"I don't care what kind of type you use for my book," said a myopic author to the publisher, but please print the galley proofs in large type. Perhaps in the future such a request will not sound so ridiculous to those familiar with the printing process. Today, however, type once set is not reset except to correct errors.

Proofreading is an art and a craft. All authors should know the rudiments thereof, though no proofreader expects them to be masters of it. Watch not only for misspelled or incorrect words (often a most elusive error), but also for misplaced or spaced quotation marks and parentheses, and improper paragraphing; and learn to recognize the difference between an en dash—used to separate an interjectional part of a sentence—and an em dash (used commonly between continuing numbers, e.g., pp. 5–10; A.D. 1165–70) and the word-dividing hyphen. Sometimes, too, a letter from a wrong font will creep into the printed text, or a boldface k or d turn up in a mathematical formula. Whatever is underlined in a MS should, of course, be italicized in print. To find the errors overlooked by the proofreader is the author's first problem in proofreading. The second problem is to make corrections using the marks and symbols, devised by professional proofreaders, that any trained typesetter will understand. The third—and most difficult—problem for authors proofreading their own works is to resist the temptation to rewrite in proofs.