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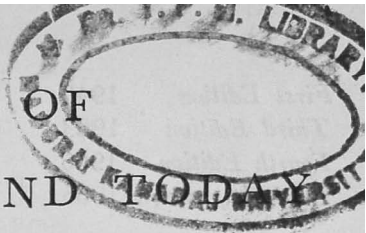
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EDITED BY
M. S. DURAN

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THE NATIONAL PUBLISH

PROSE OF
YESTERDAY AND TODAY



PROSE OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

[KERALA EDITION]

EDITED BY

M. S. DURAISWAMI,

Head of the Dept. of English, Annamalai University



THE NATIONAL PUBLISHING CO.

6, KONDI CHETTY STREET MADRAS-1

First Edition 1949
Third Edition 1963
Fourth Edition 1966
Fifth Impression 1966

Price : Rs. 3/-

Printed at
Sree Ramaprasad Press, 56 Broadway, Madras - I

INTRODUCTION

IN one of the most popular comedies of Molière, the artless hero makes a delightful discovery: that he has been speaking *prose* all his life without knowing it! Poor M. Jourdain is easily pleased: but we must deny him even this modest satisfaction. For, his language is prose only in the sense that it is not poetry. So it is with many of us. But prose is, of course, something more than the absence of poetry. It is an art, and has to be learnt, like any other; and it has a technique and a philosophy of its own.

The art of prose requires certain qualities in writer and reader alike. One is a faculty of consecutive reasoning; for, as Sir Walter Raleigh says somewhere, prose is pedestrian and must plant one foot after another firmly on the ground. Another is a habit of looking at both sides of a question and trying to tell the whole truth, dully perhaps, but dutifully. For hard, clear certitude and sweeping generalisation we must go elsewhere. Above all, there must be a sense of belonging to a civil society. We can readily imagine a poet living on a desert island and writing and singing for his own delight. But a novelist or an essayist who is content to be his own and only reader is obviously a freak. Society gives him the motive as well as matter for his work. The writing of prose is essentially a social activity.

It follows that prose is a product of social life and culture and an index of intellectual maturity. No wonder it develops late in the history of a people. And for the same reason, few writers give of their best in

prose before they reach middle age. We may go further and say that prose is the proper language of the old even as poetry is the spontaneous speech of youth. Poets are said to be cradled in song and to lisp in numbers; but if they live to grow old, many of them come to excel in 'the other harmony of prose'.

These generalities are nowhere better illustrated than in English prose. It arose late in the literary history of the people and was long in the shadow of poetry. At length, less than three hundred years ago, prose came into its own. It learnt certain virtues from the new experimental science of the day. They were veracity and sobriety, clearness and coherence. And when the 'new model' English was employed and exercised by writers like Swift in political and social causes, the art of prose was perfected.

The English are fond of saying that their genius expresses itself in poetry. But the development of their prose argues a certain natural aptitude for this as well. There are some English traits that make for the writing of racy prose. They are a love of compromise, a habit of reticence and a sense of honour. By virtue of these, English prose is rich in common sense; it makes effective use of the typical English device of understatement; and it keeps a sense of proportion because it is able to laugh at itself.

This book is an attempt to bring out the varied interests and functions of English prose. It opens with a confession of faith by Mahatma Gandhi, which is national as well as personal. Another piece by the same author follows, in which the interest is political and the manner polemical. The selection from Katherine Mansfield forms a distinct section by itself and represents the

modern style of narrative prose. Descriptions of strange places and peoples have always been a favourite form of belles lettres. To this kind belongs the extract from *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* which is a classic of the twentieth century. There used to be an old association between literature and science: and scientists were once called philosophers. Wells and Thomson belong to that tradition and must be regarded as masters of descriptive and expository prose. Nothing can be more unlike the impersonal manner of science than the art of the essayist. Its method is subjective and its end is mere pleasure. The essayist may range over the whole of life and treat of all subjects from women to words, but he makes no attempt to inform or convince or persuade. The authors, as in selections VII, VIII and IX, reveal nothing but their own personalities, tastes, whims and opinions. The personal note is heard again in *Kamala Nehru*; but here the interest centres, not in the personality of the writer but in the subject of his lamentation. It is a noble threnody in prose.

With the last piece, we return to public life and the political function of prose. And as this book opens with the credo of the man who is for all time, so it ends with the political creed of the man of tomorrow.

As one looks on the course of English prose and compares the modern with the old masters, one seems to see a decline and decay in the art. The freshness of early prose is gone; gone too are grace and form and finish. The majority of writers seem now to be more ashamed of eloquence, pattern and rhythm than of lapses in grammar of good taste. The change can perhaps be expressed by a formula: from Attic prose to journalese. But this is a superficial reading of the situation. The

fact is that the prose-writer today is trying to tell more truth about life and more of life. And as life is becoming ever more complex, and his task more difficult, he sacrificed everything to truth: he must be expressive at any cost. He prefers, therefore, idiom to grammar, sense to sound and economy to prettiness. Prose achieves now nothing more and nothing less than a troubled beauty which is in keeping with modern life. And in place of the old dulcet music, we have the mixed and many-voiced harmony that Saintsbury used to call the polyphony of prose. The gain is certainly very much greater than the loss.

M. S. D.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE Publishers' thanks for permission to include copyright extracts are due to Messrs. The Navajivan Karyalaya, for (i) 'Voluntary Poverty', (ii) 'Reply to Rabindranath Tagore'; to Messrs. The Society of Authors, Playwrights, etc. and Mr. Middleton Muddy for 'A Cup of Tea' from *The Dove's Nest and Other Stories* by Katherine Mansfield; to Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. for (i) 'What is Life?' (ii) 'Haunts of Life', (iii) 'The Donkey' from *Biology for Everyman* by Arthur Thomson; to The Trustees of the T. E. Lawrence Estate and Messrs. Jonathan Cape Ltd., for (i) 'The Brotherhood of The Desert', (ii) 'A Trial of Strength with an Edomite Winter' from his *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*; to Messrs. W. Heinemann Ltd. and Mr. H. G. Wells for (i) 'The World in Time', (ii) 'Monkeys, Apes, And Sub-Men' from *A Short History of the World*, and to Messrs. Heinemann and Max Beerbohm for 'A Clergyman' from *And Even Now*; to Lord Dunsany, The Royal Society of Literature and Messrs. The Oxford University Press for 'Among the Ruins' from *Essays by Divers Hands*; to Messrs. Hogarth Press Ltd., for 'Professions for Women' from *The Death of the Moth* by Virginia Woolf; to Srijiut Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Messrs. The Signet Press for (i) 'Kamala', (ii) 'Our Marriage and After', (iii) 'The Problem of Human Relations', (iv) 'Christmas', (v) 'Death', (vi) 'The Search for India', (vii) 'Bharat Mata', (viii) 'The Variety and Unity of India', (ix) 'Epilogue' from his *Discovery of India*.



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I
VOLUNTARY POVERTY
BY
MAHATMA GANDHI

[‘*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*’ So runs the proud epitaph on the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul’s Cathedral. So might an epitaph on Mahatma Gandhi run in a wider and deeper sense. He is the architect of the fabric of free India; and all that is purest and best in Indian life bears witness to his labours. The story of his life forms the history of this country. That story has been told many times, but by none so well as by himself. Hence, the value of his speeches and writings is twofold: they are primary sources of history, political and social; they are also records of his inner life.

In one sense, Gandhiji was neither a writer nor an orator. He cared nothing for the *art* of writing or of speaking and never cultivated the graces of style. And he took no pride or pleasure in the mere achieving of expression, the matching of thoughts and fancies with words and images. He was, nevertheless, one of the greatest writers and speakers of his time. The secret of his success in either capacity must be sought in his character and soul-force. As his whole life was an ‘experiment with truth’, that virtue passed into his speech. And we seem to hear in it the very voice of Truth, unafraid and unimpassioned. He expressed himself plainly, pointedly and economically because he meant business and his business was ‘fishing for men’s souls’. Identifying himself with ‘the lowliest and the lost’, he cast off the finery of learning and eloquence. Above all, he was the champion and exponent of great causes and those causes gave wings to his words.

Gandhiji followed the old maxim that 'we should think with the wise and speak like the common people'. He wrote, as he spoke, a plain, precise and idiomatic English, having little use for abstract words, learned terms and figures of speech. Even at his quietest, however, he cannot wholly hide a gift of happy and memorable phrasing. When he is deeply moved, the diction and the cadence remind the reader of the Bible. In his normal writing, the sentences tend to be either short and aphoristic or long and loosely co-ordinated: both of which are marks of the habitual public speaker. Like an orator, again, he is not afraid of repeating himself; in fact, he knows the value of apt iteration. But neither this nor any other manner hardens into a mannerism. It may be safely said that the only peculiarity of Gandhiji's style is that it has no peculiarities.]

WHEN I found myself drawn into the political coil, I asked myself what was necessary for me in order to remain absolutely untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain I do not propose to take you through all the details of that act or performance, interesting and, to me, sacred though they are—but I can only tell you that it was a difficult struggle in the beginning and it was a wrestle with my wife and—as I can vividly recall—with my children also. Be that as it may, I came definitely to the conclusion that, if I had to serve the people in whose midst my life was cast and of whose difficulties I was witness from day to day, I must discard all wealth, all possession.

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I cannot tell you with truth that, when this belief came to me, I discarded everything immediately. I must confess to you that progress at first was slow. And now, as I recall those days of struggle, I remember that it was also painful in the beginning. But, as days went by, I saw that I had to throw overboard many other things which I used to consider as mine, and a time came when it became a matter of positive joy to give up those things. And one after another then, by almost geometric progression, the things slipped away from me. And, as I am describing my experiences, I can say a great burden fell off my shoulders, and I felt that I could now walk with ease and do my work also in the service of my fellow-men with great comfort and still greater joy. The possession of anything then became a troublesome thing and a burden.

Exploring the cause of that joy, I found that, if I kept anything as my own, I had to defend it against the whole world. I found also that there were many people who did not have the thing, although they wanted it; and I would have to seek police assistance also if hungry famine-stricken people, finding me in a lonely place, wanted not merely to divide the thing with me but to dispossess me. And I said to myself: if they want it and would take, they do so not from any mali-

cious motive, but they would do it because theirs was a greater need than mine.

And then I said to myself: possession seems to me to be a crime: I can only possess certain things when I know that others, who also want to possess similar things, are able to do so. But we know—every one of us can speak from experience—that such a thing is an impossibility. Therefore, the only thing that can be possessed by all is non-possession, not to have anything whatsoever. In other words, a willing surrender.

You might then well say to me: but you are keeping many things on your body even as you are speaking about voluntary poverty and not possessing anything whatsoever! And your taunt would be right, if you only superficially understood the meaning of the thing that I am speaking about just now. It is really the spirit behind. Whilst you have the body, you will have to have something to clothe the body with also. But then you will take for the body not all that you can get, but the least possible, the least with which you can do. You will take for your house not many mansions, but the least cover that you can do with. And similarly with reference to your food and so on.

Now you see that there is here a daily conflict between what you and we understand today as

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civilization and the state which I am picturing to you as a state of bliss and a desirable state. On the other hand, the basis of culture for civilization is understood to be the multiplication of all your wants. If you have one room, you will desire to have two rooms, three rooms, the more the merrier. And similarly, you will want to have as much furniture as you can put in your house, and so on, endlessly. And the more you possess, the better culture you represent, or some such thing. I am putting it, perhaps, not as nicely as the advocates of that civilization would put it, but I am putting it to you in the manner I understand it.

And, on the other hand, you find the less you possess, the less you want, the better you are. And better for what? Not for enjoyment of this life, but for enjoyment of personal service to your fellow-beings; service to which you dedicate yourselves, body, soul and mind...even the body is not yours. It has been given to you as a temporary possession, and it can also be taken from you by Him who has given it to you.

Therefore, having the absolute conviction in me, such must be my constant desire that this body also may be surrendered at the will of God, and while it is at my disposal, must be used not for dissipation, not for self-indulgence, not for pleasure, but merely for service and service the

whole of your waking hours. And if this is true with reference to the body, how much more with reference to clothing and other things that we use?

And those who have actually followed out this vow of voluntary poverty to the fullest extent possible (to reach absolute perfection is an impossibility, but the fullest possible extent for a human being) those who have reached the ideal of that state, they testify that when you dispossess yourself of everything you have, you really possess all the treasures of the world. In other words, you really get all that is in reality necessary for you, everything. If food is necessary, food will come to you.

Many of you are men and women of prayer, and I have heard from very many Christian lips that they got their food in answer to prayer, that they get everything in answer to prayer. I believe it. But I want you to come with me a step further and believe with me that those who voluntarily give up everything on earth, including the body—that is to say, have readiness to give up everything (and they must examine themselves critically, rigidly, and give always an adverse judgment against themselves)—those who will follow this out will really find that they are never in want

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Want must not again be taken literally. God is the hardest task-master I have known on this earth, and He tries you through and through. And when you find that your faith is failing or your body is failing you, and you are sinking, He comes to your assistance somehow or other and proves to you that you must not lose your faith and that He is always at your beck and call, but on His terms, not on your terms. So I have found. I cannot really recall a single instance when, at the eleventh hour, He has forsaken me

II

REPLY TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

BY

MAHATMA GANDHI

THE Bard of Shantiniketan has contributed to the *Modern Review* a brilliant essay on the present movement. It is a series of word pictures which he alone can paint. It is an eloquent protest against authority, slave mentality or whatever description one gives of blind acceptance of a passing mania whether out of fear or hope. It is a welcome and wholesome reminder to all workers that we must not be impatient, we must not impose authority no matter how great. The Poet tells us summarily to reject anything and everything that does not appeal to our reason or heart. If we would gain *Swaraj*, we must stand for Truth as we know it at any cost. A reformer who is enraged because his message is not accepted, must retire to the forest to learn how to watch, wait, and pray. With all this one must heartily agree, and the Poet deserves the thanks of his countrymen for standing up for Truth and Reason. There

is no doubt that our last state will be worse than our first if we surrender our reason into somebody's keeping. And I would feel extremely sorry to discover that the country had unthinkingly and blindly followed all I had said or done. I am quite conscious of the fact that blind surrender to love is often more mischievous than a forced surrender to the lash of the tyrant. There is hope for the slave of the brute, none for that of love. Love is needed to strengthen the weak, love becomes tyrannical when it extracts obedience from an unbeliever. To mutter a *mantra* without knowing its value is unmanly. It is good therefore that the Poet has invited all who are slavishly mimicking the call of the *charka* boldly to declare their revolt. His essay serves as warning to us all who, in our impatience, are betrayed into intolerance or even violence against those who differ from us. I regard the Poet as a sentinel warning us against the approach of enemies called Bigotry, Lethargy, Intolerance, Ignorance, Inertia, and other members of that brood.

But whilst I agree with all that the Poet has said as to the necessity of watchfulness lest we cease to think, I must not be understood to endorse the proposition that there is any such blind obedience on a large scale in the country today. I have again and again appealed to reason,

and let me assure him that, if happily the country has come to believe in the spinning-wheel as the giver of plenty, it has done so after laborious thinking, after great hesitation. I am not sure that even now educated India has assimilated the truth underlying the *charka*. He must not mistake the surface dirt for the substance underneath. Let him go deeper and see for himself whether the *charka* has been accepted from blind faith or from reasoned necessity.

I do indeed ask the Poet and the Sage to spin the wheel as a sacrament. When there is war, the poet lays down the lyre, the lawyer his law reports, the school-boy his books. The Poet will sing the true note after the war is over, the lawyer will have occasion to go to his law books when people have time to fight among themselves. When a house is on fire, all the inmates go out and each one takes up a bucket to quench the fire. When all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible to me is to feed the hungry. It is my conviction that India is a house on fire, because its manhood is being daily scorched; it is dying of hunger, because it has no work to buy food with. Khulna is starving, not because the people cannot work but because they have no work. The Ceded Districts are passing successively through a fourth famine. Orissa is a land suffering

from chronic famine. Our cities are not India. India lives in her seven and a half lakhs of villages and the cities live upon the villages. They do not bring their wealth from other countries. The city people are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America, and Japan. The cities have co-operated with the latter in the bleeding process that has gone on for the past two hundred years. It is my belief based on experience that India is daily growing poorer. The circulation about her feet and legs has almost stopped. And if we do not take care, she will collapse altogether.

To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages. God created man to work for his food and said that those who are without work were thieves. Eighty per cent of India are compulsorily thieves half the year. Is it any wonder if India has become one vast prison? Hunger is the argument that is driving India to the spinning-wheel. The call of the spinning-wheel is the noblest of all, because it is the call of love. And love is *Swaraj*. The spinning-wheel will curb the mind when time spent on necessary physical labour can be said to do so. We must think of the millions who are today less than animals, who are almost in a dying state. The spinning-wheel is the reviving draught for millions of our dying coun-

trymen and countrywomen. "Why should I, who have no need to work for food, spin?" may be the question asked: Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoliation of my countrymen. Trace the course of every pice that finds its way into your pocket and you will realise the truth of what I write. *Swaraj* has no meaning for the millions if they do not know how to employ their enforced idleness. The attainment of this *Swaraj* is possible within a short time, and it is so possible only by the revival of the spinning-wheel.

I do want growth, I do want self-determination, I do want freedom, but I want all these for the soul. I doubt if the steel age is an advance upon the flint age. I am indifferent. It is the evolution of the soul to which the intellect and all our faculties have to be devoted. I have no difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man armoured after the modern style making some lasting and new discovery for mankind, but I have less difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man having nothing but a bit of flint and a nail for lighting his path or his match-lock ever singing new hymns of praise and delivering to an aching world a message of peace and goodwill upon earth. A plea for the spinning-wheel is a plea for recognising the dignity of labour.

I claim that in losing the spinning-wheel we lost our left lung. We are, therefore, suffering from galloping consumption. The restoration of the wheel arrests the progress of the fell disease. There are certain things which all must do in all climes. The spinning-wheel is the thing which all must turn in the Indian clime for the transition stage at any rate and the vast majority must for all time.

It was our love of foreign cloth that ousted the wheel from its position of dignity. Therefore I consider it a sin to wear foreign cloth. I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour. It is sinful to eat American wheat and let my neighbour, the grain dealer, starve for want of custom. Similarly it is sinful for me to wear the latest finery of Regent Street when I know that if I had but worn the things woven by the neighbouring spinners and weavers, that would have clothed me, and fed and clothed them. On the knowledge of my sin bursting upon me, I must consign the foreign garments to the flames and thus purify myself and

thenceforth rest content with the rough Khadi made by my neighbours. On knowing that my neighbours may not, having given up the occupation, take kindly to the spinning-wheel, I must take it up myself and thus make it popular.

I venture to suggest to the Poet that the clothes I ask him to burn must be and are his. If they had, to his knowledge, belonged to the poor or the ill-clad, he would long ago have restored to the poor what was theirs. In burning my foreign clothes I burn my shame. I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need, instead of giving them work which they sorely need. I will not commit the sin of becoming their patron, but on learning that I had assisted in impoverishing them, I would give them a privileged position and give them neither crumbs nor cast-off clothing, but the best of my food and clothes and associate myself with them in work.

Nor is the scheme of Non-Co-operation or *Swadeshi* an exclusive doctrine. My modesty has prevented me from declaring from the house-top that the message of Non-Co-operation, non-violence, and *Swadeshi* is a message to the world. It must fall flat if it does not bear fruit in the soil where it has been delivered. At the present moment India has nothing to share with the world, save her degradation, pauperism, and plagues. Is

it her ancient Shastras that we should send to the world? Well, they are printed in many editions, and an incredulous and idolatrous world refuses to look at them, because we, the heirs and custodians, do not live them. Before therefore I can think of sharing with the world, I must possess. Our non-co-operation is neither with the English nor with the West. Our non-co-operation is with the system the English have established, with the material civilization and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak. Our non-co-operation is a retirement within ourselves. Our non-co-operation is a refusal to co-operate with the English administrators on their own terms. We say to them: "Come and co-operate with us on our terms and it will be well for us, for you, and the world." We must refuse to be lifted off our feet. A drowning man cannot save others. In order to be fit to save others we must try to save ourselves. Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian. India must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. The mice which helplessly find themselves between the cat's teeth, acquire no merit from their enforced sacrifice. True to his potential instinct, the Poet lives for the morrow and would have us do likewise. He presents to our admiring gaze the

beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flown during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who, for want of strength, could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realised. I found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem: invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow.

III

A CUP OF TEA

BY

KATHERINE MANSFIELD

[‘I feel’, wrote KATHERINE MANSFIELD in her intimate *Journal*, ‘I feel always trembling on the brink of poetry.’ She had the poet’s way of looking at life and the poet’s power of feeling its beauty and mystery. She wrote poetry from time to time and enjoyed it; but her natural language was not verse. It was prose ‘shot’ with poetry, ‘a kind of special prose’ as she called it. We find it in her *Journal*, her Scrap-book and above all in her short stories. Katherine Mansfield was a poet who chose the short story for her medium.

In a sense, there was no choice. Story-telling came to her naturally, unavoidably and very early in life. She was nine when her first story was published. The themes and the inspiration for her early work were given by New Zealand. Katherine Beauchamp was born as Wellington on the 16th of October 1888. She came of a hardy pioneer stock which abounded in character and personality. Her earliest years were spent at Karori (near Wellington), where she observed and loved nature in its fresh, virginal beauty. Out of that home, those family traditions and those impressions of nature, she made up some of her latest and best stories.

As New Zealand gave her the stuff and the spirit of her work, so London taught her how to write. She was at Queen’s College, Harley Street, for some three years; and there she discovered and developed her powers. It was at Queen’s College, too, while she was learning to write that, she first called herself Katherine Mansfield after her

KATHERINE MANSFIELD

grandmother, Margaret Mansfield Dyer. Her first collection of short stories, *In a German Pension*, came out in 1911 and was well received.

For the next few years, she wrote stories and poems for the periodicals that were being edited by her friend, J. Middleton Murry. *Bliss*, a volume of short stories, was published in 1920; and it established her reputation. But she herself was not satisfied; and she set herself bigger tasks and higher standards. She would make her art a simple, true and pure expression of life. The first fruits of this change and growth are to be seen in *The Garden Party* (1922), the last book published in her life-time. She died in 1923, after five years of illness and pain bravely borne. *The Dove's Nest* was collected and published in 1923, another volume of stories, *Something Childish*, in 1924, her *Journal* in 1927 and her *Letters* in 1928.

The rare quality of her mind and art was recognized in her own day: and many young writers came under her influence. Her work showed that it was possible to make familiar and common things poetical. Out of such unpromising stuff as a doll's house or a garden party, she wove the rainbow beauty of her best stories. She observed life sharply and joyfully like a child and drew out, like a poet, the hidden significance of things. It often happens that some apparently trivial object or detail becomes the symbol of an idea and suggests the theme or the meaning of a whole story.

In this, as in other ways, Katherine Mansfield's art is the art of suggestion. A favourite device of hers is to present a certain situation or moment in the life of her characters, suggest its possibilities and then leave it to the reader to develop them. To an imaginative reader, it is at once a challenge and a compliment.

Katherine Mansfield has been compared to this writer and that; to Tchekhov, the great Russian master, for example.

But the essential quality of her work is unique; it is the fine flowering of a singularly pure and intense personality. The master impulse of her nature was to face life unafraid and tell the truth, which required vision and courage. The courage and the vision that were hers in life have passed into her writings. In them, we realize, as never before, the beauty and blessing of life, and also its precarious estate. We are haunted at times by a sense of evil, as though some mocking malignant power were waiting to trample on men's lives and hearts. But the shadows never prevail and in the clear light of Katherine Mansfield's faith, we see that life is good and worth living.]

ROSEMARY FELL was not exactly beautiful. No, you couldn't have called her beautiful. Pretty? Well, if you took her to pieces..... But why be so cruel as to take anyone to pieces? She was young, brilliant, extremely modern, exquisitely well dressed, amazingly well read in the newest of the new books, and her parties were the most delicious mixture of the really important people and artists—quaint creatures, discoveries of hers, some of them too terrifying for words, but others quite presentable and amusing.

Rosemary had been married two years. She had a duck of a boy. No, not Peter—Michael. And her husband absolutely adored her. They were rich, really rich, not just comfortably well off, which is odious and stuffy and sounds like one's grandparents. But if Rosemary wanted to shop she would go to Paris as you and I would go to Bond Street. If she wanted to buy flowers,

the car pulled up at that perfect shop in Regent Street, and Rosemary inside the shop just gazed in her dazzled, rather exotic way, and said: 'I want those and those and those. Give me four bunches of those. And that jar of roses. Yes, I'll have all the roses in the jar.' No, no lilac. I hate lilac. It's got no shape.' The attendant bowed and put the lilac out of sight, as though this was only too true; lilac was dreadfully shapeless. 'Give me those stumpy little tulips. Those red and white ones.' And she was followed to the car by a thin shop-girl staggering under an immense white paper armful that looked like a baby in long clothes.....

