

7. *Postscripts*.—Postscripts are generally indicative of thoughtlessness, and should be avoided, except when necessary for the purpose of mentioning some circumstance that has occurred since the letter has been written. To convey any assurance of regard or affection by means of a postscript is a great impropriety, as appearing to imply that the sentiments are so slightly impressed upon the mind of the writer as to be almost forgotten. There are special circumstances, however, which may render an expression of feeling in a postscript even more impressive than in the body of the letter; but such cases are exceptional, and must be left to the judgment of the writer.

8. *Capitals*.—Capitals should be used cautiously in letter writing. We should certainly not confine the writer of a letter to the rigid rule observed in printed literature, because an important word may sometimes be graced with a capital, which, in a printed form, would begin with a small letter, but an indiscriminate or even frequent use of capitals is a proof of the ignorance of the writer. The name of a person should always commence with a capital, and every fresh paragraph should commence with a capital; beyond this there is little need of their use—strictly speaking, none.

9. *Punctuation*.—Proper punctuation is essential to a correct and regular mode of expression. The best general rule to follow is to place the points where a pause should occur in speaking. Dashes should only be used to mark sudden change in sentiment or in place of parentheses. Correct punctuation not only gives elegance to a composition, but it makes its meaning clear, enforces attention to those words or passages which most require it, and to a great extent, prevents a misunderstanding or wilful misconstruction of the writer's meaning.

10. *Repetition*.—Avoid repetitions; they always offend the judicious ear, and are seldom proper, except when they enforce any particular meaning, or explain it more fully.

11. *Date*.—The date is a matter of great importance, particularly in business letters, therefore, you cannot be too careful to state it in full and correctly. Unless you write from a large city, like New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Boston, or Chicago, you should always mention the State, and generally the county, as there are many post offices of the same name in the United States. If you write from a city, mention the name and the number of the street, or the name of the hotel. With English writers it is customary to put the day before the month in dating a letter, as, 18th of September, instead of September 18th. We deem the former more correct, but custom favours the latter in this country.

12. *How to begin a Letter*.—A letter should be begun about two inches below the top of the paper, and the writer's left hand margin may be about an inch broad. The writer's name should be signed a little distance below the conclusion.

13. *Proper Modes of Address*.—The styles of address are varied to suit the occasion, and the terms of compliment at the close of the letter are always considered as mere courtesy or form; they should not therefore on any occasion be avoided. To a person with whom a writer is not well acquainted, he should say, "Sir," or "Madam," concluding with "Your obedient servant"; to those with whom he is tolerably well acquainted, "Dear Sir," or "Dear Madam," with "Yours faithfully"; and to those with whom he is on more familiar terms, "My dear Sir," or "My dear Madam," with "Yours truly," "Yours very truly," "Yours sincerely," "Yours very sincerely."