and it sprung upon its feet. The fabled birth of Minerva from the brain of Jove was hardly more sudden or more perfect than the financial system of the United States, as it burst forth from the conceptions of Alexander Hamilton. — DANIEL WEBSTER.

It would be still more unnatural for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world. — DANIEL WEBSTER.

Close upon this series of triumphs came a series of disasters, such as would have blighted the fame and broken the heart of almost any other commander. Yet Frederic, in the midst of his calamities, was still an object of admiration to his subjects, his allies, and his enemies. Overwhelmed by adversity, sick of life, he still maintained the contest, greater in defeat, in flight, and in what seemed hopeless ruin, than on the fields of his proudest victories. — T. B. MACAULAY.

The last passage presents an excellent example of climax combined with antithesis.

In the CHOICE, *in the* NUMBER, *and in the* ORDER *of words in a sentence, aim at* FORCE.

Chapter V.

EASE

SECTION I.

IMPORTANCE OF EASE

NEXT in importance to clearness and force comes that quality, or assemblage of qualities, which forbids harsh, awkward, or coarse expressions, and which makes a sentence easy and agreeable reading. This quality has been called by different names: *e. g.*, beauty, music, harmony, euphony, smoothness, grace, elegance, and ease. Of these terms, no one of which covers the whole ground, ease is, perhaps, the best for our purpose; for it implies the absence of everything that might increase the difficulty of communication between writer and reader. In this sense, it is within the reach of any one who will take pains to strike out of his composition every word that jars on the ear or the taste, and to remodel every sentence that says awkwardly what may be said with smoothness, if not with grace.

From most of us, the attainment of ease in this limited sense is all that can reasonably be expected; but there is another and a higher sense in which ease belongs to the masters of expression. When we say that Goldsmith, Irving, and Cardinal Newman are noted for ease, we mean that they are noted not only for the absence of everything that would interfere with the reader's comfort, but also for the presence of qualities that contribute to his pleasure: we mean very much what we mean when we say of an agreeable woman that her manner is distinguished by ease. Their writings, like her demeanor, have that nameless

grace which is as difficult to define as the fragrance of a flower. In this highest sense, ease of expression is, indeed, the flower of character.

SECTION II.

EASE AS AFFECTED BY CHOICE OF WORDS

Uneuphonious Words or **Phrases.** — Some expressions that are freely used by writers whose primary object is to make their meaning clear, or to force it upon the attention, are avoided by those who take especial pains not to offend a fastidious taste.

Of one class of these expressions — those avoided by authors who dislike to "call a spade a spade" — enough has already been said.[1]

I.	II.
Nature has forceps far more terrible.	Nature has far terribler forceps.
I reckon him the most remarkable Pontiff that has darkened God's daylight.	I reckon him the remarkablest Pontiff that has darkened God's daylight.
She is the most foolish, most unmusical of fowls that fly.	She is the foolishest, unmusicalest of fowls that fly.

"Terribler," "remarkablest," "foolishest," "unmusicalest" are used by Carlyle, whose writings are characterized by force, but not by elegance or ease.

I.	II.
The whole was rudely but not meanly lighted.	The whole was rudely but not niggardly lighted.
Darcy eagerly approached her, and behaved in so gentlemanly a manner that she began to forget all her former repugnance to him.	Darcy eagerly approached her, and behaved so gentlemanly that she began to forget all her former repugnance for him.

[1] See pages 176–180.

In these sentences as originally written, the disagreeable effect of "niggardly" and "gentlemanly" is partly owing to the fact that they are adjectives unexpectedly used as adverbs; but the corresponding adverbial forms "niggardlily" and "gentlemanlily" would be intolerable. So would "lovelily," "manlily," "masterlily," "statelily," "timelily," "womanlily," and the like.