One winter afternoon she had been buying something in a little antique shop in Curzon Street. It was a shop she liked. For one thing, one usually had it to oneself. And then the man who kept it was ridiculously fond of serving her. He beamed whenever she came in. He clasped his hands; he was so gratified he could scarcely speak. Flattery, of course. All the same, there was something.....

'You see, madam,' he would explain in his low respectful tone, 'I love my things. I would rather not part with them than sell them to someone who does not appreciate them, who has not that fine feeling which is so rare....' And, breathing

deeply he unrolled a tiny square of blue velvet and pressed it on the glass counter with his pale finger-tips.

Today it was a little box. He had been keeping it for her. He had shown it to nobody as yet. An exquisite little enamel box with a glaze so fine it looked as though it had been baked in cream. On the lid a minute creature stood under a flowery tree, and a more minute creature still had her arms round his neck. Her hat, really no bigger than a geranium petal, hung from a branch; it had green ribbons. And there was a pink cloud like watchful cherub floating above their heads. Rosemary took her hands out of her long gloves. She always took off her gloves to examine such things. Yes, she liked it very much. She loved it; it was a great duck. She must have it. And, turning the creamy box, opening and shutting it, she couldn't help noticing how charming her hands were against the blue velvet. The shopman, in some dim cavern of his mind, may have dared to think so too. For he took a pencil, leant over the counter, and his pale bloodless fingers crept timidly towards those rosy, flashing ones, as he murmured gently: 'If I may venture to point out to madam, the flowers on the little lady's bodice.'

'Charming!' Rosemary admired the flowers. But what was the price? For a moment the shop-

man did not seem to hear. Then a murmur reached her. 'Twenty-eight guineas, madam.'

'Twenty-eight guineas.' Rosemary gave no sign. She laid the little box down; she buttoned her gloves again. Twenty-eight guineas. Even if one is rich.... She looked vague. She stared at a plum tea-kettle like a plump hen above the shopman's head, and her voice was dreamy as she answered: 'Well, keep it for me—will you? I'll.....'

But the shopman had already bowed as though keeping it for her was all any human being could ask. He would be willing, of course, to keep it for her for ever.

The discreet door shut with a click. She was outside on the step, gazing at the winter afternoon. Rain was falling, and with the rain it seemed the dark came too, spinning down like ashes. There was a cold bitter taste in the air, and the new-lighted lamps looked sad. Sad were the lights in the houses opposite. Dimly they burned as if regretting something. And people hurried by, hidden under their hateful umbrellas. Rosemary felt a strange pang. She pressed her muff against her breast; she wished she had the little box, too, to cling to. Of course, the car was there. She'd only to cross the pavement. But still she waited. There are moments, horrible moments

in life, when one emerges from shelter and looks out. and it's awful. One oughtn't to give way to them. One ought to go home and have an extra-special tea. But at the very instant of thinking that, a young girl, thin, dark, shadowy—where had she come from?—was standing at Rosemary's elbow and a voice like a sigh, almost like a sob, breathed: 'Madam, may I speak to you a moment?'

'Speak to me?' Rosemary turned. She saw a little battered creature with enormous eyes, some one quite young, no older than herself, who clutched at her coat-collar with reddened hands, and shivered as though she had just come out of the water.

'M-Madam,' stammered the voice. 'Would you let me have the price of a cup of tea?'

'A cup of tea?' There was something simple, sincere in that voice; it wasn't in the least the voice of a beggar. 'Then have you no money at all?' asked Rosemary.

'None, madam,' came the answer.

'How extraordinary!' Rosemary peered through the dusk, and the girl gazed back at her. How more than extraordinary! And suddenly it seemed to Rosemary such an adventure. It was like something out of a novel by Dostoevsky, this meeting in the dusk. Supposing she took the girl

home? Supposing she did do one of those things she was always reading about or seeing on the stage, what would happen? It would be thrilling. And she heard herself saying afterwards to the amazement of her friends: 'I simply took her home with me,' as she stepped forward and said to that dim person beside her: 'Come home to tea with me.'

The girl drew back startled. She even stopped shivering for a moment. Rosemary put out a hand and touched her arm. 'I mean it,' she said, smiling. And she felt how simple and kind her smile was. 'Why won't you? Do. Come home with me now in my car and have tea.'

'You—you don't mean it, madam,' said the girl, and there was pain in her voice.

'But I do,' cried Rosemary. 'I want you to. To please me. Come along.'

The girl put her fingers to her lips and her eyes devoured Rosemary. 'You're—you're not taking me to the police station?' she stammered.

'The police station!' Rosemary laughed out. 'Why should I be so cruel? No, I only want to make you warm and to hear—anything you care to tell me.'

Hungry people are easily led. The footman held the door of the car open, and a moment later they were skimming through the dusk.

‘There!’ said Rosemary. She had a feeling of triumph as she slipped her hand through the velvet strap. She could have said, ‘Now I’ve got you,’ as she gazed at the little captive she had netted. But of course she meant it kindly. Oh, more than kindly. She was going to prove to this girl that—wonderful things did happen in life, that—fairy godmothers were real, that—rich people had hearts, and that women *were* sisters. She turned impulsively, saying: ‘Don’t be frightened. After all, why shouldn’t you come back with me? We’re both women. If I’m the more fortunate, you ought to expect.....’

But happily at that moment, for she didn’t know how the sentence was going to end, the car stopped. The bell was rung, the door opened, and with a charming, protecting, almost embracing movement, Rosemary drew the other into the hall. Warmth, softness, light, a sweet scent, all those things so familiar to her she never even thought about them, she watched that other receive. It was fascinating. She was like the rich little girl in her nursery with all the cupboards to open, all the boxes to unpack.

‘Come, come upstairs,’ said Rosemary, longing to begin to be generous. ‘Come up to my room.’ And, besides, she wanted to spare this poor little thing from being stared at by the servants; she

decided as they mounted the stairs she would not even ring for Jeanne, but take off her things by herself. The great thing was to be natural!

And 'There!' cried Rosemary again, as they reached her beautiful big bedroom with the curtains drawn, the fire leaping on her wonderful lacquer furniture, her gold cushions and the primrose and blue rugs.

The girl stood just inside the door; she seemed dazed. But Rosemary didn't mind that.

'Come and sit down,' she cried, dragging her big chair up to the fire, 'in this comfy chair. Come and get warm. You look so dreadfully cold.'

'I daren't, madam,' said the girl, and she edged backwards.

'Oh, please,'—Rosemary ran forward—'you mustn't be frightened, you mustn't really. Sit down, and when I've taken off my things we shall go into the next room and have tea and be cosy. Why are you afraid?' And gently she half pushed the thin figure into its deep cradle.

But there was no answer. The girl stayed just as she had been put, with her hands by her sides and her mouth slightly open. To be quite sincere, she looked rather stupid. But Rosemary wouldn't acknowledge it. She leant over her, saying: 'Won't you take off your hat? Your pretty hair is wet. And one is so much more comfortable without a

hat, isn't one?'

There was a whisper that sounded like 'Very good, madam,' and the crushed hat was taken off.

'And let me help you off with your coat, too,' said Rosemary.

The girl stood up. But she held on to the chair with one hand and let Rosemary pull. It was quite an effort. The other scarcely helped her at all. She seemed to stagger like a child, and the thought came and went through Rosemary's mind, that if people wanted helping they must respond a little, just a little, otherwise it became very difficult indeed. And what was she to do with the coat now? She left it on the floor, and the hat too. She was just going to take a cigarette off the mantelpiece when the girl said quickly, but so lightly and strangely: 'I'm very sorry, madam, but I'm going to faint. I shall go off, madam, if I don't have something.'

'Good heavens, how thoughtless I am!' Rosemary rushed to the bell.

'Tea! Tea at once! And some brandy immediately!'

The maid was gone again, but the girl almost cried out. 'No, I don't want no brandy. I never drink brandy. It's a cup of tea I want, madam.' And she burst into tears.

It was a terrible and fascinating moment. Rosemary knelt beside her chair.

‘Don’t cry, poor little thing,’ she said. ‘Don’t cry.’ And she gave the other her lace handkerchief. She really was touched beyond words. She put her arm round those thin, bird-like shoulders.

Now at last the other forgot to be shy, forgot everything except that they were both women, and gasped out: ‘I can’t go on no longer like this. I can’t bear it. I can’t bear it. I shall do away with myself. I can’t bear no more.’

‘You shan’t have to. I’ll look after you. Don’t cry any more. Don’t you see what a good thing it was that you met me? We’ll have tea and you’ll tell me everything. And I shall arrange something. I promise. *Do* stop crying. It’s so exhausting. Please!’

The other did stop just in time for Rosemary to get up before the tea came. She had the table placed between them. She plied the poor little creature with everything, all the sandwiches, all the bread and butter, and every time her cup was empty she filled it with tea, cream and sugar. People always said sugar was so nourishing. As for herself she didn’t eat; she smoked and looked away tactfully so that the other should not be shy.

And really the effect of that slight meal was marvellous. When the tea-table was carried away a new being, a light, frail creature with tangled hair, dark lips, deep, lighted eyes, lay back in the big chair in a kind of sweet languor, looking at the blaze. Rosemary lit a fresh cigarette ; it was time to begin.

‘And when did you have your last meal?’ she asked softly.

But at that moment the door-handle turned.

‘Rosemary, may I come in?’ It was Philip.

‘Of course.’

He came in. ‘Oh, I’m so sorry,’ he said, and stopped and stared.

‘It’s quite all right,’ said Rosemary smiling. ‘This is my friend, Miss——’

‘Smith, madam,’ said the languid figure, who was strangely still and unafraid.

‘Smith, said Rosemary. ‘We are going to have a little talk.’

‘Oh, yes,’ said Philip. ‘Quite,’ and his eye caught sight of the coat and hat on the floor. He came over to the fire and turned his back to it. ‘It’s a beastly afternoon,’ he said curiously, still looking at that listless figure, looking at its hands and boots, and then at Rosemary again.

‘Yes, isn’t it?’ said Rosemary enthusiastically. ‘Vile.’

Philip smiled his charming smile. 'As a matter of fact,' said he, 'I wanted you to come into the library for a moment. Would you? Will Miss Smith excuse us?'

The big eyes were raised to him, but Rosemary answered for her. 'Of course she will.' And they went out of the room together.

'I say,' said Philip, when they were alone. 'Explain. Who is she? What does it all mean?'

Rosemary, laughing, leaned against the door and said: 'I picked her up in Curzon Street. Really. She's a real pick-up. She asked me for the price of a cup of tea, and I brought her home with me.'

'But what on earth are you going to do with her?' cried Philip.

'Be nice to her,' said Rosemary quickly. 'Be frightfully nice to her. Look after her. I don't know how. We haven't talked yet. But show her—treat her—make her feel—'

'My darling girl,' said Philip, 'You're quite mad, you know. It simply can't be done.'

'I knew you'd say that,' retorted Rosemary. 'Why not? I want to. Isn't that a reason? And besides, one's always reading about these things. I decided—'

'But,' said Philip slowly, and he cut the end of a cigar, 'she's so astonishingly pretty.'

'Pretty?' Rosemary was so surprised that she

blushed. 'Do you think so? I—I hadn't thought about it.'

"Good lord!" Philip struck a match. 'She's absolutely lovely. Look again, my child. I was bowled over when I came into your room just now. However...I think you're making a ghastly mistake. Sorry, darling, if I'm crude and all that. But let me know if Miss Smith is going to dine with us in time for me to look up *The Milliner's Gazette*.'

'You absurd creature!' said Rosemary, and she went out of the library, but not back to her bedroom. She went to her writing-room and sat down at her desk. Pretty! Absolutely lovely! Bowled over! Her heart beat like a heavy bell! Pretty! Lovely! She drew her cheque-book towards her. But no, cheques would be of no use, of course. She opened a drawer and took out five pound notes, looked at them, put two back, and holding the three squeezed in her hand, she went back to her bedroom.

Half an hour later Philip was still in the library, when Rosemary came in.

'I only wanted to tell you,' said she, and she leaned against the door again and looked at him with her dazzled exotic gaze, 'Miss Smith won't dine with us tonight.'

Philip put down the paper. 'Oh, what's

happened? Previous engagement?'

Rosemary came over and sat down on his knee. 'She insisted on going,' said she, 'so I gave the poor little thing a present of money. I couldn't keep her against her will, could I?' she added softly.

Rosemary had just done her hair, darkened her eyes a little, and put on her pearls. She put up her hands and touched Philip's cheeks.

'Do you like me?' said she, and her tone, sweet, husky, troubled him.

'I like you awfully,' he said, and he held her tighter. 'Kiss me.'

There was a pause.

Then Rosemary said dreamily, 'I saw a fascinating little box today. It cost twenty-eight guineas. May I have it?'

Philip jumped her on his knee. 'You may' little wasteful one,' said he.

But that was not really what Rosemary wanted to say.

'Philip,' she whispered, and she pressed his head against her bosom, 'am I *pretty*?'

IV

SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM

BY

T. E. LAWRENCE

[Much may be forgiven to the first World War, because it brought forth a hero and an epic: Lawrence of Arabia and his SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM. THOMAS EDWARD LAWRENCE (1888-1935) proved himself a soldier of genius but, like some great fighters—Caesar for example—he was essentially a scholar and thinker. He was a research fellow of All Souls College, Oxford; and he accompanied the British Museum expedition that excavated the relics of a lost civilization at Carchemish. He was gaining experience and storing knowledge all the time. Even his field archaeology helped him later on; and he was a master of the theory and the history of war. And then he had a passion for learning by doing things and could turn his hand to a variety of jobs, from driving a plane to vetting a camel. Above all, he had a personality that inspired love and loyalty.]

His opportunity came when he entered the Intelligence Department of the English army in Egypt. The war had been going on for two years and going none too well for the Allies. It occurred to some Englishmen, one of whom was Lawrence and another Lord Kitchener, that they could yet win the war if they could rouse the Arabs to revolt against Turkey. Lawrence had travelled in the Near East before the war and studied the land and the people. He believed in the Arabs and liked them and wanted to help them while helping England. When England promised material help, the Arabs rose under their religious leader, the Sheriff of Mecca, and his son Feisal. Armed with elastic powers, Lawrence threw himself into the task of guiding and inspiring the Arab revolt. He lived among the

Arabs as a comrade in arms, adopting their way of life and winning their confidence and love. Under his guidance, the revolt in the desert became a guerilla war and distracted and wore out the Turks. And when General Allenby launched his offensive from Palestine in the autumn of 1918, the Arabs rolled up the Turks from the south; and the combined forces entered Damascus. The war was over; and Lawrence, seeing his mission accomplished, retired from the scene.

But that was not the end of the story. At the Peace Conference, the Allies refused to honour the pledges he had given to the Arabs. Lawrence felt that he as well as they had been betrayed. In search of work and forgetfulness, he took service as a private in the Royal Air Force and called himself T. E. Shaw. He was, however, pursued and pestered by his own fame. He had already become a legend when he died in 1935.

In the years 1919-1920, while he was critical and rather bitter about the war, he wrote an account of his own part in it and called it *SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM*, in memory of a book he had once projected and failed to write. He would have us 'take it as a personal narrative, pieced out of memory'. It often seemed to him during the two years' fighting (1917-1918) that he split into two and that while one part of him was toiling in the dust and heat, the other looked on from above, open-eyed, detached, amused. This division in himself explains the peculiar quality of *SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM*: it is at once sympathetic and critical. It tells the story of the revolt in the desert with the 'large utterance' of an epic. The narrative is noble and spacious; the characters come to life in a few strokes; and certain scenes and episodes lodge themselves in the memory. At the same time, we are invited to consider the meaning of this war and all wars. In that fiery ordeal, the very soul of Arabia and the genius of the people come to the surface and lie open to view. To the Arabs perhaps, and to Lawrence certainly, the war meant an almost mystical experience: the spirit was

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liberated and transfigured even while the body was battered and broken. SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM is thus not only an epic story but an attempt at a philosophy of war and a moving human document.

From it we can draw the features of a portrait of this modern hero. The sensitive scholar, with his artistic tastes, was a fanatic in his devotion to ideas and pursued them with a will of iron and an inviolate integrity. He was himself greater than anything he saw or celebrated.]

(1) THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE DESERT

As we went, some little puffs of dust scurried into the eye of the wind. Auda said they were ostriches. A man ran up to us with two great ivory eggs. We settled to breakfast on this bounty of the Biseita, and looked for fuel; but in twenty minutes found only a wisp of grass. The barren desert was defeating us. The baggage train passed, and my eye fell on the loads of blasting gelatine. We broached a packet, shredding it carefully into a fire beneath the egg, propped on stones, till the cookery was pronounced complete. Nasir and Nesib, really interested, dismounted to scoff at us. Auda drew his silver-hilted dagger and chipped the top of the first egg. A stink like a pestilence went across our party. We fled to a clean spot, rolling the second egg hot before us with gentle kicks. It was fresh enough, and hard as a stone. We dug out its contents with the dagger on to the flint flakes which were our

platters, and ate it piecemeal; persuading even Nasir, who in his life before had never fallen so low as egg-meat, to take his share. The general verdict was: tough and strong, but good in the Biseita.

Zaal saw an oryx; stalked it on foot, and killed it. The better joints were tied upon the baggage camels for the next halt, and our march continued. Afterwards the greedy Howeitat saw more oryx in the distance and went after the beasts, who foolishly ran a little; then stood still and stared till the men were near, and, too late, ran away again. Their white shining bellies betrayed them; for, by the magnification of the mirage, they winked each move to us from afar.

I was too weary, and too little sporting, to go out of the straight way for all the rare beasts in the world; so I rode after the caravan, which my camel overhauled quickly with her longer stride. At the tail of it were my men, walking. They feared that some of their animals would be dead before evening, if the wind blew stronger, but were leading them by hand in hope of getting them in. Only Gasim was not there; they thought him among the Howeitat, for his surlines offended the laughing soldiery and kept him commonly with the Beduin, who were more of his kidney.

There was no one behind, so I rode forward.

wishing to see how his camel was: and at last found it, riderless, being led by one of the Howeitat. His saddle-bags were on it, and his rifle and his food, but he himself nowhere; gradually it dawned on us that the miserable man was lost. This was a dreadful business, for in the haze and mirage the caravan could not be seen two miles, and on the iron ground it made no tracks: afoot he would never overtake us.

Everyone had marched on, thinking him elsewhere in our loose line; but much time had passed and it was nearly midday, so he must be miles back. His loaded camel was proof that he had not been forgotten asleep at our night halt. The Ageyl ventured that perhaps he had dozed in the saddle and fallen, stunning or killing himself: or perhaps someone of the party had borne him a grudge. Anyway they did not know. He was an ill-natured stranger, no charge on any of them and they did not greatly care.

True: but it was true also that Mohammed, his countryman and fellow, who was technically his road-companion, knew nothing of the desert, had a foundered camel, and could not turn back for him.

If I sent him, it would be murder. That shifted the difficulty to my shoulders. The Howeitat, who would have helped, were away in the mirage

out of sight, hunting or scouting. Ibn Dgheithir's Ageyl were so clannish that they would not put themselves about except for one another. Besides Gasim was my man: and upon me lay the responsibility of him.

I looked weakly at my trudging men, and wondered for a moment if I could change with one, sending him back on my camel to the rescue. My shirking the duty would be understood, because I was a foreigner: but that was precisely the plea I did not dare set up, while I yet presumed to help these Arabs in their own revolt. It was hard, anyway, for a stranger to influence another people's national movement, and doubly hard for a Christian and a sedentary person to sway Moslem nomads. I should make it impossible for myself if I claimed, simultaneously, the privileges of both societies.

So, without saying anything, I turned my unwilling camel round, and forced her, grunting and moaning for her camel friends, back past the long line of men, and past the baggage into the emptiness behind. My temper was very unheroic, for I was furious with my other servants, with my own play-acting as a Beduin, and most of all with Gasim, a gap-toothed, grumbling fellow, skrimshank in all our marches, bad-tempered, suspicious, brutal, a man whose engagement I regretted,

and of whom I had promised to rid myself as soon as we reached a discharging-place. It seemed absurd that I should peril my weight in the Arab adventure for a single worthless man.

My camel seemed to feel it also, by her deep grumbling; but that was a constant recourse of ill-treated camels. From calfhood they were accustomed to live in droves, and some grew too conventional to march alone: while none would leave their habitual party without loud grief and unwillingness, such as mine was showing. She turned her head back on her long neck, lowing to the rest, and walked very slowly, and bouncingly. It needed careful guidance to hold her on the road, and a tap from my stick at every pace to keep her moving. However, after a mile or two, she felt better, and began to go forward less constrainedly, but still slowly. I had been noting our direction all these days with my oil compass, and hoped, by its aid, to return nearly to our starting place, seventeen miles away.

Before twenty minutes, the caravan was out of sight, and it was borne in on me how really barren the Biseita was. Its only marks were the old sanded samh pits, across all possible of which I rode, because my camel tracks would show in them, and be so many blazes of the way back. This samh was the wild flour of the Sherarat;

who, poor in all but camel-stocks, made it a boast to find the desert sufficient for their every need. When mixed with dates and loosened with butter, it was good food.

The pits, little threshing floors, were made by pushing aside the flints over a circle of ten feet across. The flints, heaped up round the rim of the pit, made it inches deep, and in this hollow place the women collected and beat out the small red seed. The constant winds, sweeping since over them, could not indeed put back the flint surface (that would perhaps be done by the rain in thousands of winters), but had levelled them up with pale blown sand, so that the pits were grey eyes in the black stony surface.

I had ridden about an hour and a half, easily, for the following breeze had let me wipe the crust from my red eyes and look forward almost without pain: when I saw a figure, or large bush, or at least something black ahead of me. The shifting mirage disguised height or distance; but this thing seemed moving, a little east of our course. On chance I turned my camel's head that way, and in a few minutes saw that it was Gasim. When I called he stood confusedly; I rode up and saw that he was nearly blinded and silly, standing there with his arms held out to me, and his black mouth gaping open. The Ageyl had put our last water

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in my skin, and this he spilled madly over his face and breast, in haste to drink. He stopped babbling, and began to wail out his sorrows. I sat him, pillion, on the camel's rump: then stirred her up and mounted.

At our turn the beast seemed relieved, and moved forward freely. I set an exact compass course, so exact that often I found our old tracks, as little spurts of paler sand scattered over the brown-black flint. In spite of our double weight the camel began to stride out, and at times she even put her head down and for a few paces developed that fast and most comfortable shuffle to which the best animals, while young, were broken by skilled riders. The proof of reserve spirit in her rejoiced me, as did the little time lost in search.

Gasim was moaning impressively about the pain and terror of his thirst: I told him to stop; but he went on, and began to sit loosely; until at each step of the camel he bumped down on her hinder quarters with a crash, which, like his crying, spurred her to greater pace. There was danger in this, for we might easily founder her so. Again I told him to stop, and when he only screamed louder, hit him and swore that for another sound I would throw him off. The threat, to which my general rage gave colour, worked. After it he clung on grimly without sound.

Not four miles had passed when again I saw a black bubble, lunging and swaying in the mirage ahead. It split into three, and swelled. I wondered if they were enemy. A minute later the haze unrolled with the disconcerting suddenness of illusion; and it was Auda with two of Nasir's men come back to look for me. I yelled jests and scoffs at them for abandoning a friend in the desert. Auda pulled his beard and grumbled that had he been present I would never have gone back. Gasim was transferred with insults to a better rider's saddle-pad, and we ambled forward together.

Gasim explained that he had dismounted and had missed the party afterwards in the dark: but obviously, he had gone to sleep, where he dismounted, with a fatigue of our slow, hot journeying. We rejoined Nasir and Nesib in the van. Nesib was vexed with me, for perilling the lives of Auda and myself on a whim. It was clear to him that I reckoned they would come back for me. Nasir was shocked at his ungenerous outlook, and Auda was glad to rub into a townsman the paradox of tribe and city; the collective responsibility and group-brotherhood of the desert, contrasted with the isolation and competitive living of the crowded districts.

Over this little affair hours had passed, and the rest of the day seemed not so long; though the

heat became worse, and the sand-blast stiffened in our faces till the air could be seen and heard, whistling past our camels like smoke. The ground was flat and featureless till five o'clock, when we saw low mounds ahead, and a little later found ourselves in comparative peace, amid sand-hills coated slenderly with tamarisk. These were the Kaseim of Sirhan. The bushes and the dunes broke the wind, it was sunset, and the evening mellowed and reddened on us from the west. So I wrote in my diary that Sirhan was beautiful.

Palestine became a land of milk and honey to those who had spent forty years in Sinai: Damascus had the name of an earthly paradise to the tribes which could enter it only after weeks and weeks of painful marching across the flint-stones of this northern desert: and likewise the Kaseim of Arfaja in which we spent that night, after five days across the blazing Houl in the teeth of a sand-storm, looked fresh and countryfied. They were raised only a few feet above the Biseita, and from them valleys seemed to run down towards the east into a huge depression where lay the well we wanted: but now that we had crossed the desert and reached the Sirhan safely, the terror of thirst had passed and we knew fatigue to be our chief ill. So we agreed to camp for the night where we were, and to make beacon fires for the

slave of Nuri Shaalan, who, like Gasim, had disappeared from her caravan today.

