THE WRITING OF ENGLISH.

BEING
A NEW ENGLISH COURSE
FOR SCHOOLS,
IN THREE PARTS.

BOOK II.

MESTON TRAINING COLLEGE
ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS

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H. K. PRESCOT, M.A.

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A NEW ENGLISH COURSE FOR SCHOOLS,

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BOOK II.

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS NEW ENGLISH COURSE in three books is intended for pupils from 10 or 11 to 14 or 15 years of age in whatever type of school they may be found. Its object is to provide a straightforward progressive Course in the *Writing and Interpretation of English.* Selected passages, prose and poetry, from good authors are given with aids to their exact meaning, together with Exercises based upon them and other problems for imaginative and creative Composition.

The most telling criticism directed at the present time against the teaching of English is the lack of training in the *exact interpretation* of a passage. The Board of Education, in their Report on the Teaching of English, in their "Suggestions" for Teachers and in various official reports, call attention to this commonest weakness in the teaching of English. Again, examinations of all grades have as one of their main objects the testing of "*the understanding and workmanlike use of English.*"

Bearing these considerations in mind, the author's one aim is to afford guidance and varied practice in accurate and intensive Reading (silently and aloud) and its complement, the Art of Writing.

Many English books to-day confine themselves to quite short composition exercises, and they provide insufficient practice in Writing at full length. A feature of this series is the alternation of short and long compositions.

Believing that Grammar is best taught orally to children and that it cannot be taught by reading about Grammar, the author has left to the individual teacher the teaching of this subject and the collecting of grammatical examples from the various extracts given in the books.

Our acknowledgements are due to Messrs. Gerald Duckworth & Co. for kind permission to use extracts from "The Happy Prince," by Oscar Wilde.

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INTRODUCTORY LESSON—PICTURE STUDY.

Salisbury Cathedral. (Constable.)

Note on the Picture.

This is one of the best-known pictures of John Constable, the English landscape painter, born in 1776. When quite young he was employed about his father's windmills, and it was one of his duties to watch for changes of the sky. To this he owed a knowledge of clouds—which he used later in painting. Much of his time was spent at Salisbury, a place of which he grew very fond, and where in 1823 he painted this picture of the cathedral. He rejoiced in painting the natural green of foliage, instead of the conventional brown-tinted landscapes which were fashionable in his day.

Oral Exercise on the Picture.

(1.) Explain how you know that some of the trees in this picture are nearer than others.

(2.) From which direction is the sun shining ?

(3.) How do you know the direction ?

(4.) Describe the way in which light and shade are grouped.

(5.) What noticeable curve is made by the trees ?

(6.) Why did the artist paint the cathedral as seen through trees ? How has he used them ?

(7.) Mention all the objects you can see in the foreground.

Written Exercise.

Describe the picture.

Salisbury Cathedral
(Constable).

THE WRITING OF ENGLISH.

INTRODUCTORY—HOW TO USE THE DICTIONARY.

Every now and then you will come across a word which is new to you. Sometimes you will be able to guess or infer its meaning from the context, but often you will need the help of your *dictionary*. Suppose, for example, that you wish to make certain what an *ogre* is; you look this word up in the dictionary, and find the following:—

> "OGRE (ō·ger), n. Man-eating giant (F., first used by Perrault 1697, etym. dub.)"

1. Pronunciation.

Immediately after the word comes the guide to *pronunciation*. The line over the o shows that it is long—sounded like the ō in "so"; while the "ger" shows that the "gre" of ogre is pronounced to rhyme with an*ger*, and not with a*gree*.

2. Abbreviations.

To find out what "n.," "F.," "etym." and "dub." mean, we must look at the list of *abbreviations*, which we shall find at the beginning or end of the dictionary. In this list we find that "n." means *noun*—telling us what part of speech our word is. Then comes the explanation of the meaning—"man-eating giant." F. stands for French, the language from which "ogre" is derived. "Etym. dub." stands for "etymology dubious," and means "The history of this word is doubtful."

Your own dictionary may be a little different—perhaps easier to understand—but if anything puzzles you, remember to look at the list of abbreviations or shortened words.

The dictionary will help you to understand and to write good English ; you will need it frequently as you work through this book.

Now suppose you were asked to write some sentences showing that you understood quite clearly the meaning of the word "ogre."

You will have to show in your sentence that the ogre is a giant, and that he eats men. The following sentences convey this information :—

> The ogre set out to catch some men for his dinner ; he covered twenty yards at a stride, and the ground shook beneath his weight.
>
> The ogre propped his huge bulk against a tree, while he crunched some human bones.

Now let us see how you can use your dictionary. Read, first of all, the following passage :—

Grace Before Meat. (Charles Lamb.)

The custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing ! when a belly-full was a wind-fall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer's or goat's flesh would naturally be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace.

Charles Lamb.

Written Exercises.

(i.) Find out, with the help of your dictionary, the meaning of "precarious," "providence," "triumphal," "abstinence," "booty," and "germ." Write down each of these words together with an explanation of its meaning.

(ii.) Write sentences or short paragraphs containing the above words, so as to show that you understand their meaning. (For help, look again at the sentences about the ogre.)

If there is any other word you do not understand, either in this piece or in those that follow, look it up in your dictionary, and make sure of the meaning.

(For further studies in the use of the dictionary, see Book III.)

EXERCISES IN STORY AND DESCRIPTION.

1.

THE·SELFISH GIANT. (Oscar Wilde.)

Read—

Every afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden.

It was a lovely garden, with soft green grass. Here and there over the grass stood beautiful flowers like stars, and there were twelve peach-trees that in the spring-time broke out into delicate blossoms of pink and pearl, and in the autumn bore rich fruit. The birds sat on the trees and sang so sweetly that the children used to stop their games in order to listen to them. "How happy we are here!" they cried to each other.

One day the Giant came back. He had been to visit his friend the Cornish ogre, and had stayed with him for seven years. After the seven years were over he had said all that he had to say, for his conversation was limited,

and he determined to return to his own castle. When he arrived he saw the children playing in the garden.

"What are you doing here?" he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

"My own garden is my own garden," said the Giant; "anyone can understand that, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself." So he built a high wall all round it, and put up a notice-board—

TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED.

He was a very selfish Giant.

OSCAR WILDE.

Written Exercises.

(i.) You were hiding in the castle when the giant returned. Tell how you escaped without being seen.

(ii.) *Write down* the names of two or three games that the children might have been playing, and explain how to play *one* of them. Think out the rules of the game clearly before you start to write. Put the most important first. Try not to leave anything out, and not to repeat anything.

(iii.) Find out, with the help of your dictionary, the exact meaning of the phrases: "His *conversation* was *limited*" and "*trespassers* will be *prosecuted*," and write down your explanation.

2.

THE LUMBERMEN'S CAMP. (Walt Whitman.)

Read.

Lumbermen in their winter-camp, day-break in the woods, stripes of snow on the limbs of trees, the occasional snapping,

The glad clear sound of one's voice, the merry song, the natural life of the woods, the strong day's work.

The blazing fire at night, the sweet taste of supper,
the talk, the bed of hemlock boughs, and the
bear-skin.

WALT WHITMAN.

Oral Exercise.

Shut your book, and mention as many as you can of the things heard and seen in the lumbermen's camp.

Or, Describe the camp as if you had seen it.

Written Exercise.

With this word-picture in your mind, write a full and vivid account of "A visit to a lumberman's camp" (from daybreak to night).

3.

How to Tell or Write a Story.

(a) *Order of events.*

When you are telling a story, you will be concerned with events which happen one after the other. You will be less likely to confuse the reader (or listener) if you relate the events as far as possible in the order in which they occurred. This will be easy if the story is a true one; but if you are inventing it, you will need to *imagine* clearly the order in which the events follow one another.

(b) *Choice of setting.*

You must choose carefully the scene or *setting* for your story. Suppose you were asked to describe an encounter with some wild animal. The setting might be *the London Zoo* (an animal escapes from its cage), or a tiger in *an Indian jungle* (a shooting expedition), or a *Russian forest* (a sledge chased by wolves). A few well chosen words will carry the reader in imagination to the place which

you describe: do not weary him with many details, like those of a map or guide-book.

(c) *How to divide the story into parts or paragraphs.*

Suppose you are going to write about "*Wolves in a Russian Forest.*"

The first question is how to *divide your story* into suitable *parts* or *paragraphs.* Outstanding events should form the centre or kernel of each section.

(i.) A few *introductory* lines might give the situation: you are driving along through the dark snow-clad forest in a sledge.

(ii.) The next paragraph should deal with the first appearance of danger: a far-off howling, which gradually comes nearer; then the gleam of the wolves' red eyes through the trees.