I.	II.
The significance of this will be better understood when it is known that the present writer met the good doctor at his hotel.	The significance of this will be the better understood when it is learned that the writer hereof met the good doctor at his hotel.
The foregoing is all that El Paso and the Christian people of that city are entitled to, in answer to what I have quoted above.	The foregoing is all that El Paso and the Christian people of that city are entitled to in answer to what I have hereinbefore quoted.
Several of the poems in it were the joint work of the authors.	Several of the poems therein contained were the joint work of the authors.
No large body of men looks in that direction (or, there) for healing.	No large body of men look thitherward for healing.

"Hereof," "hereinbefore," "therein," and "thitherward" belong to a class of words which should, as a rule, be confined to legal documents. In ordinary prose, they are fatal to ease.

Repeated Sounds. — The repetition of a sound may be disagreeable.

I.	II.
He is rather corpulent.	He suffers from a tendency to corpulency.

In this sentence as originally written, the repetition of "-ency" grates on the ear.

I.	II.
The streets are paved with an extraordinary want of regularity.	The streets are extraordinarily irregularly paved.
The streets are very irregularly paved.	
One is as pathetically ridiculous as the other.	They are equally pathetically ridiculous.
Though simple, and to all appearance naturally arranged, the words are full of melody.	The words, though simple, and apparently naturally arranged, are full of melody.
They worked with equal assiduity.	They worked equally assiduously.
Usually, though not always, fine minds are fitly clothed.	Certainly fine minds are usually fitly clothed though not always.
I think about this usually without the least success.	I think about this usually entirely unsuccessfully.
Fully and impartially to report what is done is the duty of the press; it is no less clearly its duty not to try the accused.	To fully and impartially report[1] what is done is the duty of the press; it is equally clearly its duty not to try the accused.

A writer should be careful not to put two or more adverbs in "-ly" close together.

I.	II.
Ghostly Regulars hurried staggering past.	Ghostly Regulars seemed hurrying staggering past.
To-night we were to aid in humbugging those who were still unsuspicious.	We were to-night to aid in humbugging those who were still unsuspecting.
He was constantly planning and revising schemes for the extension of his business.	He was constantly planning and revising schemes for enlarging his business.
One reads on with the feeling that no prose could be easier reading.	One reads on with no feeling of anything being capable of having been easier reading in prose.

[1] See pages 136–140.

I.	II.
As the Senatorial question approaches solution, it becomes more puzzling than ever. Representatives are very reticent in the expression of their views, and the situation is rendered more complex by the fact that so many new elements are brought into notice.	As the Senatorial question approaches solution, it is becoming more puzzling than ever. Representatives are very reticent in expressing their views and the situation is becoming more complex owing to so many new elements being brought into notice.
If we constantly remember how many branches there are to the subject, we shall find it interesting.	Constantly remembering the broad branching of the subject must make it interesting.

A writer should be careful not to let words in "-ing" come into his sentences too often.

Repeated Words. — The repetition of a word is desirable whenever it makes a sentence clearer or more forcible; but euphony forbids unnecessary repetition.

I.	II.
John tried to milk one cross cow, while the men were milking the other cows.	John tried to milk one cross cow while the men were at work on the other animals.

In this example, force, as well as ease, is promoted by the repetition of "milk" and "cow."

Other examples are —

I.	II.
The modern rule of reason is replaced by the ancient rule of force.	The modern rule of reason is replaced by the ancient *régime* of force.
What is true of New York is also true of Boston.	What is true of New York is likewise to be found in Boston.

I.	II.
I have spoken of the Blue Hills alone, not because they afford Boston the only opportunity for a park south of the city, but because they are, it seems to me, of supreme importance.	I have spoken of the Blue Hills alone, not that they afford Boston the only opportunity south of the city for a park, but because they are, it seems to me, of supreme importance.
Before the mason had time to ask what was the pleasure of this strange visitor, the visitor asked if he would do a job for him.	Before the mason had time to ask what was the pleasure of this strange visitor, this one asked him if he would do a job for him.