We were not greatly perturbed about him. He knew the country and his camel was under him. It might be that he had intentionally taken the direct way to Jauf, Nuri's capital, to earn the reward of first news that we came with gifts. However it was, he did not come that night, nor next day; and when, months after, I asked Nuri of him, he replied that his dried body had lately been found, lying beside his un-plundered camel far out in the wilderness. He must have lost himself in the sand-haze and wandered till his camel broke down; and there died of thirst and heat. Not a long death—even for the very strongest a second day in summer was all—but very painful; for thirst was an active malady; a fear and panic which tore at the brain and reduced the bravest man to a stumbling babbling maniac in an hour or two; and then the sun killed him.

(2) A TRIAL OF STRENGTH WITH AN EDMITE
WINTER

THEN thirty thousand pounds in gold came up from Akaba for me and my cream camel, Wodheiha, the best of my remaining stud. She was Ateiba-bred and had won many races for her old owner: also, she was in splendid condition, fat

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but not too fat, her pads hardened by much practice over the northern flints, and her coat thick and matted. She was not tall, and looked heavy, but was docile and smooth to ride, turning left or right if the saddle-horn were tapped on the required side. So I rode her without a stick, comfortably reading a book when the march permitted.

As my proper men were at Tafiieh or Azrak, or out on mission, I asked Feisal for temporary followers. He lent me his two Ateiba horsemen, Serj and Rameid; and, to help carry my gold, added to the party Sheikh Motlog, whose worth we had discovered when our armoured cars explored the plains below Mudowwara for Tebuk.

The gold was in thousand-pound bags. I gave two bags each to fourteen of Motlog's twenty men, and took the last two myself. A bag weighed twenty-two pounds, and in the awful road-conditions two were weight enough for a camel, and swung fairly on either side in the saddle-bags. We started at noon, hoping to make a good first stage before getting into the trouble of the hills: but unfortunately it turned wet after half an hour, and a steady rain soaked us through and through, and made our camel's hair curl like a wet dog's.

Motlog at that precise stage saw a tent, Sheriff Fahad's in the corner of a sandstone pike. Des-

pite my urging, he voted to spend the night there, and see what it looked like on the hills tomorrow. I knew this would be a fatal course, wasting days in indecision: so I said farewell to him and rode on with my two men, and with six Shobek-bound Howeitat, who had joined our caravan.

The argument had delayed us, and consequently we only reached the foot of the pass at dark. By the sad, soft rain we were made rather sorry for our virtue, inclined to envy Motlog his hospitality with Fahad, when suddenly a red spark to our left drew us across to find Saleh ibn Shefia camped there in a tent and three caves, with a hundred of his freed-men fighters from Yenbo. Saleh, the son of poor old Mohammed, our jester, was the proper lad who had carried Wejh by assault on Vickery's field-day.

'*Cheyf ent?*' ('How are you?') said I earnestly twice or thrice. His eyes sparkled at the Juheina manner. He came near me and with bowed head and intense voice poured out a string of twenty '*Cheyf ents*' before drawing breath. I disliked being outdone, so replied with a dozen as solemnly. He took me up with another of his long bursts, many more than twenty this time. So I gave up trying to learn how many are the possible repetitions of salutations in Wadi Yenbo.

He welcomed me, in spite of my drenched con-

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dition, to his own carpet in his tent and gave me a new garment of his mother's sewing, while waiting for the hot stew of meat and rice. Then we lay down and slept a full night of great satisfaction, hearing the patter of rain on the double canvas of his Meccan tent.

In the morning we were off at dawn, munching a handful of Saleh's bread. As we set foot on the ascent, Serj looked up and said, 'The mountain wears his skull-cap'. There was a white dome of snow on every crest; and the Ateiba pushed quickly and curiously up the pass to feel this new wonder with their hands. The camels, too, were ignorant, and stretched their slow necks down to sniff its whiteness twice or thrice in tired inquiry; but then drew their heads away and looked forward without life-interest, once more.

Our inactivity lasted only another moment; for, as we put our heads over the last ridge, a wind from the north-east took us in the teeth, with a cold so swift and biting that we gasped for breath and turned hurriedly back into shelter. It seemed as if it would be fatal to face it; but that we knew was silly: so we pulled ourselves together and rode hard through its first extreme to the half-shelter of the valley.

Serj and Rameid, terrified by these new pains in their lungs, thought they were strangling; and

to spare them the mental struggle of passing a friendly camp, I led our little party aside behind Maulud's hill, so that we saw nothing of his weather-beaten force.

These men of Maulud's had been camped in this place, four thousand feet above the sea, for two months without relief.

We, for our one day, had a fill of hardship. Just on the ridge about Aba el Lissan the ground was crusted with frost, and only the smart of the wind in our eyes hindered us; but then our troubles began. The camels came to a standstill in the slush at the bottom of a twenty-foot bank of slippery mud, and lowed at it helplessly, as if to say that they could not carry us up that. We jumped off to help them, and slid back ourselves just as badly. At last we took off our new, cherished boots, donned to armour us against the winter; and hauled the camels up the glacis bare-foot, as on the journey down.

That was the end of our comfort, and we must have been off twenty times before sunset. Some of the dismounts were involuntary, when our camels side-slipped under us, and came down with the jingle of coin ringing through the hollow rumble of their cask-like bellies. While they were strong this falling made them as angry as she-camels could be: afterwards they grew plaintive,

and finally afraid. We also grew short with one another, for the foul wind gave us no rest. Nothing in Arabia could be more cutting than a north wind at Maan, and to-day's was of the sharpest and strongest. It blew through our clothes as if we had none, fixed our fingers in claws not able to hold either halter or riding-stick, and cramped our legs so that we had no grip of the saddle-pin. Consequently, when thrown from our falling beasts we pitched off, to crash stiffly on the ground, still frozen-brittle in the cross-legged attitude of riding.

However, there was no rain, and the wind felt like a drying one, so we held on steadily to the north. By evening we had almost made the rivulet of Basta. This meant that we were travelling more than a mile an hour; and for fear lest on the morrow we and our camels would both be too tired to do so well, I pushed on in the dark across the little stream. It was swollen, and the beasts jibbed at it, so that we had to lead the way on foot, through three feet of chilly water.

Over the high ground, beyond, the wind buffeted us like an enemy: at about nine o'clock the others flung themselves crying down on the ground and refused to go further. I too, was very near crying; sustained, indeed, only by my annoyance with their open lamentations; and therefore reluctantly

glad at heart to yield to their example. We built up the nine camels in a phalanx, and lay between them in fair comfort, listening to the driving wrack clashing about us as loud as the surges by night round a ship at sea. The visible stars were brilliant, seeming to change groups and places waywardly between the clouds which scudded over her heads. We had each two army blankets, and a packet of cooked bread; so we were armed against evil and could sleep securely in the mud and cold.

At dawn we went forward refreshed: but the weather had turned soft, with a greyness through which loomed the sad wormwood-covered hills. Upon their slopes the limestone ribs of this very old earth stood wearily exposed. In their hollows our difficulties increased with the mud. The misty valleys were sluggish streams of melting snow: and at last new thick showers of wet flakes began to fall. We reached the desolate ruins of Odroh in a midday like twilight; a wind was blowing and dying intermittently, and slow-moving banks of cloud and drizzle closed us about.

I bore right, to avoid the Beduin between us and Shobek: but our Howeitat companions led us straight upon their camp. We had ridden six miles in seven hours, and they were exhausted. The two Ateiba were not only exhausted, but demora-

lized, and swore mutinously that nothing in the world should keep us from the tribal tents. We wrangled by the roadside under the soft drift.

For myself I felt quite fresh and happy, averse from the delay of needless tribal hospitality. Zeid's penniless state was excellent pretext for a trial of strength with the Edomite winter. Shobek was only ten miles further, and daylight had yet five hours to run. So I decided to go on alone. It would be quite safe, for in such weather neither Turk nor Arab was abroad, and the roads were mine. I took their four thousand pounds from Serj and Rameid, and cursed them into the valley for cowards: which really they were not. Rameid was catching his breath in great sobs, and Serj's nervous pain marked each lurch of his camel with a running moan. They raved with miserable rage when I dismissed them and turned away.

The truth was that I had the best camel. The excellent Wodheiha struggled gamely forward under the weight of the extra gold. In flat places I rode her: at ascents and descents we used to slide together side by side with comic accidents, which she seemed rather to enjoy.

By sunset the snow-fall ceased; we were coming down to the river of Shobek, and could see a brown track straggling over the opposite hill towards the village. I tried a short cut, but the

frozen crust of the mud-banks deceived me, and I crashed through the cat-ice (which was sharp, like knives) and bogged myself so deeply that I feared I was going to pass the night there, half in and half out of the sludge: or wholly in, which would be a tidier death.

Wodheiha, sensible beast, had refused to enter the morass: but she stood at a loss on the hard margin, and looked soberly at my mudlarking. However, I managed, with the still-held head-stall, to persuade her a little nearer. Then I flung my body suddenly backward against the squelching quag, and grabbing wildly behind my head, laid hold of her fetlock. She was frightened, and started back: and her purchase dragged me clear. We crawled farther down the bed to a safe place, and there crossed: after I had hesitatingly sat in the stream and washed off the weight of stinking clay.

Shiveringly I mounted again. We went over the ridge and down to the base of the shapely cone, whose mural crown was the ring-wall of the old castle of Monreale, very noble against the night sky. The chalk was hard, and it was freezing; snow-drifts lay a foot deep each side of the spiral path which wound up the hill. The white ice crackled desolately under my naked feet as we neared the gate, where, to make a stage entry, I

climbed up by Wodheiha's patient shoulder into the saddle. Then I repented, since only by throwing myself sideways along her neck did I avoid the voussoirs of the arch as she crashed underneath in half-terror of this strange place.

I knew that Sherif Abd el Mayin should be still at Shobek, so rode boldly up the silent street in the reeded starlight, which played with the white icicles and their underlying shadow among the walls and snowy roofs and ground. The camel stumbled doubtfully over steps hidden beneath a thick covering of snow: but I had no care of that, having reached my night's goal, and having so powdery a blanket to fall on. At the cross-ways I called out the salutation of a fair night, and after a minute, a husky voice protested to God through the thick sacking which stuffed a loophole of the mean house on my right. I asked for Abd el Mayin, and was told 'in the Government House' which lay at the further end of the old castle's enceinte.

Arrived there I called again. A door was flung open, and a cloud of smoky light streamed recklessly across, whirling with motes, through which black faces peered to know who I was. I hailed them friendly, by name, saying that I was come to eat a sheep with the master: upon which these slaves ran out, noisy with astonishment, and relieved me of Wodheiha, whom they led into the

reeking stable where themselves lived. One lit me with a flaming spar up the stone outside stairs to the house door, and between more servants, down a winding passage dripping with water from the broken roof, into a tiny room. There lay Abd el Mayin upon a carpet, face down, breathing the least smoky level of air.

My legs were shaky, so I dropped beside him, and gladly copied his position to avoid the choking fumes of a brass brazier of flaming wood which crackled in a recessed shot-window of the mighty outer wall. He searched out for me a waist-cloth, while I stripped off my things and hung them to steam before the fire, which became less smarting to the eyes and throat as it burned down into red coals. Meanwhile Abd el Mayin clapped his hands for supper to be hastened and served '*Fauzan*' (tea in Harith slang, so named from his cousin, governor of their village) hot and spiced and often, till the mutton, boiled with raisins in butter, was carried in.

He explained, with his blessings on the dish, that next day they would starve or rob, since he had here two hundred men, and no food or money, and his messengers to Feisal were held up in the snow. Whereat I, too, clapped hands, commanding my saddle-bags, and presented him with five hundred pounds on account, till his subsidy came.

This was good payment for the food, and we were very merry over my oddness of riding alone, in winter, with a hundredweight and more of gold for baggage. I repeated that Zeid, like himself, was straitened; and told of Serj and Rameid with the Arabs. The Sherif's eyes darkened, and he made passes in the air with his riding-stick. I explained, in extenuation of their failure, that the cold did not trouble me, since the English climate was of this sort most of the year. 'God forbid it,' said Abd el Mayin.

We rolled up in the rugs and slept warmly. The fleas were serried, but my nakedness, the Arab defence against a verminous bed, lessened their plague: and the bruises did not prevail because I was too tired.

In the morning I rose with a splitting headache, and said I must go on. Two men were found to ride with me, though all said we should not reach Tafiieh that night. However, I thought it could not be worse than yesterday; so we skated timorously down the rapid path to the plain across which still stretched the Roman road with its groups of fallen milestones, inscribed by famous emperors.

From this plain the two faint-hearts with me slipped back to their fellows on the castle-hill. I proceeded, alternately on and off my camel, like

the day before, though now the way was all too slippery, except on the ancient paving, the last footprint of Imperial Rome which had once, so much more preciously, played the Turk to the desert dwellers. On it I could ride: but I had to walk and wade the dips where the floods of fourteen centuries had washed the road's foundations out. Rain came on, and soaked me, and then it blew fine and freezing till I crackled in armour of white silk, like a theatre knight: or like a bridal cake, hard iced.

The camel and I were over the plain in three hours; wonderful going: but our troubles were not ended. The snow was indeed as my guides had said, and completely hid the path, which wound uphill between walls and ditches, and confused piles of stone. It cost me an infinity of pain to turn the first two corners. Wodheiha, tired of wading to her bony knees in useless white stuff, began perceptibly to flag. However, she got up one more steep bit, only to miss the edge of the path in a banked place. We fell together some eighteen feet down the hill-side into a yard-deep drift of frozen snow. After the fall she rose to her feet whimpering and stood still, in a tremble.

When he-camels so baulked, they would die on their spot, after days; and I feared that now I had found the limit of effort in she-camels. I plunged

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to my neck in front of her, and tried to tow her out, vainly. Then I spent a long time hitting her behind. I mounted, and she sat down. I jumped off, heaved her up, and wondered if, perhaps, it was that the drift was too thick. So I carved her a beautiful little road, a foot wide, three deep, and eighteen paces long, using my bare feet and hands as tools. The snow was so frozen on the surface that it took all my weight first, to break it down, and then to scoop it out. The crust was sharp, and cut my wrists and ankles till they bled freely, and the roadside became lined with pink crystals, looking like pale, very pale, water-melon flesh.

Afterwards I went back to Wodheiha, patiently standing there, and climbed into the saddle. She started easily. We went running at it, and such was her speed that the rush carried her right over the shallow stuff, back to the proper road. Up this we went cautiously, with me, afoot, sounding the path in front with my stick, or digging new passes when the drifts were deep. In three hours we were on the summit, and found it wind-swept on the western side. So we left the track, and scrambled unsteadily along the very broken crest, looking down across the chess-board houses of Dana village, into sunny Arabah, fresh and green thousands of feet below.

When the ridge served no more we did further

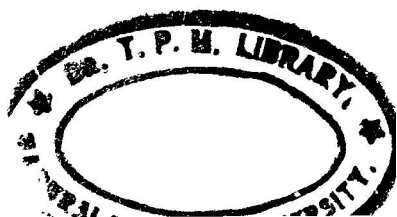
heavy work, and at last Wodheiha baulked again. It was getting serious, for the evening was near; suddenly I realized the loneliness, and that if the night found us yet beyond help on this hill-top, Wodheiha would die, and she was a very noble beast. There was also the solid weight of gold, and I felt not sure how far, even in Arabia, I could safely put six thousand sovereigns by the roadside with a signet as mark of ownership, and leave them for a night. So I took her back a hundred yards along our beaten track, mounted, and charged her at the bank. She responded. We burst through and over the northern lip which looked down on the Senussi village of Rasheidiya.

This face of the hill, sheltered from the wind and open to the sun all afternoon, had thawed. Underneath the superficial snow lay wet and muddy ground; and when Wodheiha ran upon this at speed her feet went from under her and she sprawled, with her four feet locked. So on her tail, with me yet in the saddle, we went sliding round and down a hundred feet. Perhaps it hurt the tail (there were stones under the snow) for on the level she sprang up unsteadily, grunting, and lashed it about like a scorpion's. Then she began to run at ten miles an hour down the greasy path towards Rasheidiya, sliding and plunging wildly:

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with me, in terror of a fall and broken bones, clinging to the horns of the saddle.

A crowd of Arabs, Zeid's men, weather-bound here on their way to Feysal, ran out when they heard her trumpeting approach, and shouted with joy at so distinguished an entry to the village. I asked them the news; they told me all was well. Then I remounted for the last eight miles into Tafeleh, where I gave Zeid his letters and some money, and went gladly to bed ... flea-proof for another night.



V

(1) THE WORLD IN TIME

BY

H. G. WELLS

[MR. CHESTERTON says somewhere that he used to lie in bed at night and listen to Mr. Wells 'growing in his sleep'. It is a whimsical jest but it contains a core of truth. There was something amazing in the way Mr. Wells's mind went on growing, without growing old. It took all knowledge for its province and was interested in all those things that touched the work, wealth and happiness of mankind. And it outgrew the prejudices of class, country and race and felt at home in every part of the universe. Looking back on his career, Mr. Wells described it as 'an advance from a backyard to cosmopolis'.

HERBERT GEORGE WELLS (1886-1946) was born and brought up in a home that was not much better than a backyard. His parents, who kept a shop at Bromley in Kent, tried to make him a shopman at a linen draper's. But he ran away and gained admission to South Kensington College, London, where he studied biology under Huxley. After taking his degree, he found a congenial occupation as a journalist and story-writer. His first book was a scientific romance called *The Time Machine* (1895); and it proved so popular that it set him free from fear of want. For the next fifty years, Mr. Wells devoted himself to his chosen task of teaching mankind the science of social life by an almost endless flow of books and pamphlets.

He said that mankind must adapt itself to the new economic conditions of life or perish as many other species had perished. It could yet save itself if it made a 'vast,

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systematic, collective mental effort'. For bringing about a mental rebirth, all the intellectuals of the world must unite and enter into an 'open conspiracy'. In a world state ruled by an aristocracy of experts, with the help of reason and scientific method, men could yet come to be as gods.

This message was delivered with minor variations in a hundred odd books. The most pleasant and persuasive of them are in the form of fiction. They fall into three groups:

Scientific romances and fantasies, such as *The Time Machine*, *The War of the Worlds* and *The first Men in the Moon*;

Novels, like *Kipps* and *The History of Mr. Polly*, which portray lower middle class life with humour and sympathy in the manner of Dickens; and

Sociological novels, like *Tono-Bungay* and *The World of William Clissold*.

Outside fiction, his most significant work is to be found in his *Outline of History*, *A Short History of the World* and *The Science of Life*. The last work takes stock of modern biological knowledge for the benefit of the common man. The two histories, in their different ways, trace the 'growth of the human community'. The vast, unwieldy material is handled and shaped with artistic skill. History becomes something as exact as science and as readable as a romance. It has been said, however, that Mr. Wells re-interpreted history in the light of his own principles—or prejudices.

He was not an original thinker but a great educator and popularizer. He shaped the minds of the young for three decades and inspired them with a new hope and enthusiasm. And though that enthusiasm has passed, the stimulus of his mind remains.]

IN the last fifty years there has been much very fine and interesting speculation on the part of scientific men upon the age and origin of our

Earth. Here we cannot pretend to give even a summary of such speculations because they involve the most subtle mathematical and physical considerations. The truth is that the physical and astronomical sciences are still too undeveloped as yet to make anything of the sort more than an illustrative guesswork. The general tendency has been to make the estimated age of our globe longer and longer. It now seems probable that the Earth has had an independent existence as a spinning planet flying round and round the sun for a longer period than 2,000,000,000 years. It may have been much longer than that. This is a length of time that absolutely overpowers the imagination.

Before that vast period of separate existence, the sun and Earth and the other planets that circulate round the sun may have been a great swirl of diffused matter in space. The telescope reveals to us in various parts of the heavens luminous spiral clouds of matter, the spiral nebulae, which appear to be in rotation about a centre. It is supposed by many astronomers that the sun and its planets were once such a spiral, and that their matter has undergone concentration into its present form. Through majestic aeons that concentration went on until in that vast remoteness of the past for which we have given figures, the world and its moon were distinguish-

able. They were spinning then much faster than they are spinning now ; they were at a lesser distance from the sun ; they travelled round it very much faster, and they were probably incandescent or molten at the surface. The sun itself was a much greater blaze in the heavens.

If we could go back through that infinitude of time and see the earth in this earlier stage of its history, we should behold a scene more like the interior of a blast-furnace or the surface of a lava flow before it cools and cakes over than any other contemporary scene. No water would be visible because all the water there was would still be superheated steam in a stormy atmosphere of sulphurous and metallic vapours. Beneath this would swirl and boil an ocean of molten rock substance. Across a sky of fiery clouds the glare of the hurrying sun and moon would sweep swiftly like hot breaths of flame.

Slowly by degrees as one million of years followed another, this fiery scene would lose its eruptive incandescence. The vapours in the sky would rain down and become less dense overhead ; great slaggy cakes of solidifying rock would appear upon the surface of the molten sea, and sink under it to be replaced by other floating masses. The sun and moon growing now each more distant and each smaller, would rush with

diminishing swiftness across the heavens. The moon now, because of its smaller size, would be already cooled far below incandescence, and would be alternately obstructing and reflecting the sunlight in a series of eclipses and full moons.

And so with a tremendous slowness through the vastness of time, the Earth would grow more and more like the earth on which we live, until at last an age would come when, in the cooling air, steam would begin to condense into clouds, and the first rain would fall hissing upon the first rocks below. For endless millennia the greater part of the earth's water would still be vaporized in the atmosphere, but there would now be hot streams running over the crystallising rocks below and pools and lakes into which these streams would be carrying detritus and depositing sediment.

At last a condition of things must have been attained in which a man might have stood up on earth and looked about him and lived. If we could have visited the earth at that time we should have stood on great lava-like masses of rock without a trace of soil or touch of living vegetation, under a storm-rent sky. Hot and violent winds, exceeding the fiercest tornado that ever blows, and downpours of rain such as our milder, slower earth today knows nothing of, might have assailed us. The

water of the downpour would have rushed by us, muddy with the spoils of the rocks, coming together into torrents, cutting deep gorges and canyons as they hurried past to deposit their sediment in the earliest seas. Through the clouds we should have glimpsed a great sun moving visibly across the sky, and in its wake and in the wake of the moon would have come a diurnal tide of earthquake and upheaval. And the moon, which nowadays keeps one constant face to earth, would then have been rotating visibly and showing the side it now so inexorably hides.

The Earth aged, and the day lengthened, the sun grew more distant and milder, the moon's pace in the sky slackened; the intensity of rain and storm diminished and the water in the first seas increased and ran together into the ocean garment our planet henceforth wore.

But there was no life as yet upon the earth; the seas were lifeless, and the rocks were barren.

(2) MONKEYS, APES AND SUB-MEN

BY

H. G. WELLS

NATURALISTS divide the class *Mammalia* into a number of orders. At the head of these is the order *Primates*, which includes the lemurs, the

monkeys, apes, and man. Their classification was based originally upon anatomical resemblances and took no account of any mental qualities.

Now the past history of the Primates is one very difficult to decipher in the geological record. They are for the most part animals which live in forests like the lemurs and monkeys or in bare rocky places like the baboons. They are rarely drowned and covered up by sediment, nor are most of them very numerous species, and so they do not figure so largely among the fossils as the ancestors of the horses, camels and so forth do. But we know that quite early in the Cainozoic period, that is to say some 40,000,000 years ago or so, primitive monkeys and lemuroid creatures had appeared, poorer in brain and not so specialised as their later successors.

The great world-summer of the middle Cainozoic period drew at last to an end. It was to follow those other two great summers in the history of life, the summer of the Coal Swamps and the vast summer of the Age of Reptiles. Once more the Earth spun towards an Ice Age. The world chilled, grew milder for a time and chilled again. In the warm past hippopotami had wallowed through a lush sub-tropical vegetation, and a tremendous tiger with fangs like sabres, the sabre-toothed tiger, had hunted its prey where

now the journalists of Fleet Street go to and fro. Now came a bleaker age and still bleaker ages. A great weeding and extinction of species occurred. A woolly rhinoceros, adapted to a cold climate, and the mammoth, a big woolly cousin of the elephants, the Arctic musk-ox and the reindeer passed across the scene. Then century by century the Arctic ice cap, the wintry death of the great Ice Age, crept south-ward. In England it came almost down to the Thames, in America it reached Ohio. There would be warmer spells of a few thousand years and relapses towards a bitterer cold.

Geologists talk of these wintry phases as the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Glacial Ages, and of the interludes as Interglacial periods. We live today in a world that is still impoverished and scarred by that terrible winter. The First Glacial Age was coming on 600,000 years ago; the Fourth Glacial Age reached its bitterest some 50,000 years ago. And it was amidst the snows of this long universal winter that the first man-like beings lived upon our planet.