(iii.) The third paragraph would describe the frantic struggles of the horses to increase the speed of the sledge, while the wolves are springing almost at their flanks, and the terror and desperation of the passengers.

(iv.) A last paragraph might tell how a woodman's cottage suddenly came in sight through a clearing in the trees: the woodman runs out with a gun, and succeeds in scaring off the wolves.

Written Exercise.

Write a thrilling story, on this plan, about "Wolves in the Forest."

4.

The method of setting to work would be similar even if you were writing on a quite different subject, such as "A Day in the Country." Think of the probable course of

events, and of a day you have actually spent in this way—the coming of the invitation to spend a day with a friend in the country; the journey in the train; an afternoon spent climbing on the hills, or picking blackberries; the "good-byes" and home-coming.

Written Exercise.

Write as interestingly as you can on A Day on a River," or At the Sea."

5.

You will have done something if you merely give a clear idea of what happened; but you ought to do more than this. You ought to make your account *interesting* as well as *clear*. Make your story lead up to its point, or most important part—this is called working up to a *climax*. Do not give away the main facts of the story at the beginning, or the reader will have no wish to reach the end.

Compare these two brief accounts of a striking incident:—

(i.) *The Hair-breadth Escape.* (Told *with* climax.)

> "As I turned into the High Street, I saw a large car coming swiftly up the road towards me, on my right. Facing me, on the opposite side of the street, a motor-lorry was drawn up by the side of the pavement, so that a woman standing near it could not see the approaching car. She stepped suddenly into the road. In a flash the car was on her, but by a sharp swerve managed just to avoid her."

In the above version the important, exciting fact—that the woman was nearly killed—is *kept till the end.*

(ii.) *The Same Story.* (Told *without* climax.)

"The other day I saw a woman nearly knocked down by a motor. She stepped suddenly off the pavement as it approached, and the driver only just managed to avoid her. She had not been able to see it before, because of a large van standing at the side of the road."

You can see for yourself which of these two accounts leads up to the main fact of the story, and which gives it away at the beginning.

Oral Exercise.

Imagine you witnessed this incident. Describe it.

6.

Exercises in Story Writing—Order and Climax.

(i.) Write headings or notes to show how you would divide into sections some stories on the following subjects:—

- (a) A princess who said she would only marry a cobbler.
- (b) How you made a new friend at school.
- (c) Seen from the top of a motor-bus.
- (d) A visit to some building or place of interest.
- (e) The swallow comes back to England in the spring.

(ii.) *Write a story* on *one* of the above.

7.

Re-write the following, so as to make it *work up to a climax*:—

"I saw the figure of a woman in white pass across the hall, and seemingly vanish through the solid wall. I was struck dumb with terror, for I knew

there was no one besides myself in the house. I had entered the hall to make sure that the door was locked for the night. It was already getting dusk. Only that afternoon, at tea, we had been talking about ghosts."

8.

And this :—

"Charles I. was condemned to death, and executed on the scaffold. He had for long struggles against the Parliamentary party, both by force of arms and by intrigue. It all came about through his belief in the "Divine Right of Kings." He thought that the people had no right to call their king to account, and those who supported him, and were prepared to fight in his cause were called Cavaliers, while the soldiers of the Parliament were known as 'Round-Heads.'"

9.

And this :—

"We only won the match by one goal to nil. The end was very exciting, as you can imagine, for neither side had scored when there was only five minutes to go. How we all cheered when Wilson kicked a goal just before the whistle went. It was a hard fight all the way through. The enemy had the advantage of weight, but our men were the faster. We went down to the field on our bicycles, and were rather late in arriving, as we had to struggle against a strong wind."

10.

And this :—

> "The order was given, and we charged the enemy with fixed bayonets. My best friend was killed by a stray bullet when the fighting was nearly over, so I did not share the general rejoicing that we had won a victory with the loss of so few men. Besides, we had been marching all day almost without food; and my feet were blistered. It rained heavily right up to the time of the battle, and long before we came in sight of the enemy we were drenched to the skin. The dull rumbling of distant artillery was grim and sinister in the extreme."

11.

FROM INDIA. (W. C. Bennett.)

"O come you from the Indies, and, soldier, can you tell
Aught of the gallant 90th, and who are safe and well?
O soldier, say my son is safe—for nothing else I care,
And you shall have a mother's thanks—shall have a widow's prayer."

"Oh, I've come from the Indies—I've just come from the war;
And well I know the 90th, and gallant lads they are;
From colonel down to rank and file, I know my comrades well,
And news I've brought for you, mother, your Robert bade me tell."

" And do you know my Robert, now ? Oh, tell me, tell
 me true—
O soldier, tell me word for word all that he said to
 you !
His very words—my own boy's words—O tell me every
 one !
You little know how dear to his old mother is my son ! "

" Through Havelock's fights and marches the 90th were
 there ;
In all the gallant 90th did, your Robert did his share :
Twice went into Lucknow, untouched by steel or
 ball ;
And you may bless your God, old dame, that brought
 him safe through all."

" O thanks unto the living God that heard his mother's
 prayer,
The widow's cry that rose on high her only son to
 spare !
O blessed be God, that turned from him the sword and
 shot away !—
And what to his old mother did my darling bid you
 say ? "

" Mother, he saved his colonel's life, and bravely it was
 done ;
In the despatch they told it all, and named and praised
 your son ;
A medal and a pension's his ; good luck to him, I say ;
And he has not a comrade but will wish him well
 to-day."

"Now, soldier, blessings on your tongue! O husband, that you knew
How well our boy pays me this day for all that I've gone through;
All I have done and borne for him the long years since you're dead!
But, soldier, tell me how he looked, and all my Robert said."

"He's bronzed, and tanned, and bearded, and you'd hardly know him, dame;
We've made your boy into a man, but still his heart's the same;
For often, dame, his talks of you, and always to one tune;—
But there, his ship is nearly home, and he'll be with you soon."

"Oh! is he really coming home, and shall I really see
My boy again, my own boy, home? and when, when will it be?
Did you say soon?"—"Well, he is home; keep cool, old dame; he's here."
"O Robert, my own blessed boy!"—"O mother!—mother dear!"

W. C. BENNETT.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) This is a story in verse of a soldier in the Indian Mutiny and of his home-coming. Where does the *climax* come?

(ii.) Imagine you saw this home-coming. Tell Robert's story, keeping the climax (the mother's recognition of her son) till the end.

12.

Oliver Asks for More. (Dickens.)

Read.

The evening arrived; the boys took their places. The master, in his cook's uniform, stationed himself at the copper; his pauper assistants ranged themselves behind him; the gruel was served out; and a long grace was said over the short commons. The gruel disappeared; the boys whispered to each other, and winked at Oliver; while his next neighbours nudged him. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, basin and spoon in hand, said, somewhat alarmed at his own temerity:

"Please, sir, I want some more."

The master was a fat, healthy man; but he turned very pale. He gazed in stupefied astonishment on the small rebel for some seconds, and then clung for support to the copper. The assistants were paralysed with wonder, the boys with fear.

"What!" said the master at length, in a faint voice.

"Please, sir," replied Oliver, "I want some more."

The master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle; pinioned him in his arms; and shrieked aloud for the beadle.

The board were sitting in solemn conclave, when Mr. Bumble rushed into the room in great excitement, and addressing the gentlemen in the high chair, said,

"Mr. Limbkins, I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist has asked for more!"

There was a general start. Horror was depicted on every countenance.

"For *more*!" said Mr. Limbkins. "Compose yourself, Bumble, and answer me distinctly. Do I understand that he asked for more, after he had eaten the supper allotted by the dietary?"

"He did, sir," replied Bumble.

"That boy will be hung," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. "I know that boy will be hung."

CHARLES DICKENS. *Oliver Twist.*

Oliver Twist had lost his parents, and was left without any money, when still quite a young child. Nowadays he would have been better treated, but in the early part of the nineteenth century poor orphans were sent to workhouses of the kind Dickens describes.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) With the help of the dictionary, give the meaning of these words as they occur in the story:—

Copper, pauper, commons, temerity, paralysed, "the board," conclave and dietary.

(ii.) Tell the story in your own way.

13.

A beadle was a parish officer, who carried out the orders of the magistrates before there were any policemen to do so.

Read what is said about the beadle, and then picture to yourself what he must have been like. *Write down* a short description.

14.

Notice that much is said about the *feelings* or *emotions* of the characters in this story. *Make a list* of the words

or phrases which describe the different emotions of (a) the boys, and (b) the officials.

Notice how these words make us enter into the story, and feel almost as excited as if we ourselves were there in the workhouse.

15.

Dickens *exaggerates* the behaviour of the officials, in order to make them appear ridiculous. That is to say, he uses strong words like "paralysed," "shrieked," and "horror."

