APPENDIX

I.

GENERAL RULES FOR PUNCTUATION

JUDGMENT determines the relations, whether of thought or of language, which marks of punctuation indicate; taste determines the choice, when good usage admits of a choice, between two modes of indicating those relations: judgment and taste are, therefore, the guides to correct punctuation.

Since punctuation is one of the means by which a writer communicates with his readers, it naturally varies with thought and expression: the punctuation of "Tristram Shandy" will therefore differ from that of "The Rambler;" and in a less degree the punctuation of Burke's Orations, from that of Macaulay's Essays. Hence no one writer—even were books printed correctly, as is rarely the case — can be taken as a model. Hence, too, a system of rules loaded with exceptions, though founded upon the best usage and framed with the greatest care, is as likely to fetter thought as to aid in its communication.

Assistance may, however, be obtained from a few simple rules founded upon the principle that *the purpose of every point is to indicate to the eye the construction* of the sentence in which it occurs,—a principle which is best illustrated by examples of *sentences correctly constructed* as well as correctly punctuated. One who knows few rules, but who has mastered the fundamental principles of construction, will punctuate far better than one who slavishly follows a set of formulas. The latter will

not know how to act in a case not provided for in any formula: the former will readily understand that the letter of a rule may be violated, in order to give effect to its spirit; that ambiguity and obscurity should, above all things, be avoided; and that marks of punctuation which are required on principle may be omitted when they are disagreeable to the eye or confusing to the mind.

Some rules are common to spoken and to written discourse: but the former is directed to the *ear*, the latter to the *eye;* and the pauses required by the ear or the voice do not always correspond with the stops required by the eye. A speaker is often obliged to pause between words which should not be separated by marks of punctuation; or he is carried by the current of emotion over places at which marks of punctuation would be indispensable: he has inflection, emphasis, gesture, in addition to pauses, to aid him in doing what the writer has to do with stops alone.

A slight knowledge of punctuation suffices to show the absurdity of the old rules, — that a reader should pause at a comma long enough to count one, at a semicolon long enough to count two, and at a colon long enough to count three. The truth is that, in some of the most common cases in which a comma is necessary, a speaker would make no pause. For example:

No, sir. Thank you, sir.

On the other hand, sentences often occur in which a comma can at no point be properly inserted, but which no one can read without making one or more pauses before the end. For example:—

The art of letters is the method by which a writer brings out in words the thoughts which impress him.

I lately heard a man of thought and energy contrasting the modern want of ardor and movement with what he remembered in his own youth.

The great use of a college education is to teach a boy how to rely on himself.

In punctuation the following points are used:—

Comma	[,]
Semicolon	[;]
Colon	[:]
Period	[.]
Interrogation Point	[?]
Exclamation Point	[!]
Dash	[—]
Marks of Parenthesis	[()]
Apostrophe	[']
Hyphen	[-]
Marks of Quotation	[" " or ' ']

No one of these points should be used exclusively or to excess; for each has some duty which no other point can perform. There are, however, a number of cases in which the choice between two points—as comma and semicolon, colon and semicolon—is determined by taste rather than by principle.

A student of punctuation should ask himself why in a given case to put in a stop rather than why to leave one out; for the insertion of unnecessary stops is, on the whole, more likely to mislead a reader than is the omission of necessary ones.

Perhaps the most intelligible, as well as the most compendious, method of giving a general idea of the principal uses of the several marks of punctuation is to enlarge a short sentence by making successive additions to it.

Examples.	Remarks.
1. John went to town.	1 to 4. Complete sentences requiring a period at the end (XV.). No other point possible, because words closely connected stand next to one another, and the construction is plain.
2. John Williams went to the city.	
3. Popular John Williams boldly went to the city of New York.	
4. Popular and handsome John Williams boldly went to the city of New York.	
5. Popular, handsome John Williams boldly went to the city of New York.	5. Comma after "popular" in place of "and" (I. *e*).
6. Popular, handsome, and wealthy	6. Comma before "and," because

John Williams boldly went to the city of New York.

7. Popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, boldly went to the city of New York.

8. I assure you, gentlemen of the jury, that popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, boldly went to the city of New York.

9 (1). I assure you, gentlemen of the jury, that popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, went, with the boldness of a lion, to the city of New York.

