

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

[...] short man standing on each of his feet for the quarter of an hour immediately preceding.

"It is indeed a noble and a brilliant sight," said Mr. Snodgrass, in whose bosom a blaze of poetry was rapidly bursting forth.

"We are in a capital situation now," said Mr. Pickwick, looking round him. The crowd had gradually dispersed in their immediate vicinity, and they were nearly alone.

"Capital!" echoed both Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle. "What are they doing now?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, adjusting his spectacles.

"I—I—rather think," said Mr. Winkle, changing colour "I rather think they're going to fire." "Nonsense," said Mr. Pickwick, hastily.

"I—I—really think they are," urged Mr. Snodgrass, somewhat alarmed.

"Impossible," replied Mr. Pickwick. He had hardly uttered the word, when the whole half-dozen regiments levelled their muskets as if they had but one common object, and that object the Pickwickians, and burst forth with the most awful and tremendous discharge that ever shook the earth to its centre, or an elderly gentleman off his.

It was in this trying situation, exposed to a galling fire of blank cartridges, and harassed by the operations of the military, a fresh body of whom had begun to fall in on the opposite side, that Mr. Pickwick displayed that perfect coolness and self-possession, which are the indispensable accompaniments of a great mind. He seized Mr. Winkle by the arm, and placing himself between that gentleman and Mr. Snodgrass, earnestly besought them to remember that beyond the possibility of being [...]

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[...] rendered deaf by the noise, there was no immediate danger to be apprehended from the firing.

"But—but—suppose some of the men should happen to have ball cartridges by mistake," remonstrated Mr. Winkle, pallid at the supposition he was himself conjuring up. "I heard something whistle through the air just now—so sharp; close to my ear."

"We had better throw ourselves on our faces, hadn't we?" said Mr. Snodgrass.

"No, no—it's over now," said Mr. Pickwick. His lip might quiver, and his cheek might blanch, but no expression of fear or concern escaped the lips of that immortal man.

Mr. Pickwick was right: the firing ceased; but he had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the accuracy of his opinion, when a quick movement was visible in the line: the hoarse shout of the word of command ran along it, and before either of the party could form a guess at the meaning of this new manœuvre, the whole of the half-dozen regiments, with fixed bayonets, charged at double quick time down upon the very spot on which Mr. Pickwick and his friends were stationed.

Man is but mortal: and there is a point beyond which human courage cannot extend. Mr. Pickwick gazed through his spectacles for an instant on the advancing mass and then fairly turned his back and—we will not say fled; firstly, because it is an ignoble term, and, secondly, because Mr. Pickwick's figure was by no means adapted for that mode of retreat—he trotted away, at as quick a rate as his legs would convey him; so quickly, indeed, that he did not perceive the awkwardness of his situation, to the full extent, until too late.

The opposite troops, whose falling-in had perplexed [...]

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Mr. Pickwick a few seconds before, were drawn up to repel the mimic attack of the sham besiegers of the citadel; and the consequence was that Mr. Pickwick and his two companions found themselves suddenly inclosed between two lines of great length, the one advancing at a rapid pace, and the other firmly waiting the collision in hostile array.

"Hoi!" shouted the officers of the advancing line. "Get out of the way!" cried the officers of the stationary one.

"Where are we to go to?" screamed the agitated Pickwickians.

"Hoi-hoi-hoi!" was the only reply. There was a moment of intense bewilderment, a heavy tramp of footsteps, a violent concussion, a smothered laugh; the halfdozen regiments were half a thousand yards off, and the soles of Mr. Pickwick's boots were elevated in air.

Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle had each performed a compulsory somerset with remarkable agility, when the first object that met the eyes of the latter as he sat on the ground, staunching with a yellow silk handkerchief the stream of life which issued from his nose, was his venerated leader at some distance off, running after his own hat, which was gambolling playfully away in perspective.

There are very few moments of a man's existence when he experiences so much ludicrous distress, or meets with so little charitable commiseration, as when he is in pursuit of his own hat. A vast deal of coolness, and a peculiar degree of judgment, are requisite in catching a hat. A man must not be precipitate, or he runs over it; he must not rush into the opposite extreme, or he loses it altogether. The best way is, to keep gently up with [...]

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[...] the object of pursuit, to be wary and cautious, to watch your opportunity well, get gradually before it, then make a rapid dive, seize it by the crown, and stick it firmly on your head: smiling pleasantly all the time, as if you thought it as good a joke as anybody else.

There was a fine gentle wind, and Mr. Pickwick's hat rolled sportively before it. The wind puffed, and Mr. Pickwick puffed, and the hat rolled over and over as merrily as a lively porpoise in a strong tide; and on it might have rolled, far beyond Mr. Pickwick's reach, had not its course been providentially stopped, just as that gentleman was on the point of resigning it to its fate.

Mr. Pickwick, we say, was completely exhausted, and about to give up the chase, when the hat was blown with some violence against the wheel of a carriage, which was drawn up in a line with half-a-dozen other vehicles on the spot to which his steps had been directed. Mr. Pickwick, perceiving his advantage, darted briskly forward, secured his property, planted it on his head, and paused to take breath.

CHARLES DICKENS, *The Pickwick Papers*

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Note where the parts of these sentences do not agree, and make the necessary corrections:

- i. A long perspective of red coats and white trousers were all that they could see.
- ii. The perfect coolness and self-possession of Mr. Pickwick is well worth recording.
- iii. That low roar of many voices which usually announce the arrival of something important ran through the crowd.
- iv. The manœuvres of a whole army was to be inspected by the commander-in-chief.
- v. The Pickwick Papers were written by Charles Dickens.
- vi. Neither Mr. Winkle nor Mr. Snodgrass were pleased when the firing began.

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(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Search out in your dictionary the meanings of any words that are new to you; then use each of the following phrases in a complete sentence:

(i) violent concussion; (ii) air of mysterious solemnity; (iii) assignable cause or reason; (iv) some facetious gentleman; (v) last extreme of human torture; (vi) unaccountable absence.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Read the following passage carefully, and then rewrite, inserting full stops, commas, and capital letters where necessary:

everything indicated that the coming event was one of no ordinary importance there were the sentries keeping the ground the servants attending to the wants of the ladies and the sergeants running here there and everywhere Colonel Bulder himself was there with a very red face as if to show that it was indeed a very special occasion Mr. Pickwick and his companions secured a place in the front row and waited patiently for two hours.

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Use your dictionary to find simpler words to take the place of those words or phrases printed in italics. Rewrite the whole piece, substituting the words you have found. Then compare your version with the original. Which do you prefer?

There are very few moments in a man's existence when he *experiences* so much *ludicrous distress*, or meets with so little *charitable commiseration*, as when he is

in pursuit of his own hat. A vast deal of coolness, and a *peculiar degree* of judgment, are *requisite in* catching a hat. A man must not be [...]