Describe in the same way some meal in which you were disappointed in the food.

16.

What do you think the boys whispered to one another before Oliver asked for more? Write down their conversation.

17.

Write a summary of the story of "Oliver asks for more." (A *summary* contains only the most important facts.)

18.

A SLAVE-DRIVER. (Mrs. Stowe.)

"I say, all on ye," he said, retreating a pace or two back, "look at me—look at me—look me right in the eye—*straight*, now!" said he, stamping his foot at every pause.

As by a fascination, every eye was now directed to the glaring greenish-gray eye of Simon.

"Now," said he, doubling his great heavy fist into something resembling a blacksmith's hammer, "d'ye see this fist? Heft it!" he said, bringing it down on Tom's

hand. "Look at these yer bones! Well, I tell ye this yer fist has got as hard as iron *knocking down niggers.* I never see the nigger yet I couldn't bring down with one crack," said he, bringing his fist down so near to the face of Tom that he winked and drew back. "I don't keep none of yer cussed overseers; I does my own overseeing, and I tell you things *is* seen to. You's every one on ye got to toe the mark, I tell ye—quick—straight—the moment I speak. That's the way to keep in with me. Ye won't find no soft spot in me, nowhere. So, now, mind yourselves, for I don't show no mercy."

The women involuntarily drew in their breath, and the whole gang sat with downcast, dejected faces. Meanwhile Simon turned on his heel, and marched up to the bar of the boat for a dram.

"That's the way I begin with my niggers," he said to a gentlemanly man who had stood by him during his speech. "It's my system to begin strong—just let 'em know what to expect."

"Indeed!" said the stranger, looking upon him with the curiosity of a naturalist studying some out-of-the-way specimen.

MRS. H. B. STOWE. *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

This extract is from a book called *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Mrs. Beecher Stowe. It was written to show the evils of slavery in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century. Many of the negro slaves kept in private houses were happy and well-treated, as is shown by the fact that their owners were not afraid, when they had to leave home to fight during the American Civil War, to trust their wives and children to the care of the slaves. But on the cotton plantations the negroes were

herded in droves like animals, cruelly beaten, and worked to death.

Uncle Tom had at first a happy home, but on the death of his owner was sold to a cotton-planter, of brutal character, to whom we are here introduced.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) This piece is mainly given up to the *description of character.* Name the words and phrases which you think do most to reveal the character of the slave-driver.

(ii.) Explain in your own words just what you think a *slave* is.

(iii.) With the aid of your dictionary, see that you understand the meaning of "fascination," "involuntarily," "curiosity" and "specimen."

(iv.) The slave-driver is standing with his back to you. Using only four nouns and four adjectives, describe what you can see of him, so as to make us feel that we almost know what he is going to be like when he turns round, though we have not yet seen his face.

19.

Write about twenty lines, continuing the conversation between the stranger and the slave-driver.

20.

The slave-driver was ignorant, and so used incorrect expressions. Make a list of these, and write opposite them the correct English form. This example will help you:—

Incorrect—	*Correct*—
things *is* seen to	things *are* seen to
no soft spot in me	no soft spot in me
nowhere	*anywhere*

21.

With this story in your mind, write on "The Evils of Slavery."

Or summarise the story. Write down in about six lines what happened.

22.

DAFFODILS. (Wordsworth.)

Read this poem to yourself.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
  That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
  A host, of golden Daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
  Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
  And twinkle in the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
  Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
  Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
  Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—
A poet could not but be gay
  In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
  What wealth the show to me had brought

For oft when on my couch I lie
  In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
  Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
  And dances with the daffodils.

WORDSWORTH.

Notes on the poem.

Perhaps there are one or two words or phrases that you do not understand.

The *Milky Way* is a vast band of stars, which may be seen on clear nights stretching across the sky like a veil or streamer. The stars composing it are so far away and so numerous that they appear like a sprinkling of powder.

Jocund means joyful; and *pensive* means thoughtful. (Look up these words in the dictionary.)

". *that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude.*" This means that when we are alone it is pleasant to disregard our surroundings, and to review with *the mind's eye* scenes and places we remember to have enjoyed in the past.

Read the poem over and over again, till you *know it by heart.*

Oral Exercises.

(i.) If you had to divide the poem into two parts, where would you draw the dividing line?

(ii.) Can you remember some of the words and phrases which Wordsworth uses to convey the idea that:—

(a) He was very lonely.
(b) The daffodils were bright and gay.
(c) They were very many.
(d) They were in motion.

(iii.) Could any other words have been used instead of:—
"Wandered," "host," "sprightly," "sparkling"?
Say why you think your words are better than, or not so good as, these.

23.

(i.) Write in your own words the meaning of:—
"Continuous as the stars."
"Along the margin of a bay."

"Out-did the sparkling waves in glee."
"In vacant or in pensive mood."

(ii.) Tell in your own words, or as exactly as you can, what Wordsworth saw and how the scene affected him. (Remember there are four stanzas.)

24.

If you live in the country you may have seen daffodils growing wild as they are described here. If you live in the town you may have seen them sold in the streets.

Write a description of a daffodil. Make it as accurate as you can.

25.

Wordsworth spent a great part of his time in the Lake Country, where he saw these flowers. The English Lakes are in the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.

If you live there, describe some part that you know.

If you live in some other part of England, look up the Lakes in your atlas; give some account of their size and position, and of the route by which you would have to travel in order to visit them.

26.

How a Poem is Written.

You can tell by a glance at a poem that it is different from the everyday language in which you write a letter or story, or tell your ordinary thoughts. The first thing that strikes the eye is the regular arrangement of the lines, and there are other more important differences, which are revealed when we read carefully. The following are some things to notice.

How Poetry is written—Stanza, Rhyme and Metre.

(i.) Notice that Wordsworth's poem (" Daffodils ") is written in four groups of six lines each. These groups are called *stanzas*.

(ii.) Every line begins with a capital letter, even if it does not begin a sentence.

(iii.) Lines 1 and 3, 2 and 4, 5 and 6, in each stanza, *rhyme*. That is to say, the last sound of line 1 is the same as the last sound of line 3, and so on.

(iv.) In English we pronounce some parts of words more loudly or distinctly than other parts. For instance in the word " lonely," " lone-" is pronounced more heavily than "-ly." The former is called *the stressed syllable*, and the latter *the unstressed syllable*. If we wish to indicate the stress in writing, we do so thus—" lóne|lў." This is called *scanning* the word (or line).

In poetry these stressed and unstressed syllables are arranged to follow one another in a regular order or *metre*. The metre of the poem quoted here is simple; it consists mostly of one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed, as for example :—

Ī wándered lónely ás ă cloúd.

(v.) A *syllable* is the shortest part of a word that can be pronounced separately. Here are some examples of words divided into syllables and scanned :—

Dáff|ŏ|díls flút|ter|ing sól|ĭ|túde.

(vi.) Sometimes when you have heard a merry tune played, you have wanted to beat time with your hand or foot. That was because you enjoyed the *rhythm*. Poetry, as well as music, has a rhythm. Read out the

following, and make a downward beat of your hand at each stressed syllable. They are marked for you.

(a) Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground.

(b) Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise:
I sing of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible, against her bore, in vain,
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts in Spain.

(c) For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the valour of the brave.

There are many possible metres, but one of the simplest gives to each line eight syllables, alternately unstressed and stressed, and four lines to a stanza, as in Wordsworth's "Daffodils" (Exercise 22).

Written Exercise.

Try to write a short poem in this metre, on *one* of the following subjects:—

(i.) A Picnic. (ii.) Violets. (iii.) A Pet Animal
(iv.) Winter. or (v.) Any subject you fancy.

27.

On a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes. (Gray.)

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
  The azure flowers that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima reclined,
  Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
  The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
  She saw; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed; but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
  The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Though richest purple to the view
  Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first and then a claw,
  With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd in vain to reach the prize
What female heart can gold despise?
  What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous Maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
  Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled,)
The slipp'ry verge her feet beguiled,
  She tumbled headlong in.

THOMAS GRAY.

Notes on the poem.

A *Genius* is supposed to be a spirit that haunts a particular place. (*Genii* is the Latin plural of *Genius*.)

A *Nymph* is a kind of gracious girl-fairy, thought by the ancient Greeks to dwell in the caves and fountains of their country.

Tyre was a famous seaport on the coast of Palestine. The people who lived there used to fish for the murex, a shell-fish from which a rich purple or crimson dye was extracted. So this colour was called Tyrian. Because it was very rare and costly, kings and princes wore purple.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) Read the poem aloud.

(ii.) Are there any words which seem to you suitable only for poetry, and not for prose? Which are they?

(iii.) Try to explain these phrases:—
"Pensive Selima," "Conscious tail," "Betray'd a golden gleam," " "Presumptuous Maid!" "Malignant Fate."