9 (2). I assure you, gentlemen of the jury, that popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, went with the boldness of a lion to the city of New York.

10 (1). I assure you, gentlemen of the jury, that popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, who is now over seventy years of age, boldly went to the city of New York, that city which is so well governed.

10 (2). I assure you, gentlemen of the jury, that popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, who is now over seventy years of age, boldly went to the city of New York,—that city which is so well governed.

11. I assure you, gentlemen of the jury, that popular, handsome, and wealthy John Williams, son of Samuel Williams, who is now over seventy years of age, boldly went to the city of New York,—that city which, as everybody knows, is well governed.

12. To show you how well governed that city is, I need only refer to the "Quarterly Review," vol. cxl. p. 120, and "The Weekly Clarion," No. xl. p. 19.

13 (1). The first tells us about a man who is called John Doe; the second, about Richard Roe. Doe was charged with larceny; Roe, with breach of trust.

13 (2). The first tells us about a man who is called John Doe, the second about Richard Roe. Doe was charged with larceny, Roe with breach of trust.

14. Mr. Williams was bold.

15 (1). If Mr. Williams was bold, he was also prudent.

15 (2). Mr. Williams was as prudent as he was bold.

16 (1). Mr. Williams was bold, and he was also prudent.

16 (2). Mr. Williams had all the boldness of the lion; and he also had the wisdom of the serpent.

17 (1). Mr. Williams had all the boldness of the lion; and he also had the wisdom of the serpent: but he lacked the innocence of the dove.

17 (2). Mr. Williams had all the boldness of the lion, and he also had the wisdom of the serpent; but he lacked the innocence of the dove.

each of the three adjectives stands in a similar relation to the noun (I. *g*).

7. "Son of Samuel Williams" between commas, because in apposition with "John Williams" (II. *a*), and parenthetical (VI. *a*).

8. "Gentlemen of the jury" between commas, because indicating to whom the whole sentence, one part as much as another, is addressed (III. *c*), and because parenthetical (VI. *a*).

9 (1). "With the boldness of a lion" between commas,—though its equivalent "boldly" (in 8) is not,—because the construction of an adverbial phrase is more uncertain than that of a single word (IV. *a*).

9 (2). Commas omitted after "went" and "lion," because disagreeable to the eye (see page 328),—a practical reason which in this case overrules the theoretical reason for their insertion.

10 (1). Comma between "Williams" and "who," because the "who" clause makes an additional statement (V. *a*), in the nature of a parenthesis (VI. *a*). No comma between "city" and "which," because the "which" clause is an integral part of the sentence, and is necessary to the sense (V. *b*).

10 (2). Dash added to comma between "York" and "that" to relieve the eye from too many commas near together (VI. *e*),—a reason strengthened in paragraph 11 by the additional commas.

11. "As everybody knows" between commas, because it is a parenthetical expression which can be lifted out of the sentence without injuring the construction (VI. *a*).

12. Marks of quotation to indicate that the "Quarterly Review" and "The Weekly Clarion" are called by their names (XVII. *a*). Periods after cxl. and xl., because in better taste and more agreeable to the eye than commas (XX. *e*).

13 (1). Commas after "second" and "Roe," to take the place of words necessary to complete the sense (VII. *a*). In this case semicolons required between the clauses.

13 (2). Commas omitted after "second" and "Roe," because the sense is plain without them (VII. *b*). In this case commas required between the clauses.

14. Period after Mr., an abbreviation (XVI. *a*). So, too, in paragraph 12, after "vol.," "No.," "p."

15 (1). Comma required between the principal and the dependent clause (VIII. *a*).

15 (2). No comma required, because the principal clause merges in the dependent one (VIII. *b*).

16 (1). Two independent clauses separated by a comma (IX. *a*).

16 (2). Two independent clauses separated by a semicolon (IX. *b*).

17 (1). Colon after "serpent" to indicate that the clause after it is balanced against the two clauses before it (XII. *a*).

17 (2). Same effect produced by substituting comma for semicolon, and semicolon for colon (XII. *b*).