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[...] *precipitate*, or he runs over it; he must not rush to the opposite extreme, or he loses it altogether. The best way is, to keep gently up with the *object of pursuit*, to be *wary* and cautious, to watch your *opportunity* well, get gradually before it, then make a rapid dive, seize it by the crown, and stick it firmly on your head.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

- i. Notice in the passage given in Exercise (D) that Dickens uses long and difficult words, but at the end writes very plainly and simply. Why is this?
- ii. Write all you can about "Catching a Runaway Hat."
- iii. Suppose yourself to have been with Mr. Pickwick between the two lines of troops; write down your thoughts at the moment when one line commenced to advance, and describe your feelings when the advance was over.
- iv. How would you prove to a dull boy that this extract is funny?
- v. Draw a diagram showing the disposition of the troops at the review, and how Mr. Pickwick and his friends got into difficulties.
- vi. With the help of your atlas draw a sketch-map showing Rochester and the adjoining towns.

II

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

HAMELIN TOWN's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

Rats!

They fought the dogs, and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
"'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation—shocking!
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine [...]"

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

[...] For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease?
Rouse up, Sirs! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

An hour they sate in council;
At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd mine ermine gown sell,
I wish I were a mile hence!
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.

Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap?
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's that?"
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little, though wondrous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous.)
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!"
"Come in"—the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure! [...]

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His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek, nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in—
There was no guessing his kith and kin!
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire:
Quoth one: "It's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone!"

He advanced to the council-table:
And, "Please your honours," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,

After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper.”
(And here they noticed round his neck
 A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same check;
 And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.) [...]

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

“Yet,” said he, "poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
 Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
 Of a monstrous brood of vampyre-bats:
And as for what your brain bewilders,
 If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders?"
"One? fifty thousand!"—was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;

And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives. [...]

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From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
 Wherein all plunged and perished!
—Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry
 (As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary:
Which was: "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe:
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks;
And it seemed as if a voice
 (Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice!
 The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!"

And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!'
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles!
Poke out the nests and block up the holes! [...]"

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!"—when suddenly, up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For Council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!
"Besides," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Besides, our losses have made us thrifty:

A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

The Piper's face fell, and he cried
"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,

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Of a nest of scorpions no survivor—
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe to another fashion."

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I'll brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

Once more he stept into the street
And to his lips again Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet,
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,

Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by—
And could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However, he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain's side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all? No! One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say,
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.

For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,

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And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
 With those who think the candles come too soon,
 Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad, silent moments as they pass;
Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
 One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
 At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song—
 Indoors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

LEIGH HUNT

II

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
 When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
 And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead:
That is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead
 In summer luxury, he has ver done
 With his delights, for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
 On a lone winter evening, when the frost
 Has wrought a silence, from the hearth there shrills
The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
 And seems, to one in drowsiness half lost,
 The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

JOHN KEATS

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Without changing the sense, substitute other words for those printed in italics:

FOUR POEMS

- i. The *occasion* is divine.
- ii. The *presence* in the room.
- iii. Sullen with *mistrust*.
- iv. Harangued the *tremblers*.
- v. Green little *vaulter*.
- vi. The summoning *brass*.

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Combine and group these sentences so as to form a flowing piece of composition.

The grasshopper rejoices in the sultry days of June. He jumps about in the grass. His is the only voice we hear in the heat of midday. Then even the bees are languid. The cricket loves the fire. He hates to see the candles come. His cheerful tune marks those happy moments spent round the fire. One belongs to the fields. The other belongs to the hearth. Both are full of sunshine. Both bring us a message of joy.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Arrange in poetical form and punctuate:

Jaffâr the Barmecide the good Vizier the poor man's hope the friend without a peer Jaffâr was dead slain by a doom unjust and guilty Hâroun sullen with mistrust of what the good and e'en the bad might say ordained that no man living from that day should dare to speak his name on pain of death all Araby and Persia held their breath.

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Study carefully the rhythm of the following lines. Mark the accented syllables as in this example:

And _[accented] hold _[unaccented] | the giv | er as | thou deem | est fit

(i) He said, "Let worth grow frenzied, if it will;
The caliph's judgment shall be master still."

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Mr. Winkle did entertain considerable misgivings in the very lowest recesses of his own heart, relative to his equestrian skill; but, as he would not have them even suspected on any account, he at once replied with things." great hardihood, "Certainly. I should enjoy it, of all things.

Mr. Winkle had rushed upon his fate; there was no resource. "Let them be at the door by eleven," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Very well, sir," replied the waiter.

The waiter retired; the breakfast concluded; and the travellers ascended to their respective bedrooms, to pre- pare a change of clothing, to take with them on their approaching expedition.

Mr. Pickwick had made his preliminary arrangements, and was looking over the coffee-room blinds at the passengers in the street, when the waiter entered, and announced that the chaise was ready—an announcement which the vehicle itself confirmed, by forthwith appearing before the coffee-room blinds aforesaid.

It was a curious little green box on four wheels, with a low place like a wine-bin for two behind, and an elevated perch for one in front, drawn by an immense brown horse, displaying great symmetry of bone. A hostler stood near, holding by the bridle another immense horse— apparently a near relative of the animal in the chaise— ready saddled for Mr. Winkle.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Pickwick, as they stood upon the pavement while the coats were being put in. "Bless my soul! who's to drive? I never thought of that."

"Oh! you, of course," said Mr. Tupman.

"I!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Not the slightest fear, sir," interposed the hostler.

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"Warrant him quiet, sir; a hinfant in arms might drive him."

"He don't shy, does he?" inquired Mr Pickwick.

"Shy, sir?—He wouldn't shy if he was to meet a vaggin-load of monkeys with their tails burnt off."

The last recommendation was indisputable. Mr. Tupman and Mr. Snodgrass got into the bin; Mr. Pickwick ascended to his perch, and deposited his feet on a floor clothed shelf, erected beneath it for that purpose.

"Now, shiny Villiam," said the hostler to the deputy hostler, "give the gen'lm'n the ribbins." "Shiny Villiam"—so called, probably, from his sleek hair and oily countenance—placed the reins in Mr. Pickwick's left hand; and the upper hostler thrust a whip into his right.

"Wo-o!" cried Mr. Pickwick, as the tall quadruped evinced a decided inclination to back into the coffee-room window.

"Wo-o!" echoed Mr. Tupman and Mr. Snodgrass from the bin.

"Only his playfulness, gen'lm'n," said the head hostler encouragingly; "just kitch hold on him, Villiam." The deputy restrained the animal's impetuosity, and the principal ran to assist Mr. Winkle in mounting. "

"T'other side, sir, if you please."

"Blowed if the gen'lm'n worn't a gettin' up on the wrong side," whispered a grinning post-boy to the inexpressibly gratified waiter.

Mr. Winkle, thus instructed, climbed into his saddle, with about as much difficulty as he would have experienced in getting up the side of a first-rate man-of-war.

"All right?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, with an inward presentiment that it was all wrong.

"All right," replied Mr. Winkle faintly.