By the middle Cainozoic period there have appeared various apes with many quasi-human attributes of the jaws and leg-bones, but it is only as we approach these Glacial Ages that we find traces of creatures that we can speak of as 'almost

human'. These traces are not bones but implements. In Europe, in deposits of this period, between half a million and a million years old, we find flints and stones that have suddenly been chipped intentionally by some handy creature desirous of hammering, scraping, or fighting with the sharpened edge. These things have been called 'Eoliths' (=dawn stones). In Europe there are no bones nor other remains of the creature which made these objects, simply the objects themselves. For all the certainty we have it may have been some entirely un-human but intelligent monkey. But at Trinil in Java, in accumulations of this age a piece of a skull and various teeth and bones have been found of a sort of ape-man, with a brain-case bigger than that of any living apes, which seems to have walked erect. This creature is now called *Pithecanthropus erectus*, the walking ape-man, and the little trayful of its bones is the only help our imaginations have as yet in figuring to ourselves the makers of the Eoliths.

It is not until we come to sands that are almost a quarter of a million years old that we find any other particle of a sub-human being. But there are plenty of implements, and they are steadily improving in quality as we read on through the record. They are no longer clumsy Eoliths; they are now shapely instruments made with con-

siderable skill. *And they are much bigger than the similar implements afterwards made by true men.* Then, in a sandpit at Heidelberg, appears a single quasi-human jaw-bone, a clumsy jaw-bone, absolutely chinless, far heavier than a true human jaw-bone and narrower, so that it is improbable the creature's tongue could have moved about for articulate speech. On the strength of this jaw-bone, scientific men suppose this creature to have been a heavy, almost human monster, possibly with huge limbs and hands, possibly with a thick felt of hair, and they call it the Heidelberg man.

This jaw-bone is, I think, one of the most tormenting objects in the world to our human curiosity. To see it is like looking through a defective glass into the past and catching just one blurred and tantalizing glimpse of this Thing, shambling through the bleak wilderness, clambering to avoid the sabre-toothed tiger, watching the woolly rhinoceros in the woods. Then before we can scrutinise the monster, he vanishes. Yet the soil is littered abundantly with the indestructible implements he chipped out for his uses.

Still more fascinatingly enigmatical are the remains of a creature found at Piltdown in Sussex in a deposit that may indicate an age between a hundred and a hundred and fifty thousand years ago, though some authorities would put these

particular remains back in time to before the Heidelberg jaw-bone. Here there are the remains of a thick sub-human skull much larger than any existing ape's, and a chimpanzee-like jaw-bone which may or may not belong to it, and, in addition, a bat-shaped piece of elephant bone evidently carefully manufactured, through which a hole had apparently been bored. There is also the thigh-bone of a deer with cuts upon it like a tally. That is all.

What sort of beast was this creature which sat and bored holes in bones?

Scientific men have named him *Eoanthropus*, the Dawn Man. He stands apart from his kindred; a very different being either from the Heidelberg creature or from any living ape. No other vestige like him is known. But the gravels and deposits of from 100,000 years onward are increasingly rich in implements of flint and similar stone. And these implements are no longer rude 'Eoliths'. The archaeologists are presently able to distinguish scrapers, borers, knives, darts, throwing stones and hand axes

We are drawing very near to man. In our next section we shall have to describe the strangest of all these precursors of humanity, the Neanderthalers, the men who were almost, but not quite, true men.

But it may be well perhaps to state quite clearly here that no scientific man supposes either of these creatures, Heidelberg Man nor *Eoanthropus*, to be direct ancestors of the men of today. These are, at the closest, related forms.

THE NEANDERTHALER AND THE RHODESIAN MAN

About fifty or sixty thousand years ago, before the climax of the Fourth Glacial Age, there lived a creature on Earth so like a man that until a few years ago its remains were considered to be altogether human. We have skulls and bones of it and a great accumulation of the large implements it made and used. It made fires. It sheltered in caves from the cold. It probably dressed skins roughly and wore them. It was right-handed as men are.

Yet now the ethnologists tell us these creatures were not true men. They were of a different species of the same genus. They had heavy protruding jaws and very low foreheads and great brow ridges above the eyes. Their thumbs were not opposable to the fingers as men's are; their necks were so poised that they could not turn back their heads and look up to the sky. They probably slouched along, head down and forward. Their chinless jaw-bones resemble the Heidelberg jaw-bone and are markedly unlike human jaw-bones. And there

were great differences from the human pattern in their teeth. Their cheek teeth were more complicated in structure than ours, more complicated and not less so, they had not the long fangs of our cheek teeth; and also these quasi-men had not the marked canines (dog teeth) of an ordinary human being. The capacity of their skulls was quite human, but the brain was bigger behind and lower in front than the human brain. Their intellectual faculties were differently arranged. They were not ancestral to the human line. Mentally and physically they were upon a different line from the human line.

Skulls and bones of this extinct species of man were found at Neanderthal among other places, and from that place these strange proto-men have been christened Neanderthal Men, or Neanderthalers. They must have endured in Europe for many hundreds or even thousands of years.

At that time the climate and geography of our world were very different from what they are at the present time. Europe for example was covered with ice reaching as far south as the Thames and into Central Germany and Russia; there was no Channel separating Britain from France; the Mediterranean and the Red Sea were great valleys, with perhaps a chain of lakes in their deeper portions, and a great inland sea spread from the

present Black Sea across South Russia and far into Central Asia. Spain and all of Europe not actually under ice consisted of bleak uplands under a harder climate than that of Labrador, and it was only when North Africa was reached that one would have found a temperate climate. Across the cold steppes of Southern Europe with its sparse arctic vegetation, drifted such hardy creatures as the woolly mammoth, and woolly rhinoceros, great oxen and reindeer, no doubt following the vegetation northward in spring and southward in autumn.

Such was the scene through which the Neanderthaler wandered, gathering such subsistence as he could from small game or fruits and berries and roots. Possibly he was mainly a vegetarian, chewing twigs and roots. His level elaborate teeth suggest a largely vegetarian dietary. But we also find the long marrow bones of great animals in his caves, cracked to extract the marrow. His weapons could not have been of much avail in open conflict with great beasts, but it is supposed that he attacked them with spears at difficult river crossings and even constructed pitfalls for them. Possibly he followed the herds and preyed upon any dead that were killed in fights, and perhaps he played the part of jackal to the sabre-toothed tiger which still survived in his day. Possibly in

the bitter hardships of the Glacial Ages this creature had taken to attacking animals after long ages of vegetarian adaptation.

We cannot guess what this Neanderthal man looked like. He may have been very hairy and very inhuman-looking indeed. It is even doubtful if he went erect. He may have used his knuckles as well as his feet to hold himself up. Probably he went about alone or in small family groups. It is inferred from the structure of his jaw that he was incapable of speech as we understand it.

For thousands of years these Neanderthals were the highest animals that the European area had ever seen; and then some thirty or thirty-five thousand years ago as the climate grew warmer a race of kindred beings, more intelligent, knowing more, talking and co-operating together, came drifting into the Neanderthal's world from the south. They ousted the Neanderthals from their caves and squatting places; they hunted the same food; they probably made war upon their grisly predecessors and killed them off. These newcomers from the south or the east—for at present we do not know their region of origin—who at last drove the Neanderthals out of existence altogether, were beings of our own blood and kin, the first True Men. Their brain-cases and thumbs and necks and teeth were anatomically the same

as our own. In a cave at Cro-Magnon and in another at Grimaldi, a number of skeletons have been found, the earliest truly human remains that are so far known.

So it is our race comes into the Record of the Rocks, and the story of mankind begins.

The world was growing like our own in those days though the climate was still austere. The glaciers of the Ice Age were receding in Europe; the reindeer of France and Spain presently gave way to great herds of horses as grass increased upon the steppes, and the mammoth became more and more rare in Southern Europe and finally receded northward altogether.

We do not know where the True Men first originated. But in the summer of 1921, an extremely interesting skull was found together with pieces of a skeleton at Broken Hill in South Africa, which seems to be a relic of a third sort of man, intermediate in its characteristics between the Neanderthaler and the human being. The brain-case indicates a brain bigger in front and smaller behind than the Neanderthaler's and the skull was poised erect upon the backbone in a quite human way. The teeth also and the bones are quite human. But the face must have been ape-like with enormous brow ridges and a ridge along the middle of the skull. The creature was indeed a true man, so

to speak, with an ape-like, Neanderthaler face. This Rhodesian Man is evidently still closer to real men than the Neanderthal Man.

This Rhodesian skull is probably only the second of what in the end may prove to be a long list of finds of sub-human species which lived on the Earth in the vast interval of time between the beginnings of the Ice Age and the appearance of their common heir, and perhaps their common exterminator, the True Man. The Rhodesian skull itself may not be very ancient. Up to the time of publishing this book there has been no exact determination of its probable age. It may be that this sub-human creatures survived in South Africa until quite recent times.

VI

(1) WHAT IS LIFE?

BY

SIR J. ARTHUR THOMSON

[Some seventeen years ago, Mr. J. M. Dent, the founder of the publishing house of Dent, was looking round for an unusual kind of scientist. He should be able to write a book on the science of life for the use of Everyman. It should give him 'a clear, authoritative and reasonably detailed picture of life in its manifold forms'; but it should be 'free from the technicalities and professional minutiae of the formal text-book'. The scientist finally chosen for writing this *Biology for Everyman* was SIR J. ARTHUR THOMSON, Regius Professor of Natural History (1899-1930), Aberdeen University.

It was a wise and fortunate choice. Professor Thomson had been educated at Edinburgh, Jena and Berlin. He had lectured on zoology for many years in the School of Medicine at Edinburgh. For forty years, he had been one of the most popular and inspiring teachers of his time. And he had been doing valuable research, without making fuss, in *Alcyonaria*, a kind of red coral, on which he was an authority. But he was no specialist; he was essentially a critic and philosopher of life. Following the bent of his genius, he had been an expositor of science and had come to be the leading writer on general biology in Great Britain. Works of *Evolution*, *The Evolution of Sex and Life: Outlines of General Biology* were (and are) indispensable to students and teachers of biology. *The Outline of Science* and *The New Natural Science* were more popular in their appeal. As a populariser, Professor Thomson had a real literary talent and taste to help him. He belonged with the scientists of an older day and wrote like a scholar and lover of letters. His style was easy,

lucid and exact, with an occasional sparkle of phrase or figure. And it was shot through with his own quiet, unforced humour.

Sir Arthur threw himself into his new work with enthusiasm and made *Biology of Everyman* his greatest, as it was his last, achievement. It was almost ready for publication when he died in 1933.

The book begins with an examination of life, its nature and meaning. Then it presents a pageant of animal life, from the protozoa to mammals. The next volume opens with general considerations and a review of 'the drama of life', and passes on to a rather rapid survey of plants. The last chapters deal with Man and Man in relation to plants and animals.

It must be said at once that this is biology for Everyman but still biology: it does not sacrifice truth to effect. The scientific temper is there; and so is the scientific method. But the author is something more than a scientist, especially when he is in the presence of the beauty of nature. This book gives proof not only of his knowledge but of his love of living things. As a reviewer put it. 'Some of the fragrance of life is reflected in these pages, and the clouds, too, are mirrored there'.*]

THIS question of Life is a big one, not as yet fully answerable. Still, we must not simply say: We do not know what Life really is. For this confession would not be doing justice to the numerous investigations, continuing every year, that describe the chemical and physical processes that are always going on in the living body.

The student of engines can describe most of the operations of a railway locomotive in terms of what

* *Times Literary Supplement*, November 22nd, 1934.

Francis Bacon called 'the secret motions of things'. He tells us about the invisible movements of molecules of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen when the coal or oil is burned, about invisible movements of molecules of water when the steam is formed to move the piston, and so on and so forth.

Similarly, the physiologist can tell us much that is very interesting about the chemical and physical processes that go on in our body. And while it is quite possible that this is not the way to discover the true inwardness of Life, it certainly brings many of the ongoings in the body into line with those that occur in non-living things like engines.

This is making progress towards a description of Life, though it must be confessed that the central secret seems to retreat as science advances.

Thus we know much about contraction of muscles when we lift a piece of bread to our mouth, drawing one piece of skeleton nearer another, and yet we are not able to give more than a sketchy account of what happens when a muscle—a piece of flesh—in our arm becomes shorter and broader. We speak, and with some truth, of our muscles as the engines of the body, and then we remember that they consist of transparent threads of very watery living matter enclosed in very delicate films.

We touch a hot cinder on the fire-place and immediately draw back our hand, more quickly than we can utter a hasty word, but although we know, or can know, a great deal about the kind of reflex action that our movement illustrates—a nervous message to spinal cord and back again, at the rate of about four hundred feet per second—we do not as yet understand what a nerve-thrill really is.

We know that the news travels along a transparent thread of living matter, that an electrical change occurs, that a little heat is given off and a corresponding amount of carbon dioxide, but we are not able to explain the nerve-message in terms of anything else.

We come down to the irritability of living matter—which is just a long way of spelling Life. This is what we meant by saying the central secret seems to recede as science advances. Some day, perhaps, when all the minor mysteries have been cleared away, we shall get a glimpse of the major mystery of Life itself.

Life is a peculiar kind of activity that is exhibited by living creatures. And if you ask in what ways is it peculiar, part of the answer is that it is a kind of activity so *regulated* that it is able to continue for days or months or years, for it is self-preservative, and so *regulated* that it gets things

done, for, even if it is not purposeful, it is always purposelike, except in rare cases such as moths flying into the candle.

Yet when we say that Life is regulated activity, exhibited by living creatures, we are obviously miles away from any definition. For it is one of the laws of definition that it must not include, however well hidden, the thing that is being defined; and that is what we have done in the words 'activity', 'regulated', and 'living creatures'.

Still, there is some use in saying that Life is a peculiar kind of activity manifested by living creatures, for it shows that our question need not lose itself in metaphysics. We are not asking about 'a vital principle' or 'a vital force'; we are asking this question, to begin with, at any rate: What is peculiar in the activities of plants and animals and ourselves? What are the essential characteristics of living creatures?

The answer must apply to the hyssop on the wall as well as to the cedar of Lebanon, to the mite as well as to the mammoth, to the golden eagle as well as to the heather amid which it captures the unwary grouse. There is a long, long gamut from microbe to man, but all are alive; and it was a great step when Linnaeus, some two centuries ago, applied the word 'organisms' to all plants as well as to all animals and all mankind.

Whatever is true of Life must be true of them all, except in cases of degeneracy and the like.

If we ask, *What is Man?* we are most likely to come towards a good answer if we take man at his best and not bushmen. So when we ask, *What is Life?* we are most likely to come towards a good answer if we begin with life at its best—as in the birds of the air, the beasts of the field and the bees in their hive, as also in the lilies of a day and the big trees of California, some of which have lived for three thousand years.

It is not at present possible to define Life, but there is a useful note in one of Herbert Spencer's descriptions—that 'Life is effective response to surroundings'; and to that I should like to add one of my own—that 'Life is the urge for more'—more food, more power, more room, more light, more self-expression, more life.

Let us now ask the chemist, the physicist, the biologist, and the psychologist—each in turn—to tell us very shortly what he thinks of Life.

The chemist tells us that all living creatures are built up of the same kind of stuff, which is called protoplasm, defined by Huxley as 'the physical basis of life'. Here is a chemical similarity that makes the whole world kin.

The chemist would tell us that he is greatly struck by the orderliness of the living laboratory,

by the way in which processes of building up make good all the breaking down, and by the quickness and quietness of it all.

The expert on physics, who is chiefly concerned with energy (the power of doing work) and its changes, would tell us first that we must not suppose that living creatures *create* any energy. Like engines which change fuel into work, so organisms change the chemical energy of food into locomotion and work, sometimes into light, often into heat, and also into stores—especially in the plant world. But all living creatures are like engines in being *transformers* of one kind of energy into another. We say that a man is full of energy, but he will soon lose his ‘go’ if he tries to exist without food.

On the other hand, the physicist tells us that he admires living creatures more than his own engines, because they get more energy in proportion out of their food than his engines get out of their fuel. A fish has more efficient engines than a battleship, and a fire-fly is a more economical light-producer than an arc-lamp.

The biologists are the experts on Life, and most of them would say that the characteristic activities of plants and animals seemed to them very different from those of the non-living world.

No doubt there are chemical and physical pro-

cesses going on in every living body, but they are regulated and combined and harmonized after a fashion that seems unique. In the non-living world, say of suns and other stars, or in radioactive elements, all the clocks seem to be running down, but in living creatures they are always being wound up again—until the spring finally breaks in death. The organism is incessantly changing and yet it has the power of remaining much the same for many a year. Moreover, it can grow at the expense of food, often very different from itself, for the foal grows by drinking milk or eating grass, and the grass gets its food from air and soil-water.

More than that, the living creature can reproduce or multiply, and from a pinhead-like germ-cell there develops a great edifice—plant or animal or man. There is nothing like this in the non-living world.

And, again, the world of life is full of novelties or new departures which form the raw materials of possible progress. Generation succeeds generation in a way that even the heavenly bodies do not show when a nebula gives rise to a system of stars.

Among the living generations there is struggling and sifting, and thus comes about evolution, which is still going on.

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Give me Life at its best, says the psychologist, and I see it thrilled by Mind. Man shows Reason and Intelligence; many of the beasts of the field show intelligent behaviour; ants and bees are children of instinct; lower down still there are experiments of a simple sort, and everywhere among animals there is feeling.

Perhaps mind has never come to its own among plants, though we are often tempted to think that in their beauty we witness their dream-smiles. But even if mind never awakens in plants, it is a reality that counts in the life of many animals. Perhaps in some form it is at the very heart of life, enabling us to understand just a little the regulatedness, the unity, the power of profiting by experience and registering it, the purposelikeness, and the novel self-expressions that are so often to be found in living creatures.

No doubt we must not use big words like 'intelligence' for little creatures with just the beginning of a nervous system, but it may be that something of the nature of mind—perhaps 'sentience' would be a good word—is conterminous with life.

Just as there is no particular moment in an infant's or an embryo's life when we can say, 'Mind has awakened,' so in the world of life as a whole we cannot say, 'Lo here,' or 'Lo, there.'

SIR J. ARTHUR THOMSON

What begins as a slender rill of inner or subjective life becomes eventually a powerful stream.

Meanwhile, we welcome all that the chemist and the physicist can tell us about the ongoings in the living body; we remain none the less convinced that organisms are more than mechanisms; and we suggest as answer to our question, that Life is a dance of enchanted particles with Mind as the music.

(2) HAUNTS OF LIFE

THE DEEP SEA

BY

SIR J. ARTHUR THOMSON

THIS haunt is an unseen world, yet we know a great deal about it and the animals that live there. From a ship we can throw a stone into it, but a visit is impossible on account of the enormous pressure—in many places several tons on the square inch. By the Deep Sea is always meant the floor of the ocean at great depths and the zones of water near the floor. Not much is known about the ‘mid-waters’ between the illumined surface zones and the dark abysses. The floor of the Deep Sea occupies more than a third of the earth’s surface, so it is not a small haunt of life that we are thinking about.

If the Deep Sea cannot be visited, how do we know so much about it? Because explorers from all nations have reached down with the long arm of the dredge from all sorts of places in all the seven seas, and have brought up abyssal animals from depths sometimes of several miles. By means of bottles that can be opened and shut at the great depths, samples of the water have been obtained, and there are other devices for obtaining samples of the mud and similar deposits, usually called Deep-Sea ooze. By means of a little metal messenger sent whirring down a wire it is possible to expose thermometers at particular depths, and what they register can be fixed so that it does not change on the way up. Something has been known about the Deep Sea for over a hundred years, but the most important exploring expedition was that of the *Challenger*, 1873-6: important in itself and important in prompting others. With a staff of naturalists aboard, including Sir Wyville Thomson, Sir John Murray, and Professor Moseley, the *Challenger* cruised over 68,900 nautical miles and raised treasures of life over three hundred stations. The spoils required fifty huge volumes for their description. The *Challenger* Expedition might well be called a 'Columbus voyage,' for it practically discovered a new world—the world of the Deep Sea.

In trying to picture this strange haunt of life we should think first of its great depth. The average depth of the ocean is about two and a half miles, and as vast tracts are shallow, there must be others that are very deep. In some places Mount Everest would be quite engulfed with 2,600 feet to spare. What is called the Challenger Deep goes down for nearly six miles, and a depth of slightly over six miles has been recorded.

Now the depth involves enormous pressure, which at 2,500 fathoms amounts to two and a half tons on the square inch, a much greater pressure than that which drives the piston of an ordinary railway engine. If a beam of wood is lowered with weights, it comes up so compacted that it will not float. If a ship's hawser is lowered it is squeezed into the thickness of one's wrist. A great slab of whale's flesh is pressed into pemmican. Yet from these abysses we dredge delicate animals whose skeleton a child's fingers could crush, and some of the most daintily built animals in the world come from beneath miles of sea. The explanation is that the porous bodies are permeated with water through and through, so that the pressure is not felt. If a closed glass vessel is lowered it is soon shattered into powder; but an open glass vessel is of course unaffected, the pressure inside and out being the same. So it is

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with the Deep-Sea animals.

As the sun's heat is lost at about 150 fathoms, the Deep Sea is very cold, varying a little on each side of 32°F., the freezing-point of fresh water. There is very slight change throughout the year. Eternal winter reigns. It has been shown that cold water, rich in oxygen, is always sinking down from the Poles, especially from the Antarctic northwards.

As the rays of light are practically lost at 250 fathoms, and as the most sensitive photographic plate is unaffected when automatically exposed below 900 fathoms, which is rather over a mile, the abysses must be very dark. If it were not for the fitful gleams of some luminescent animals we might think of the Deep Sea as swathed in eternal night.

We must add to our physical picture of the Deep Sea that it is very calm, without any rapid currents, and that in many places the floor is thickly covered with powdery ooze. There is unbroken silence and here is no scenery except a few ridges and gullies, and here and there a volcanic cone—a strange, dark, cold, calm, silent, monotonous world.

As to the Deep-Sea animals, there must be much that is interesting. In the first place, though there are some abyssal deserts with very few

inhabitants, and though there are more animals at moderate depths than in the great 'deeps' the big fact is that there is no depth limit to the distribution of life. Very important is the absence of plants, apart from the resting stages of some simple seaweeds. The reason is, of course, the absence of light, and the consequence is that animals must all be carnivorous. But as they cannot all be eating one another, we look for an extraneous food-supply, and find it in the slow, ceaseless rain of infinitesimally small creatures sinking down through miles of water like snow-flakes on a quiet winter day. No doubt some larger animals, like sharks and whales, contribute to the thinly spread abyssal table. As there seem to be no bacteria in the Deep Sea, there can be no rottenness, and the compressed carcass of a whale is simply nibbled away by thousands of small crustaceans.

It is interesting to think of Sir John Murray trawling with a fifty-foot spread of otter trawl at a depth of 2,820 fathoms, which is over three miles. What kind of animals did he capture? The answer is that most of the great classes up to fishes, barring of course the air-breathing insects, are well represented in the Deep Sea—sponges, corals, worms, starfishes, sea-urchins, crustaceans, sea-spiders, all sorts of molluscs, and then the

queerest of queer fishes. It is a very representative fauna that peoples the inhospitable world of the Deep Sea. Thousands of different kinds have been described; some have been seen only once.

One of the fascinations of Natural History is the discovery of fitnesses, for every creature is suited to its habits and habitat. What are the outstanding adaptations of Deep-Sea animals? Many of them, like the sea-lilies and sea-pens, are raised on long stalks out of the soft ooze. Others, like many of the crabs and sea-spiders, have almost incredibly long legs, out of all proportion to their bodies. They are among the lankiest creatures in existence, and are able to stalk about delicately as if on stilts. This probably saves them from floundering deeply in the ooze, which has sometimes the consistence of butter on a hot day.

The Japanese flinty sponge called *Euplectella*, or Venus's flower basket, rises like a fairy palace from the floor of the Deep Sea, and it is a good example of the delicacy of build that we have already mentioned. The body is so permeable that the enormous pressure of the miles of water is not felt. In some of the fishes even the bones are so delicately built that one can run a needle into them without breaking the point. When a hungry Deep-Sea fish rises quickly in pursuit of a Deep-

Sea prawn, it may get into a zone of water where the pressure is less than inside the body, and, if it has not time to adjust things, it may be forced upwards and upwards to the surface, where it explodes! The internal organs may be forced out of the mouth, and even the scales may be driven off. The Deep Sea is the only place in the world where creatures can tumble upwards, but it does not happen often.

In a world of darkness, eyes are not likely to be of much use, and we are not surprised to find an extraordinary development of touch-organs, such as antennae and other kinds of feelers. One of the abyssal fishes dredged off the west coast of Ireland has a tactile barbule many times the length of the body, and some of the prawn-like crustaceans have antennae three or four times their length. These touch-organs must be very useful for feeling the way in the dark abysses, being doubtless used as a blind man uses his staff. Some of the Deep-Sea animals are perhaps the touchiest creatures in the world, though bats will run them close.