18 (1). Mr. Williams had all the boldness of the lion; and he also had the wisdom of the serpent: but he lacked the innocence of the dove; he lacked simplicity; he lacked purity; he lacked truthfulness.	18 (1). Series of short sentences after "dove" separated by semicolons (XI. *a*).
18 (2). Mr. Williams had all the boldness of the lion, and he also had the wisdom of the serpent; but he lacked the innocence of the dove,— he lacked simplicity, he lacked purity, and he lacked truthfulness.	18 (2). Comma and dash substituted for semicolon, because succeeding clauses no longer in a series with the preceeding one, but in apposition with it (II. *d*).
19. Mr. Williams had all the boldness of the lion; and he also had the wisdom of the serpent: but he lacked the innocence of the dove; he lacked simplicity; he lacked purity; he lacked truthfulness, — what good thing did he not lack?	19. Dash rendered necessary by the sudden change of construction (XIV. *a*). Interrogation point to indicate a direct question (XV.).
20 (1). Do you suppose that Mr. Williams went to New York for an honorable purpose? that he had no improper motive? no criminal design?	20 (1). Interrogation points to indicate successive questions; small letters instead of capitals to indicate closeness of connection, like that of independent clauses in an affirmative sentence (XV. *a*).
20 (2). Do you suppose that Mr. Williams went to New York for an honorable purpose, that he had no improper motive, no criminal design?	20 (2). Same result reached by substitution of commas for interrogation points.
21. Honor! his honor!	21. Exclamation points as used in sentences closely connected (XV. *b*).
22. I tell you that his purpose was dishonorable; that his motive was most improper; that his design was both legally and morally criminal.	22. Semicolons to separate dependent expressions in a series (X. *a*).
23. He was, as I have said, bold: much may be accomplished by boldness.	23. Colon between short sentences not closely connected (XI. *b*).
24. His purposes were: first, to meet his confederates; secondly, to escape detection.	24. Colon before particulars formally stated (XIII. *a*).
25. Such were Mr. Williams's purposes, and such were his confederates' purposes.	25. Apostrophes to indicate the possessive of a singular, and that of a plural, noun (XIX. *c*).

26. Such were Mr. Williams's purposes, and such were his confederates' purposes, — purposes which I will not characterize as they deserve.	26. Dash to give rhetorical emphasis (XIV. *c*).
27 (1). "How do you know this?" I am asked.	27 (1 to 4). Quotation points used with a direct question (XVII. *a*). Interrogation point enough if question comes first. If it comes last, comma used when but one question asked (XIII. *c*); colon, when two or more (XIII. *b*). Indirect question punctuated like affirmative sentence.
27 (2). I am asked, "How do you know this?"	
27 (3). I am asked: "How do you know this? On what evidence is the charge founded?"	
27 (4). I am asked how I know this, on what evidence I make the charge.	
28. I answer that I have known it since March, '67.	28. Apostrophe to indicate omission of figures (XIX. *b*).
29. I answer that I have known it since March, 1867; since his father-in-law's decease.	29. Hyphens to join parts of a derivative word (XVIII. *b*).
30. The authorities on which I shall rely are: 11 Mass. Rep. 156; 2 Kent's Com. 115–126.	30. Colon to supply ellipsis of "the following" (VII. *e*). Style of quoting law books.
31 (1). I beg you to give close attention to these authorities, which, though not recent, are important, pertinent to the case in hand, and, therefore, not to be slurred, neglected, or sneered at.	31 (1). Every comma inserted in obedience to some rule.
31 (2). I beg you to give close attention to these authorities, which though not recent are important, pertinent to the case in hand, and therefore not to be slurred, neglected, or sneered at.	31 (2). Commas omitted for reasons of taste and for the comfort of the eye.

I.

WORDS IN A SERIES

(1) No comma [,] is inserted before or after conjunctions— such as *and*, *or*, *nor*, *but*, *yet*—when employed to connect two words belonging to the same part of speech and in the same

construction (*a*), or to connect two expressions which are in the same construction and are used as if they belonged to the same part of speech (*b*).

(2) A comma should, however, be inserted before the conjunction when the preceding word is qualified by an expression that is not intended to qualify the word after the conjunction (*c*); or when the word after the conjunction is followed by an expression which qualifies that word alone (*d*).