The substitution of "the visitor" for "this one" renders the last sentence easier to understand as well as easier to read.

Other examples are —

I.	II.
They are obliged to devote a great part of their time to an uncongenial study, to the neglect of the study which they would take pleasure in pursuing.	They are obliged to devote a great part of their time to an uncongenial study to the neglect of the one which they would take pleasure in pursuing.
It is an attempt to show, not that his virtues outweighed his faults, but that his faults grew out of his education.	It is an attempt to show not that his virtues outweighed his faults but that the latter were the consequences of education.

In the foregoing examples, ease is promoted by the repetition of a word.

I.	II.
He challenges any one to meet him, "man to man."	He challenges any man to meet him "man to man."

In the last sentence as originally written, the unnecessary repetition of "man" jars on the ear.

Other examples are —

I.	II.
I, for one, hope that electric lights will be among our modern improvements.	I hope for one that electric lights will be one of the modern improvements.
Climbing up the rocky bank, I stretched myself on the ground, which was warm with the sun now shining brightly upon it.	I climbed up the rocky bank, stretched myself upon the ground which was warm with the sun which now shone bright.
If the vocation[1] of preaching had not been invented before, it must have been hit upon to give Spurgeon a place.	If the avocation[1] of a preacher had not been invented before, it would have to have been hit upon to fit Spurgeon.
Darcy's love was rekindled by seeing her again, and he decided to propose.	Darcy's love was again aroused by seeing her again and he decided to propose.
His attention had at first been attracted to Miss Bennet by her marked aversion to[2] him, then he became interested in her, and then fell in love.	Miss Bennet first attracted his attention first by her marked aversion for[2] him and he was first interested then in love.
Though she loves the opera, she finds Wagner "rather stupid;" but if she sees that you enjoy him, she admires your taste.	She loves the opera but finds Wagner "rather stupid" but if she finds you enjoy his works she admires your taste.
The fact impressed my childish fancy very much, — fascinated it, indeed.	The fact impressed my childish fancy very much; in fact fascinated it.

In the last sentence as originally written, the repetition of "fact" is objectionable not only because of the sound, but also because "fact" is used in two senses.

Other examples are —

I.	II.
I don't think the young ladies particularly bold; but we might imagine so if we believed a story told by one of them.	I don't think the young ladies are particularly bold, but one might imagine so if one believed a story told by one of them.[3]

[1] See page 54. [2] See page 144. [3] See page 213.

I.

His words sound not like those of his characters only, but like those of a man who is himself condemning the habit.[1]

This help Kipling refuses, giving us only enough to arouse our curiosity in his characters, without showing them to us as living beings.

Every one was drowned except Gulliver, who swam until his strength gave out and he was on the point of drowning.

There can be no objection to the process that raises the low, and thus destroys the individuality of the baser man; for of that we are well rid.

II.

His words sound like those of a man who really did not like the habit, not like those of his characters only.[1]

This help Kipling refuses to us, giving us only enough to arouse our curiosity in his characters, without showing them to us as living characters.

Every one was drowned except Gulliver, who swam about until his strength gave out, and he was about to drown.

It is not that process that raises the low that can be objected to; for that but destroys the individuality of the baser man and we are well rid of such a characteristic.

In the foregoing examples, ease is injured by the repetition of a word.

Easy or **Clumsy Construction.** — Of two forms of expression that mean the same thing, one may be less clumsy or harsh than the other.

I.

He should beware of asking how it happened.

They did not suspect that they were inflicting a wound.

In reading Carlyle, the first thing that strikes the mind is that his style is rugged.

We are so tired of plays without ethical motive that we have taken to ethical homilies which are dramatic in nothing but form.

II.

He should beware not to ask how it happened.

They were unsuspicious of being inflicting a wound.

The first idea that strikes the mind in reading Carlyle concerns itself with the ruggedness of his style.

Because we were tired of plays without ethical motives, we have taken up ethical homilies having only the form of drama.