This raises a question in regard to the eyes of fishes. In some cases we know of shore fishes with average eyes which have relatives living at 300-600 fathoms, and these have big eyes—in adaptation, we naturally say, to the scanty light. And there

are other relatives that live at great depths of over 1,000 fathoms, and they have very small eyes. Which is as it should be, for there is no light at 1,000 fathoms, and a useless eye is not only a needless expense, but may be a weak spot if it is injured in a collision. But the difficulty is that among the abyssal fishes, many of which have dwindling eyes, there are some with large goggle-eyes. If we say that small eyes are what we should expect in an eternal night what are we to say of eyes in the same surroundings that are larger than usual? In some cases the big-eyed abyssal fishes may be relatively new-comers, but perhaps a slightly more satisfactory answer is that the big-eyed species take advantage of the gleams of luminescent animals.

The luminescence or, as it is badly called, phosphorescence of many Deep-Sea animals has been studied in a dark room on board ship when the light-producers survived the upward journey. It is a cold light without any heat-rays, and it seems usually to be produced by a rapid oxidation accompanying a fermentation. A substance called a luciferase ferments another substance called a luciferin, and a bright light results. Sometimes the light is produced inside an eye-like organ; sometimes a luminous secretion is exuded into the water. It probably has different uses in different

Deep-Sea animals—a lantern to some, a lure to others, here a love-signal and there a warning, but we must keep in mind the possibility that it often has no use at all, but is simply a by-product of the chemical and physical routine of the body. We know that a fire-fly or glow-worm uses its light as a signal in courtship, but we can only guess, as yet, at the use of luminescence to a brittle-star or a sea-pen living in the abysses.

Another puzzle is the frequency of colour among animals living in the world of darkness. Thus there are many brilliantly red crustaceans, and there are also blues and yellows. Perhaps we press too hard in trying to discover a use for everything; perhaps the bright colouring of many Deep-Sea animals is simply a by-play of the chemical routine and the minute structure of the tissues. In the same way it is difficult to be sure that there is any use in the brilliant autumn colouring of the withering leaves, which we might almost call the flowers of the forest.

A different kind of puzzle is raised by the question: Whence did the Deep-Sea animals come? The answer must be that most of them are migrants from the illumined seaweed-growing shallow waters round the coasts—migrants that have followed the down-drifting food along the slopes which lead to the abysses. There are few

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very ancient types in the Deep-Sea, and it is unlikely that there was much colonization of the abysses before the Cretaceous period. The colonizing of the inhospitable abysses is one of the many instances of the urge of life to overflow into every vacant corner, and it is a noteworthy fact that we find abundant beauty, fitness, and vigour in the strange, cold, dark, silent, plantless world of the Deep-Sea, across which there stretch the cables by which man has annihilated distance.

(3) THE DONKEY

BY

SIR J. ARTHUR THOMSON

WE cannot but like the donkey. It is quaint, clever, affectionate, and philosophical. No doubt we have been party to the conspiracy to call it ugly, stupid, sulky and dull; but we have known all the time that this is one of our traditional fictions. We accept it in our everyday talk, but we know that it is not true. In our estimate of the donkey, we must exclude, as for other domesticated animals, all those unfortunate individuals that are ill-bred, under-fed, and badly treated; but that is not always true even of the coster's 'moke', which is often as engaging as it is well appreciated.

From the zoologist's point of view the domestic donkey is very satisfactory. Whereas the pedigree of the dog is somewhat perplexing, and the lineage of cattle is controversially complicated, the descent of the donkey, like that of the pig, is perfectly clear. In its structure the donkey shows a comprehensive similitude with the African wild asses, and there seems to be no warrant for dragging in the Syrian onager or any other species. The ancient inscriptions of Thebes indicate that onagers were tamed for centuries B.C., but there is nothing against the general verdict that donkeys are domesticated descendants of African wild asses. Perhaps there is room for difference of opinion when the question is raised whether the donkeys all sprang from the Nubian wild asses, or whether Somaliland asses, Masai asses, Maskat asses, and other African strains may not have had a share in the evolution. The variability of the domesticated forms suggests that several wild strains of *Equus asinus africanus* went to their making. It must be noted that during the five thousand years or so since the domestication of the wild ass began many breeds have been established in different countries, some dwarfish and others stately, some white and others black, some with a very distinct shoulder-cross, and others with transverse bands on the fore-limbs. Donkeys

are not one but many, and they vary in temperament as well as in superficial features. As regards deeper structures, such as the details of the skull, there is great uniformity. In all essentials the donkey is a conservative type.

How does a donkey differ from a pony? We think at once of the long ears—‘like errant wings,’ as Mr. G. K. Chesterton described them—the long tail ending in a wisp, the upright mane, the dark shoulder-cross, and the absence of warts on the hind-legs. Whatever ‘species’ means, it is what is implied in the differences between horse and ass—a natural discontinuity which the artificially hybridized mules do but emphasize. When we dry the blood of a horse and of an ass we find that the crystals of haemoglobin differ in detail in the two species. We can hear the difference of species when we listen to a neigh and to a bray.

The donkey’s ‘hee-haw’ is one of the weirdest sounds in the animal kingdom—perhaps the strangest of kincalls. As Phil Robinson says: “I defy any one to hear a donkey fairly out and not to laugh at the cavernous melancholy] of the animal’s concluding notes. It commenced with an ardour that has something of military enthusiasm in it, but suddenly, as if the memory of secret griefs had supervened, the voice drops from the full-breathed out-cry that rings across the Bikaner

wastes to a dolorous pumping up of hollow groans and husky sobs.' Pope speaks of 'the loud clarion of the braying ass,' and Swift called the donkey 'the nightingale of brutes,' but others have been less flattering in their references. Thus we read of 'the hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray.' Of Cowper's remark on the ass that frightened John Gilpin's horse, that it 'did sing most loud and clear,' Robinson says that 'this is the nearest approach to appreciation of this great jest of Nature that I know of in verse.' In any case the earth will be a duller place when there are no more donkeys left to bray.

The interpretation of the extraordinary hee-haw is, of course, to be found in the donkey's ancestral home, which is the desert. The resonant call is adapted to wake the echoes of the great spaces. A loud-speaker is required in the sparsely populated dry steppes. When the donkey rolls in the dry dust, its Unconscious is recalling the desert; and perhaps a similar interpretation may be found for its frequent objection to stepping over a streamlet that crosses a road. Its colouring is often suited to a sandy background, where it is inconspicuous even to a lion's hungry eyes. Every one knows that a donkey becomes invisible on a common at night. Though we hear it eating, we cannot see at all. The long ear is connected

THE DONKEY

with the resonant bray, for it is adapted to catch a distant note of news in the boundless desert. In its mobility it also helps the sentinel of the little herd to locate the approach of the enemy. Not that wild asses relegate to others much of their individual vigilance, for they do not take many mouthfuls without raising their heads, searching the environment with their ear-trumpets, and sniffing the air. Wordsworth was peculiarly prosaic that day he saw the ass,

*with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turn round his long left ear.*

Another of the clear reminiscences of the desert home is the donkey's ability to thrive on very Spartan fare. Thistles recall the xerophytic vegetation of the arid lands where its ancestors are still at home. It is sad, however, that man should have taken advantage of the donkey's frugality and made it an excuse for not giving the creature enough to eat.

The African wild ass is a handsome, agile, high-spirited, courageous creature. It lives in little bands—usually a male and several females with their foals. Like other polygynists the males fight savagely with their rivals. As is the case with many other big-brained mammals, the young asses

are very playful. They are irresistible combinations of roguishness and confidence, and there seems to be no warrant for calling them untamable. It is likely enough that the well-known Old Testament description of the wild ass referred to the Asiatic onager, but it would also fit the North African species.

*Who sent forth the wild ass free?
And who loosened the bonds of the mustang,
Whose range I made the steppe,
And his dwellings the salt marshes?
He laughs at the roar of the city;
The shouts of the driver he does not hear,
He explores the mountains, his pasture,
And searches after everything green.*

If the wild ass is such a fine creature, how do we account for the often depressed donkey? The depression is not to man's credit, but happily it is far from being universal. In many countries the domesticated donkey retains many of the good qualities of the wild ass. It is possible that some of the very dull dwarf types, 'not much larger,' as Darwin said, 'than a Newfoundland dog,' are semi-pathological variants, with perturbed endocrinal glands. But perhaps the main fact is that the dwarfish, depressed donkey is a diagram of the combined result of careless nature on the one

hand (including food, stabling, grooming, and treatment) and careless breeding on the other. We should photograph a dull 'cuddy' side by side with a high-caste white ass from Egypt, and label the picture 'Bad-breeding' and 'Good-breeding.' When we see a weary, disheartened 'moke,' we feel as if we shared in a breach of trust. It will be a sad pity if the fine type of donkey disappears from the haunts of men, and we will not be consoled by any car, bray it ever so imitatively.

VII

‘A CLERGYMAN’

BY

SIR MAX BEERBOHM

[SIR MAX BEERBOHM is somewhat of a survivor and a stranger in our midst. He belongs, by birth and temperament alike, to a generation that was devoted to art and, in fact, made an art of life. The witty, ironical spirit of that age is preserved for us in the notorious *YELLOW BOOK*, to which Mr. Max Beerbohm contributed.

He was then (1894) only twenty-two; but his art was already perfect. In fact, it was two arts, for this favourite of the gods painted even better than he wrote. He was ‘nothing if not critical’ and his criticism of men and things took the form of caricature and parody. When his caricatures were exhibited, the public found in them an irresistible combination of humour, nonsense and fantasy.

From time to time, during twenty years, he brought out volumes of essays and sketches like *AND EVEN NOW, MORE, YET AGAIN* and *A DIVERSITY OF THINGS*. In these, he displayed a refined egotism, a happy wit and a fastidious sense of form. It is remarkable how many of these essays treat of art and artists, especially writers. He is drawn to the subject because he is himself an artist, but chiefly because he is amused by the vanity and pretensions of his brethren. He delights, like Puck, in the spectacle of human folly—

‘Lord, what fools these mortals be!’

This spirit of irresponsible fun appears again in his burlesques and parodies. The fantastic story of *ZULEIKA DOBSON* is romance reduced to absurdity. *THE DREADFUL DRAGON OF HAYHILL* is a fairy tale turned inside

out. And *A CHRISTMAS GARLAND* parodies the styles of well-known contemporaries and reveals a happy, natural gift of mimicry.

When he speaks in his own voice, Sir Max Beerbohm has the exactitude of a scholar and the easy grace of a wit and man of the world. With his cultivated mind and his passion for the right word, he draws on all the resources of the language for expressing himself. He is rather partial to words of Latin origin and handles them with scholarly propriety. And, as we should have expected, his writing is allusive and charged with associations for the responsive reader. At the same time, it is wholly free from pedantry. He writes as people used to speak (or wished to) in polite society, when conversation was still a fine art. Clarity, speed and piquancy are the cardinal virtues of this style; and brevity is the very soul of it.]

FRAGMENTARY, pale, momentary; almost nothing; glimpsed and gone; as it were, a faint human hand thrust up, never to reappear, from beneath the rolling waters of Time, he forever haunts my memory and solicits my weak imagination. Nothing is told of him but that once, abruptly he asked a question, and received an answer.

This was on the afternoon of April 7th, 1778, at Streatham, in the well-appointed house of Mr. Thrale. Johnson, on the morning of that day, had entertained Boswell at breakfast in Bolt Court, and invited him to dine at Thrale Hall. The two took coach and arrived early. It seems that Sir John Pringle had asked Boswell to ask Johnson 'what were the best English sermons for style.'

In the interval before dinner, accordingly, Boswell reeled off the names of several divines whose prose might or might not win commendation. 'Atterbury?' he suggested. Johnson: Yes, Sir, one of the best. Boswell: Tillotson? Johnson: Why, not now. I should not advise any one to imitate Tillotson's style; though I don't know; I should be cautious of censuring anything that has been applauded by so many suffrages.—South is one of the best, if you except his peculiarities, and his violence, and sometimes coarseness of language.—Seed has a very fine style; but he is not very theological. Jortin's sermons are very elegant. Sherlock's style, too, is very elegant, though he has not made it his principal study.—And you may add Smalridge. Boswell: I like Ogden's Sermons on Prayer very much, both for neatness of style and subtilty of reasoning. Johnson: I should like to read all that Ogden has written. Boswell: What I want to know is, what sermons afford the best specimen of English pulpit eloquence. Johnson: We have no sermons addressed to the passions, that are good for anything; if you mean that kind of eloquence. A CLERGYMAN, whose name I do not recollect: Were not Dodd's sermons addressed to the passions? Johnson: They were nothing, Sir, be they addressed to what they may.

The suddenness of it—Bang!—and the rabbit that had popped from its burrow was no more.

I know not which is the more startling—the debut of the unfortunate clergyman, or the instantaneousness of his end. Why hadn't Boswell told us there was a clergyman present? Well, we may be sure that so careful and acute an artist had some good reason. And I suppose the clergyman was left to take us unawares because just so did he take the company. Had we been told he was there, we might have expected that sooner or later he would join in the conversation. He would have had a place in our minds. We may assume that in the minds of the company around Johnson he had no place. He sat forgotten, overlooked; so that his self-assertion startled every one just as on Boswell's page it startles us. In Johnson's massive and magnetic presence only some very remarkable man, such as Mr. Burke, was sharply distinguishable from the rest. Others might, if they had something in them, stand out slightly. This unfortunate clergyman may have had something in him, but I judge that he lacked the gift of seeming as if he had. That deficiency, however, does not account for the horrid fate that befell him. One of Johnson's strongest and most inveterate feelings was his veneration for the Cloth. To any one in Holy Orders he habitually listened

with a grave and charming defence. Today moreover, he was in excellent good humour. He was at the Thrales', where he so loved to be; the day was fine; a fine dinner was in close prospect; and he had had what he always declared to be the sum of human felicity—a ride in a coach. Nor was there in the question put by the clergyman anything likely to enrage him. Dodd was one whom Johnson had befriended in adversity; and it had always been agreed that Dodd in his pulpit was very emotional. What drew the blasting flash must have been not the question itself, but the manner in which it was asked. And I think we can guess what that manner was.

Say the words aloud: 'Were not Dodd's sermons addressed to the passions?' They are words which, if you have any dramatic and histrionic sense, *cannot* be said except in a high, thin voice.

You may, from sheer perversity, utter them in a rich and sonorous baritone or bass. But if you do so, they sound utterly unnatural. To make them carry the conviction of human utterance, you have no choice: you must pipe them.

Remember, now, Johnson was very deaf. Even the people whom he knew well, the people to whose voices he was accustomed, had to address him very loudly. It is probable that this unregar-

ded, young, shy clergyman, when at length he suddenly mustered courage to 'cut in,' let his high, thin voice soar *too* high, insomuch that it was a kind of scream. On no other hypothesis can we account for the ferocity with which Johnson turned and rended him. Johnson didn't, we may be sure, mean to be cruel. The old lion, startled, just struck out blindly. But the force of paw and claws was not the less lethal. We have endless testimony to the strength of Johnson's voice; and the very cadence of those words, 'They were nothing, Sir, be they addressed to what they may,' convinces me that the old lion's jaws never gave forth a louder roar. Boswell does not record that there was any further conversation before the announcement of dinner. Perhaps the whole company had been temporarily deafened. But I am not bothering about *them*. My heart goes out to the poor dear clergyman exclusively.

I said a moment ago that he was young and shy; and I admit that I slipped those epithets in without having justified them to you by due process of induction. Your quick mind will have already supplied what I omitted. A man with a high thin voice, and without power to impress any one with a sense of his importance, a man so null in effect that even the retentive mind of Boswell did not retain his very name, would assuredly not be a

self-confident man. Even if he were naturally shy, social courage would soon have been sapped in him, and would in time have been destroyed, by experience. That he had not yet given himself up as a bad job, that he still had faint wild hopes, is proved by the fact that he did snatch the opportunity for asking that question. He must accordingly, have been young. Was he the curate of the neighbouring church? I think so. It would account for his having been invited. I see him as he sits there listening to the great Doctor's pronouncement on Atterbury and those others. He sits on the edge of a chair in the background. He has colourless eyes, fixed earnestly, and a face almost as pale as the clerical bands beneath his somewhat receding chin. His forehead is high and narrow, his hair mouse-coloured. His hands are clasped tight before him, the knuckles standing out sharply. This constriction does not mean that he is steeling himself to speak. He has no positive intention of speaking. Very much, nevertheless, is he wishing in the back of his mind that he *could* say something—something whereat the great Doctor would turn on him and say, after a pause for thought, 'Why yes, Sir. That is most justly observed' or 'Sir, this has never occurred to me. I thank you'—thereby fixing the observer for ever high in the esteem of all. And now in a flash the

chance presents itself. 'We have,' shouts Johnson, 'no sermons addressed to the passions, that are good for anything.' I see the curate's frame quiver with sudden impulse, and his mouth fly open, and—no, I can't bear it, I shut my eyes and ears. But audible, even so, is something shrill, followed by something thunderous.

Presently I re-open my eyes. The crimson has not yet faded from that young face yonder, and slowly down either cheek falls a glistening tear. Shades of Atterbury and Tillotson! Such weakness shames the Established Church. What would Jortin and Smalridge have said?—what Seed and South? And, by the way, who *were* they, these worthies? It is a solemn thought that so little is conveyed to us by names which to the palaeo-Georgians conveyed so much. We discern a dim, composite of a big man in a big wig and a billowing black gown, with a big congregation beneath him. But we are not anxious to hear what he is saying. We know it is very elegant. We know it will be printed and be bound in finely-tooled full calf, and no palaeo-Georgian gentleman's library will be complete without it. Literate people in those days were comparatively few; but, bating that, one may say that sermons were as much in request as novels are today. I wonder, will mankind continue to be capricious? It is a very

solemn thought indeed that no more than a hundred-and-fifty years hence the novelists of our time, with all their moral and political and sociological outlook and influence, will perhaps shine as indistinctly as do those old preachers, with all their elegance, now. 'Yes, Sir,' some great pundit may be telling a disciple at this moment, 'Wells is one of the best. Galsworthy is one of the best, if you except his concern for delicacy of style. Mrs. Ward has a very firm grasp of problems, but is not very creational.—Caine's books are very edifying. I should like to read all that Caine has written. Miss Corelli, too, is very edifying.—And you may add Upton Sinclair.' 'What I want to know,' says the disciple, 'is, what English novels may be selected as specially enthralling.' The pundit answers: 'We have no novels addressed to the passions that are good for anything, if you mean that kind of enthrallment.' And here some poor wretch (whose name the disciple will not remember) inquires: 'Are not Mrs. Glyn's novels addressed to the passions?' and is in due form annihilated. Can it be that a time will come when readers of this passage in our pundit's Life will take more interest in the poor nameless wretch than in all the bearers of those great names put together, being no more able or anxious to discriminate between (say) Mrs. Ward and Mr. Sinclair

than we are to set Ogden above Sherlock, or Sherlock above Ogden? It seems impossible. But we must remember what things are not always what they seem.

Every man illustrious in his day, however much he may be gratified by his fame, looks with an eager eye to posterity for a continuance of past favours, and would even live the remainder of his life in obscurity if by so doing he could insure that future generations would preserve a correct attitude towards him forever. This is very natural and human, but, like so many very natural and human things, very silly. Tillotson and the rest need not, after all, be pitied for our neglect of them. They either know nothing about it, or are above such terrene trifles. Let us keep our pity for the seething mass of divines who were *not* elegantly verbose, and had no fun or glory while they lasted. And let us keep a specially large portion for one whose lot was so much worse than merely undistinguished. If that nameless curate had not been at the Thrales' that day, or, being there, had kept the silence that so well became him, his life would have been drab enough, in all conscience. But at any rate an unpromising career would not have been nipped in the bud. And that is what in fact happened, I'm sure of it. A robust man might have rallied under the blow. Not so our

friend. Those who knew him in infancy had not expected that he would be reared. Better for him had they been right. It is well to grow up and be ordained, but not if you are delicate and very sensitive, and shall happen to annoy the greatest, the most stentorian and roughest of contemporary personages. 'A Clergyman' never held up his head or smiled again after the brief encounter recorded for us by Boswell. He sank into a rapid decline. Before the next blossoming of Thrale Hall's almond trees he was no more. I like to think that he died forgiving Dr. Johnson.

VIII
AMONG THE RUINS
BY
LORD DUNSANY

[It is characteristic of LORD DUNSANY that he says of himself in the latest volume of his autobiography, 'the principal occupations of my life [are] shooting snipe, woodcock and ducks and hunting foxes.' He was indeed a capital gunner and hunter in his day but he was something more. Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, eighteenth Baron Dunsany (born 1878), fought gallantly in the Boer War and Four Years' War and, again, did his bit in the L.D.V., though he was sixty-two, during the Battle of Britain. And, in a spirit of adventure, he went and occupied the Byron chair of English Literature at the University of Athens for a year (1940-41), his voyage out and back being a modern Odyssey.

His seventy years have thus been filled with active work and adventure. But his mental life has been even more exciting and adventurous. For he is a poet, though he writes prose plays, mostly, and tales and fantasies. 'However much I have travelled,' he tells us, 'my thoughts have travelled much more.... And they had not travelled long before they were beyond the lands that I knew, and so I had to invent lands for them:' e.g., Golnuz, Belzoond, Merimna. In those lands, 'east of the sun and west of the moon,' anything is possible and credible, provided it is beautiful and bizarre—like the *Travel Tales of Mr. Joseph Jorkens*. And the author makes up his own myths and gives his world gods and devils of its own. He disclaims all moral intention or allegory; but his fantastic plays and tales do suggest an oblique criticism of our world and civilization: witness *The Gods of the Mountain* and *The Use of Man*.

Lord Dunsany dislikes modern civilization on many counts: not the least of them being the damage it has done to the English language. As an artist in words, he is vigilant against the corruption of his medium. He is never tired of warning the English-speaking world of the mischief done by ignorant people who attempt 'fine writing.' Not that he is a precisian or pedant. On the contrary. His own prose style is racy, rapid and unconventional in its vigour. And it reflects his own poetic, humorous, whimsical vision of life.]

WHEN I read essays on various aspects of English literature I sometimes remember the words of a friend who, with accurate exaggeration, said of Sargent that he used to send out his charwoman to buy his paints. He seems to have been above such details himself, and his pictures are decomposing. Most things are more inter-related than we think; and an age that began to sell bad paints soon neglected the care of its language, and so rapidly is our language now decaying that if the rate continues, or perhaps accelerates, those of us who are writing now will not be understood clearly in one or two generations. We are often told that a language must grow; and that is too obvious to be worth remarking; but the change I notice is merely decay. It is autumn, not spring, with our language, and the adjectives are fluttering to the ground. When a word has been lost too long it cannot be replaced, for only pedants pick such words up, and no one will receive them at

their hands. It is therefore that I want to urge a few, if only a few, to do what they can to preserve our fading ones before their loss becomes irreparable. Luxurious, mysterious, Roman, hostile, useful, and even large and small, are among the good words that we are fast losing: indeed hostile is almost gone already, but is worth a desperate effort to save it, as will be seen by reading any of the military histories of last century and comparing them with a modern account of any battle. Now let me explain clearly why I say that these words are lost or dying: it is no argument to say that an adjective like Roman, hostile, large or small is dying because it is rarely used; for there may be merely no occasion to use it: I say that hostile is lost when I read of an enemy army, that Roman is falling away when I hear of our Rome correspondent, and that large and small are beginning to follow them when I read of a large-scale attack or a small-scale one; and so on and so on. It is not growth in a language, or flexibility, as I have often heard it called, to discard one's adjectives one by one and to have to use nouns in their places. I once heard the true Bohemian defined as a man whom you would find shaving in the drawing-room with an ordinary knife. It can be done, but not so effectively as in the bathroom with a razor; and the writer of this bright

little description was making the point that the essential thing about the Bohemian was that he should make shift with the wrong thing for the wrong purpose. Just as one can shave to some extent with a table-knife, so nouns may do the work of adjectives; but only clumsily, for the adjective is a grace in a language which the dense forests of Germany prevented the Romans from bringing to that part of Europe, and the Germans are fond of strings of nouns to this day; and I think that it is some of their children, looking for freedom in the West, who have probably clothed their somewhat crude idiom with English in America, whence these clattering nouns may have been imported to us. Let me first of all deal with an objection often raised when I have approached this topic in public; it goes something like this: Lord Dunsany evidently objects to words like lamp-post, schoolboy and Post Office. I mention this objection in order to clear it out of the way, for it has no bearing on the case; these are hyphenated nouns, and not only useful, but necessary; all Tennyson's poems are full of them. What I am dealing with is, firstly, the ousting of the adjective, and, secondly, the sheer confusion of a row of five, and even six, nouns, such as for instance 'summer evening London scare heading'. The loss of the adjective is mere loss, and to be

deplored; these rows of nouns are confused for the simple reason that whereas adjectives, however many, all qualify the following noun, as in Swinburne's 'golden remote wild West,' and there cannot be any doubt of the meaning whatever, there are no rules whereby to tell in a row of nouns which nouns are qualifying which; a glance at a few examples will show that the first two nouns may be qualifying the third, or the first noun qualifying the second and third; and the greater the number the greater the confusion, unless you happen to know exactly already what the writer is going to say. Now this reduces us to writing only what it is expected that we will write, whereas I think it is the essence of writing which is to be of any interest, that it should tell us something that we were not quite expecting, even if it be something so simple as a statement by Francis Ledwidge that briars make semicircles on the ways. Perhaps my meaning will be made quite clear by a simple example. Take the words 'a stone house': this is perfectly unmistakable and no more to be objected to than lamp-post. But you cannot heap up any more nouns on it; for a utility stone house may either mean a house built of utility stone, or a stone house which has the quality of utility. Things get still worse if you call it a mystery utility stone house, while a luxury

mystery utility stone house is one degree worse still. And I have seen even more than five such nouns in a row; so that it is not impossible that we may read one day of an austerity luxury mystery utility stone house; and let no one object that there would be no meaning here; we are far past any meaning. The addition of even an adjective, when things are as bad as this, will only increase the confusion. If we will agree, as I suppose we shall, that the prime purpose of language is to express a clear meaning to others, no one will think of objecting to a composite word like schoolboy (or let us rather say University man, because there the words are still separate); but by that test one must object to a luxury University man, because it may mean either a man at a luxurious University or a luxurious undergraduate. I have seen correspondence on this subject that was almost angry, and yet I only want to save a few useful adjectives (and the word useful itself is among them), the loss of which can be no gain to anyone.