(3) A comma is required between such words or expressions, when they are not connected by a conjunction (*e*); or when there are more than two such words or expressions (*f*), even though a conjunction is put before the last one in the series (*g*). If, however, the word or expression following the conjunction is more closely connected with the word or expression immediately preceding it than with the other words in the series, the comma is omitted (*h*).

(4) If the conjunction is repeated before each word or expression in the series, the comma is usually omitted where the words between which the conjunction stands are closely united in meaning (*i*), and is sometimes inserted where they are not so united (*j*).

(5) If the series is composed of several words unconnected by conjunctions, a comma is put after the last word, in order to indicate that all the words in the series bear the same relation to the succeeding part of the sentence (*k*); but sometimes, as where the sentence is so short as to present no difficulty, this rule is disregarded (*l*). If the succeeding part of the sentence is connected with the last word in the series, but not with the preceding words, the comma is omitted (*m*).

(*a*) Sink *or* swim, live *or* die, survive *or* perish, I give my hand *and* my heart to this vote.

(*a*) A just *but* melancholy reflection embittered, however, the noblest of human enjoyments.

(*b*) The new order of things was inducing laxity of manners *and* a departure from the ancient strictness.

(*c*) He suddenly *plunged, and* sank.

(*c*) His mind was profoundly *thoughtful, and* vigorous.

(*d*) All day he kept on *walking, or* thinking about his misfortunes.

(*d*) 'Twas certain he could *write, and* cipher too.

(*e*) His trees extended their *cool, umbrageous* branches.

(*e*) Kinglake has given Aleck a *great, handsome*[1] chestnut mare.

(*f*) These are no mediæval personages; they belong to an *older, pagan, mythological* world.

(*g*) This is the best way to strengthen, *refine, and* enrich the intellectual powers.

(*g*) He had a hard, *gray, and* sullen face, piercing black eyes under bushy gray eyebrows, thin *lips, and* square jaw.

(*g*) It is the centre of trade, the supreme court of fashion, the umpire of rival *talents, and* the standard of things rare and precious.

(*h*) I have had to bear heavy rains, to wrestle with great storms, to fight my way *and* hold my own as well as I could.

(*i*) There speech *and* thought *and* nature failed a little.

(*i*) We bumped *and* scraped *and* rolled very unpleasantly.

(*j*) For his sake, empires had risen, *and* flourished, *and* decayed.

(*i*), (*j*) And feeling all along the garden wall,
Lest he should swoon *and* tumble *and* be found,
Crept to the gate, *and* open'd it, *and* closed.

(*i*), (*d*) I sat *and* looked *and* listened, *and* thought how many thousand years ago the same thing was going on in honor of Bubastis.

(*k*) The colleges, the clergy, the lawyers, the wealthy *merchants, were* against me.

(*l*) All great works of genius come from deep, *lonely* thought.

(*l*) Punish, guide, *instruct* the boy.

(*m*) Lydgate's conceit was of the arrogant sort, never simpering, never impertinent, never *petty in* its claims, but benevolently contemptuous.

In the example under (*j*), some writers would omit the commas. Their omission would be more usual in a colloquial than in an oratorical style, such as that of the passage in Macaulay from which the sentence is taken.

II.

WORDS IN APPOSITION

A comma is put between two words or phrases which are in apposition with each other (*a*), unless they are used as a com-

[1] There is no comma here, because the writer is speaking, not of a mare that is handsome *and* chestnut, but of a chestnut mare that is handsome.

pound name or a single phrase (*b*). Instead of a comma, the dash [—] alone (*c*), or combined with the comma (*d*), is sometimes used.

(*a*) Above all, I should speak of *Washington, the* youthful Virginian colonel.
(*a*) Next to the capital stood *Bristol, then* the first English seaport, and *Norwich, then* the first English manufacturing town.
(*b*) On the seventeenth of November, 1558, after a brief but most disastrous reign, *Queen Mary* died.
(*b*) *Ward Room, Franklin Schoolhouse, Washington Street*, Boston.
(*c*) This point represents a second *thought—an* emendation.
(*c*) Do I want an arm, when I have three right *arms—this* (putting forward his left one), and Ball, and Troubridge?
(*d*) The two principles of which we have hitherto *spoken,—Sacrifice* and Truth.
(*d*) He considered fine writing to be an addition from without to the matter treated *of,—a* sort of ornament superinduced.