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"Let 'em go," cried the hostler,—“Hold him in, sir,” and away went the chaise, and the saddle-horse, with Mr. Pickwick on the box of the one, and Mr. Winkle on the back of the other, to the delight and gratification of the whole inn-yard.

"What makes him go sideways?" said Mr. Snodgrass in the bin, to Mr. Winkle in the saddle.

"I can't imagine," replied Mr. Winkle. His horse was drifting up the street in the most mysterious manner—side first, with his head towards one side of the way, and his tail towards the other.

Mr. Pickwick had no leisure to observe either this or any other particular, the whole of his faculties being concentrated in the management of the animal attached to the chaise, who displayed various peculiarities, highly interesting to a bystander, but by no means equally amusing to anyone seated behind him. Besides constantly jerking his head up, in a very unpleasant and uncomfortable manner, and tugging at the reins to an extent which rendered it a matter of great difficulty for Mr. Pickwick to hold them, he had a singular propensity for darting suddenly every now and then to the side of the road, then stopping short, and then rushing forward for some minutes, at a speed which it was wholly impossible to control.

"What *can* he mean by this?" said Mr. Snodgrass, when the horse had executed this manœuvre for the twentieth time.

"I don't know," replied Mr. Tupman; "it *looks* very like shying, don't it?" Mr. Snodgrass was about to reply, when he was interrupted by a shout from Mr. Pickwick.

"Woo!" said that gentleman; "I have dropped my whip."

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"Winkle," said Mr. Snodgrass, as the equestrian came trotting up on the tall horse, with his hat over his ears, and shaking all over, as if he would shake to pieces, with the violence of the exercise, "pick up the whip, there's a good fellow."

Mr. Winkle pulled at the bridle of the tall horse till he was black in the face; and having at length succeeded in stopping him, dismounted, handed the whip to Mr. Pickwick, and grasping the reins, prepared to remount.

Now whether the tall horse, in the natural playfulness of his disposition, was desirous of having a little innocent recreation with Mr. Winkle, or whether it occurred to him that he could perform the journey as much to his own satisfaction without a rider as with one, are points upon which, of course, we can arrive at no definite and distinct conclusion. By whatever motives the animal was actuated, certain it is that Mr. Winkle had no sooner touched the reins, than he slipped them over his head, and darted backwards to their full length.

"Poor fellow," said Mr. Winkle soothingly,—"poor fellow-good old horse." The "poor fellow was proof against flattery: the more Mr. Winkle tried to get near him, the more he sidled away; and, notwithstanding all kinds of coaxing and wheedling, there were Mr. Winkle and the horse going round and round each other for ten minutes, at the end of which time each was at precisely the same distance from the other as when they first commenced—an unsatisfactory state of things under any circumstances, but particularly so in a lonely road, where no assistance can be procured.

"What am I to do?" shouted Mr. Winkle, after the dodging had been prolonged for a considerable time. "What am I to do? I can't get on him."

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"You had better lead him till we come to a turnpike," replied Mr. Pickwick from the chaise.

"But he won't come!" roared Mr. Winkle. "Do come, and hold him."

Mr. Pickwick was the very personation of kindness and humanity: he threw the reins on the horse's back, and having descended from his seat, carefully drew the chaise into the hedge, lest anything should come along the road, and stepped back to the assistance of his distressed companion, leaving Mr. Tupman and Mr. Snodgrass in the vehicle.

The horse no sooner beheld Mr. Pickwick advancing towards him with the chaise whip in his hand, than he exchanged the rotatory motion in which he had previously indulged, for a retrograde movement of so very determined a character,

that it at once drew Mr. Winkle, who was still at the end of the bridle, at a rather quicker rate than fast walking, in the direction from which they had just come. Mr. Pickwick ran to his assistance, but the faster Mr. Pickwick ran forward, the faster the horse ran backward. There was a great scraping of feet, and kicking up of the dust; and at last Mr. Winkle, his arms being nearly pulled out of their sockets, fairly let go his hold. The horse paused, stared, shook his head, turned round, and quietly trotted home to Rochester, leaving Mr. Winkle and Mr. Pickwick gazing on each other with countenances of blank dismay. A rattling noise at a little distance attracted their attention. They looked up.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the agonized Mr. Pickwick, "there's the other horse running away!"

It was but too true. The animal was startled by the noise, and the reins were on his back. The result may be guessed. He tore off with the four-wheeled chaise [...]

AN EQUESTRIAN ADVENTURE

[...] behind him, and Mr. Tupman and Mr. Snodgrass in the four-wheeled chaise. The heat was a short one. Mr. Tupman threw himself into the hedge, Mr. Snodgrass followed his example, the horse dashed the four-wheeled chaise against a wooden bridge, separated the wheels from the body, and the bin from the perch; and finally stood stock still to gaze on the ruin he had made.

The first care of the two unspilt friends was to extricate their unfortunate companions from their bed of quickset—a process which gave them the unspeakable satisfaction of discovering that they had sustained no injury, beyond sundry rents in their garments, and various lacerations from the brambles. The next thing to be done was, to unharness the horse. This complicated process having been effected, the party walked slowly forward, leading the horse among them, and abandoning the chaise to its fate.

CHARLES DICKENS, *The Pickwick Papers*

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Rewrite this passage, avoiding any awkward repetition by use of the pronouns:

Mr. Pickwick had no leisure to observe either this or any other particular, the whole of Mr. Pickwick's faculties being concentrated in the management of the

animal attached to the chaise, who displayed various peculiarities highly interesting to a bystander but by no means equally amusing to any one seated behind the animal. Besides constantly jerking the animal's head up in a very unpleasant and uncomfortable manner, and tugging at the reins to an extent which rendered it a matter of great difficulty for Mr. Pickwick to hold the reins, the animal had a singular propensity for darting suddenly to the side, then stopping short and then rushing forward at a great speed.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Make sentences using the following phrases:

(i) considerable misgivings; (ii) approaching expedition; (iii) inexpressibly gratified; (iv) inward presentiment; (v) various peculiarities; (vi) executed this manœuvre.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Change into indirect speech:

- I. "I don't know," said Mr. Tupman.
- II. "I have dropped my whip," said that gentleman.
- III. "What am I to do?" shouted Mr. Winkle.
- IV. "We want to put this horse up here," said Mr. Pickwick.
- V. "It got us into trouble last time," said the woman.
- VI. "Do you think we stole this horse?" said the angry Mr. Pickwick.

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Dickens frequently added to the humour of his writing by giving simple things long names; a 'horse,' for instance, is a 'quadruped.' Notice these examples, and rewrite them as briefly and simply as you can.

(i) Mr. Winkle did entertain considerable misgivings in the very lowest recesses of his own heart, relative to his equestrian skill.

(ii) Mr. Pickwick had made his preliminary arrangements.

(iii) It was a curious little green box, drawn by an immense brown horse, displaying great symmetry of bone.

(iv) The tall quadruped evinced a decided inclination to back into the coffee-room window.

(v) He exchanged the rotatory motion in which he had previously indulged, for a retrograde motion.