(iv.) What words and phrases convey the idea that, to the cat Selima, the goldfish were something very mysterious and exciting? Write them down.

Written Exercise.

Tell this story in your own simple prose.

28.

Try to write a poem of your own, telling how an animal that came down to the river to drink, was caught by a crocodile. Remember the crocodile lies quite still in the water like a rough log of wood; that he snaps suddenly with his terrible jaws, and drags his victims to the bottom of the river, holding them there till they drown.

29.

If you cannot write a poem, expand the above outline into a story of your own.

30.

STUDY OF A CONVERSATION.

MRS. GLEGG AND THE PACKMAN. (George Eliot.)

Read twice silently.

"Fetch it and let me see you measure it," said Mrs. Glegg *authoritatively*.

Bob obeyed with *ostentatious reluctance*.

"See what there is over measurement!" he said, holding forth the extra half-yard, while Mrs. Glegg was busy examining the damaged yard, and throwing her head back to see how far the fault would be lost on a distant view.

"I'll give you six shilling for it," she said, throwing it down with the air of a person who mentions an *ultimatum*.

"Didn't I tell you now, mum, as it 'ud hurt your feelings to look at my pack? That damaged bit's turned your stomach now—I see it has," said Bob, wrapping the *muslin* up with the utmost quickness, and apparently about to fasten up his pack.

"Well, seven shilling," said Mrs. Glegg.

"Put it out o' your mind, mum, now do," said Bob. "Here's a bit o' net, then, for you to look at before I tie up my pack, just for you to see what my trade's come to; spotted and sprigged, you see, beautiful, but yallow—'s been lyin' by an' got the wrong colour. I could niver ha' bought such net if it hadn't been yallow. . And I gev five an' eightpence for that piece o' net—if I was to tell y' anything else I should be tellin' you fibs; an' five an' eightpence I shall ask for it—not a penny more—for it's a woman's article, an' I like to 'commodate the women. Five an' eightpence for six yards—as cheap as if it was only the dirt on it as was paid for."

"I don't mind having three yards of it," said Mrs. Glegg.

"Why, there's but six altogether," said Bob. "No, mum, it isn't worth your while; you can go to the shop to-morrow an' get the same pattern ready whitened. It's on'y three times the money. What's that to a lady like you?" He gave an emphatic tie to his bundle.

"Come, lay me out that muslin," said Mrs. Glegg. "Here's eight shilling for it."

"You *will* be jokin', mum," said Bob, looking up with a laughing face. "I see'd you was a pleasant lady when I fust come to the winder."

"Well, put it me out," said Mrs. Glegg *peremptorily*.

"But if I let you have it for ten shillin', mum, you'll be so good as not tell nobody. I should be a laughin' stock; the trade 'ud hoot me, if they knowed it. I'm obliged to make believe as I ask more nor I do for my goods, else they'd find out I was a flat. I'm glad you

don't insist upo' buyin' the net, for then I should ha' lost my two best bargains for Mrs. Pepper o' Fibb's End, an' she's a rare customer."

"Let me look at the net again," said Mrs. Glegg, *yearning* after the cheap spots and sprigs, now they were vanishing.

"Well, I can't deny you, mum," said Bob, handing it out. "Eh! see what a pattern now!

"Here's fifteen shilling, then, for the two," said Mrs. Glegg. "But it's a shameful price."

GEORGE ELIOT. *The Mill on the Floss.*

Oral Exercises.

(i.) Tell the story in your own words; or each of you may tell a part of the story in turn.

(ii.) You have some book or article by you which you would be glad to sell at a good price. Hold it up for the class to see, and explain all its good points, praising it as though you really wished to sell it. Imagine you are a packman.

Written Exercise.

Write down shortly (in about 6—12 lines) what happened in this story.

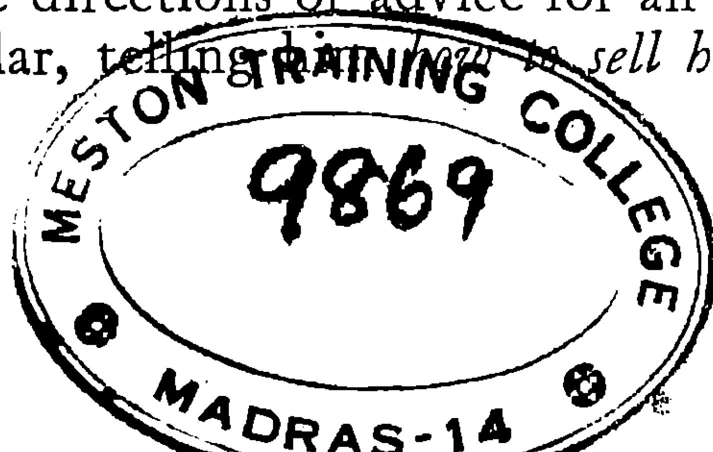
31.

Re-write n your own words the full meaning of the words and phrases in *italics*.

And re-write Bob's remarks in correct English.

32.

Mrs. Glegg did not want to buy at first, but the packman persuaded her in the end, because he was a good salesman. Notice carefully what he says and does; then write down some directions or advice for an inexperienced shopman or pedlar, telling him *how to sell his goods.*



33.

What do you think Mrs. Glegg's *character* must have been? Give as full an account of her as possible.

34.

A part of the story is reproduced here, but all the stops are left out. Copy out what follows, putting in commas, full stops, etc., where you think right. (After each full stop you must put a capital letter.) Then look back at the original to see how the stops are placed, and compare with your punctuation.

> "Put it out o' your mind mum now do" said Bob "here's a bit o' net then for you to look at before I tie my pack just for you to see what my trade's come to spotted and sprigged you see beautiful but yallow—'s been lying by an' got the wrong colour I could never ha' bought such net if it hadn't been yallow"

35.

THE ART OF WRITING CONVERSATION.

This piece (Exercise 30) is an excellent example of the *use of conversation* in telling a story. It would often waste the reader's time to repeat the actual words of the persons concerned. It would probably be better to write: "Mr. Smith met Mr. Jones, and arranged to see him again in a week's time"—or "Mr. Smith gave the necessary directions to his secretary"—than to make Mr. Smith speak for himself about trivial matters. But sometimes conversation can be used to *reveal character*, as in the case of Mrs. Glegg.

Written Exercise.

Re-write the following *in the form of conversations,* so as to suggest the character of the speakers. Notice carefully the way in which the punctuation is used. The beginning and end of a person's speech are marked by inverted commas, and a fresh paragraph is begun to show when someone else is speaking. Revise the Lesson on Quotation in Book I. if you need help.

One day, when travelling on a 'bus, I found that I had left all my money at home. I asked the conductor to let me finish my ride without a ticket, as it was very important for me to reach my destination in time. He ordered me to descend, but a kind old lady offered to lend me the money.

36.

And this :—

Uncle George asked his two nephews to tea. He wished to know how they were getting on at school. Bob said he was thoroughly enjoying himself there, but Tom said he hated it.

37.

And this :—

The captain of the robbers called his lieutenant, and discussed with him how they were to break into the castle. One was for instant assault, the other for caution.

38.

Reproduce the following in the form of ordinary narrative, *without conversation.* You need only write one sentence for each conversation. You should state what *happened*, without quoting actual words.

(i.) " May I take your order ? " said the waitress.

" Some China tea, and toasted scones, please."

" I am sorry we have no scones. Can I get you some muffins ? "

"I don't care for muffins. Can you give me crumpets?"
"I am sorry we have no crumpets. Would you care for toast?"
"Yes, I should like that very much."

(ii.) "Good afternoon, would you care to come inside?"
"I only came to inquire if you would subscribe to the Orphans' fund. We are needing money very badly just now."
"I should be delighted to give you sixpence, or a shilling."
"We do not accept less than five shillings from anyone."

39.

Write conversations of about ten lines each on the following subjects:—

(i.) Between two boys, one of whom has borrowed the other's bicycle and damaged it.
(ii.) Between a man and his wife, discussing where to go for a holiday.
(iii.) Between the boy who has set out to seek his fortune, and the old woman he meets in the enchanted wood.

40.

DOUGLAS AND PERCY. (Ballad.)

At last these two stout Earls did meet, like captains of great might:
Like lions wood,* they laid on load, and made a cruel fight:

*"Wood" means frantic or savage.

They fought until they both did sweat, with swords of
tempered steel ;
Until the blood, like drops of rain, they trickling down
did feel.

"Yield thee, Lord Percy," Douglas said ; "in faith I will
thee bring,
Where thou shalt high advanced be by James our Scottish
king :

"Thy ransom I will freely give, and this report of
thee.
Thou art the most courageous knight, that ever I did
see."