The excessive use of nouns seems to grow like a bad habit, so that often when a man has written a perfectly clear sentence he throws in one or more nouns to spoil it. I read, for instance, that a ship was sunk in the South Atlantic. Surely that is clear enough. But, after he had written that, the

writer threw in the word area. What could the South Atlantic area possibly mean, that was not meant by the South Atlantic?

But why object to South Atlantic area? For this reason, that it weakens the word Atlantic and robs it of some of its meaning. If the South Atlantic has to be fortified by the addition of the word 'area,' the time will come when we shall not quite know what the South Atlantic is, if we meet it all by itself; just as the word weather seems no longer able to express any meaning alone, or why should we always call it weather conditions? If the word does not need this support, the word 'conditions' is, among other things, a waste of ink; and, if it does need it, then it has recently lost the meaning it had for ages.

And, if another example be needed of spoiling a sentence by throwing a noun at it when it is quite finished, here is another I culled from a South African paper: 'African troops yesterday enjoyed their first ration of brandy issue.' When this writer got as far as the word brandy the sentence was finished, or he might have said that they enjoyed an issue of brandy; but a ration of brandy issue seems a very queer drink.

Scientists are continually needing new words that no pedant should grudge to them; it is not these that are harming the language; their need

for precision alone will surely prevent them from blurring the outline of a word like *weather* by the friction of an unnecessary noun.

Then there is an indirect harm that is done to the clear understanding of English by this crowding of nouns upon each other; for when we come on a noun that rightfully follows another, as in such a sentence as 'the tree squirrels come to for shelter,' we may start reading 'the tree-squirrels,' till we find that it makes nonsense and have to start again. The almost complete lack of hyphens in modern writing makes such mistakes all the easier. Such hyphens as there are went wrong very suddenly, only two decades ago; one often reads now of an 'ex-town mayor,' which can only mean the mayor of a destroyed town, but is not meant to; and one sees that the Cunard Line has been amalgamated with the White, but not with the Star.

Another invariable fault with modern hyphens is that a line occupied by an army will always go like this: Snarovsky-Gopmund-Nevton Banskoi-Hulston-Marbery. Why the gap in the middle of it? For the odd reason that Nevton Banskoi is the name of one town. Surely it should have a hyphen more on that account, not less. People say: 'Oh, but Nevton Banskoi does not have a hyphen'. Nor do Banskoi and Hulston: but when

it is wanted to join them up, why leave the staring gap where the gap should least be? To the eye the line seems broken just where no break can ever occur. A glance at the map or a moment's thought puts one right, as a rock can be pushed out of a road in a moment by a motorist; but the paths of thought are smoother without these little obstructions. An example of what I was referring to only a few lines back is the following sentence that I read in a paper: 'Poultry farmers are inclined to gather from the recent Ministry of Food hints that almost anything can be made out of eggs.' This of course means, or rather says, that poultry farmers gather hints from the recent Ministry of Food. But is the Ministry of Food recent? A moment's research shows that this is not what was intended, and Ministry of Food is uncouthly doing the work of an adjective. Some people answer such criticisms as this by asking: 'But how would you write it yourself?' 'That does not matter; there are several ways of writing this simple statement clearly; a mere s and an apostrophe would have saved it, and the shifting of the word recent; but what is important is to avoid ambiguity or vagueness, if you attach any importance to anything that you write or say. I suppose it is mainly a matter of clearness that makes diamond more valued than glass. The little word

‘of’ will often save us from the supposed necessity of using nouns instead of adjectives. Is that word going to be lost from our language too? I was recently reading one of Lord Avebury’s books, and came on the sentence ‘Among the hardy Norsemen runes were supposed to be.....’ Nothing could be clearer: the reader’s thought flowed unchecked along those words, in his time; but the language has become vitiated since then, and I was checked for a moment as I read it. It was like trying to play on an old lawn-tennis-court, well mown in 1880, but since given over to weeds. One would trip as one played. Was Norsemen a noun or an adjective? The meaning is clear enough; but the modern reader has to pause and think as he reads, so as to see that Norsemen runes is not what was intended, just as one has to be careful to step round the tall thistle on the old lawn-tennis-court. We grow expert in dodging these weeds, but they grow up daily all round us and the time will come when the play of thought along sentences of our language will be very greatly impeded. Here is another weed, from a heading in some newspaper: ‘Critical Area Commander.’ This is not even three nouns, only two of them, but they are aggravated by the adjective, which in these cases is often as bad as another noun. As I have said, there are no rules whereby

to tell which noun this adjective qualifies; you merely take your choice, or are supposed to know already, whether the Area Commander was critical, or whether he commanded a critical area. Probably the people in the area in which that paper was published knew, at that particular time, which meaning was intended. But what will people make of it a few years hence, and perhaps some distance away? It may be said that no such remote message was intended, and that to give it was neither the function nor the interest of the writer. This may be so. If we are not to be heard far off, we shall not require clear voices. If we have nothing much to say, we need not express ourselves clearly. But I am very reluctant to accept that we are a dying people in an aimless age, with no particular message; idle singers of an empty day, as William Morris bitterly put it, neither fair to himself nor to his age.

Of course these lawn-tennis-players in the undergrowth acquire a certain dexterity, and the modern reader coming on such a sentence as 'once in her fitting room corsetry troubles vanish' knows at once, without the slightest aid from hyphens, where to separate this row of nouns, stepping between 'fitting room' and 'corsetry troubles' with the ease with which a practised player steps just between the bramble and the

teazle on some tennis-court unweeded since Queen Victoria^d died.

Only today I received a letter from a hospital stating that certain needs were of equal importance "in war and peacetime alike." This is perfectly good sense, but does it mean exactly what it says? Nouns have been worn so thin by overwork that we can no longer recognize a noun when we see it. Is war a noun here? It may be. But I think it is meant for an adjective qualifying the word *time*; or rather a hyphenated noun that has lost its hyphen. I think that what is meant is 'in war-time and peace-time alike'. There is no important difference, because most of us are in this war while it lasts; but what is important is that the meaning is not crisp and clear like a newly minted coin, but good enough for the purpose, like one of those old franc-notes that you see in Africa, which although thumbled and dirty and partly illegible is almost certainly a one-franc note.

Sometimes whole sentences are used as adjectives, as where I read in another paper that a Field-Marshal "has sent a 'victory is assured' farewell message to the army." I am not speaking now of any beauties of language; I am only, as it were, in your studio, not looking at your pictures, but pointing out that your paint is decaying. I am concerned now only with the clear meaning of

words. I have seen headings where I had to read some of the column below to find out what they meant, and I have seen sentences whose meaning I could not get until I had read the context. A good example of this is, 'brief case sword,' a heading I saw in a paper, or part of a sentence, which I noted down at the time; but as I neglected to attach the meaning, I cannot now remember quite what it was. And the other day I read of a 'popular health drink.' Why not a 'people health drink,' I wondered, if nouns are to be used like this? And then one often reads something of this kind: The enemy lost his artillery, cavalry, mounted infantry and transport *horses*. It is not till one comes to the word *horses* that one understands that the nouns one was reading were not intended for nouns. One goes back to the beginning of the sentence and, taking a second run at it, finds entirely a different meaning. And with this new custom a belief is growing that there is a certain significance in a noun that is not in its adjective, so that the noun is more and more often used to do an adjective's work. One may talk perhaps of an England cricketer or an England farmer, though I do not see why one should: but another noun brings sheer confusion, and an England health farmer has either no meaning at all, or, what is worse, ambiguity. A

few years more of this, and the clear and simple description 'a healthy English farmer' will be among the lost phrases, or put away as pedantic. An adjective should, I think, be regarded as the mirror of its noun, with the exact meaning its noun has. When a noun has no adjective, like London, then it must be used in an adjective's place; but the man who would use a word like Rome as an adjective would merely bark himself, when there might be occasion for barking, though he kept his own dog.

IX

PROFESSIONS FOR WOMEN

BY

VIRGINIA WOOLF

[VIRGINIA WOOLF was fortunate beyond most writers in her birth and breeding. Her father was Sir Leslie Stephen, scholar, critic, agnostic and the first editor of *The Dictionary of National Biography*. From him she inherited a free, fearless and original mind and a disbelief in orthodox religion, or rather a belief in a new religion, the religion of Truth. And at the right moment, her father died. She had money and leisure for reading, thinking and writing. She was encouraged and fortified in her dependence by Mr. Leonard Woolf whom she married in 1912.

It was as a critic that Virginia Woolf first made a name for herself. She was a reviewer for the *Times Literary Supplement* for many years and wrote for other periodicals as well. When she republished these occasional writings, many years later, she called them modestly *The Common Reader*, saying that she was nothing more than that. But she was in fact, as a biographer points out, a very uncommon reader, with her wit and imagination and her learning worn lightly.

Her own creative writing began with two novels in traditional form, *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*. Then followed a series of experiments in the technique of fiction till she perfected a new kind of novel in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*. To put it simply if crudely, her later novels have no use for plot or individual characters or dialogue or description; in place of these, they present disembodied sensation and sub-conscious states of mind. It is the method of pure poetry but it has its dangers. *The*

Waves (1931), for example, reaches the limit of intelligibility; the common reader finds the most part of the novel beautiful but bewildering.

This is one reason why Virginia Woolf is not a popular writer. Another lies in her limited range and sympathy. The world of intellectual men and women was the only world she knew and cared for. But there are two qualities by virtue of which she will always have and hold a 'fit audience though few'. They are the qualities of poetic vision and poetic speech. She feels the beauty and pathos of life and finds a unity and pattern beneath its confusing surface. And she makes us see this beauty and this reality through the clear medium of her style. She writes as well-bred people talk, gracefully and allusively; there are few learned words and the syntax is loose and flexible. But it is really a poet's prose, with its subtle cadence, its fresh metaphors and free associations. In its glancing brightness, its variety and flow, we seem to see an image of life itself.]

WHEN your secretary invited me to come here, she told me that your Society is concerned with the employment of women and she suggested that I might tell you something about my own professional experiences. It is true I am a woman; it is true I am employed; but what professional experiences have I had? It is difficult to say. My profession is literature; and in that profession there are fewer experiences for women than in any other, with the exception of the stage—fewer, I mean, that are peculiar to women. For the road was cut many years ago—by Fanny Burney, by Aphra Behn, by Harriet Martineau, by Jane Austen, by George Eliot—many famous women,

and many more unknown and forgotten, have been before me, making the path smooth, and regulating my steps. Thus, when I came to write, there were very few material obstacles in my way. Writing was a reputable and harmless occupation. The family peace was not broken by the scratching of a pen. No demand was made upon the family purse. For ten and six pence one can buy paper enough to write all the plays of Shakespeare—if one has a mind that way. Pianos and models, Paris, Vienna and Berlin, masters and mistresses, are not needed by a writer. The cheapness of writing paper is, of course, the reason why women have succeeded as writers before they have succeeded in the other professions.

But to tell you my story—it is a simple one. You have only got to figure to yourself a girl in a bedroom with a pen in her hand. She had only to move that pen from left to right—from ten o'clock to one. Then it occurred to her to do what is simple and cheap enough after all—to slip a few of those pages into an envelope, fix a penny stamp in the corner, and drop the envelope into the red box at the corner. It was thus that I became a journalist; and my effort was rewarded on the first day of the following month—a very glorious day it was for me—by a letter from an editor containing a cheque for one pound ten

shillings and six pence. But to show you how little I deserve to be called a professional woman, how little I know of the struggles and difficulties of such lives, I have to admit that instead of spending that sum upon bread and butter, rent, shoes and stockings, or butcher's bills, I went out and bought a cat—a beautiful cat, a Persian cat, which very soon involved me in bitter disputes with my neighbours.

What could be easier than to write articles and to buy Persian cats with the profits? But wait a moment. Articles have to be about something. Mine, I seem to remember, was about a novel by a famous man. And while I was writing this review I discovered that if I were going to review books I should need to do battle with a certain phantom. And the phantom was a woman, and when I came to know her better I called her after the heroine of a famous poem. The Angel of the House. It was she who used to come between me and my paper when I was writing reviews. It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her. You who come of a younger and happier generation may not have heard of her—you may not know what I mean by the Angel in the House. I will describe her as shortly as I can. She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was

utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it—in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all—I need not say it—she was pure. Her purity was supposed to be her chief beauty—her blushes, her great grace. In those days—the last of Queen Victoria—every house had its Angel. And when I came to write I encountered her with the very first words. The shadow of her wings fell on my page; I heard the rustling of her skirts in the room. Directly, that is to say, I took my pen in my hand to review that novel by a famous man, she slipped behind me and whispered: ‘My dear, you are a young woman. You are writing about a book that has been written by a man. Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own. Above, all, be pure.’ And she made as if to guide my pen. I now record the one act for which I take some credit to myself, though the credit rightly belongs to some excellent ancestors of mine who left me a certain sum of money—shall we say five hundred pounds a year?—so that it was not necessary for me to

depend solely on charm for my living. I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self-defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing. For, as I found, directly I put pen to paper, you cannot review even a novel without having a mind of your own, without expressing what you think to be truth about human relations, normality, sex. And all these questions, according to the Angel of the House, cannot be dealt with freely and openly by women; they must charm, they must conciliate, they must—to put it bluntly—tell lies if they are to succeed. Thus, whenever I felt the shadow of her wing or the radiance of her halo upon my page, I took up the inkpot and flung it at her. She died hard. Her fictitious nature was of great assistance to her. It is far harder to kill a phantom than a reality. She was always creeping back when I thought I had despatched her. Though I flatter myself that I killed her in the end, the struggle was severe; it took much time that had better have been spent upon learning Greek grammar; or in roaming the world in search of adventures. But it was a real experience; it was an experience that was bound to befall all women writers at that time. Killing the Angel

in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer.

But to continue my story. The Angel was dead; what then remained? You may say that what remained was a simple and common object—a young woman in a bed-room with an inkpot. In other words, now that she had rid herself of falsehood, that young woman had only to be herself. Ah, but what is ‘herself’? I mean, what is a woman? I assure you, I do not know. I do not believe that you know. I do not believe that anybody can know until she has expressed herself in all the arts and professions open to human skill. That indeed is one of the reasons why I have come here—out of respect for you, who are in process of showing us by your experiments what a woman is, who are in process of providing us, by your failures and successes, with that extremely important piece of information.

But to continue the story of my professional experiences. I made one pound ten and six by my first review; and I bought a Persian cat with the proceeds. Then I grew ambitious. A Persian cat is all very well, I said; but a Persian cat is not enough. I must have a motor car. And it was thus that I became a novelist—for it is a very strange thing that people will give you a motor car if you will tell them a story. It is a still stranger

thing that there is nothing so delightful in the world as telling stories. It is far pleasanter than writing reviews of famous novels. And yet, if I am to obey your secretary and tell you my professional experiences as a novelist, I must tell you about a very strange experience that befell me as a novelist. And to understand it you must try first to imagine a novelist's state of mind. I hope I am not giving away professional secrets if I say that a novelist's chief desire is to be as unconscious as possible. He has to induce in himself a state of perpetual lethargy. He wants life to proceed with the utmost quiet and regularity. He wants to see the faces, to read the same books, to do the same things day after day, month after month, while he is writing, so that nothing may break the illusion in which he is living—so that nothing may disturb or disquiet the mysterious nosings about, feelings round, darts, dashes and sudden discoveries of that very shy and illusive spirit, the imagination. I suspect that this state is the same both for men and women. Be that as it may, I want you to imagine me writing a novel in a state of trance. I want you to figure to yourselves a girl sitting with a pen in her hand, which for minutes, and indeed for hours, she never dips into the inkpot. The image that comes to my mind when I think of this girl is the image of a fisherman lying sunk in dreams

on the verge of a deep lake with a rod held out over the water. She was letting her imagination sweep unchecked round every rock and cranny of the world that lies submerged in the depths of our unconscious being. Now came the experience, the experience that I believe to be far commoner with women writers than with men. The line raced through the girl's fingers. Her imagination had rushed away. It had sought the pools, the depths, the dark places where the largest fish slumber. And then there was a smash. There was an explosion. There was foam and confusion. The imagination had dashed itself against something hard. The girl was roused from her dream. She was indeed in a state of the most acute and difficult distress. To speak without figures she had thought of something, something about the body, about the passions which it was unfitting for her as a woman to say. Men, her reason told her, would be shocked. The consciousness of what men will say of a woman who speaks the truth about her passions had roused her from her artist's state of unconsciousness. She could write no more. The trance was over. Her imagination could work no longer. This I believe to be a very common experience with women writers—they are impeded to the extreme conventionality of the other sex. For though men sensibly allow themselves great freedom in these respects,

I doubt that they realize or can control the extreme severity with which they condemn such freedom in women.

These then were two very genuine experiences of my own. These were two of the adventures of my professional life. The first—killing the Angel in the House—I think I solved. She died. But the second, telling the truth about my own experiences as a body, I do not think I solved. I doubt that any woman has solved it yet. The obstacles against her are still immensely powerful—and yet they are very difficult to define. Outwardly, what is simpler than to write books? Outwardly, what obstacles are there for a woman rather than for a man? Inwardly, I think, the case is very different; she has still many ghosts to fight, many prejudices to overcome. Indeed it will be a long time still, I think, before a woman can sit down to write a book without finding a phantom to be slain, a rock to be dashed against. And if this is so in literature, the freest of all professions for women, how is it in the new professions which you are now for the first time entering?

Those are the questions that I should like, had I time, to ask you. And indeed, if I have laid stress upon these professional experiences of mine, it is because I believe that they are, though in different forms, yours also. Even when the path is nomi-

nally open—when there is nothing to prevent a woman from being a doctor, a lawyer, a civil servant—there are many phantoms and obstacles, as I believe, looming in her way. To discuss and define them is I think of great value and importance; for thus only can the labour be shared, the difficulties be solved. But besides this, it is necessary also to discuss the ends and the aims for which we are fighting, for which we are doing battle with these formidable obstacles. Those aims cannot be taken for granted; they must be perpetually questioned and examined. The whole positions as I see it—here in this hall surrounded by women practising for the first time in history I know not how many different professions—is one of extraordinary interest and importance. You have won rooms of your own in the house hitherto exclusively owned by men. You are able, though not without great labour and effort, to pay the rent. You are earning your five hundred pounds a year. But this freedom is only a beginning; the room is your own, but it is still bare. It has to be furnished; it has to be decorated; it has to be shared. How are you going to furnish it, how are you going to decorate it? With whom are you going to share it, and upon what terms? These, I think are questions of the utmost importance and interest. For the first time in history you are able

to ask them; for the first time you are able to decide for yourselves what the answers should be. Willingly would I stay and discuss those questions and answers—but not tonight. My time is up; and I must cease.

X

KAMALA NEHRU

BY

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU has been living a double life all these years! He is outwardly a man of action, gaol-goer, nation-builder and born ruler of men. But there is an inner life, a chamber of lonely thought, into which he retires from time to time. And then he asks himself disturbing questions about life: Why? To what end?

The story of his outer life is well-known and may be soon told. Jawaharlal Nehru was born at Allahabad in 1889. His father, Pandit Motilal Nehru, sent him to Harrow at the age of fifteen. From Harrow, he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge and read for the Natural Science Tripos. After taking his degree (1910), he joined the Inner Temple; and two years later, he was called to the Bar. He returned to India after an absence of seven years and set up practice at Allahabad. His marriage, which took place in 1916, gave sweetness and light to his life for twenty years. But the Non-Cooperation Movement came and swept him into politics and, very soon (1921), into prison. For the next twenty-five years, the history of his life is part of the history of India.

Since 1921, Pandit Nehru has gone to prison eight times and lived there nine years in all. And during 1930-35 and 1940-46, he enjoyed only a few brief spells of freedom, not more than a few weeks or days at a time.

It was in prison that his other and less-known life came into play. Naini, Alipore, Almora, Ahmadnagar Fort and other jails had one advantage: they gave him rest from

action and leisure for thought. He could now face certain conflicts and contradictions within himself. One part of him was a product of the West: an English Liberal, but also a cosmopolitan, a socialist and revolutionary. But in another and deeper part of his being, he was an Indian, Kashmiri brahmin, an inheritor of the Nehru tradition. How was a personality so split to be integrated? This was his individual problem. But it was only part of a general question that faced India and the whole of Asia. Was it possible to cast off the burden of the past without cutting the life-time between the past and the present?

Pandit Nehru tried to answer it by going back to the past and studying it in its relation to present. *Glimpses of World History* was his first attempt at such a study. Written originally for the instruction of his daughter, it is both a popular book and an interpretation of history. In his next work, *An Autobiography* (1936), he explored his own past, traced his spiritual growth and discovered the nature of the conflict within himself. It may well be called *The Discovery of Nehru*.

The Discovery of India (1945), the third of his prison-born books, applies the same method to the solution of the national problem. How is India to develop the 'dynamic outlook' needed for growth, without foregoing those 'basic eternal principles' that give stability to society? A review of India's cultural history suggests a solution. India should recover the faculty of adaptation she once had. Other cultures should be welcomed and absorbed. To restore the balance between the inner and the outer life, she needs the progressive outlook of the West and the scientific habit of mind. And then, beyond the bounds of nationalism, there lies the shining goal of internationalism, the One World of tomorrow.

To most readers, however, neither the history of the past nor the vision of the future is likely to appeal so much as the mind of the author mirrored in this book. It is the mind of a man who seeks truth fearlessly and look upon life as adventure. And because of his detachment and

freedom from 'isms', he belongs to no camp or creed and is condemned to spiritual solitude.]

(1) KAMALA

ON the 4th September, 1935, I was suddenly released from the mountain jail of Almora, for news had come that my wife was in a critical condition. She was far away in a sanatorium at Badenweiler in the Black Forest of Germany. I hurried by automobile and train to Allahabad reaching there the next day, and the same afternoon I started on the air journey in Europe. The air liner took me to Karachi and Baghdad and Cairo, and from Alexandria a sea-plane carried me to Brindisi. From Brindisi I went by train to Basle in Switzerland. I reached Badenweiler on the evening of the 9th September, four days after I had left Allahabad and five days after my release from Almora Jail.

There was the same old brave smile on Kamala's face when I saw her, but she was too weak and too much in the grip of pain to say much. Perhaps my arrival made a difference for she was a little better the next day and for some days after. But the crisis continued and slowly drained the life out of her. Unable to accustom myself to the thought of her death, I imagined that she was improving and that if she could only survive that

crisis she might get well. The doctors, as is their way, gave me hope. The immediate crisis seemed to pass and she held her ground. She was never well enough for a long conversation. We talked briefly and I would stop as soon as I noticed that she was getting tired. Sometimes I read to her. One of the books I remember reading out to her in this way was Pearl Buck's 'The Good Earth.' She liked my doing this but our progress was slow.

Morning and afternoon I trudged from my pension in the little town to the sanatorium and spent a few hours with her. I was full of the many things I wanted to tell her and yet I had to restrain myself. Sometimes we talked a little of old times, old memories, of common friends in India; sometimes, a little wistfully, of the future and what we would do then. In spite of her serious conditions she clung to the future. Her eyes were bright and vital, her face usually cheerful. Old friends who came to visit her were pleasantly surprised to find her looking better than they had imagined. They were misled by those bright eyes and smiling face.

In the long autumn evenings I sat by myself in my room in the pension, where I was staying, or sometimes went out for a walk across the fields or through the forest. A hundred pictures of Kamala succeeded each other in my mind, a

hundred aspects of her rich and deep personality. We had been married for nearly twenty years and yet how many times she had surprised me by something new in her mental or spiritual make up. I had known her in so many ways and, in later years, I had tried my utmost to understand her. That understanding had not been denied to me, but I often wondered if I really knew her or understood her. There was something elusive about her, something fay-like, real but unsubstantial, difficult to grasp. Sometimes, looking into her eyes, I would find a stranger peeping out at me.