(vi) Mr. Pickwick ascended to his perch, and deposited his feet upon a floor-clothed shelf.

AN EQUESTRIAN ADVENTURE

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

(i) Read carefully Dickens's description of the four-wheeled chaise, and draw a sketch of it.

(ii) You look upon this as a funny incident, but what do you suppose Mr. Winkle thought of it? Write "My Ride to Dingley Dell," as told by Nathaniel Winkle."

(iii) Write in a few lines (*a*) the thoughts of one tall horse as he trotted home to Rochester, (*b*) the thoughts of the other tall horse as he was led to Dingley Dell.

(iv) After reading Mr. Winkle's painful experiences, compile a set of rules for those about to get on horseback for the first time.

(v) It is said that Mr. Winkle "climbed into his saddle, with about as much difficulty as he would have experienced in getting up the side of a first-rate man-of-war." Compile a list of four other feats which you consider Mr. Winkle would have found equally difficult.

(vi) Write a brief summary of the whole extract under these headings: (i) The Departure; (ii) The Journey; (iii) The Catastrophe.

VIII

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,

Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep-the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more-but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword-and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."
So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the halt twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: But at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud.

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?"

MORTE D'ARTHUR

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time.
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

Thou would'st betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spake King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him:
But when I look'd again, behold an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

MORTE D'ARTHUR

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

LORD TENNYSON

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Correct mistakes in the following sentences:

(i) Arthur had seen his knights go one by one, and Sir Bedivere was the last of any.

(ii) The goodliest of any fellowship of famous knights that ever existed was unsoldered.

(iii) It was the subtlest of any jewellery ever seen in a sword handle.

(iv) Although Arthur was severely wounded and weak in body, Sir Bedivere was the weakest in mind.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

(v) Excalibur was more wonderful than all swords.

(vi) There were three queens in the barge, and the taller and fairer of them called Arthur by name.

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Join the following sentences by using relative pronouns:

(i) Arthur writhed in pain. He said that he perished by the people he had made.

(ii) Sir Bedivere was the last of Arthur's knights. He flung Excalibur into the middle mere.

(iii) But first Bedivere tried to hide it. He thought it was a shame to throw away so fine a sword.

(iv) Arthur hated all deceit. He reproached Bedivere bitterly.

(v) There was an arm clothed in white samite. It caught Excalibur by the hilt.

(vi) The knight was overcome with grief. He bore his precious load to the margin of the lake.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Make a distinction between possessives and plurals by inserting apostrophes wherever they are required in the following sentences:

(i) Of all the swords that Sir Bedivere had ever handled there was none so grand as Arthurs.

(ii) The Round Table was dissolved: the knights places were vacant.

(iii) Sir Bediveres eyes were dazzled.

(iv) He made up his mind to disregard the kings whims.

(v) Excalibur was a lonely maidens work. She wrought it nine years as she sat in the deeps upon the hidden bases of the hills.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

It will be noticed that some poetry requires to be said quickly, while other poetry loses all its beauty and all its meaning unless said slowly. There are examples of both in this poem. You cannot read this passage slowly:

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it.

Neither can you read this quickly:

Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Find two similar examples, one of 'fast time,' and the other of meaning. 'slow time,' and notice in each case how well the time suits the meaning.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

(i) What are "greaves and cuisses"? Get a picture showing a knight in armour and make a sketch from it.

(ii) Notice how appropriate the hissing sound is in the lines:

The sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam.

Try to find a similar instance for yourself in any book of poetry you have.

(iii) Write a description of the "island-valley of Avilion," and say what you imagine happened to Arthur there.

(iv) What were Sir Bedivere's excuses for disobeying the dying king? Were they reasonable? What would you have done in Sir Bedivere's place?

(v) The winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

Describe the scene pictured by the poet as expressively as you can in your own words.

(vi) "The old order changeth, yielding place to new." What do you consider the greatest change that you have seen? Do you consider it a change for the better?

IX

SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

I am always very well pleased with a country Sunday, and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join

together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard, as a citizen does upon the Change, the whole parish-politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing. He has likewise given a handsome pulpitcloth, and railed in the communion table at his own expense. He has often told me, that at his coming to his [...]

SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a common-prayer book: and at the same time employed an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the old knight's peculiarities break out upon these occasions. Sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces amen three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority

of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very [...].

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Avoid the use of *and* in the following sentences by using a participle. Thus, instead of "Sir Roger is a good churchman and has beautified the inside of his church," write: "Sir Roger, *being* a churchman, has beautified the inside of his church."

(i) We know London as it is now and we find it very hard to realize what it was in the days of Addison.

(ii) It had not long recovered from the ravages of plague and fire and it was filled with new buildings.

(iii) The church spires and the great new dome of St Paul's gleamed white over the roofs and were a sight to behold.

(iv) The citizen's were mostly traders and they were noted for their sturdy independence.

(v) The Londoner scarcely ever went on a journey and was quite content with the sights of his own city.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Punctuate the following sentences:

(i) Why said Sir Roger is your husband not at church this morning

(ii) Is it likely that many country squires were as kindly as old Sir Roger

(iii) What are you doing said my old friend to John Matthews

(iv) Do the old knights peculiarities make you smile

(v) Is not the church beautiful asked Sir Roger with pride

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Read through the essay again very carefully, paying particular attention to the style in which it is written. It will be noticed that the sentences are fairly long, and that the style is smooth and flowing, admirably suiting the subject-matter. Rewrite the following so as to make flowing sentences as nearly as possible in the style of Addison:

SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

Joseph Addison was born near Amesbury in 1672. His father was a clergyman. Joseph had a great fondness for writing Latin poetry. In those days ability to write verses in Latin was the key to success. So Addison rose to be Secretary of State. He also wrote much poetry in English. This has almost been forgotten, except for one or two hymns. These are often sung in churches. It is, however, as an essayist that he has won lasting fame. The essays, especially those of *The Spectator*, had a great circulation. They secured for him great popularity. "Sir Roger at Church" is taken from *The Spectator*. It gives a good idea of Addison's style.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

- (i) What part of a church is the chancel? Draw a sketch-plan of any church you know showing the chancel.
- (ii) Set out the reasons which Addison gives in favour of keeping Sunday as a day of rest.
- (iii) Write an essay on "A Sunday in the Country."
- (iv) Suppose that you are John Matthews: write a brief defence of your bad behaviour in church.
- (v) Explain what is meant by the following phrases: "an itinerant singing-master"; "a secret reprimand"; "the present incumbent."
- (vi) Imagine that you are one of Sir Roger's tenants: write a letter to him explaining your absence from church on Sunday last.

X

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay;
Now the great winds shorewards blow;
Now the salt tides seawards flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.
This way, this way.