"No, Douglas," quoth Earl Percy then, "thy proffer I
do scorn ;
I will not yield to any Scot that ever yet was born."

With that, there came an arrow keen out of an English
bow,
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart, a deep and
deadly blow :

Who never spake more words than these—"Fight on, my
merry men all ;
For why, my life is at an end Lord Percy sees my fall."

Then leaving life, Earl Percy took the dead man by the
hand ;
And said, "Earl Douglas, for thy life would I had lost
my land.

"O Christ! my very heart doth bleed with sorrow for
thy sake;
For sure a more redoubted knight mischance could never
take."

A knight among the Scots there was, which saw Lord
Douglas die,
Who straight in wrath did vow revenge upon the Lord
Percy

Sir Hugh Montgomery was he call'd, who, with a spear
most bright,
Well-mounted on a gallant steed, ran fiercely through the
fight;

And past the English Archers all, without all dread or
fear;
And through Earl Percy's body then he thrust his hateful
spear;

With such a vehement force and might did he his body
gore,
The staff ran through the other side a large cloth-yard
and more.

The Ballad of Chevy-Chace.

Notes on the poem

This ballad is founded on fact. The battle it describes was fought at Otterburn in Northumberland in 1388. It was the custom for Scottish nobles like Earl Douglas, to lead their followers over the border to burn or steal any English property they could come at. The English behaved

in much the same way. Sometimes pitched battles would take place.

This is called a ballad, partly because it *tells a story* and partly because of its metre. It is full of spirit and energy, and Sir Philip Sydney, the famous courtier and soldier of Queen Elizabeth's day, declared that it

"stirred his blood like the sound of a trumpet"

when he heard it recited by a blind man.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) Try to recite this ballad aloud as well as did the blind man whom Sir Philip Sydney heard.

(ii.) Read the first two stanzas aloud, making a downward beat of your hand at each accented syllable.

(iii.) What is meant by :—

"They laid on load," "tempered steel," "in faith I will thee bring," "ransom," "redoubted," and "cloth-yard" ?

(iv.) Is rhyme used in this ballad ? Give examples.

(v.) Do you like or dislike this poem ? Give reasons one way or the other.

(vi.) There is an effect of strain and violence in the poem. Say which words and phrases you think do most to produce this effect.

41.

Write out the story in your own words, dividing your account into four paragraphs, and putting a title over each. Notice that one part of the poem introduces you to what is happening ; part recounts a conversation ; and the rest is grouped round two dramatic incidents. This should guide you in arranging your paragraphs.

42.

Find out from your history book which king was on the English throne at this time, and write a short account

of how he distinguished himself as a boy and how he lost his crown.

43.

In the same metre, and with the same arrangement of rhymes, try to write a ballad of eight to twelve lines telling how Saint George killed the dragon. Remember to go straight to the point, as you will have no space to describe the scenery, and how the dragon was discovered.

You might make a plan like this:—

First 4 lines: Saint George breaks his spear against the dragon's scales, and is unhorsed.

Second 4 lines: He fights on foot, and deals the dragon a fatal wound with his sword.

Third 4 lines: The dragon dies, lashing the ground with his tail, and breathing forth fire and smoke.

There is no need to copy this plan exactly.

44.

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S MAN FRIDAY. (Defoe.)

He was a comely, handsome fellow, perfectly well made, with straight strong limbs, not too large, tall and well shaped, and as I reckon, about twenty-six years of age. He had a very good countenance—not a fierce and surly aspect, but seemed to have something very manly in his face; and yet he had all the sweetness and softness of an European in his countenance too, especially when he smiled. His hair was long and black, not curled like wool; his forehead very high and large, and a great vivacity and sparkling sharpness in his eyes. The colour of his skin was not quite black, but very tawny, and yet not of an ugly yellow nauseous tawny, as the Brazilians and Virginians and other natives of America are, but of

a bright kind of a dun olive colour, that had in it something very agreeable, though not very easy to describe. His face was round and plump; his nose small, not flat like the negroes; a very good mouth, thin lips, and his fine teeth well set and white as ivory.

After he had slumbered, rather than slept, about half an hour, he waked again, and comes out of the cave to me, for I had been milking my goats, which I had in the enclosure just by. When he espied me, *he came running to me, laying himself down again upon the ground, with all the possible signs of an humble thankful gesture to show it.* At last he lays his head flat upon the ground, close to my foot, and sets my other foot upon his head, as he had done before; *and after this made all the signs to me of subjection, servitude, and submission imaginable, to let me know how he would serve me as long as he lived.*

I understood him in many things, and let him know I was very well pleased with him. In a little time I began to speak to him and teach him to speak to me. And first, I made him know his name should be Friday, which was the day I saved his life. I called him so for the memory of the time. I likewise taught him to say Master, and then let him know that was to be my name. I likewise taught him to say Yes and No, and to know the meaning of them. I gave him some milk in an earthen pot, and let him see me drink it before him, and sop my bread in it. And I gave him a cake of bread to do the like, which he quickly complied with, and made signs that it was very good for him.

I kept there with him all that night; but as soon as it was day I beckoned to him to come with me, and let him know I would give him some clothes; at which he

seemed very glad, for he was stark naked. As we went by the place where he had buried the two men he pointed exactly to the place, and showed me the marks that he had made to find them again, making signs to me that we should dig them up again and eat them! At this I appeared very angry, expressed my abhorrence of it, made as if I would vomit at the thoughts of it, and beckoned with my hand to him to come away, which he did immediately, with great submission. I then led him up to the top of the hill, to see if his enemies were gone; and, pulling out my glass, I looked and saw plainly the place where they had been, but no appearance of them, or of their canoes; so that it was plain that they were gone, and had left their two comrades behind them, without any search after them.

DEFOE. *Robinson Crusoe.*

Oral Exercises.

(i.) (a) Name the parts of the body described; (b) Give the words used to describe each part.

(ii.) Find out, from your dictionary if necessary, the meanings of: *comely, tawny, dun, vivacity, nauseous.* Put them into sentences of your own so as to show that you can use the words properly.

45.

Give in clear and concise language of your own the exact meaning of the *words in italics.*

46.

Write your own description of Friday, and compare it with the original. Get your class companions to criticise it, noting any omissions or additions or errors.

47.

Describe in your own words the "countenance of Friday."

48.

Taking this as a model, describe fully and carefully any member of your own family—imagine that he or she has been lost and that you have to give a full description to the police.

49.

A THRILLING MOMENT. (Reade.)

Read twice.

When they were almost starved with cold, and waiting for the attack, the door on the stairs opened softly and closed again. Nothing more.

There was another harrowing silence.

Then a single light footstep on the stair; and nothing more.

Then a light crept under the door: and nothing more.

Presently there was a gentle scratching, not half so loud as a mouse's, and the false door-post opened by degrees and left a perpendicular space, through which the light streamed in. The door, had it been bolted, would now have hung by the bare tip of the bolt, which went into the real door-post, but, as it was, it swung gently open of itself. It opened inwards, so Denys did not raise his cross-bow from the ground, but merely grasped his dagger.

The candle was held up, and shaded from behind by a man's hand.

He was inspecting the beds from the threshold, satisfied that *his victims* were both in bed.

The man glided into the apartment. But at the first step something in the position of the cupboard and chair

made him uneasy. *He ventured no further*, but put the candle on the floor and stooped to peer under the chair; but, as he stooped, an iron hand grasped his shoulder, and a dagger was driven so fiercely through his neck that the point came out at his *gullet*. There was a terrible hiccough, but no cry; and *half a dozen silent strokes followed in swift succession*, each a death-blow, and *the assassin* was laid noiselessly on the floor.

CHARLES READE. *A Fight with Robbers.*

Oral Exercises.

(i.) Re-tell in your own language the words and phrases *in italics*, so as to show that you know their exact meaning.

(ii.) Explain exactly how you would walk if you wished to go upstairs as quietly as possible.

Written Exercises.

(i.) Write a summary of the piece in about six lines.

(ii.) Copy out the following, *inserting stops* as you think fit. Then look back to the piece, and compare its punctuation with your own.

> Presently there came a gentle scratching not half so loud as a mouse's and the false door-post opened by degrees and left a perpendicular space through which the light streamed in the door had it been bolted would now have hung by the bare tip of the bolt which went into the real door-post but as it was it swung gently open of itself it opened inwards so Denys did not raise his cross-bow from the ground but merely grasped his dagger.

50.

Continue the story from the point where it breaks off, in a passage of similar length.

51.

The arrangement of the door is not very fully explained. Give an exact account of how you think it must have worked.

52.

Write a passage about equal in length to this, saying what you think had happened *before* the events described here.

53.

How a Story is Made Exciting.

Reade's Style.