In a sentence constructed like the first one under (*c*), the dash is preferable to the comma; for the dash indicates unmistakably that the two expressions between which it stands are in apposition, whereas the comma might leave room for a momentary doubt whether "an emendation" was the second term in a series, of which "a second thought" was the first term. A similar remark can be made about the second sentence under (*c*).

Where, as in the sentences under (*d*), the words in apposition are separated from each other by several other words, the dash indicates the construction more clearly than the comma would do.

III.

VOCATIVE WORDS

Vocative words or expressions are separated from the context by one comma, when they occur at the beginning (*a*) or at the end (*b*) of a sentence; by two commas, when they occur in the body of a sentence (*c*).

(*a*) Mark *Antony, here,* take you Cæsar's body?
(*b*) What would *you, Desdemona?*
(*c*) Mr. Adams and Mr. *Jefferson, fellow-citizens, were* successfully Presidents of the United States.
(*c*) I *remain, Sir, your* obedient servant.
(*c*) *No, sir,*[1] *I* thank you.

IV.

ADVERBS AND ADVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS

Adverbial (*a*), participial (*b*), adjectival (*c*), or absolute (*d*) expressions are separated from the context by a comma or commas. So are many adverbs and conjunctions when they modify a clause or a sentence, or connect it with another sentence (*e*).

(*a*) By the law of *nations, citizens* of other countries are allowed to sue and to be sued.
(*a*) The *book, greatly* to my *disappointment, was* not to be found.
(*b*) Without attempting a formal definition of the *word, I* am inclined to consider rhetoric, when reduced to a system in books, as a body of rules derived from experience and observation, extending to all communication by language and designed to make it efficient.
(*b*) Returning to the *question, let* me add a single word.
(*c*) Violent as was the *storm, it* soon blew over.
(*d*) To make a long story *short, the* company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election.
(*d*) To state my views *fully, I* will begin at the beginning.
(*e*) The *pursuers, too, were* close behind.
(*e*) *Finally, let* us not forget the religious character of our origin.
(*e*) *Here, indeed, is* the answer to many criticisms.
(*e*) *Therefore, however* great the changes to be accomplished, and however dense the array against us, we will neither despair[2] on the one hand, nor on the other[2] threaten violence.

"Many words ranked as adverbs are sometimes employed conjunctively, and require a different treatment in their punct-

1 See "Capital Letters," III. p. 352.
2 Commas omitted here for reasons of taste. See p. 328.

uation. When used as conjunctions, *however*, *now*, *then*, *too*, *indeed*, are divided by commas from the context; but when as adverbs, qualifying the words with which they are associated, the separation should not be made. This distinction will be seen from the following examples:—

"1. HOWEVER.—We must, *however*, pay some deference to the opinions of the wise, *however* much they are contrary to our own.

"2. NOW.—I have *now* shown the consistency of my principles; and, *now*, what is the fair and obvious conclusion?

"3. THEN.—On these facts, *then*, I *then* rested my argument, and afterwards made a few general observations on the subject.

"4. TOO.—I found, *too*, a theatre at Alexandria, and another at Cairo; but he who would enjoy the representations must not be *too* particular.

"5. INDEED.—The young man was *indeed* culpable in that act, though, *indeed*, he conducted himself very well in other respects.

"When placed at the end of a sentence or clause, the conjunction *too* must not be separated from the context by a comma; as, 'I would that they had changed voices *too*.'"[1]

V.

RELATIVE CLAUSES

Relative clauses which are merely *explanatory* of the antecedent, or which present an *additional* thought, are separated from the context by a comma or commas (*a*); but relative clauses which are *restrictive*, that is, which limit or determine the meaning of the antecedent, are not so separated (*b*).[2]

(*a*) His *stories*, *which* made everybody *laugh*, *were* often made to order.

(*a*) At five in the morning of the seventh, *Gray*, *who* had wandered from his *friends*, *was* seized by two of the Sussex scouts.

(*a*) His *voice*, *which* was so pleasing in *private*, *was* too weak for a public occasion.

(*a*) In times like *these*, *when* the passions are *stimulated*, *truth* is forgotten.

[1] Wilson: Punctuation, p. 73.

[2] See Principles of Rhetoric, p. 105.

(*a*) The leaders of the *party*, *by whom* this plan had been *devised*, *had been* struggling for seven years to organize such an assembly.