Call her once before you go.
Call once yet.
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear:
Children's voices, wild with pain.
Surely she will come again.
Call her once and come away.
This way, this way.
"Mother dear, we cannot stay."
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret! Margaret!
Come, dear children, come away down.
Call no more.
One last look at the white-wall'd town,

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

And the little grey church on the windy shore.
Then come down.
She will not come though you call all day.
Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
Feed in the ooze of their pasture ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
"Twill be Easter-time in the world-ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said; "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves."
She smil'd, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say.
Come," I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town.
Through the narrow pav'd streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones, worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone.
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book.
"Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door."
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.
 Down, down, down.
Down to the depths of the sea.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy.
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well.
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill, Singing most joyfully,
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand;
And over the sand at the sea;

And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaid,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children.
Come, children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

A pavement of pearl.
Singing, "Here came a mortal.
But faithless was she.
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow;
When clear falls the moonlight;
When spring-tides are low:
When sweet airs come sea-ward
From heaths starr'd with broom;
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom:
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie;

Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
 And then come back down.
Singing, "There dwells a lov'd one,
But cruel is she.
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Say whether the verbs in the following sentences are active or passive; then rewrite, changing active to passive, and *vice versa*:

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

- (i) The far-off sound of a silver bell was heard by us yesterday.
- (ii) My poor soul is lost, merman, here with thee.
- (iii) In the world they say long prayers.
- (iv) That loved one who dwells in the white town left the kings of the sea.
- (v) The children were told by the merman to come away down and call no more.
- (vi) They took one last fond look at the white-walled town.

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Join the following pairs of sentences by using one or other of these connectives:
but, yet, and, for.

- (i) The children called long and loud. Their mother did not hear.
- (ii) The strong winds howled. The wild waves roared.

(iii) It was growing cold and dark. They were reluctant to go back to the sea cavern.

(iv) She would not come. She was afraid that she might lose her soul.

(v) The mother was faithless. The children loved her.

(vi) When it is fine we will gaze at the little town. Then we will return.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Arrange in poetical form and punctuate:

Come dear children come away down call no more one last look at the white walled town and the little grey church on the windy shore then come down she will not come though you call all day come away come away children dear was it yesterday we heard the sweet bells over the bay in the caverns where we lay through the surf and through the swell the far-off sound of a silver bell.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

In prose-writing careless repetition is a fault, but in poetry a very striking effect is often produced by repeating a word or sound. There are many good instances in this poem—e.g.,

Let us away
This way, this way.

Write the stanza which you think contains the best examples, and underline the repeated words.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

(i) In a previous exercise you saw how Browning used *alliteration*; many instances will be found here also. Search out three good examples.

(ii) This poem is full of pathos: the author makes us feel very sorry for the lonely merman and the children who were bereft of a mother's care. Think of all

the other pathetic stories you have read, whether in poetry or prose, and write a short account of the saddest of them.

(iii) Write a piece of descriptive prose entitled, "The Merman's Abode."

(iv) Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea.

Read these lines to yourself, and mark the accent by beating time. Then write them out, marking off the feet, and placing a dash (') over each accented syllable.

(v) In the following lines it will be noticed how well the sound suggests the sense: Now the wild white horses play, Champ and chafe and toss in the spray. Find a similar example.

(vi) Study carefully the weather descriptions in the poem, and show how wind and wave provide a suitable setting for the story.

XI

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother), was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swineherd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as youngsters of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which, kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian makeshift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could

easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking [...]

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

[...] remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?— not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before— indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young fire-brand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—*crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the newborn pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure which he experienced in his lower regions had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end [...]

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

[...] of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?"

"O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste-O Lord," with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled in every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorched his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving [...]

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

[...] upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the nighttime. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Peking, then an inconsiderable assize town, Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same

remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given,—to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present— without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision; and when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices [...]

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

[...] one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (burnt, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

CHARLES LAMB

EXERCISES

(4) THE USE OF WORDS

Expand the following sentences by inserting relative clauses, thus: Charles Lamb, (who wrote this essay), lived in London.

(i) The swine-herd, Ho-ti, (), left the cottage in the care of his eldest son, Bo-bo.

(ii) While he was thinking what he should say, an odour () assailed his nostrils.

(iii) Bo-bo paid no heed to the blows () but continued eating.

(iv) The father and son were summoned to take their trial at Pekin ().

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

(v) The gentlemen of the jury () brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

(vi) The judge () bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money.

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

As a sentence is the expression of a single thought, it should contain no more than is necessary to convey that one thought. Rewrite the following passage, breaking up the sentences where this rule is not obeyed:

The cottage, a poor makeshift of a building, was left in the charge of Bo-bo, who was extremely fond of playing with fire. He let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw which kindled quickly and made such a blaze that their poor mansion was reduced to ashes together with a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, and this was much more important. Bo-bo, wondering what he should say to his father, was in great trouble over the loss of the pigs, which was indeed a serious matter, when a strange odour assailed his nostrils. It was unlike any scent which he had before experienced, and he knew it did not come from the burnt cottage. He had smelt that smell before. It was not the first accident of the kind which had occurred through his carelessness, and his mouth began to water. He felt the pig and burnt his fingers. To cool them, he put them to his mouth and *tasted-crackling!*

(C) PUNCTUATION

Change into direct speech:

(i) Bo-bo asked his father to come and taste the burnt pig.

(ii) Ho-ti asked his son what he had got there devouring.

- (iii) The foreman of the jury said he should like to have some of the burnt pig.
- (iv) Ho-ti told his son not to let the secret escape.
- (v) The angry father told the boy that he had already burnt down three houses.
- (vi) The reporter said that it was the oddest verdict he had ever known.

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Charles Lamb in this essay often uses high-sounding phrases in order to produce a humorous effect. Notice the following examples, and rewrite, expressing the same idea as simply as possible:

- (i) His sire entered, armed with retributory cudgel.
- (ii) He shouted out, "Only taste—O Lord," —with such-like barbarous ejaculations.
- (iii) A premonitory moistening overflowed his nether lip.
- (iv) An odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced.
- (v) The tickling rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters.
- (vi) Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

- (i) Write an account entitled "The Discovery of Roast Pig, according to Bo-bo."
- (ii) Give a version of the trial at Peking supposed to have been written by a reporter who was present.
- (iii) Write an essay on "My Favourite Dish."

(iv) Imagine that you have discovered a paragraph cut from an old newspaper giving an account of the sudden rise in the price of fuel and pigs. Write out this paragraph.

(v) Write a short conversation that took place between Ho-ti and Bo-bo after the trial.

(vi) Search for the meanings of these words, and then use each in a sentence: consternation, wringing, negligence, asunder, manifest.

XII

SOME GALLOPING POEMS

How THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX
I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-bolts un- drew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Re-buckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;
At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half chime,
So, Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is time!"

SOME GALLOPING POEMS

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,

To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river-headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back,
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate, [...]

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer; or good,
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad

Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.
And all I remember is-friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine.
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

ROBERT BROWNING

LOCHINVAR

O, YOUNG Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide border his steed was the best;
And, save his good broadsword, he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But ere he alighted by Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

SOME GALLOPING POEMS

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far,
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young
Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:

There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

SIR WALTER SCOTT

BANNERMAN OF THE DANDENONG ¹

I RODE through the Bush in the burning noon
Over the hills to my bride,—
The track was rough and the way was long,
And Bannerman of the Dandenong,
He rode along by my side.