Here in "A Thrilling Moment" (Exercise 49) is a sensational incident—two men waiting for their would-be murderer—well described. Ask yourself *how* the author produces the effect of mystery and excitement. Then the next time you wish to tell someone a thrilling story you will know how to set about it.

When our attention is closely strained to catch some signal or sound, things seem to happen very slowly—you know the proverb, "A watched pot never boils"—so the first thing the author requires is to produce this feeling of waiting and slowness. He does it by *using many paragraphs*; several of them contain only one sentence. We make longer pauses at the end of a paragraph than at the end of a sentence, so that as we read we are continually being caught up and made to wait a little.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) How many *paragraphs* are there in Reade's story? Summarise each.

(ii.) Read the story aloud, with the right pauses. The rest of the class might listen with their books closed.

54.

If we are in the dark, and cannot see, we naturally pay more attention to what we hear, especially if we are

listening for the approach of some danger. Under such circumstances each little noise catches the breath, and makes the heart beat faster. Hence the author (Reade) treats us to plenty of little noises—a door opened and closed, a footstep, and a gentle scratching—before the light of the candle allows us to see what is happening.

Then *the action* quickens up, and *the incidents* of the killing follow one another in quick succession. There are no paragraphs to interrupt, and only one full stop (after "gullet") between the moment when the first blow is struck and the collapse of the corpse. The thing happens with a rush, and is over in an instant. Notice the words, "half a dozen silent strokes followed in swift succession." Is there anything about them which suggests to you the action of rapid stabbing?

Written Exercise.

Now try to write any story which could fairly be called A Thrilling Moment," in your best and most vivid style.

55.

Re-write the following so as to *delay the action* and keep the reader waiting:—

> Wandering round the edge of the pool, the boy searched for a good place from which to dive, and presently finding a spot to his satisfaction, began to test the temperature of the water with his toe; many times he drew back with a shiver, but finally, throwing off the rest of his clothes, he balanced himself on the projecting root of a tree, and dived beneath the surface of the water

56.

And this :—

The Indian crept nearer to the unconscious sentry, availing himself of every scrap of cover, and pausing now behind the bole of a tree, and now behind some tangled mass of undergrowth, while every now and then some noise from the forest would cause him to crouch motionless upon the ground in fear of discovery.

57.

And this :—

Straining his eyes at his field-glasses, he watched the progress of the little party, which had now reached the most dangerous part of the mountain, and appeared to be in difficulties, since a halt was made from time to time, as though to discuss the route, or sometimes to extricate one of the climbers from an awkward position; presently the three who were leading seemed to stumble, and then to disappear completely over the edge of a crevasse.

58.

Re-write the following so as to *speed up the action* and tell the story more quickly :—

A car came in sight. It was moving rapidly. The old woman with the barrow neither heard nor saw it. She remained in the middle of the road.

The driver blew his horn loudly.

Still she took no notice.

At the last moment he put on his brakes.

The car swerved violently, and climbed up the bank at the side of the road. At the top it overturned. It was all over in a moment.

59.

And this

The bear was almost upon him. He looked wildly round for a retreat. He knew that there was no time to lose.
The only thing was to climb a tree.
His eye measured the distance to the nearest, and he ran to it as fast as he could. There was only just time to leap into the lower branches. Then he worked his way upwards.

60.

And this :—

The ball was passed to him. He caught it. Then he ran past the forwards. One tried to collar him. He dodged successfully.
Now he must pass the backs. He dodged again twice.
Running at full speed he reached the posts. He placed the ball upon the ground. He had scored a try.

61.

Write a short story under *one* of the following titles, making it as thrilling as you can :—

(i.) "*A Fight with an Elephant.*"
(ii.) "*The Secret Passage.*"
(iii.) "*How I Made My Fortune.*"

62.

THE KNIGHT'S LEAP. (A Legend of Altenahr.)

"So the foemen have fired the gate, men of mine;
  And the water is spent and gone?
Then bring me a cup of the red Ahr-wine:
  I never shall drink but this one.

"And reach me my harness, and saddle my horse,
  And lead him me round to the door;
He must take such a leap to-night perforce
  As horse never took before.

"I have fought my fight, I have lived my life,
  I have drunk my share of wine;
From Trier to Coln there was never a knight
  Led a merrier life than mine.

"I have lived by the saddle for years two score;
  And if I must die on tree,
Then the old saddle-tree, which has borne me of yore,
  Is the properest timber for me.

"So now to show bishop, and burgher, and priest
  How the Altenahr hawk can die;
If they smoke the old falcon out of his nest,
  He must take to his wings and fly."

He harnessed himself by the clear moonshine,
  And he mounted his horse at the door;
And he drained such a cup of the red Ahr-wine
  As never man drained before.

He spurred the old horse, and he held him tight,
And he leapt him out over the wall;
Out over the cliff, out into the night,
Three hundred feet of fall.

They found him next morning below in the glen,
With never a bone in him whole—
A mass or a prayer now, good gentlemen,
For such a bold rider's soul.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Exercise.

Tell aloud *or* write this story in prose making it as real as you can.

63.

LETTER-WRITING.

(Revise the Lesson in Book I. which dealt with dating, modes of address and conclusion.)

Letters giving news.

All letters may be said to give news of a kind, but some are written solely for the purpose of interesting and entertaining the people to whom they are addressed, and should be the easiest to write well Here are some *suggestions* :—

(i) *Have something to say* No one whose mind is like a blank sheet can write a "newsy" letter He may stamp a few bare facts on paper, but he will only bore his correspondents, unless he can stir himself to take an active interest in his surroundings He must be alive to the thousand differences between one man and another,

one place and another, one state of mind and another. The man who can interest others is never dull himself. He finds things pleasing, horrible, quaint, pitiable, ludicrous, mysterious, or amusing, but never void of all quality and character.

(ii.) This does not mean that you should affect an interest in something which secretly repels you, merely for the sake of appearing intelligent. You probably have some subjects in common with anyone to whom you wish to write other than a purely formal letter; choose therefore those topics which will appeal to your correspondent, and not those which will not interest him.

Written Exercises.

Write *one* of the following letters:—

(i.) To your parents, describing a children's play, in which some of your friends have performed.
(ii.) To a friend who is interested in animals, telling him about a dog you have bought.
(iii.) Giving your first impressions of a new house, to which you have just moved.

64.

And one of these:—

(i.) Telling how the shop windows look when they are decorated for Christmas.
(ii.) Describing some of the people you pass in the street on their way to school.
(iii.) Giving an account of some holiday you have spent away from home.

65.

Letters telling something unpleasant.

You may sometimes have to write a letter containing information that may be unpleasing to the reader. It is important to do so as gently and politely as possible.

(i.) *Refusing invitations.*

Make it plain that you are grateful for the invitation; and if possible, that you would gladly have accepted it, had you not been unavoidably prevented.

(ii.) *Refusing a request.*

Try not to convey the impression that your reasons are simply an excuse for selfishness.

(iii.) *Conveying bad news.*

Let your opening sentences prepare the way for the bad news, in order that the reader may not receive too sudden a shock.

Written Exercises.

Write *one* of the following letters :—

(i.) From yourself to a friend, refusing an invitation to tea.

(ii.) You have been asked to play in a cricket match : you do not wish to do so, because you have arranged to attend a Scouts' camp. Write your refusal.

(iii.) A friend asks you to stay the night with him, because you are visiting the town where he lives ; but you know he is short of room, and that your presence will cause inconvenience. Write your refusal.

(iv.) Someone writes offering to sell you a camera second-hand, but you know that it has never worked properly since he bought it. Write your refusal.

66.

And *one* of these :—

(i.) A choirmaster, or teacher is retiring, and a fund is being raised to buy a leaving present for him. You are asked to subscribe, but refuse because you have had very little to do with him.

(ii.) An uncle offers to take you for a sea voyage during your holidays. Though anxious not to offend him, you decline, because you are a bad sailor.

(iii.) An acquaintance asks for the loan of your bicycle. You have been told by a third party that your acquaintance, whenever he rides a cycle, falls off and damages the machine. Write your refusal.

(iv.) Someone living at a great distance from your home asks you to go and stay with him. You cannot afford the railway fare. Refuse.

67.

And *one* of these :—

(i.) You were present at a street accident in which your friend was hurt. Write to his mother, in Canada, telling her about it.

(ii.) You used to take in a magazine, and pass it on to a friend when you had finished with it. He is still very eager to read it, but you have decided to give up taking it, because your interests have changed. Tell him so.

(iii.) You have failed to pass an important examination, and you have to write and tell your parents.

(iv.) A friend writes, telling you of an advertisement he has seen, which offers a wonderful packet of foreign stamps for a shilling. He is about to answer it, but you write to suggest that it would be waste of money.