(*a*) We not only find Erin for *Ireland*, *where* brevity is in favor of the *substitution*, *but* also Caledonia for Scotland.

(*b*) He did *that which* he feared to do.

(*b*) *He who* is his own lawyer is said to have a fool for a client.

(*b*) The uproar, the blood, the gashes, the ghastly *figures which* sank down and never rose again, spread horror and dismay through the town.

(*b*) Those *inhabitants who* had favored the insurrection expected sack and massacre.

(*b*) The *extent to which* the Federalists yielded their assent would at this day be incredible.

(*b*) I told *him where* that opposition must end.

(*b*), (*a*) Those Presbyterian members of the House of *Commons who* had been expelled by the army, returned to their seats, and were hailed with acclamations by great *multitudes*, *which* filled Westminster Hall and Palace Yard.

VI.

PARENTHETIC EXPRESSIONS

Parenthetic or *intermediate* expressions are separated from the context by commas (*a*), by dashes either alone (*b*) or combined with other stops (*c*), or by marks of parenthesis [( )] (*d*). The last are less common now than they were formerly. The dash should not be used too frequently, but is to be preferred to the comma when the latter would cause ambiguity or obscurity, as where the sentence already contains a number of commas (*e*).

Brackets [ ] are used when words not the author's (*f*), or when signs (*g*), are inserted to explain the meaning or to supply an omission. Sometimes also brackets are needed for clearness (*h*).

(*a*) The difference, therefore, between a regiment of the foot guards and a regiment of clowns just *enrolled*, *though* doubtless *considerable*, *was* by no means what it now is.

(*a*) The English of the *North*, *or*[1] *Northumbrian*, *has* bequeathed to us few monuments.

[1] In this sentence, the word "or" is not a disjunctive, but has the force of "otherwise called."

(*b*), (*a*) It *will—I* am sure it *will—more* and *more, as* time goes *on, be* found good for this.

(*c*) When he was in a *rage,—and* he very often was in a *rage,—he* swore like a porter.

(*c*) They who thought her to be a great *woman,—and* many people did think her to be *great,—were* wont to declare that she never forgot those who did come, or those who did not.

(*d*) He was received with great respect by the minister of the Grand Duke of *Tuscany* (*who* afterwards mounted the Imperial *throne*), *and* by the ambassador of the Empress Queen.

(*d*) *Circumstances* (*which* with some gentlemen pass for *nothing*) *give* in reality to every political principle its distinguishing color and discriminating effect.

(*d*) If it is true, as this new teacher says, that the artist is the product of his time, it is *evident* (*they* will *infer*) *that* no modern artist can become like the product of another time.

(*e*), (*a*) In the insurrection of provinces, either distant or separated by natural *boundaries,—more* especially if the inhabitants, differing in religion and language, are rather subjects of the same government than portions of the same *people,—hostilities* which are waged only to sever a legal tie may assume the *regularity, and* in some measure the *mildness, of* foreign war.

(*f*) The chairman of our Committee of Foreign *Relations* [*Mr. Eppes*], *introduced* at this time these amendments to the House.

(*g*) [See brackets enclosing the parenthetic signs in VI. line 3.]

(*h*) [As here and in (*g*), to show that these are not examples, but references.]

The principle which requires parenthetical expressions to be set off by marks of punctuation,—a principle underlying II., III., IV., and V. (*a*), as well as VI.,—founded though it is in the obvious utility of separating from the rest of the sentence words which interrupt the continuity of thought, and can be removed without impairing the grammatical structure, may occasionally be violated to advantage; as, for example, by the omission of commas before and after the words "though it is," in the third line of this paragraph. So, too, in the first line of XIV., the parenthetical expression, "either alone or combined with other stops," is set off by commas; but, in the second and third lines of VI., the same expression is written without the first comma, because by the omission the expression is

made to qualify "dashes" only. In the clause, "after a brief but most disastrous reign" (II. *b*), the words "but most disastrous" are parenthetical; but marks of parenthesis can well be spared, the clause is so brief.

VII.