A day's march off my Beautiful dwelt,
By the Murray streams in the West;—
Lightly lilted a gay love-song
Rode Bannerman of the Dandenong,
With a blood-red rose on his breast.

"Red, red rose of the Western streams'
Was the song he sang that day—
Truest comrade in hour of need;
Bay Mathinna his peerless steed—
I had my own good grey.

¹By permission of Miss Alice Werner.

SOME GALLOPING POEMS

There fell a spark on the upland grass—
The dry Bush leapt into flame;—
And I felt my heart go cold as death,
And Bannerman smiled and caught his breath,
But I heard him name Her name.

Down the hill-side the fire-floods rushed.
On the roaring eastern wind;—
Neck and neck was the reckless race,—
Ever the bay mare kept her pace,
But the grey horse dropped behind.

He turned in the saddle—"Let's change, I say!"
And his bridle rein he drew.
He sprang to the ground,—"Look sharp!" he said,
With a backward toss of his curly head—
"I ride lighter than you!"

Down and up—it was quickly done—
No words to waste that day!—
Swift as a swallow she sped along,
The good bay mare from Dandenong,—
And Bannerman rode the grey.

The hot air scorched like a furnace blast
From the very mouth of Hell:—

The blue gums caught and blazed on high
Like flaming pillars into the sky;...
The grey horse staggered and fell.

"Ride, ride, lad-ride for her sake!" he cried;
Into the gulf of flame
Were swept, in less than a breathing space,
The laughing eyes, and the comely face,
And the lips that named *Her* name.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

She bore me bravely, the good bay mare;—
Stunned, and dizzy and blind,
I heard the sound of a mingling roar—
'Twas the river's rush that I heard before,
And the flames that rolled behind.

Safe—safe, at Nammooora gate,
I fell, and lay like a stone.
O love! thine arms were about me then,
Thy warm tears called me to life again,—
But—O God! that I came alone!—

I and my Beautiful dwelt in peace,
By the Murray streams in the West,—
But oft through the mist of my dreams along
Rides Bannerman of the Dandenong,
With the blood-red rose on his breast.

ALICE WERNER

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Rewrite the following passage, making the necessary corrections in the tenses:

It was sunrise when I rose from my resting-place and resumed my journey. What a change! All was waste. The sun had set upon a prairie still clothed in its natural garb of herb- age. It rose upon a scene of desolation. Not a single weed— not a blade of grass is left. The tall grove now spreads a labyrinth of scorched and

naked branches—the very type of ruin. A thin covering of grey ashes was sprinkled upon the ground beneath, and several large dead trees were still blazing or sending up long spires of smoke. In every direction barrenness marks the track of the flames. It has even worked its course against the blast, hugging to the roots of tall grass. The wind was still raging; cinders and ashes are drifting and whirling about in almost suffocating clouds.

SOME GALLOPING POEMS

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Use the following phrases in complete sentences:

(i) broke silence; (ii) horrible heave of the flank; (iii) cast loose; (iv) dauntless in war; (v) lightly lirting; (vi) a breathing-space.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Punctuate the following sentences, and supply capital letters where necessary:

(i) good speed cried the watch as we galloped through

(ii) joris broke silence with yet there is time

(iii) gallop gasped he for aix is in sight

(iv) joris cried stay spur

(v) now tread we a measure said young lochinvar

(vi) he turned in the saddle lets change I say

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Rearrange the words so as to restore the *galloping rhythm* to these lines:

(i) And at last I saw my stout galloper Roland.

(ii) As down his throat I poured our last measure of wine.

(iii) But they did ne'er see the lost bride of Netherby.

(iv) O, out of the west young Lochinvar is come.

(v) But behind dropped the grey horse.

(vi) She, the good bay mare, bore me bravely.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

(i) Write a descriptive sketch entitled "A Ride for Life."

(ii) Examine the following lines, and notice how the *sound* helps the sense:

The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff.

The b's convey just the crisp, snapping effect which the poet desired. Search for other examples.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

(iii) Tell the story of Bannerman's great sacrifice in your own words.

(iv) Write in a few lines what you think must have been the bridegroom's opinion of young Lochinvar and his exploit.

(v) Find the meanings of the following words: postern, askance, dastard, craven, galliard, scaur, strath, peerless.

(vi) Read carefully the account of young Lochinvar's feats, and say which you consider to be the most wonderful. Was it possible?

XIII

DOBBIN'S FIGHT WITH CUFF

Cuff's fight with Dobbin, and the unexpected issue of that contest, will long be remembered by every man who was educated at Dr. Swishtail's famous school. The latter youth (who used to be called Heigh-ho Dobbin, Gee-ho Dobbin, and by many other names indicative of puerile contempt) was the quietest, the clumsiest, and, as it seemed, the dullest of all Dr. Swishtail's young gentlemen. His parent was a grocer in the City: and it was bruited abroad that he was admitted into Dr. Swishtail's academy upon what are called "mutual principles" that is to say, the expenses of his board and schooling were defrayed by his father in goods, not money; and he stood there—almost at the bottom of the school—in his scraggy corduroys and jacket, through the seams of which his great big bones were bursting—as the representative of so many pounds of tea, candles, sugar, mottled-soap, plums (of which a very mild proportion was supplied for the puddings of the establishment), and other commodities. A dreadful day it was for young Dobbin when one of the youngsters of the school, having run into the town upon a

poaching excursion for hardbake and polonies, espied the cart of Dobbin and Rudge, Grocers and Oilmen, Thames Street, London, at the Doctor's door, discharging a cargo of the wares in which the firm dealt.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

Young Dobbin had no peace after that. The jokes were frightful, and merciless against him. "Hullo, Dobbin," one wag would say, "here's good news in the paper. Sugar is ris', my boy." Another would set a sum—"If a pound of mutton-candles cost sevenpence-halfpenny, how much must Dobbin cost?" and a roar would follow from all the circle of young knaves, usher and all, who rightly considered that the selling of goods by retail is a shameful and infamous practice, meriting the contempt and scorn of all real gentlemen.

"Your father's only a merchant, Osborne," Dobbin said in private to the little boy who had brought down the storm upon him. At which the latter replied haughtily, "My father's a gentleman, and keeps his carriage," and Mr. William Dobbin retreated to a remote outhouse in the playground, where he passed a half-holiday in the bitterest sadness and woe.

Now, William Dobbin, from an incapacity to acquire the rudiments of the Latin language, as they are propounded in that wonderful book the Eton Latin Grammar, was compelled to remain among the very last of Dr. Swishtail's scholars, and was "taken down continually by little fellows with pink faces and pinafores when he marched up with the lower form, a giant amongst them, with downcast stupefied look, his dog's eared primer, and his tight corduroys. High and low, all made fun of him. They sewed up those corduroys, tight as they were. They cut his bed-strings. They upset buckets and benches, so that he might break his shins over them, which he never failed to do. They sent him parcels, which, when opened, were found to contain the paternal soap and candles. There was no little fellow but had his jeer and joke at Dobbin; and he bore everything [...]