68.

Letters of condolence.

When a friend or relative meets with ill fortune, you may wish to write expressing your sympathy. It may often be best simply to state your regret for what has occurred, but sometimes you may add a few words of encouragement. If so, be careful not to give the impression that you regard the matter as something trivial and not worth worrying about.

Written Exercises.

Write *one* of the following letters :—

(i.) To a friend who has failed to secure a post which he desired.

(ii.) To an aunt who has just lost a pet dog.
(iii.) To someone who cannot go to the cinema with you, because of a scalded foot.

69.

And *one* of these :—

(i.) Owing to the failure of a bank, your grown-up sister has lost all her savings. Write to condole with her.
(ii.) To a friend who has to stay in bed for months with a broken leg.
(iii.) Someone you know has been charged with theft : you are certain she is innocent. Write to encourage her.

70.

Letters of congratulation.

If you write to congratulate others on their good fortune, write it to show that you are genuinely pleased, and that you think it well deserved. Do not say that some people have all the luck, but that it never comes to you !

Written Exercises.

Write *one* of the following letters :—

(i.) To a friend whose aunt has given him a watch as a birthday present.
(ii.) To someone who has saved another from drowning.
(iii.) To someone who has earned a reward, by finding a lost piece of jewelry.
(iv.) To someone who has just recovered from an illness.

71.

Letters of introduction.

Someone may ask you to write a letter introducing him to one of your friends or acquaintances, or to write him a testimonial saying that you can vouch for his character or abilities.

Such letters are usually left open so that the person about whom they are written may read them if he wishes. This being the case you will have to consider his feelings in what you write as well as your desire to give accurate information about him to your friend.

Written Exercises.

Write *one* of the following letters :—

(i.) Saying that the bearer is coming as a stranger to Southampton, and asking your friend there to invite him to a meal.

(ii.) Saying that the bearer is a suitable person to look after animals.

(iii.) To a friend who has been in South Africa, asking him to give the bearer (who is thinking of emigrating) information about the conditions in that country.

72.

Ulysses.

Read and learn by heart.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail.
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd and wrought, and thought
with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the
deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

LORD TENNYSON.

Exercises.

Study carefully each item in this wonderful picture of Ulysses and of his friends getting ready to "sail beyond the sunset." Then describe in your own simple prose style:—

(i.) The port (lines 1—2).
(ii.) Ulysses' speech to his companions (lines 3—10).
(iii.) The harbour (lines 11 to end).

73.

THE ADVENTURES OF A SHILLING. (Addison.)

Read.

I was last night visited by a friend of mine, who has an inexhaustible fund of discourse, and never fails to entertain his company with a variety of thoughts and hints that are altogether new and uncommon. Whether it were in complaisance to my way of living, or his real opinion, he advanced the following paradox, "That it required much greater talents to fill up and become a retired life, than a life of business." Upon this occasion he rallied very agreeably the busy men of the age, who only valued themselves for being in motion, and passing through a series of trifling and insignificant actions. In the heat of his discourse, seeing a piece of money lying

on my table, 'I defy (says he) any of these active persons to produce half the adventures that this twelve-penny piece has been engaged in, were it possible for him to give us an account of his life."

My friend's talk made so odd an impression upon my mind that soon after I was a-bed I fell insensibly into a most unaccountable reverie, that had neither moral nor design in it, and cannot be so properly called a dream as a delirium.

Methought the shilling that lay upon the table reared himself upon his edge, and turning the face towards me, opened his mouth, and in a soft silver sound, gave me the following account of his life and adventures:—

"I was born (says he) on the side of a mountain, near a little village of Peru, and made a voyage to England in an ingot, under the convoy of Sir Francis Drake. I was, soon after my arrival, taken out of my Indian habit, refined, naturalised, and put into the British mode, with the face of Queen Elizabeth on one side, and the arms of the country on the other. Being thus equipped, I found in me a wonderful inclination to ramble, and visit all parts of the new world into which I was brought. The people very much favoured my *natural disposition*, and shifted me so fast from hand to hand that before I was five years old I had travelled into almost every corner of the nation. But in the beginning of my sixth year, to my unspeakable grief, I fell into the hands of a miserable old fellow, who clapped me into an iron chest, where I found five hundred more of my own quality who lay under the same confinement. The only relief we had was to be taken out and counted over in the fresh air every morning and evening.

"After an imprisonment of several years, we heard somebody knocking at our chest, and breaking it open with a hammer. This we found was the old man's heir, who, as his father lay a-dying, was so good as to come to our release; he separated us that very day. What was the fate of my companions I know not; as for myself, I was sent to the apothecary's shop for a pint of sack. The apothecary gave me to an herb-woman, the herb-woman to a butcher, the butcher to a brewer, and the brewer to his wife, who made a present of me to a preacher. After this manner I made my way merrily through the world; for, as I told you before, we shillings love nothing so much as travelling. I sometimes fetched in a shoulder of mutton, sometimes a play-book, and often had the satisfaction to treat a Templar at a twelvepenny ordinary, or carry him, with three friends, to Westminster Hall.

"In the midst of this pleasant progress which I made from place to place, I was arrested by a superstitious old woman, who shut me up in a greasy purse, in pursuance of a foolish saying, "That while she kept a Queen Elizabeth's shilling about her, she should never be without money." I continued here a close prisoner for many months, till at last I was exchanged for eight and forty farthings.

"I thus rambled from pocket to pocket till the beginning of the Civil Wars, when, to my shame be it spoken, I was employed in raising soldiers against the king: for being of a very tempting breadth, a sergeant made use of me to *inveigle country fellows, and 'list them in the service of the Parliament.*

"As soon as he had made one man sure, his way was to oblige him to take a shilling of a more homely figure,

and then practise the same trick upon another. Thus I continued doing great mischief to the Crown, till my officer, chancing one morning to walk abroad earlier than ordinary, gave me to a milk-maid. This wench bent me, and gave me to her sweetheart. This *ungenerous gallant* marrying her within a few days after, pawned me for a dram of brandy, and drinking me out next day, I was beaten flat with a hammer, and again set a running.

"After many adventures, which it would be tedious to relate, I was sent to a young spendthrift, in company with the will of his deceased father. The young fellow, who I found was very extravagant, gave great demonstrations of joy at the receiving of the will: but opening it, *he found himself disinherited* and cut off from the possession of a fair estate, by virtue of my being made a present to him. This put him into such a passion, that after having taken me in his hand, and cursed me, he squirred me away from him as far as he could fling me. I chanced to light in an unfrequented place under a dead wall, where I lay undiscovered and useless, during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell.

"About a year after the king's return, a poor cavalier that was walking there about dinner-time, fortunately cast his eye upon me, and, to the great joy of us both, carried me to a cook's shop, where he dined upon me, and drank the king's health

"Being now of great credit and antiquity, I was rather looked upon as a medal than an ordinary coin; for which reason a gamester laid hold of me, and converted me to a counter, having got together some dozens of us for that use. We led a melancholy life in his possession, being busy at those hours wherein current coin is at

rest, and partaking the fate of our master, being in a few moments valued at a crown, a pound, a sixpence, according to the situation in which the fortune of the cards placed us. I had at length the good luck to see my master break, by which means I was again *sent abroad under my primitive denomination of a shilling.*

"I shall pass over many other accidents of less moment, and hasten to that *fatal catastrophe*, when I fell into the hands of an artist, who conveyed me under ground, and with an unmerciful pair of shears, cut off my titles, clipped my brims, retrenched my shape, rubbed me to my inmost ring, and, in short, so spoiled and pillaged me, that he did not leave me worth a groat. You may think what a confusion I was in, to see myself thus *curtailed and disfigured.* I should have been ashamed to have shown my head, had not all my old acquaintances been reduced to the same shameful figure, excepting some few that were punched through the middle.

"*In the midst of this general calamity, when everybody thought our misfortune irretrievable, and our case desperate,* we were thrown into the furnace together, and (as it often happens with cities rising out of a fire) appeared with greater beauty and lustre than we could ever boast of before. What has happened to me since this change of sex which you now see, I shall take some other opportunity to relate. In the meantime, I shall only repeat two adventures, as being very extraordinary, and neither of them having ever happened above once in my life.

"The first was, my being in a poet's pocket, who was so taken with the brightness and novelty of my appearance, that it gave occasion to the finest burlesque poem in the British language, entitled from me, 'The Splendid

Shilling.' The second adventure, which I must not omit, happened to me in the year 1703, when I was given away in charity to a blind man; but indeed this was by mistake, the person who gave me having heedlessly thrown me into the hat among a pennyworth of farthings."

JOSEPH ADDISON.

Oral Exercises.

(i.) Read this essay or composition carefully.