Except for a little schooling, she had had no formal education; her mind had not gone through the educational process. She came to us as an unsophisticated girl, apparently with hardly any of the complexes which are said to be so common now. She never entirely lost that girlish look, but as she grew into a woman her eyes acquired a depth and a fire, giving the impression of still pools behind which storms raged. She was not the type of modern girl, with the modern girl's habits and lack of poise. Yet she took easily enough to modern ways. But essentially she was an Indian girl and, more particularly, a Kashmiri girl, sensitive and proud, childlike and grown-up, foolish and wise. She was reserved to those she

did not know or did not like, but bubbling over with gaiety and frankness before those she knew and liked. She was quick in her judgment and not always fair or right, but she stuck to her instinctive likes and dislikes. There was no guile in her. If she disliked a person, this was obvious and she made no attempt to hide the fact. Even if she had tried to do so, she would probably not have succeeded. I have come across few persons who have produced such an impression of sincerity upon me as she did.

(2) OUR MARRIAGE AND AFTER

I thought of the early years of our marriage when, with all my tremendous liking for her, I almost forgot her and denied her, in so many ways, that comradeship which was her due. For I was then like a person possessed, giving myself utterly to the cause I had espoused, living in a dream-world of my own, and looking at the real people who surrounded me as unsubstantial shadows.

And yet I was very far from forgetting her and I came back to her again and again as to a sure haven. What indeed could I have done if she had not been there to comfort me and give me strength, and thus enable me to re-charge the drained-off battery of my mind and body?

I had taken from her what she gave me. What had I given to her in exchange during these early years? I had failed evidently and, possibly, she carried the deep impress of those days upon her. With her inordinate pride and sensitiveness she did not want to come to me to ask for help, although I could have given her that help more than any one else. She wanted to play her own part in the national struggle and not be merely a hanger-on and a shadow of her husband. She wanted to justify herself to her own self as well as to the world. Nothing in the world could have pleased me more than this, but I was far too busy to see beneath the surface and I was blind to what she looked for and so ardently desired. And then prison claimed me so often and I was away from her, or else she was ill. Like Chitra in Tagore's play, she seemed to say to me: 'I am Chitra. No goddess to be worshipped, nor yet the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you deign to keep me by your side in the path of danger and daring, if you allow me to share the great duties of your life, then you will know my true self.' But she did not say this to me in words and it was only gradually that I read the message of her eyes.

In the early months of 1930 I sensed her desire and we worked together and I found in this

experience a new delight. We lived for a while on the edge of life, as it were, for the clouds were gathering and a national upheaval was coming. Those were pleasant months for us but they ended too soon and, early in April, the country was in the grip of civil disobedience and governmental repression, and I was in prison again.

Most of us menfolk were in prison. And then a remarkable thing happened. Our women came to the front and took charge of the struggle. Women had always been there of course, but now there was an avalanche of them, which took not only the British Government but their own menfolk by surprise. Here were these women, women of the upper or middle classes, leading sheltered lives in their homes, peasant women, working-class women, rich women, poor women, pouring out in their tens of thousands in defiance of government order and police *lathi*. It was not only that display of courage and daring, but what was even more surprising was the organizational power they showed.

Never can I forget the thrill that came to us in Naini prison when news of this reached us, the enormous pride in the women of India that filled us. We could hardly talk about all this among ourselves for our hearts were full and our eyes were dim with tears.

My father had joined us later in Naini prison

and he told us much that we did not know. He had been functioning outside as the leader of the civil disobedience movement and he had encouraged in no way these aggressive activities of the women all over the country. He disliked, in his paternal and somewhat old-fashioned way, young women and old messing about in the streets under the hot sun of summer and coming into conflict with the police. But he realized the temper of the people and did not discourage any one, not even his wife and daughters and daughter-in-law. He told us how he had been agreeably surprised to see the energy, courage and ability displayed by women all over the country. Of the girls of his own household he spoke with affectionate pride.

At my father's instance, a 'Resolution of Remembrance' was passed at thousands of public meetings all over India on January 26, 1931, the anniversary of India's Independence Day..... The resolution was a long one. But a part of it related to the women of India: 'We record our homage and deep admiration for the womanhood of India, who, in the hour of peril for the motherland, forsook the shelter of their homes and, with unfailing courage and endurance, stood shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk in the front line of India's national army, to share with them the sacrifices and triumphs of the struggle.....'

In this upheaval Kamala had played a brave and notable part and on her inexperienced shoulders fell the task of organizing our work in the city of Allahabad when every known worker was in prison. She made up for that inexperience by her fire and energy and, within a few months, she became the pride of Allahabad.

We met again under the shadow of my father's last illness and his death. We met on a new footing of comradeship and understanding. A few months later when we went with our daughter to Ceylon for our first brief holiday, and our last, we seemed to have discovered each other anew. All the past years that we had passed together had been but a preparation for this new and more intimate relationship.

We came back all too soon and work claimed me and, later, prison. There was to be no more holidaying, no working together, not even being together, except for a brief while between two long prison terms of two years each which followed each other. Before the second of these was over, Kamala lay dying.

When I was arrested in February 1934 on a Calcutta warrant, Kamala went to our rooms to collect some cloths for me. I followed her to say good-bye to her. Suddenly she clung to me and, fainting, collapsed. This was unusual for her as

we had trained ourselves to take this jail-going lightly and cheerfully and to make as little fuss about it as possible. Was it some premonition she had that this was our last more or less normal meeting?

Two long prison terms of two years each had come between me and her just when our need for each other was greatest, just when we had come so near to each other. I thought of this during the long days in jail, and yet I hoped that the time would surely come when we would be together again. How did she fare during these years? I can guess but even I do not know, for during jail interviews, or during a brief interval outside there was little normality. We had to be always on our best behaviour lest we might cause pain to the other by showing our own distress. But it was obvious that she was greatly troubled and distressed over many things and there was no peace in her mind. I might have been of some help, but not from jail.

(3) THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

All these and many other thoughts came to my mind during my long solitary hours in Badenweiler. My past life unrolled itself before me and there was always Kamala, standing by. She became a symbol of Indian women, or of woman herself.

Sometimes she grew curiously mixed up with my ideas of India, that land of ours which was so dear to us, with all her faults and weaknesses, and so elusive and full of mystery. Kamala and I were unlike each other in some ways, and yet in some other ways very alike: we did not complement each other. Our very strength became a weakness in our relations to each other. There could either be complete understanding, a perfect union of minds, or difficulties. Neither of us could live a humdrum domestic life, accepting things as they were.

Yet I remember telling Kamala, during our holiday in Ceylon, how fortunate we had been in spite of difficulties and differences, in spite of all the tricks that life had played upon us. Marriage was an odd affair, and it had not ceased to be so even after thousands of years of experience. We saw around us the wrecks of many a marriage or, what was no better, the conversion of what was bright and golden into dross. How fortunate we were, I told her and she agreed, for though we had sometimes quarrelled and grown angry with each other, we had kept that vital spark alight, and for each one of us life was always unfolding new adventure and giving fresh insight into each other.

The problem of human relationships, how

fundamental it is, and how often ignored in our fierce arguments about politics and economics. It was not so ignored in the old and wise civilizations of India and China, where they developed patterns of social behaviour, which with all their faults certainly gave poise to the individual. That poise is not in evidence in India today. But where is it in the countries of the West which have progressed so much in other directions?

(4) CHRISTMAS 1935

Winter had come and the landscape was white with snow. As Christmas approached there was a marked deterioration in Kamala's condition. Another crisis had come and it seemed that her life hung by a mere thread. During those last days of nineteen thirty-five I ploughed my way through snow and slush not knowing how many days or hours she would live. The calm winter scene with its mantle of white snow seemed so like the peace of cold death to me, and I lost all my past hopeful optimism.

But Kamala fought this crisis also and with amazing vitality survived it. She grew better and more cheerful and wanted us to take her away from Badenweiler. She was weary of the place, and another factor which made a difference was the death of another patient in the sana-

torium, who had sometimes sent flowers to her and once or twice visited her. That patient—he was an Irish boy—had been much better than Kamala and was even allowed to go out for walks. We tried to keep the news of his sudden death from her but we did not succeed. Those who are ill, and especially those who have the misfortune to stay in a sanatorium, seem to develop a sixth sense which tells them much that is sought to be hid from them.

In January I went to Paris for a few days and paid another brief visit to London. Life was pulling at me again and news reached me, in London, that I had been elected, for a second time, president of the Indian National Congress, which was to meet in April. I had been expecting this as friends had forewarned me and I had even discussed it with Kamala. It was a dilemma for me: to leave her as she was or to resign from the presidency. She would not have me resign. She was just a little better and we thought that I could come back to her later.

At the end of January 1936, Kamala left Badenweiler and was taken to a sanatorium near Lausanne in Switzerland.

(5) DEATH

Both Kamala and I liked the change to Switzerland. She was more cheerful and I felt a little more at home in that part of Switzerland which I knew fairly well. There was no marked change in her condition and it seemed that there was no crisis ahead. She was likely to continue as she was for a considerable period, making perhaps slow progress.

Meanwhile the call of India was insistent and friends there were pressing me to return. My mind grew restless and ever more occupied with the problems of my country. For some years I had been cut off by prison or otherwise from active participation in public affairs and I was straining at the leash. My visits to London and Paris and news from India had drawn me out of my shell and I could not go back to it.

I discussed the matter with Kamala and consulted the doctor. They agreed that I should return to India and I booked my passage by the Dutch K.L.M. air line. I was to leave Lausanne on February 28. After all this had been fixed up, I found that Kamala did not at all like the idea of my leaving her. And yet she would not ask me to change my plans. I told her that I would not make a long stay in India and hoped to return after two or three months. I could return even

earlier if she wanted me to. A cable would bring me by air to her within a week.

Four or five days remained before the date fixed for my departure. Indira, who was at school at Bex nearby, was coming over to spend those last days with us. The doctor came to me and suggested that I should postpone my return by a week or ten days. More he would not say. I agreed immediately and made another reservation in a subsequent K.L.M. plane.

As these last days went by a subtle change seemed to come over Kamala. The physical condition was much the same, so far as we could see, but her mind appeared to pay less attention to her physical environment. She would tell me that someone was calling her, or that she saw some figure or shape enter the room when I saw none.

Early on the morning of February 28, she breathed her last. Indira was there, and so was our faithful friend and constant companion during these months, Dr. M. Atal.

A few other friends came from neighbouring towns in Switzerland, and we took her to the crematorium in Lausanne. Within a few minutes that fair body and that lovely face, which used to smile so often and so well, were reduced to ashes. A small urn contained the mortal remains of one who had been so vital, so bright and so full of life.

XI

THE DISCOVERY OF INDIA

BY

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

(1) THE SEARCH FOR INDIA

DURING the twenties my work was largely confined to my own province and I travelled extensively and intensively through the towns and villages of the forty-eight districts of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, that heart of Hindustan as it has so long been considered, the seat and centre of both ancient and medieval civilization, the melting pot of so many races and cultures, the area where the great Revolt of 1857 blazed up and was later ruthlessly crushed. I grew to know the sturdy *Jat* of the northern and western districts, that typical son of the soil, brave and independent-looking, relatively more prosperous; the Rajput peasant and petty land-holder, still proud of his race and ancestry, even though he might have changed his faith and adopted Islam; the deft and skilful artisans and cottage workers, both Hindu and Moslem; the poorer peasantry and tenants in their vast numbers, especially in

Oudh and the eastern districts, crushed and ground down by generations of oppression and poverty, hardly daring to hope that a chance would come to better their lot and yet hoping and full of faith.

During the thirties, in the intervals of my life out of prison, and especially during the election campaign of 1936-37, I travelled more extensively throughout India, in towns and cities and villages alike. Except for rural Bengal, which unhappily I have only rarely visited, I toured in every province and went deep into villages. I spoke of political and economic issues and judging from my speech I was full of politics and elections. But all this while, in a corner of my mind, lay something deeper and more vivid, and elections meant little to it, or the other excitements of the passing day. Another and a major excitement had seized me, and I was again on a great voyage of discovery and the land of India and the people of India lay spread out before me. India with all her infinite charm and variety began to grow upon me more and more, and yet the more I saw of her the more I realized how very difficult it was for me or for any one else to grasp the ideas she had embodied. It was not her wide spaces that eluded me, or even her diversity, but some depth of soul which I could not fathom, though I had occa-

sional and tantalizing glimpses of it. She was like some ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously. All of these exist together in our conscious or subconscious selves, though we may not be aware of them, and they had gone to build up the complex and mysterious personality of India. That sphinx-like face with its elusive and sometimes mocking smile was to be seen throughout the length and breadth of the land. Though outwardly there was diversity and infinite variety among our people, everywhere there was that tremendous impress of oneness, which had held all of us together for ages past, whatever political fate or misfortune had befallen us. The unity of India was no longer merely an intellectual conception for me: it was an emotional experience which overpowered me. That essential unity had been so powerful that no political division, no disaster or catastrophe, had been able to overcome it.

It was absurd, of course, to think of India or any country as a kind of anthropomorphic entity. I did not do so. I was also fully aware of the diversities and divisions of Indian life, of classes, castes, religions, races, different degrees of cultural development. Yet I think that a country with a

long cultural background and a common outlook on life develops a spirit that is peculiar to it and that is impressed on all its children, however much they may differ among themselves. Can any one fail to see this in China, whether he meets an old-fashioned mandarin or a Communist who has apparently broken with the past? It was this spirit of India that I was after, not through idle curiosity, though I was curious enough, but because I felt that it might give me some key to the understanding of my country and people some guidance to thought and action. Politics and elections were day-to-day affairs when we grew excited over trumpery matters. But if we were going to build the house of India's future, strong and secure and beautiful, we would have to dig deep for the foundations.

(2) BHARAT MATA

Often as I wandered from meeting to meeting I spoke to my audience of this India of ours, of Hindustan and of *Bharata*, the old Sanskrit name derived from the mythical founder of the race. I seldom did so in the cities for there the audiences were more sophisticated and wanted stronger fare. But to the peasant, with his limited outlook, I spoke of this great country for whose freedom we were struggling, of how each part differed from

the other and yet was India, of common problems of the peasants from north to south and east to west, of the *Swaraj*, that could only be for all and every part and not for some. I told them of my journeying from the Khyber Pass in the far north-west to *Kanya Kumari* or Cape Comorin in the distant south, and how everywhere the peasants put me identical questions, for their troubles were the same—poverty, debt, vested interests, landlord, moneylender, heavy rents and taxes, police harassment, and all these wrapped up in the structure that the foreign government had imposed upon us—and relief must also come for all. I tried to make them think of India as a whole and even to some little extent of this wide world of which we were a part. I brought in the struggle in China, in Spain, in Abyssinia, in Central Europe, in Egypt and the countries of Western Asia. I told them of the wonderful changes in the Soviet Union and of the great progress made in America. The task was not easy; yet it was not so difficult as I had imagined, for our ancient epics and myth and legend, which they knew so well, had made them familiar with the conception of their country, and some there were always who had travelled far and wide to the great places of pilgrimage situated at the four corners of India. Or there were old soldiers who had served in foreign parts in World

War I or other expeditions. Even my references to foreign countries were brought home to them by the consequences of the great depression of the thirties.

Sometimes as I reached a gathering, a great roar of welcome would greet me: *Bhārat Mātā-ki-Jai*—Victory to Mother India! I would ask them unexpectedly what they meant by that cry, who was this *Bhārat Mātā*, Mother India, whose victory they wanted? My question would amuse them and surprise them, and then, not knowing exactly what to answer, they would look at each other and at me. I persisted in my questioning. At last a vigorous *Jat*, wedded to the soil from immemorial generations, would say that it was the *dharti*, the good earth of India, that they meant. What earth? Their particular village patch, or all the patches in the district or province, or in the whole of India? And so question and answer went on, till they would ask me impatiently to tell them all about it. I would endeavour to do so and explain that India was all this that they had thought, but it was much more. The mountains and the rivers of India, and the forests and the broad fields, which gave us food, were all dear to us, but what counted ultimately were the people of India, people like them and me, who were spread out all over this vast land. *Bhārat Mātā*,

Mother India, was essentially these millions of people, and victory to her meant victory to these people. You are parts of this *Bhārat Mātā*, I told them, you are in a manner yourselves *Bhārat Mātā*, and as this idea slowly soaked into their brains, their eyes would light up as if they had made a great discovery.

(3) THE VARIETY AND UNITY OF INDIA

The diversity of India is tremendous; it is obvious; it lies on the surface and anybody can see it. It concerns itself with physical appearances as well as with certain mental habits and traits. There is little in common, to outward seeming, between the Pathan of the North-West and the Tamil in the far South. Their racial stocks are not the same, though there may be common strands running through them; they differ in face and figure, food and clothing, and, of course, language. In the North-West Frontier Province there is already the breath of Central Asia, and many a custom there, as in Kashmir, reminds one of the countries on the other side of the Himalayas. Pathan popular dances are singularly like Russian Cossack dancing. Yet with all these differences, there is no mistaking the impress of India on the Pathan, as this is obvious on the Tamil. This is not surprising, for these border lands, and indeed

Afghanistan also, were united with India for thousands of years. The old Turkish and other races who inhabited Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia before the advent of Islam were largely Buddhists, and earlier still, during the period of the Epics, Hindus. The frontier area was one of the principal centres of old Indian culture and it abounds still with ruins of monuments and monasteries and, especially, of the great university of Taxila, which was at the height of its fame two thousand years ago, attracting students from all over India as well as different parts of Asia. Changes of religion made a difference but could not change entirely the mental backgrounds which the people of those areas had developed.

The Pathan and the Tamil are two extreme examples; the others lie somewhere in between. All of them have their distinctive features, all of them have still more the distinguishing mark of India. It is fascinating to find how the Bengalees, the Marathas, the Gujaratis, the Tamils, the Andhras, the Oriyas, the Assamese, the Canarese, the Malayalis, the Sindhis, the Punjabis, the Pathans, the Kashmiris, the Rajputs and the great central block comprising the Hindustani speaking people, have retained their peculiar characteristics for hundreds of years, have still more or less the

THE DISCOVERY OF INDIA

same virtues and failings of which old tradition or record tells us, and yet have been throughout these ages distinctively Indian, with the same national heritage and the same set of moral and mental qualities. There was something living and dynamic about this heritage which showed itself in ways of living and a philosophical attitude to life and its problems. Ancient India, like ancient China, was a world in itself, a culture and a civilization which gave shape to all things. Foreign influences poured in and often influenced that culture and were absorbed. Disruptive tendencies gave rise immediately to an attempt to find a synthesis. Some kind of a dream of unity has occupied the mind of India since the dawn of civilization. That unity was not conceived as something imposed from outside, a standardization of externals or even of beliefs. It was something deeper and, within its fold, the widest tolerance of belief and custom was practised and every variety acknowledged and even encouraged.

Difference, big or small, can always be noticed even within a national group, however closely bound together it may be. The essential unity of that group becomes apparent when it is compared to another national group, though often the differences between two adjoining groups fade out or intermingle near the frontiers, and modern

developments are tending to produce a certain uniformity everywhere. In ancient and medieval times, the idea of the modern nation was non-existent, and feudal, religious, racial or cultural bonds had more importance. Yet I think that at almost any time in recorded history an Indian would have felt more or less at home in any part of India, and would have felt as a stranger and alien in any other country. He would certainly have felt less of a stranger in countries which had partly adopted his culture or religion. Those who professed a religion of non-Indian origin and coming to India settled down there, became distinctively Indian in the course of a few generations, such as Christians, Jews, Parsis, Moslems. Indian converts to some of those religions never ceased to be Indians in spite of a change of faith. All these were looked upon in other countries as Indians and foreigners, even though there might have been a community of faith between them.

Today, when the conception of nationalism has developed much more, Indians in foreign countries inevitably form a national group and hang together for various purposes, in spite of their internal differences. An Indian Christian is looked upon as an Indian wherever he may go. An Indian Moslem is considered an Indian in Turkey or

Arabia or Iran or any other country where Islam is the dominant religion.

All of us, I suppose, have varying pictures of our native land and no two persons will think exactly alike. When I think of India, I think of many things; of broad fields dotted with innumerable small villages; of towns and cities I have visited; of the magic of the rainy season which pours life into the dry parched-up land and converts it suddenly into a glistening expanse of beauty and greenery; of great rivers and flowing water; of the Khyber Pass in all its bleak surroundings; of the southern tip of India; of people, individually and in the mass; and, above all, of the Himalayas, snow-capped, or some mountain valley in Kashmir in the spring, covered with new flowers, and with a brook bubbling and gurgling through it. We make and preserve the pictures of our choice, and so I have chosen this mountain background rather than the more normal picture of a hot, subtropical country. Both pictures would be correct, for India stretches from the tropics right up to the temperate regions, from near the equator to the cold heart of Asia.

(4) EPILOGUE

The discovery of India—what have I discovered? It was presumptuous of me to imagine that I could

unveil her and find out what she is today and what she was in the long past. Today she is four hundred million separate individual men and women, each differing from the other, each living in a private universe of thought and feeling. If this is so in the present, how much more difficult is it to grasp that multitudinous past of innumerable successions of human beings. Yet something has bound them together and binds them still. India is a geographical and economic entity, a cultural unity amidst diversity, a bundle of contradictions held together by strong but invisible threads. Overwhelmed again and again, her spirit was never conquered, and today when she appears to be the plaything of a proud conqueror, she remains unsubdued and unconquered. About her there is the elusive quality of a legend of long ago; some enchantment seems to have held her mind. She is a myth and an idea, a dream and a vision, and yet very real and present and pervasive. There are terrifying glimpses of dark corridors which seem to lead back to primeval night, but also there is the fullness and warmth of the day about her. Shameful and repellant she is occasionally, perverse and obstinate sometimes even a little hysteric, this lady with a past. But she is very lovable and none of her children can forget her wherever they go or whatever strange

fate befalls them. For she is part of them in her greatness as well as her failings, and they are mirrored in those deep eyes of hers that have seen so much of life's passion and joy and folly and looked down into wisdom's well. Each one of them is drawn to her, though perhaps each has a different reason for that attraction or can point to no reason at all, and each sees some different aspect of her many-sided personality. From age to age she has produced great men and women, carrying on the old tradition and yet ever adapting it to changing times. Rabindranath Tagore, in line with that great succession, was full of the temper and urges of the modern age and yet was rooted in India's past, and in his own self built up a synthesis of the old and the new. 'I love India,' he said, 'not because I cultivate the idolatry of geography, not because I have had the chance to be born in her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great ones.' So many will say, and yet others will explain their love for her in some different way.

The old enchantment seems to be breaking today and she is looking around and waking up to the present. But however she changes, as change she must, that old witchery will continue and

hold the hearts of her people. Though her attire may change, she will continue as of old and her store of wisdom will help her to hold on to what is true and beautiful and good in this harsh, vindictive and grasping world.





NOTES

[A note on the Notes : In order that students might not be pampered, no explanation is offered of words that could and should be looked up in a dictionary. And so with place names found in every atlas.]

I. VOLUNTARY POVERTY (Page 1)

Gandhiji made this confession of faith in an address delivered at the Guildhall, London, on September 23rd, 1931. In his view, poverty is sacred ; it is a condition precedent of the good life ; and it is an attribute of godhead, Daridra-narayan. (Cf. the diametrically opposite view of George Bernard Shaw). As for the doctrine of renunciation, it is derived, of course, from Hindu teaching ; but, as interpreted by Gandhiji, it recalls the teaching of Jesus Christ as well. When Gandhiji had to tell his Christian hearers of the burden of riches and the wisdom of taking no thought for the morrow, as if they were strange doctrines, he must have enjoyed the irony of the situation. From the nature of the subject, the language is simple and suggestive like that of the Bible.

A great burden fell off: As Christian's burden did in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Now you see daily conflict: Here lies the gulf between Western economics and Gandhian economics. For a satire on the 'multiplication of wants,' see Tolstoy's *How much Land Does A Man Require?* In that story, a man kills himself by his greed and hunger for land.

Therefore, having that absolute conviction in me, such must be my desire: 'Having' is a 'floating participle', since it has no noun of reference.

Those who have actually followed they testify: Note the anacoluthon. The subject of 'testify' is 'those' but it is repeated in 'they'.

NOTES

QUESTIONS

1. Bring out the conflict between Western civilization and Gandhiji's ideal.

2. Explain how those who give up everything are 'never in want'.

II. REPLY TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE (Page 8)

Rabindranath Tagore was a friend and warm admirer of Mahatma Gandhi, for whose advent he had waited and prayed and prepared the way. It happened, however, in 1921, that the poet was away in Europe, lecturing and raising funds for his new World University (VISWA BHARATI), when Gandhiji launched his campaign of non-co-operation. Tagore would have distrusted the movement at any time, because he believed in the unity of all culture and refused to recognize any barrier between the East and the West; but he was now doubly mortified. For, Gandhiji's followers in India seemed to be giving the lie to the noble ideal of international brotherhood as fast as he taught it in Europe. He feared honestly that the new nationalism would (1) cut off India from the culture of the West and (2) set up a new absolutism in India, which would enslave the minds of men and shut out truth altogether. He published his misgivings in *An Appeal to Truth*, which appeared in *The Modern Review* of October 1921.