DOBBIN'S FIGHT WITH CUFF

[...] thing quite patiently, and was entirely dumb and miserable.

Cuff, on the contrary, was the great chief and dandy of the Swishtail Seminary. He smuggled wine in. He fought the town-boys. Ponies used to come for him to ride home on Saturdays. He had his top-boots in his room, in which he used to hunt in the holidays. He had a gold repeater: and he took snuff like the Doctor. He had

been to the Opera, and knew the merits of the principal actors, preferring Mr. Kean to Mr. Kemble. He could knock you off forty Latin verses in an hour. He could make French poetry. What else didn't he know, or couldn't he do? They said even the Doctor himself was afraid of him.

Cuff, the unquestioned king of the school, ruled over his subjects, and bullied them, with splendid superiority. This one blacked his shoes: that toasted his bread, others would fag out, and give him balls at cricket during whole summer afternoons. Figs' was the fellow whom he despised most, and with whom, though always abusing him, and sneering at him, he scarcely ever condescended to hold personal communication.

One day in private, the two young gentlemen had had a difference. Figs, alone in the schoolroom, was blundering over a home letter; when Cuff, entering, bade him go upon some message, of which tarts was probably the subject.

"I can't," says Dobbin; "I want to finish my letter."

"You can't!" says Mr. Cuff, laying hold of that document (in which many words were scratched out, many were misspelt, on which had been spent I don't know how much thought, and labour, and tears; for the poor fellow [...])

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

[...] was writing to his mother, who was fond of him, although she was a grocer's wife, and lived in a back parlour in Thames Street). "You *can't*?" says Mr. Cuff: "I should like to know why, pray? Can't you write to old Mother Figs to-morrow?"

"Don't call names," Dobbin said, getting off the bench very nervous.

"Well, sir, will you go?" crowed the cock of the school.

"Put down that letter," Dobbin replied; "no gentleman readth letterth."

"Well, *now* will you go?" says the other.

"No, I won't. Don't strike, or I'll *thmash* you," roars out Dobbin, springing to a leaden inkstand, and looking so wicked, that Mr. Cuff paused, turned down his coat sleeves again, put his hands into his pockets, and walked away with a sneer. But he never meddled personally with the grocer's boy after that; though we must do him the justice to say he always spoke of Mr. Dobbin with contempt behind his back.

Sometime after this interview, it happened that Mr. Cuff, on a sunshiny afternoon, was in the neighbourhood of poor William Dobbin, who was lying under a tree in the playground, spelling over a favourite copy of *The Arabian Nights* which he had apart from the rest of the school, who were pursuing their various sports-quite lonely, and almost happy.

William Dobbin had for once forgotten the world, and was away with Sinbad the Sailor in the Valley of Diamonds, or with Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Peribanou in that delightful cavern where the Prince found her, and whither we should all like to make a tour; when shrill cries, as of a little fellow weeping, woke up his [...]

DOBBIN'S FIGHT WITH CUFF

[...] pleasant reverie; and looking up, he saw Cuff before him, belabouring a little boy.

It was the lad who had peached upon him about the grocer's cart; but he bore little malice, not at least towards the young and small. "How dare you, sir, break the bottle?" says Cuff to the little urchin, swinging a yellow cricket-stump over him.

The boy had been instructed to get over the playground wall (at a selected spot where the broken glass had been removed from the top, and niches made convenient in the brick); to run a quarter of a mile; to purchase a pint of rum-shrub on credit; to brave all the Doctor's outlying spies, and to clamber back into the playground again; during the performance of which feat, his foot had slipt, and the bottle was broken, and the shrub had been spilt, and his pantaloons had been damaged, and he appeared before his employer a perfectly guilty and trembling, though harmless, wretch.

"How dare you, sir, break it?" says Cuff; "you blundering little thief. You drank the shrub, and now you pretend to have broken the bottle. Hold out your hand, sir."

Down came the stump with a great heavy thump on the child's hand. A moan followed. Dobbin looked up. The Fairy Peribanou had fled into the inmost cavern with Prince Ahmed: the Roc had whisked away Sinbad the Sailor out of the Valley of Diamonds out of sight, far into the clouds: and there was everyday life before honest William; and a big boy beating a little one without cause.

"Hold out your other hand, sir," roars Cuff to his little school-fellow, whose face was distorted with pain.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

Dobbin quivered, and gathered himself up in his narrow old clothes.

"Take that, you little rascal!" cried Mr. Cuff, and down came the wicket again on the child's hand. Dobbin started up.

I can't tell what his motive was. Up he sprang, and screamed out, "Hold off, Cuff, don't bully that child anymore; or I'll—"

"Or you'll what?" Cuff asked in amazement at this interruption. "Hold out your hand, you little beast."

"I'll give you the worst thrashing you ever had in your life," Dobbin said, in reply to the first part of Cuff's sentence; and little Osborne, gasping and in tears, looked up with wonder and incredulity at seeing this amazing champion put up suddenly to defend him: while Cuff's astonishment was hardly less. Fancy our late monarch George III when he heard of the revolt of the North American Colonies: fancy brazen Goliath when little David stepped forward and claimed a meeting; and you have the feelings of Mr. Reginald Cuff when this *rencontre* was proposed to him.

"After school," says he, of course; after a pause and a look, as much as to say, "Make your will, and communicate your last wishes to your friends between this time and that."

"As you please," Dobbin said. "You must be my bottle-holder, Osborne."

"Well, if you like," little Osborne replied; for you see his papa kept a carriage, and he was rather ashamed of his champion.

Yes, when the hour of battle came, he was almost ashamed to say, "Go it, Figs"; and not a single other [...]

DOBBIN'S FIGHT WITH CUFF

[...] boy in the place uttered that cry for the first two or three rounds of that famous combat, at the commencement of which the scientific Cuff, with a contemptuous smile on his face, and as light and as gay as if he was at a ball, planted his blows upon his adversary, and floored that unlucky champion three times running. At

each fall there was a cheer; and everybody was anxious to have the honour of offering the conqueror a knee.

"What a licking I shall get when it's over," young Osborne thought, picking up his man. "You'd best give in," he said to Dobbin; "it's only a thrashing, Figs, and you know I'm used to it." But Figs, all whose limbs were in a quiver, and whose nostrils were breathing rage, put his little bottle-holder aside, and went in for a fourth time.

As he did not in the least know how to parry the blows that were aimed at himself, and Cuff had begun the attack on the three preceding occasions, without ever allowing his enemy to strike, Figs now determined that he would commence the engagement by a charge on his own part; and accordingly, being a left-handed man, brought that arm into action, and hit out a couple of times with all his might—once at Mr. Cuff's left eye, and once on his beautiful Roman nose.

Cuff went down this time, to the astonishment of the assembly. "Well hit, by Jove," says little Osborne, with the air of a connoisseur, clapping his man on the back. "Give it him with the left, Figs, my boy."