[1] See page 250.

I.

As his thoughts wandered to Silas Marner,[1] he imagined the wealth which that[1] most humble person must have accumulated in fifteen years of hard toil.

A young Scottish nobleman who happened to be near saw the man hanging there and cut him down.

"Is criticism a lost art?" is a question often put by the student who compares the critical writings of to-day with those of one or two centuries ago.

II.

As his thoughts wandered to that[1] most humble person, there associated itself in his mind the wealth that Silas Marner[1] must have accumulated in fifteen years of hard toil.

A young Scottish nobleman happened to be near and seeing the man hanging cut him down.

"Is criticism a lost art?" is a question often asked by the student comparing the critical writings of to-day with the criticisms of one or two centuries ago.

From the point of view of correctness, of clearness, and of force, as well as from that of ease, "dangling participles,"[2] as illustrated by the last example, are objectionable.

I.

Among the defects of Browning commonly insisted upon is his obscurity.

A visit from the east wind, so much dreaded at times, would have been welcome.

They were walking on real pavements in front of shops with windows of plate glass.

Among them was the skeleton of Manon's lover, for whom she had lately wept but whom she was now fast forgetting.

II.

Among the commonly insisted upon defects of Browning is his obscurity.

A visit from the at times dreaded east wind would have been welcome.

They were walking upon real pavements in front of plate-glass-windowed shops.

Among them was the skeleton of Manon's late wept and now being fast forgotten lover.

These sentences as originally written exemplify the common fault of putting a long adjective phrase before, instead of after, the noun which it qualifies.

[1] See page 226.

[2] See page 235.

SECTION III.

EASE AS AFFECTED BY NUMBER OF WORDS

Sentences may be deficient in ease because they contain too few words, or because they contain too many.

Too few Words. — The omission of words that are needed to make a sentence clear or smooth is a sin against ease.

I.

These grounds, as no one can refuse to acknowledge, are sound.

The man that really was in Darcy and constituted his true character, the man that despised his own pride and chafed at the restraint of society, came out in his courtship of Elizabeth Bennet.

The reason why animals are the best characters for a fable is that we have no preconceived ideas about their actions.

He who was both the player on the instrument and its inventor was forgotten in his work.

So long as farmers do not have as good opportunities to gain a living as those which their fellow-countrymen enjoy, government will not be successful.

II.

These grounds no one can refuse to acknowledge sound.

The man that really was in Darcy and his true character which despised his pride and chafed at the restraint of society was displayed in his courtship of Elizabeth Bennet.

The reason of animals being the best personages for a fable is that they suggest no prejudice.

The performer on and author of the instrument was forgotten in his work.

Government will not be successful so long as farmers are not allowed an equal opportunity to gain a living with their fellows.

In each of these examples, both clearness and ease are promoted by using more words than are used in the sentence as originally written.

Too many Words. — For obvious reasons, a writer who aims chiefly at ease need not be so concise as one who aims at force; but every writer should beware of redundancy.

I.

He was forty years of age (or, years old).

"Gagging" means the actor's addition to the author's lines of words that have a local application (or, of local hits).

No other writer embodies so many characteristics of the age of Elizabeth as Ben Jonson.

In the whole affair, there had doubtless been much that had put it outside the pale of things subject to ordinary judgment.

The verdict was favorable to a point beyond my experience.

The grossness of the past has given place to the purity of our nineteenth century poets.

The quaint sayings of many of George Eliot's characters could have been imagined by no one but George Eliot.

Thackeray certainly admires Swift; but when he asks himself whether he should have liked Swift as a friend, his answer is, "Decidedly not."

His mere presence puts every one in high spirits.

II.

He was a man of forty years of age.

Gagging is the addition by the actor to the lines provided by the author of remarks of his own, usually with a local application.

No one writer unites in himself so many of the characteristics of the age of Elizabeth as does Ben Jonson.