(ii.) Consult the dictionary for any difficult words, taking care to choose the meaning that suits the context.

(iii.) Give in your own words the meaning of the sentences and phrases in italics. Try to give the exact meaning in as few words as possible. Explain the *paradox* (paragraph 1) in your own way.

Written Exercises.

(i.) Re-write paragraph 2 so as to give its full meaning in your own words.

(ii.) Read again, beginning at paragraph 4. Make a note of each "adventure" so as to form a complete account of the shilling. Now write a plan or skeleton of the essay.

74.

Through what periods of history did the shilling rove? What do you learn from its adventures of the habits and events of these periods?

75.

You have now seen how charming and entertaining an "Autobiography" of a shilling can be made by a great writer like Addison. Tell, in similar vein, with humorous adventures, the autobiography of any *article* with whose life history you are acquainted. You must write in the "first person," as "autobiography" means a biography written by oneself. (Don't repeat "I" too often. Addison does not.)

76.

Dramatic Exercises.

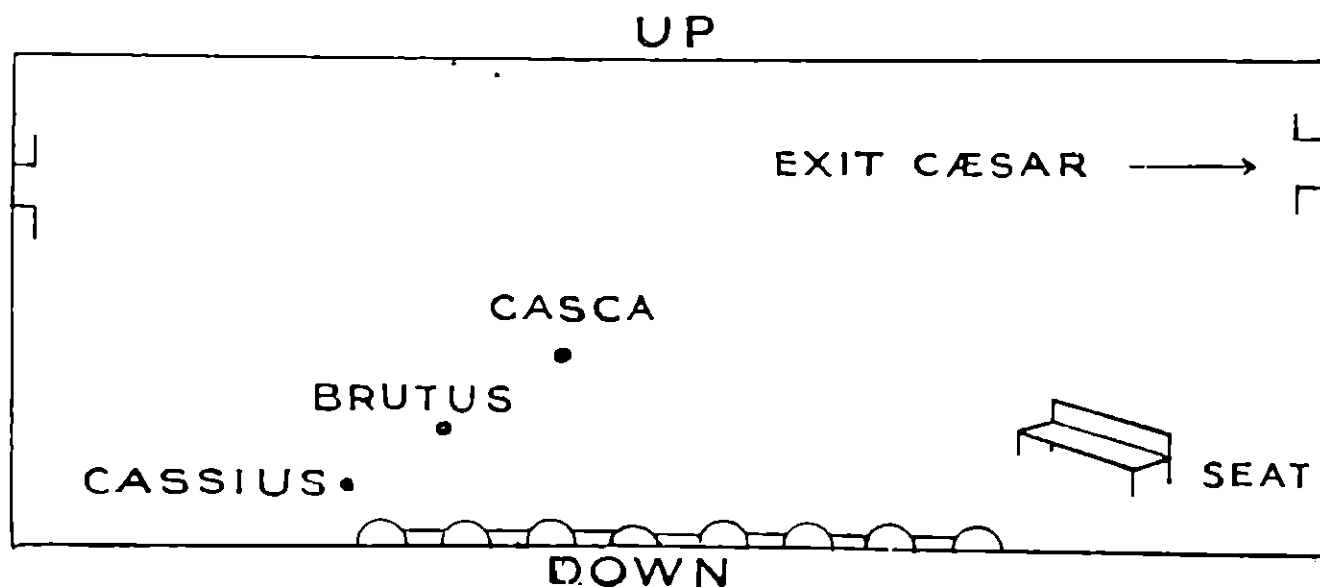
How to Study a Scene for Acting. (Shakespeare.)

Let us study Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*—the last part of Act I., Scene 2, after the second exit of Cæsar and his train. You should have this scene open beside you to refer to.

Positions on the Stage.

Suppose you are going presently to act this scene. The first thing you have to decide is where the various characters shall stand, and how they shall make their exits. You will see from the earlier part of the scene that Brutus and Cassius have been on the stage for some time. They have just been making remarks to one another about Cæsar, who has passed across the stage with his attendants. In order to allow him to be fully visible to the audience, they must be at one side, and in order that their conversation may be heard, they should have no one in front of them. That is to say, they must be near the front of the stage.

Cæsar will naturally pass off on the opposite side, leaving Casca loitering behind. That Brutus may pluck his cloak, without crossing in front of Cassius, the positions should at this point be as follows:—



Presently Casca is going to describe to the others how Cæsar refused the offer of a crown. It will be difficult for the others to listen to his long speech, if they remain standing, without making a stiffly posed group. It will be better for at least one of the listeners to be seated. Brutus is nearest to the seat, but at what point shall he pass in front of Casca to reach it ? Perhaps when he says "I should not then ask Casca what had chanced." This speech has a flavour of impatience or irritation about it, and might well be marked by Brutus' half turning his back on Casca, and taking the few steps which will bring him to the seat. After a slight pause, Casca will continue : "Why, there was a crown offered him"

Or where Brutus says : "Tell us the manner of it" —he might seat himself as though in preparation for a long story.

In this grouping Casca, who is for the moment the chief person on the stage, will hold the central position, and can turn from one to the other of his companions, as they question him. Brutus and Cassius do not address one another directly, until they are left to themselves ; and so they will not have to talk across Casca.

Note also that the seated position is more suited to Brutus than to Cassius, since the former is troubled and reflective, while the latter has the most clear and dominating purpose of the three, and is better able to convey the idea of energy and intentness in a standing posture.

The grouping will remain unaltered till the exit of Casca. Then Brutus will rise and approach Cassius for their final conversation. Brutus should depart by the exit nearest to him, leaving Cassius holding the centre of the stage.

The Characters (*or "dramatis personæ"*).

If you are playing a part and wish to characterise (or give character to) it, it is not enough to speak the words written for you; they must be spoken as Brutus, or Cassius, or Casca, would have spoken them. You have to make up your mind what sort of a man you are representing. You can only do this by study of the play. Though of course it is necessary to read the whole play, we can find out a good deal from one scene. Let us try with this one.

(i.) *Brutus.*

He seems to have a personal interest in Cæsar, and the fact that he was "sad." When Casca passes on to speak of Cicero and other matters, Brutus seems to lose interest, and leaves all the questioning to Cassius. He (Brutus) speaks less than either of the other two. We may guess that he is troubled by these hints of ambition on the part of Cæsar, his intimate friend.

He is a moody man, and does not much care for Casca's boisterous style of speech.

He should speak in low grave tones, and appear worried.

(ii.) *Casca.*

He is not too gracious, and has to be persuaded to tell his story. When he does so, it is in a rough coarse style, and he uses many shortened forms of speech. In spite of his cynical suggestions that the whole thing is mere foolery, he every now and then displays a real jealousy of Cæsar. He appears quite proud of his ignorance in being unable to understand Greek.

He should speak loudly, and quickly, with here and there a sneering laugh, and his manner and movements should be impatient. He might make an impressive pause and change in his voice, before announcing the death of Marullus and Flavius.

(iii.) *Cassius.*

He is the prime mover in the plot against Cæsar. He is particularly eager to obtain the co-operation of Brutus, and to this end wishes to incense him against Cæsar. He draws attention to various points in Casca's tale: that a crown was offered to Cæsar, showing his ambition to be king; that Cæsar was subject to some unpleasant kind of fit. He suggests that they are all grovelling before a tyrant who is unworthy to rule them—". . you, and I, and honest Casca, *we* have the falling-sickness."

He suggests to Brutus that the time is ripe for some "bold or noble enterprise," and that Casca will be a useful ally therein. He is afraid that Brutus may be repelled by Casca's manner.

When he is left alone, he reveals his plans openly—to prevent Cæsar becoming king, by winning his friends to join in a plot to murder him.

We see that he understands the characters of Casca and Brutus, and can move them to his own purposes. He is full of energy. He has no real grievance against Cæsar, but he is naturally restless and envious. If we look back in the scene, we shall find that Cæsar describes him as "a lean and hungry" man, who "looks quite through the deeds of men."

He should be played as a man with hidden force of character, which every now and then peeps out, but

which he can disguise when he wishes to win or placate people.

Exercises.

Study the following scenes from Shakespeare, and then write a description first of the movements and grouping, as you consider they ought to be; and then a description of the characters, and the way in which you think they ought to be played. Take the above lesson as your model.

(i.) *The Tempest*, Act II., Scene 1, as far as *Sebastian*. "O! but one word."

(ii.) *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I., Scene 3.

(iii.) *Twelfth-Night*, Act II., Scene 3, from *Enter* Malvolio to *Exit*, Maria.

(iv.) *King John*, Act IV., Scene 1.

(v.) *King Henry the Eighth*, Act III., Scene 2, from "*Exeunt all except Wolsey*" to the end.

(vi.) *Macbeth*, Act I., Scene 7.

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