Figs' left made terrific play during the rest of the combat. Cuff went down every time. At the sixth round, there were almost as many fellows shouting out, "Go it, Figs," as there were youths exclaiming, "Go it, Cuffs." At the twelfth round the latter champion was [...]

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

[...] all abroad, as the saying is, and had lost all presence of mind and power of attack or defence. Figs, on the contrary, was as calm as a Quaker. His face being quite pale, his eyes shining open, and a great cut on his under lip bleeding profusely, gave this young fellow a fierce and ghastly air, which perhaps struck terror into many spectators. Nevertheless, his intrepid adversary prepared to close for the thirteenth time. Cuff coming up full of pluck, but quite reeling and groggy, the Fig-merchant put in his left as usual on his adversary's nose, and sent him down for the last time.

"I think *that* will do for him," Figs said, as his opponent dropped as neatly on the green as I have seen Jack Spot's ball plump into the pocket at billiards; and the fact is, when time was called, Mr. Reginald Cuff was not able, or did not choose, to stand up again.

And now all the boys set up such a shout for Figs as would have made you think he had been their darling champion through the whole battle; and as absolutely brought Dr. Swishtail out of his study, curious to know the cause of the uproar. He threatened to flog Figs violently, of course; but Cuff, who had come to himself by this time, and was washing his wounds, stood up and said, "It's my fault, sir—not Figs'—not Dobbin's. I was bullying a little boy; and he served me right." By which magnanimous speech he not only saved his conqueror a whipping, but got back all his ascendancy over the boys which his defeat had nearly cost him.

W. M. THACKERAY, *Vanity Fair*

DOBBIN'S FIGHT WITH CUFF EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Rewrite the following passage in the present tense:

William Dobbin had for once forgotten the world, and was away with Sinbad the Sailor in the Valley of Diamonds, or with Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Peribanou in that delightful cavern where the Prince found her, and whither we should all like to make a tour; when shrill cries, as of a little fellow weeping, woke up his pleasant reverie; and looking up, he saw Cuff before him, belabouring a little boy. It was the little lad who had peached upon him about the grocer's cart; but he bore little malice, not at least towards the young and small.

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Rewrite the following passage, altering the phrasing so as to omit the word 'then':

Thackeray, who was born at Calcutta, was sent to the famous Charterhouse School in London which he nicknamed the "Slaughterhouse." Then he went to Cambridge where he made friends with Tennyson and many others who afterwards became famous. By them he was always affectionately called "Old Thack." Then he went abroad; and then he returned home to enjoy the fortune which his father had left him. Then he lost a great portion of this fortune through gambling and then he realized that he would have to work for his living. Then he set to work and started on his career as a writer. So that what seemed at the time a great disaster was really a blessing both for Thackeray himself and for us who read his books.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Change into direct speech:

- (i) The wags told Dobbin that sugar was ris'.
- (ii) Dobbin reminded Osborne that his father was only a merchant.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

- (iii) Osborne replied that his father was a gentleman and kept his carriage.
- (iv) Cuff said he would like to know why.
- (v) Cuff ordered Osborne to hold out his hand.
- (vi) Dobbin said he would give him the worst thrashing he had ever had in his life.

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Supply descriptive words of your own in the following sentences, afterwards comparing your words with those used by Thackeray:

- (i) He stood there—almost at the bottom of the school—in his——corduroys.
- (ii) The jokes were—and—against him.
- (iii) They considered that the selling of goods by retail was a—and—practice.
- (iv) He marched up with the lower form, a giant amongst them, with——look.
- (v) Little Osborne gasped with wonder and incredulity at seeing this——champion put up suddenly to defend him.
- (vi) Fancy—Goliath when—David stepped forward and claimed a meeting.

(E) ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

- (i) Write the outlines of an imaginary debate, in which Cuff, Osborne, Dobbin, and other boys at the Swishtail Seminary took part, on the subject "What makes a gentleman?"
- (ii) Supply an alternative title to the extract.

(iii) Write a letter from Dr Swishtail to Messrs Dobbin and Rudge, Grocers and Oilmen, Thames Street, London, E.C., requesting a supply of soap and candles for use in the Seminary.

DOBBIN'S FIGHT WITH CUFF

(iv) Find out all you can concerning the Fairy Peribanou, Sinbad the Sailor, the Valley of Diamonds, the Roc, and Prince Ahmed, and write a short account of each.

(v) Write an essay on "Bullies."

(vi) Compile a list of all the schoolboy fights of which you have ever read, and say which account pleases you most.

XIV

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,

No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

GRAY'S ELEGY

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave
Await alike th'inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre;

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th'applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenious shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

GRAY'S ELEGY

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,

With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th'unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th'unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;

Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

THOMAS GRAY

ON A FAVOURITE CAT

ODE ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT

DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD-FISHES

"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
Through 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,

EXTRACTS AND EXERCISES

Nor knew the gulf between—
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled-);
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery
God Some speedy aid to send:—
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard—
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties! undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters, gold!

THOMAS GRAY

EXERCISES

(A) THE USE OF WORDS

Turn into the passive:

- (i) The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.
- (ii) The ploughman leaves the world to darkness and to me.
- (iii) Let not ambition mock their useful toil.
- (iv) One morn I missed him on the customed hill.
- (v) Heaven did a recompense send.
- (vi) Her conscious tail her joy declared.

(B) SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS

Combine the following pairs of sentences by using *for*, *as*, or *because*: [...]

GRAY'S ELEGY & ON A FAVOURITE CAT

[...] (i) The ploughman plods slowly homeward. He is weary.

(ii) The moping owl complains to the moon. Some have molested her ancient solitary reign.

(iii) Nothing shall rouse them from their lowly bed. They are gone beyond recall.

(iv) Knowledge did not unroll her ample page to their eyes. They were poor and had to toil unceasingly.

(v) Some hand has erected a frail memorial. It wished to protect these bones from insult.

(vi) I missed him near his favourite tree. He was dead.

(C) PUNCTUATION

Punctuate the following passage, and supply capital letters where necessary:

while thomas gray was staying with his mother and aunts at stoke poges he began the famous elegy for a time it was not printed but circulated in manuscript

among his friends afterwards however it was brought out in pamphlet form and sold at sixpence unlike old thack who was driven through force of circumstances to write for his living gray had private means and wrote very little he resided in a college in cambridge at one time he became terribly afraid of fire and so that he might be ready at any time he ordered a rope ladder from london some mischievous undergraduates heard of this and one night cried fire when there was no fire gray as they expected let down his ladder and quickly descended into a big tub of cold water which had been placed beneath the poet did not see the joke and angrily moved to another college where strange to say he was nearly burned out in dead earnest.

(D) THE CHOICE OF WORDS

Make a list of all the adjectives with the accompanying nouns which occur in the lines from "Now fades the glimmering land- scape" to "No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed." Notice in each case how apt is the description. You could not change a word without losing something of sound or meaning.