ELLIPTICAL SENTENCES

A comma is often required to indicate an ellipsis (*a*); but the comma, if not needed to make the sense clear, may be dispensed with (*b*). Where the ellipsis is of the expressions *that is, namely*, and the like, a point is always required: in some cases a comma is to be preferred (*c*), in others a comma and dash (*d*), in others a colon (*e*).

(*a*) *Admission, twenty-five* cents. *Tickets, fifty* cents.

(*a*) He was born at the old *homestead, May 7, 1833.* He always lived in *Newport, Rhode Island, United* States of America.

(*a*) Its political maxims are invaluable; its exhortations to love of country and to brotherly affection among *citizens, touching.*

(*a*) With a united government, well administered, he saw that we had nothing to fear; and without *it, nothing* to hope.

(*b*) On the best lines of communication the ruts were deep, the *descents precipitous*, and the *way often* such as it was hardly possible to distinguish, in the dark, from the unenclosed heath and fen which lay on both sides.

(*b*) Hancock served the cause with his liberal opulence, *Adams with* his incorruptible poverty.

(*c*) This scene admits of but one *addition, that* we are misgoverned.

(*d*) This deplorable scene admits of but one *addition,—that* we are governed by councils from which a reasonable man can expect no remedy but poison, no relief but death.

(*e*) One thing is *sure: the* bill will not pass.

In both the examples under (*b*), the insertion of commas between the italicized words would, on account of the proximity of other commas, create obscurity and offend the eye; in the third and fourth examples under (*a*), this objection does not hold.

VIII.

DEPENDENT CLAUSES

A comma is used between two clauses, one of which depends on the other (*a*). If, however, the clauses are intimately connected in both sense and construction, the comma is often omitted (*b*).

(*a*) Though herself a model of personal *beauty*, *she* was not the goddess of beauty.

(*a*) Had a conflict once *begun*, *the* rage of their persecutors would have redoubled.

(*a*) If our will be *ready*, *our* powers are not deficient.

(*a*) As soon as his declaration was *known*, *the* whole nation was wild with delight.

(*a*) While France was wasted by *war*, *the* English pleaded, traded, and studied in security.

(*b*) The Board may hardly be *reminded that* the power of expending any portion of the principal of our fund expired at the end of two years.

(*b*) And loved *her as* he loved the light of heaven.

(*b*) We wished to associate with the *ocean until* it lost the pond-like look which it wears to a countryman.

(*b*) You may *go if* you will.

(*b*) I *doubt whether* he saw the true limits of taste.

(*b*) Then Shakspere is a *genius because* he can be translated into German, and not a *genius because* he cannot be translated into French.

These examples show that, if the dependent clause comes first, a comma is usually required; but that sometimes one is not required if the dependent clause comes immediately after the clause on which it depends. In the former case, the word which makes the connection between the two clauses is at a distance from the words it connects; in the latter case, it stands between or at least near the words it connects.

IX.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

A point is required between two independent clauses connected by a conjunction,—such as *for*, *and*, *but*, or *yet*,—in order to render it certain that the conjunction does not serve to connect the *words* between which it stands. If the sentence is a short one, and the clauses are closely connected, a comma is sufficient (*a*); in other cases, a semicolon [;] (*b*) or a colon [:] (*c*) is required.[1]

(*a*) I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a single spider could furnish; wherefore I destroyed *this*, *and* the insect set about another.

(*a*) There was a lock on the *door*, *but* the key was gone.

(*a*) Learn to live *well*, *or* fairly make your will.

(*a*) The lock went *hard*, *yet* the key did open it.

(*a*) He smote the rock of the national *resources*, *and* abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of the Public *Credit*, *and* it sprang upon its feet.

(*b*) This was the greatest victory in that war, so fertile in great *exploits; and* it at once gave renown to the Admiral.

(*b*) So end the ancient voices of religion and *learning; but* they are silenced, only to revive more gloriously elsewhere.

(*a*), (*b*) The very idea of purity and disinterestedness in politics falls into *disrepute*, *and* is considered as a vision of hot and inexperienced *men; and* thus disorders become incurable, not by the virulence of their own quality, but by the unapt and violent nature of their remedies.

(*c*), (*b*) The Mohawks were at first afraid to *come: but* in April they sent the Flemish Bastard with overtures of *peace; and* in July a large deputation of their chiefs appeared at Quebec.