There had doubtless been much in the whole affair which had placed it outside the pale of things which are subject to the ordinary judgment of men.

The almost universal verdict was favorable, to a degree that I have never known it.

The grossness of the past has vanished to be replaced by the purity of our nineteenth century poets.

The quaint sayings that many of her[1] characters have, could not have been thought by any one else than George Eliot.[1]

Thackeray certainly admires Swift; but when it comes as to whether he would have liked to have had Swift for a friend, he says most decidedly not.

He has the happy gift that to put every one in high spirits he has only to be present.

In each of these examples, both force and ease are promoted by using fewer words than are used in the sentence as originally written.

[1] See page 226.

SECTION IV.

EASE AS AFFECTED BY ORDER

From the point of view of ease, it is especially important so to construct a sentence as to give the reader as little trouble as possible in getting from word to word and from clause to clause.

Position of **Words.** — The misplacing of one word sometimes interferes with the reader's ease.

I.

Anne, must it not? Anne, must it not be our Mr. Elliot? Pray, sir, did you not hear?

Is it not the same with other professions?

II.

Anne, must not it? Anne, must it not be our Mr. Elliot? Pray, sir, did not you hear?

Is not it the same with other professions?

Nowadays it is more natural to write "Must it not?" "Did you not?" "Is it not?" than "Must not it?" "Did not you?" "Is not it?" but the latter order was preferred in the days of Miss Austen, from one of whose novels the sentences under II. are taken. Sounds that are agreeable to one generation may be disagreeable to another.

I.

A woman who had refused him was still as fair as when she declined to leave the world for him, — fairer, indeed.

The blow had come, and it struck him now as hard as if it had not been expected, — almost harder.

II.

A woman who had refused him was still as fair as, more beautiful in fact than, when she declined to leave the world for him.

The blow had come, and it struck him now as hard as, almost harder than, if it had not been expected.

In these sentences as originally written, the stress thrown on the unimportant words "as" and "than" is offensive to the ear.

I.

The Rev. Mr. Collins was filled with gratitude to his benefactress and admiration of her.

II.

The Rev. Mr. Collins was filled with gratitude to and admiration of his benefactress.[1]

In this sentence as originally written, a disagreeable emphasis is thrown on "to" and "of," the least important words in the sentence.

Other examples are —

I.

I wish to be much more with my children, and to work much more for them.

Weakness produced by insufficient food was, no doubt, the chief cause of their death on their arrival, or very soon afterward.

All have come (just as Philadelphia bricks come) from a distinctly superior sort of clay, and are in the process of returning to it.

II.

I wish to be much more with, and to work much more for, my children.

The weakness produced by the insufficient food has no doubt been the chief cause of their death on, or very soon after, their arrival.

All have come from (even as Philadelphia bricks come from), and are in the process of returning to, a distinctly superior sort of clay.

By emphasizing insignificant words, a writer sins not only against ease, but also against force; for he lays stress on what is least important. When, however, a preposition, or some other little word, is really emphatic, it should be emphasized: *e. g.*, "He could not help laughing, partly at, and partly with, his countryman."

Position of **Phrases** and **Clauses.** — Phrases and clauses are often so placed as to interfere with the reader's ease.

I.

This affords to the other colleges just grounds for indignation.

To the other colleges this affords just grounds for indignation.

II.

This affords just grounds to the other colleges for indignation.

[1] See page 234.

I.	II.
Most of Washington's portraits have to me (or, To me most of, etc.) a mask-like appearance.	The majority of Washington's portraits to me have a mask-like appearance.

In these sentences as originally written, "to the other colleges" and "to me" are so placed as to jar on the ear. If the writer does not mean to emphasize these expressions, they should come after "affords" and "have;" if he does mean to emphasize them, they should come at the beginning.

I.	II.
Perhaps their education taught them something, — something valuable, if you will, — but one thing it did not do.	Their education taught them perhaps something — if you will something valuable — but one thing it did not do.