(*a*), (*c*) His friends have given us materials for *criticism*, *and* for these we ought to be grateful; his enemies have given us negative *criticism*, *and* for this, up to a certain point, we may be *grateful: but* the criticism we really want neither of them has yet given us.[2]

X.

DEPENDENT EXPRESSIONS IN A SERIES

Semicolons are used between expressions in a series which have a common dependence upon words at the beginning (*a*) or at the end (*b*) of a sentence.

[1] For punctuation of independent clauses not connected by a conjunction—successive short sentences—see XI., p. 344.

[2] See also XII. (*a*), p. 345.

(*a*) You could give us no commission to wrong or oppress, or even to suffer any kind of oppression or wrong, on any grounds whatsoever: not on political, as in the affairs of *America; not* on commercial, as in those of *Ireland; not* in civil, as in the laws for *debt; not* in religious, as in the statutes against Protestant or Catholic dissenters.

(*a*) They forget that, in England, not one shilling of paper-money of any description is received but of *choice; that* the whole has had its origin in cash actually *deposited; and* that it is convertible, at pleasure, in an instant, and without the smallest loss, into cash again.

(*a*) In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood: binding up the Constitution of our country with our dearest domestic *ties; adopting* our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family *affections; keeping* inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our State, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

(*b*) The ground strowed with the dead and the *dying; the* impetuous *charge; the* steady and successful *repulse; the* loud call to repeated *assault; the* summoning of all that is manly to repeated *resistance; a* thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death;—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more.

(*b*) How we have fared since then—what woful variety of schemes have been *adopted; what* enforcing, and what *repealing; what* doing and *undoing; what* shiftings, and changings, and jumblings of all kinds of men at home, which left no possibility of order, consistency, or vigor—it is a tedious task to recount.

XI.

SUCCESSIVE SHORT SENTENCES

Either semicolons or colons may be used to connect in form successive short sentences which are, though but slightly, connected in sense. Semicolons are usually preferred where the connection of thought is close (*a*); colons, where it is not very close (*b*).

(*a*) The united fleet rode unmolested by the *British; Sir* Charles Hardy either did not or would not see them.

(*a*) Such was our situation: and such a satisfaction was necessary to prevent recourse to *arms; it* was necessary toward laying them *down; it* will be necessary to prevent the taking them up again and again.

(*a*) Mark the destiny of crime. It is ever obliged to resort to such *subterfuges; it* trembles in the broad *light; it* betrays itself in seeking concealment.

(*a*) The women are generally *pretty; few* of them are *brunettes; many* of them are discreet, and a good number are lazy.

(*a*) He takes things as they *are; he* submits to them all, as far as they *go; he* recognizes the lines of demarcation which run between subject and subject.

(*b*) Very few faults of architecture are mistakes of honest *choice: they* are almost all hypocrisies.

(*b*) The same may be said of the classical *writers: Plato*, Aristotle, Lucretius, and Seneca, as far as I recollect, are silent on the subject.

(*b*) Compute your *gains: see* what is got by those extravagant and presumptuous speculations which have taught your leaders to despise all their predecessors.

(*b*), (*a*) The professors of science who threw out the general principle have gained a rich harvest from the seed they *sowed: they* gave the *principle; they* got back from the practical telegrapher accurate standards of measurement.[1]

XII.

COMPOUND SENTENCES

Colons are used between two members of a sentence, one or both of which are composed of two or more clauses separated by semicolons (*a*); semicolons, or very rarely colons, between clauses, one or both of which are subdivided by a number of commas (*b*). The relations which the several parts of the sentence bear to one another are thus clearly indicated.

(*a*) Early reformations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late reformations are terms imposed upon a conquered *enemy: early* reformations are made in cool blood; late reformations are made under a state of inflammation.

(*a*) We are seldom tiresome to ourselves: and the act of composition fills and delights the mind with change of language and succession of *images: every* couplet when produced is new; and novelty is the great source of pleasure.

(*a*) There seems to have been an Indian path; for this was the ordinary route of the Mohawk and Oneida *war-parties: but* the path was narrow, broken, full of gullies and pitfalls, crossed by streams, and in one place interrupted by a lake which they passed on rafts.[2]

[1] See also XII. (*a*), below.

[2] See also IX. (*c*), and XI. (*b*), (*a*), pp. 343, 344.