In this sentence as originally written, "if you will" is so placed as to separate words that are in apposition. Another fault is in the misplacing of "perhaps."

I.	II.
To this exposure Culbert attributes the affection of the lungs from which she is suffering.	Culbert to this exposure attributes the affection of the lungs from which she is suffering.
In this state of affairs, Francis vacillated between the two parties.	Francis, in this state of affairs, vacillated between the two parties.
In spite of great resistance from the Parliament, this concordat was at length ratified.	This concordat, in spite of great resistance from the Parliament, was at length ratified.
Although a Jewess, Jessica believed in Christianity.	Jessica, although a Jewess, believed in Christianity.[1]

In these sentences as originally written, the words which stand between subject and verb clog the flow of thought and interfere with the reader's ease.

[1] See page 239.

I.	II.
The doctor's house, which had been the most hospitable house in Carlingford, would, of course, be shut up.	The doctor's house would, of course, be shut up, which had been the most hospitable house in Carlingford.
Of all women who have undertaken to write poetry, she is by far the best.	Of all women she is by far the best that ever took upon them the task of writing poetry.
By their support of prohibition, the Republicans have retained thousands of voters who would otherwise have left the party long ago.	The Republicans have gained thousands of voters by their support of prohibition who would long ago have left the party had it not taken this start.

These sentences as originally written are so framed as to put the emphatic words in an obscure place, and to separate the relative clause from the noun with which it belongs. The first fault is a sin against force; the second is a sin against ease.

Sentence-endings. — Some teachers and some text-books maintain that a sentence should never end with a preposition or other insignificant word.

The remark attributed to a college professor, "A preposition is a bad word to end a sentence with," whether authentic or not, is instructive. If the professor's practice had squared with his theory, he would have said, "A preposition is a bad word with which to end a sentence;" but his instinct for language was stronger than his doctrine. His practical refutation of his own theory shows how dangerous it is to base a rule upon one's notion of what good use should be, rather than upon what it is.

From the point of view of ease, the professor's remark as it slipped from his lips is certainly better than the form it would have taken had his sentence been framed in ac-

cordance with his theory. That the theory is inconsistent with the practice of many good authors might easily be shown by pages of citations. A few instances must suffice.

> Oh, beware, my lord, of jealousy!
> It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock
> The meat it feeds on.
>
> SHAKSPERE.

> Thou art all the comfort
> The gods will diet me with.
>
> SHAKSPERE.

For the same reason, idiots are still in request in most of the courts of Germany, where there is not a prince of any great magnificence, who has not two or three . . . fools in his retinue, whom the rest of the courtiers are always breaking their jests upon. — ADDISON.

"I am heartily sorry, sir, I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you see," continued he, showing his shackles, "what my tricks have brought me to." — GOLDSMITH.

This proposal, which she could not avoid considering as perfectly just, was readily agreed to. — GOLDSMITH.

"There is hardly any personal defect," replied Anne, "which an agreeable manner might not gradually reconcile one to." — JANE AUSTEN.

What part of Bath do you think they will settle in? — JANE AUSTEN.

I am struck, almost into silence, at my own pert little protestant mind, which never thought for a moment of asking what the church had been built for. — RUSKIN.

They wanted to make a fire, but there were no matches to light it with.

It seemed a pity that in a land full of turkeys the Fishes could n't have just one to make merry with.

The last two sentences come from a book written for children. In the best of such books, sentences ending with prepositions are of frequent occurrence.

I.	II.
That is the book which I have taken a fancy to.	That is the book to which I have taken a fancy.
That is all I ask for.	That is all for which I ask.
What are you thinking of?	Of what are you thinking?
What are you driving at?	At what are you driving?

The sentences given under I. are more idiomatic and more agreeable to the ear than those given under II.

In the CHOICE, *in the* NUMBER, *and in the* ORDER *of words in a sentence, study the reader's* EASE.