The Poet's protest provoked Gandhiji: and his *Reply to Rabindranath Tagore* was published in *Young India* on October 13th, 1921. With a magnanimous gesture, it admits the truth of Tagore's warning in principle and confers on him the title of The Great Sentinel. But it denies that any such danger as mental despotism is threatening this country at the present time. The doctrine of the *charka* has been accepted by all, not blindly, not as an act of faith, but after mature consideration. It is the one thing calculated to feed and save a starving people. Hence, it is a sacrament to spin the wheel. Declaring roundly that all who eat without work are thieves, the patriot calls upon the poet to burn his foreign clothes and spin for his living.

The proper comment upon this *Reply to Tagore* is that made by Romain Rolland—‘Dark and tragic words Here we have the misery of the world rising up before the dream of art and crying “Dare deny me existence!” Who does not sympathize with Gandhi’s passionate emotion and share it? And yet in his reply, so proud and so poignant, there is nevertheless something that justifies Tagore’s misgivings. *Silent Poeta* (the poet should be silent)..... Obey without discussion the law of Swadeshi, the first command of which is, Spin!’ Apart from this, the *Reply* is a magnificent example of political polemics.

Bigotry, Lethargy that brood: A fine metaphor, the word ‘brood’ suggesting a large number of monsters brought forth at one birth.

Big houses of Europe, America and Japan: ‘Houses’ meant companies or firms.

To a people the only form in which God can dare appear: There is no real impiety in this challenging statement. As Gandhiji says in a later passage ‘Service of humanity and knowledge of God are synonymous terms.’

[The steel age the flint age: Tools and weapons, like axes, hammers, knives and daggers, were made of flint in the Old Stone Age and the New Stone Age. Hence the name flint age. It is the antithesis of the age of steel tools and machines. Before the invention of matches, flint was also used for striking a light with the help of a piece of steel.

It was our love of foreign cloth etc.: The whole paragraph is an illustration of Gandhiji’s economics. He insists on our reducing our wants; and secondly, he refuses to divorce money-making from morality. See, further, the first extract.

Picture of the birds early in the morning: An image, fierce and beautiful, in the manner of satirical poetry. As the Latin saying has it—‘Indignation inspires poetry.’

NOTES

QUESTIONS

1. Explain why 'spinning the wheel' is called 'a sacrament'.

2. Do you consider Rabindranath Tagore a 'thief' 'eating without work'?

III. A CUP OF TEA (Page 17)

On the 11th of January 1922, Katherine Mansfield noted in her *Journal*: 'Wrote and finished *A Cup of Tea*. It took about 4-5 hours.' A few weeks later, it was published in *Cassell's Magazine*.

When Katherine Mansfield was pleased to write satire, she could be ruthless. *A Cup of Tea* is a good example of her method and purpose. The heroine is one of those social parasites that the author loved to hold up and examine. She takes Rosemary to pieces with demure malice as only a woman can a woman. What gives edge to the satire is that Rosemary is described in Rosemary's own language, the language of the smart set in the nineteen-twenties.

The meaning and the mood of the story are suggested by a homely image—a cup of tea. The season, the weather and the hour all call for that refreshment. The tea-pot in the antique shop seems to prophesy it. And Rosemary herself, well-fed though she is, looks forward to it. The poor girl (Smith?) begs of her nothing more than the price of a cup of tea and is about to perish for want of it. But tea at Rosemary Fell's is an elaborate and luxurious affair and the fine lady prides herself on dispensing it. Ultimately, her good intentions boil down to a cup of tea—and three pounds. And her reward for that cup of tea is an enamel box that costs twenty-eight guineas!

Duck: Rosemary's pet term of endearment. Probably it was then in vogue.

Not Peter—Michael: As if in answer to the reader who might have expected the more fashionable name. Peter.

NOTES

Bond Street, Regent Street: Streets in London where the most fashionable shops and luxury trades are located.

A thin shop girl: Katherine Mansfield adored flowers but she had no eyes for their beauty when a load of them was being carried by an underfed shop-girl to the carriage of a rubbishy rich woman. One of the significant images of the story.

Flattery of course...All the same: Rosemary believed that the shopman worshipped her for herself and not her money.

A novel by Dostoevsky: Feodor Michaelovitch Dostoevsky (1821-1881) is one of the masters of the Russian novel. He explored the unknown regions of man's mind and spirit. *Crime and Punishment* is his masterpiece; other well-known works are *The Brothers Karamazov* and *The Idiot*. Russian literature was 'discovered' in England towards the close of the last century and became fashionable in the first years of this. Rosemary is showing off her knowledge of Russian fiction.

The police station: For begging in the street.

Jeanne: Rosemary's lady's maid. Probably a French-woman. French ladies' maids were once in fashion.

I don't want.....brandy: The double negative (which is simply an emphatic negative) is a sign of her class and want of education. One wonders whether she never touched brandy!

It was Philip: Rosemary's husband.

Smith, madam: A fib. Smith is a common name, the first you can think of or assume in England. (Cf. Brown.)

Its hands and boots: Evidence of poverty and social class.

She's pretty: Probably a lie. But it served its purpose: it roused Rosemary's jealousy and damped her charity.

The Milliner's Gazette: Meaning that she was a milliner or some such thing and could only 'talk shop.'

NOTES

QUESTIONS

1. Retell the story as 'Miss Smith' would tell it, in direct narration.
2. What do you think of Miss Smith's character and past?
3. Pick out such details of description in the story as are significant.
4. Sketch the character of Rosemary Fell.

IV. SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM (Page 33)

(1) THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE DESERT

In May 1917, Lawrence evolved a new plan of campaign. He was to go, with a handful of men, to the edge of the Syrian desert, stir up the tribes there, raise a camel force and then turn west and rush Akaba, a strategic port at the head of the Gulf of Akaba. It was a brilliant but arduous scheme; for, it meant a march of six hundred miles in the desert in May. Further, Emir Feisal was busy at headquarters and left Lawrence to take sole charge, which he disliked.

With a few trusty comrades, lightly armed and provisioned, he rode out into the desert on the 9th of May. On the 24th, they found themselves in a sun-baked desert strewn with sharp flaky flints.

The episode of the loss and rescue of Gasim is a fine illustration of one of the many contrasts offered by the desert: the power and cruelty of nature on the one hand and man's kindness to man on the other. It must be noted, however, that Lawrence's conduct was unusual and heroic, even by Arab standards. But being Lawrence, he claims no credit for it and calls it a necessary and politic kindness.

Auda: Auda Abu Tayi was a Beduin chief and the greatest fighting man in Northern Arabia. A raider and robber, he was also a knight-errant. Feisal had no stronger ally and Lawrence no more loyal friend than Auda.

Nasir: Sherif Nasir Beni Hussein of Medina was the leader

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of the party. Lawrence calls him 'an opener of roads and forerunner of Feisal's movement.'

Nesib: Nesib Bey el Bekri of Damascus was the political officer representing Feisal.

Zaal: A cousin of Auda's.

Howeitat: A tribe, originally Beduin, spread widely over the Arabian desert. Auda belonged to a branch of it.

Gasim: A servant engaged for the expedition. 'A fanged and yellow-faced outlaw, who [had] fled into the desert to the Howeitat, after killing a Turkish official.' (Lawrence)

The Ageyl: Townsmen from Nejd who hired themselves out as escort in the desert. There were thirty-five of them in the party and their leader was one, Dgheithir.

Mohammed: 'An obedient peasant boy', engaged for the expedition.

Skrimshank: or skrimshanker: a shirker of duty (Army slang).

Sherarat: A desert tribe.

Sirhan: 'A famous roadway, camping ground and chain of water holes' extending to Syria. (Lawrence)

Forty Years in Sinai: The Jews, returning home from Egypt, lived in Sinai for forty years before they entered the promised land.

Nuri Shaalan: A local Beduin chief and friend of Feisal's.

QUESTIONS

1. Tell the story of the loss and rescue of Gasim as he would tell it.

2. Examine the motives of Lawrence's kindness to Gasim.

(2) TRIAL OF STRENGTH WITH AN EDMITE WINTER

As the first piece treats of the horror of the desert under the sun, so this is a companion study of cold and snow. The weather and the rigour of travel induce an appropriate mood: and Lawrence communicates it with subtle art.

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The journey to Tafleh is also one of the great rides in literature. (Compare it with Browning's *Muleykeh* and *How They Brought The Good News*): Lawrence makes his camel as romantic as any horse. Of his own courage and knight-errantry, he says nothing: but the facts speak for themselves.

Early in 1918, the Arabs, who had advanced as far north as the Dead Sea, took Tafleh. Lawrence went, soon after, to Guweira in the south, where some British armoured cars were stationed. His next job was to convoy a large remittance of gold to Emir Zeid who lay at Tafleh and had no money. Lawrence started from Guweira on the 8th of February 1918.

Akaba: Feisal's head-quarters.

Ateiba: Name of a desert tribe.

Reading a book: Perhaps Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, a copy of which travelled with him in his saddle bag.

Azrak: A fort on the border of Syria. Lawrence had made it a base for doing propaganda and collecting intelligence.

Mudowwara; Tebuk: Stations on the Hejaz railway attacked by the Arabs. Lawrence had taught them to blast the track and wreck trains all along the line.

Shobek: A place south of Tafleh.

Yenbo: In Northern Hejaz. Once Feisal's base.

Mohammed: A soldier of the Juheina tribe, who joined Feisal's camp early in the war.

Vickery: A gunner and staff officer who helped in the capture of Wejh, the first decisive victory for the Arabs.

Maulud: Maulud el Mukhlus was a veteran warrior and the first regular officer to join Feisal. He was holding and harassing the Turks in and around Maan.

Abad el Lissan: High rough country rising from the Guweira plain.

Maan: A strategic station on the Hejaz railway. It stands on a plateau.

Edomite: Edom was the Hebrew name of Idumaea, the country south-east of Palestine.

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Monreale: An old crusader fort.

Sherif Abd el Mayin: A local chief who occupied Shobek after the Turks had run away.

Harith: Name of a local tribe.

QUESTIONS

1. Bring out the heroism of Lawrence's journey.
2. How does Lawrence interest us in his camel?
3. Sketch the character of Lawrence as revealed by the two journeys.
4. What aspects of Arab character are illustrated by the two pieces?

V

A Short History of the World was written in 1922 and revised and brought up to date in 1938. It gives the common reader a philosophical view of 'the great human adventure' called history. But man is only the latest of the many experiments in life carried on by nature. To show his place in the scheme of things, Mr. Wells gives an account of those earlier experiments. He begins his book accordingly with the birth of this planet and the slow preparation for the coming of life.

(1) THE WORLD IN TIME (Page 60)

Chapter I makes us realize the insignificance of Earth by picturing it as a speck in space. Chapter II, on the other hand, deflates our dignity by showing how old the world is and how late man came on the scene. The world revealed here is as fantastic and frightful as any of those invented by Mr. Wells. In the march of æons, the play of fiery forces and the desolation of the scene, there is a sublime poetry, which he feels and brings out. His style is normally plain and workmanlike but it rises to the occasion. The sentences get shorter and shapely and the phrasing more figurative, almost poetical at times.

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Tendency to make.....age of our globe longer : It was believed by orthodox Christians not so long ago, that the world was created suddenly in 4004 B.C.

A diurnal tide of earthquake : Corresponding to the tides at sea now caused by the attraction of the sun and the moon.

The Ocean garment our planet.....wore : Note the peptic touch.

QUESTIONS

1. What is known of the age and origin of Earth?
2. Trace the stages by which the world became habitable.

(2) MONKEYS, APES AND SUB-MEN (Page 65) THE NEANDERTHALER AND THE RHODESIAN MAN (Page 71)

There was a storm of protest and ridicule, less than a hundred years ago, when biologists explained the evolution of man. Darwin and Huxley did *not* say that man was descended from the monkey: but it was believed by many that they did. Even twenty-five years ago, Mr. Wells found it necessary to say that man and the ape had common ancestors but no closer relationship.

Long after the first appearance of life, after the fishes, after the reptiles, and last among the mammals, came man. And he did not come all at once. There were a number of false starts and 'false men'. The circumstances in which he emerged were long a mystery. Mr. Wells shows how the mystery was cleared up by the combined efforts of biologists and geologists. The tracing of the 'true man' is as thrilling as the tracking down of a criminal. Further, in reconstructing the form and habits of an extinct species from a trayful of bones, the palaeontologist shows his scientific imagination.

Class, order etc. : Terms used in biological classification. A *class* consists of many *orders*; an *order* is made up of many *families*; a *family* may comprise one *genus* or many

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genera; and a *genus* is a group of *species*. Thus man belongs to the class of mammals, the order of primates and the genus *homo sapiens*.

Difficult to decipher in the geological record: 'The knowledge we possess of life before the beginnings of human memory and tradition is derived very largely from the markings and fossils of living things in the stratified rocks.' (*A Short History of The World, Chapter III.*) This is the geological record or 'Record of the Rocks.'

Cainozoic Period: This 'New Life' Period began somewhere between forty and eighty million years ago and continues.

Coal Swamps: Life spread from water to land in the age of the Coal Swamps. Vast woody plants and amphibious animals flourished in swamps and lagoons.

Age of Reptiles: So called because of the abundance and variety of monstrous reptiles such as the dinosaur and the pterodactyl. They became extinct 80,000,000 years ago.

Fleet Street: In London.

Skulls and bones found at Neanderthal: In 1857, N. is a valley in Prussia.

QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of the several types of sub-men.
2. Describe the methods and results of the search for the origin of the True Man.
3. Compare The Neanderthal Man and The Rhodesian Man with The True Man and bring out their relationship.

VI. (1) WHAT IS LIFE? (Page 77)

This is a fundamental question suggested by what Sir Arthur Thomson calls the 'Drama of Life.' It cannot be answered by science alone but science can clear the way and bring us nearer to the answer. Meanwhile, Sir Arthur provides us with a working definition of Life, which is not rigorously logical but handy and concrete. He draws our

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attention to the 'purposelike', if not purposeful, activity of all living things. He gives reason to think that Mind is at the very heart of Life. And he relates the two in a poetic image.

Linnaeus: Swedish botanist (1707-1778) who devised a system of botanical classification.

The lilies of a day: A phrase going back to a line in Ben Jonson's well-known poem, *It is not growing like a tree* —

*A lily of a day,
Is fairer far in May.*

Huxley: Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) was a physiologist, professor and writer. A champion and populariser of the theory of evolution.

We cannot say, 'Lo, here', or 'Lo, there': Adapted from a passage in *St. Mark*, Ch. 13, v. 21.

Life is a dance: A characteristic definition, at once poetical and scientific. For another poetic fancy, see the passage above on plants and their 'dream-smiles.'

QUESTIONS

1. Show how the different sciences help us to answer the question: What is Life?
2. Why is Sir Arthur Thomson 'convinced that organisms are more than mechanisms'?

(2) HAUNTS OF LIFE (Page 86)

THE DEEP SEA

Of all the haunts or homes of life, the Deep Sea is the most interesting because it is the most mysterious. Till a hundred years ago, science was as helpless as the sun in throwing light on it. The exploring of it, by the *Challenger* expedition for example, was one of the romantic adventures of science. Among other things it revealed the abundance, variety and colourful beauty of

life in that inhospitable world which seems a miracle. Not less wonderful is the adaptation of characters and habits to the habitat of animals. It is of the essence of Sir Arthur Thomson's purpose and method that he explains these marvels but does not explain them away. The Deep Sea has been dredged but the wonder of it remains. It is a strange, topsy-turvy world, without light or sound or vegetable or vegetarians, where it rains *meat* and drink all the time and where, if an animal falls at all, it falls upward and may burst like a balloon.

Sir Wyville Thomson (1830-1882) was Professor of Natural History, Edinburgh University. He was Director of the Civilian Scientific Staff, H.M.S. *Challenger*; and he wrote an account of the expedition.

Sir John Murray (1841-1914) was a British marine zoologist and oceanographer. He was Naturalist to the *Challenger* expedition.

Professor Moseley: Henry Nottidge Moseley (1844-1891) was Naturalist to *Challenger* expedition. Later, Professor of Human and Comparative Anatomy, Oxford.

The Deep Sea animals the touchiest creatures: In the literal sense. Not in the sense of 'quick to take offence'. But the ambiguity is part of the fun here.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the Deep-Sea world and its fauna.
2. Give an account of the 'adaptations' of Deep-Sea life.

(3) THE DONKEY (Page 95)

The donkey is a perilous subject. Many an illustrious writer has ventured upon it and come to grief. Witness Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* and Coleridge's line *To a Young Ass*. But Sir Arthur Thomson has had better luck, partly because of his sense of humour. Besides, he reverses the popular opinion of the donkey and advances an unconventional view. And though he is a scientist, he is not ashamed of showing his sympathy or pointing a plain moral. The tables

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are thus turned and it is now man, owner and driver of the donkey, that looks foolish.

The light handling and literary grace of the piece are characteristic of this book and its author. But under cover of an entertaining talk, it manages to give useful scientific information about the donkey.

The ancient inscriptions of Thebes: Thebes was the ancient capital of Upper Egypt.

As Mr. G. K. Chesterton described them: In his poem, *The Donkey*, which vindicates the animal. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, journalist of genius, master of paradox and defender of the Catholic faith, was the greatest romantic of his time (1874-1936). His essays and crime fiction are his enduring work.

Phil Robinson: Philip Robinson (1847-1902) was born at Chanar (in India). He was a journalist and writer on Indian birds and beasts.

The hard dry sea-saw of his horrible bray: In Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*, a sentimental story in verse.

Cowper's remark on the ass: In the humorous verse tale of *John Gilpin*. William Cowper (1731-1800) has been called the most English of poets. His shorter poems and his Letters enjoy an unfading popularity.

Old Testament description: See *Job* Ch. 39 vv 5-8.

Perturbed endocrinal glands: Certain ductless glands which prepare a transparent fluid called hormones. These hormones or 'chemical messengers' regulate the health and activity of the body and the mind. A diseased condition of the glands stunts or distorts the growth of an animal.

Photograph a dull 'cuddy': 'Cuddy' is Scots for 'donkey'.

QUESTIONS

1. How does Sir Arthur Thomson disprove the 'traditional fiction' about the donkey?
2. Describe the physical character and the habits of the donkey and show how far they are the result of 'adaptation.'

VII. A CLERGYMAN (Page 102)

This essay was written in 1918 and appeared in the volume entitled *And Even Now* (1920).

We start with a prosaic, unpromising fact. But Sir Max Beerbohm reveals its possibilities when he reconstructs the scene. He would have us give due value to every element of the situation: the place, the occasion, the company and above all, the character and habits of Johnson in general and his mood on that particular day. Seen in that context, the incident becomes not only more striking but more mysterious. Johnson had been happy. But Johnson turned and rent a clergyman. How could such a bolt have fallen from such a blue.

The solution lies, perhaps, in the clergyman's character. We know nothing about it but we can reconstruct it. With the utmost gravity, Sir Max follows the inductive method of Sherlock Holmes and discovers the man's age, character and history and even his looks and voice. The nameless clergyman is absurd enough by himself but the effect of the picture is heightened by the figure of the other and very different clergyman in the background, who is the very type and representative of 'PALAEOGEORGIAN' divines.

Having invented his clergyman's weakness and woes, the author declares that his heart goes out to the unhappy young man. And we are invited to imagine the probable fate of Johnson's victim. How sweet and touching it is to believe, as we must, that 'he died forgiving Dr. Johnson'!

Note: The anonymity of the Clergyman is not absolute. Mrs. Piozzi (formerly Mrs. Thrale) identified him as one 'Mr. Embry.'

Fragmentary, pale imagination: A parody of the lyrical manner of romantic writers like De Quincey.

This was on the afternoon: See Chapter XXXVI of Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*.

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Mr. Thrale: A rich brewer and a friend and admirer of Johnson's.

Johnson: Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), compiler of a Dictionary, was the greatest Englishman of letters. He is loved and regarded by his countrymen as a type of the Englishman at his best.

Boswell: James Boswell (1740-1795) sought Johnson's friendship, took notes of his talk and wrote the finest biography in the language: *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*

Bolt Court: Johnson lived in his last years at 8, Bolt Court, Fleet Street.

Atterbury: Francis Atterbury (1662-1732), Bishop of Rochester.

Tillotson: John Tillotson (1630-1694) was Archbishop of Canterbury.

South: Robert South (1634-1716).

Seed: Jeremiah Seed (1700-1747).

Jortin: John Jortin (1698-1770) was Archdeacon of London.

Sherlock: Thomas Sherlock (1678-1761) was Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge.

Smallridge: George Smallridge (1663-1719) was Bishop of Bristol. Steele praised him in *The Tatler* under the name of Favonius.

Ogden: Samuel Ogden (1716-1778) was Professor of Geology at Cambridge.

Dodd: William Dodd (1729-1777) was a fashionable preacher but was hanged for forgery. Dr. Johnson was persuaded to write petitions for mercy on his behalf.

Burke: Edmund Burke (1729-1797) was the greatest political philosopher of his day and the greatest orator in the language.

Palaeo-Georgians: Men belonging to the early Georgian era. A learned formation, made in fun.

A big man in a big wig: Was Sir Max thinking of Dr. Ogden? Just so he is said to have looked in the pulpit.

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Galsworthy: John Galsworthy (1867-1933) was novelist of distinction, a dramatist with a social bias and humanitarian. (Works: *The Forsyte Saga*, *Justice* etc.)

Mrs. Ward: Mary Augusta Ward (1851-1920) was a journalist and a novelist. (Chief work: *Robert Elsmere*.)

Caine: Sir Thomas Henry Hall Caine (1853-1931) was a popular novelist. (Works: *The Deemster*, *The Manxman*, etc.)

Miss Corelli: Marie Corelli (1864-1924) was a writer of popular romances like *Mighty Atom*, *The Sorrows of Satan*, etc.

Upton Sinclair: B. 1878. The most powerful writer of propaganda fiction in America. (Works: *The Jungle*, *Boston*, etc.)

Mrs. Glyn: Elinor Glyn (1864-1943) has written many popular romances, such as *Three Weeks* and *Six Days*.

The next blossoming...of almond trees: This reference to nature is a happy touch and completes the picture. It recalls the description of the death of lovelorn maidens in old-fashioned romantic novels.

QUESTIONS

1. 'He for ever haunts my memory and solicits my..... imagination.' Elucidate.

2. Show how the 'extinction' of the Clergyman is made both startling and credible.

3. Bring out the comic intention and effect of the essay.

VIII. AMONG THE RUINS (Page 113)

On February 24th, 1943, Lord Dunsany read his paper, *Among the Ruins*, before the Royal Society of Literature, of which he is a member. It should be compared with another paper, *England Language Conditions*, which he read before the English Association in 1927. There he had described and deplored chiefly the fate of adjectives: they were decayed and 'on the dole.' In the later discourse, he speaks of

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adjectives, again, warmly and wittily, but he finds other signs of decay equally grave. Here, nouns are being shot like rubbish. There, they are herded together till they lose all meaning or suggest many false ones. And hyphens are effaced or, worse still, misplaced, with perverse ingenuity. There comes a stage, at last, when we cannot get at the meaning at all or can get at it only if we knew already what the words are trying to say, which is a queer use and function of language.

The light touch and temper of this talk are not less admirable than the love of good English.

Sargent: John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) was an American portrait-painter.

These clattering nouns...have been imported: 'In a great many cases, it is really contrary to the genius of the language to use an adjective at all ... Mere position before another noun is really the most English way of turning a noun into an adjective e.g., "a Gladstone bag." Shakespeare did not scruple to write *the Carthage Queen*, *Rome gates*, *Tiber banks*, even! *air Verona Streets*.' (O. Jespersen: *Growth and Structure of the English Language*, pp. 133-134.)

Francis Ledwidge: (1891-1917), Irish peasant poet, was killed in the First World War. His genius was discovered and proclaimed to the world by Lord Dunsany.

Austerity luxury mystery utility stone house: Cf. *England Language Conditions*, coined in fun by Lord Dunsany. In an article in *The Atlantic Monthly*, he showed how the opening lines of *Paradise Lost* would look in this jargon:

'Of the first man disobedience and the veto tree fruit, whose death taste brought on world mortality and all our woe sing Heaven muse, who on the Horeb or Sinai mystery top inspired etc.

Another happy coinage, this time by Walter De La Mare, is both a definition and a parody of the thing: 'The journalese noun adjective short cut utility heading expedient.'

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Conditions: Elsewhere, Lord Dunsany calls it one of those 'derelict words floating about amongst our sentences, a danger to the traffic of thought.'

Lord Avebury: Sir John Lubbock, first Baron Avebury (1834-1913), was a business man who devoted his leisure to natural science. In addition to his scientific writings, he wrote some very popular books like *The Pleasures of life* and *The Beauties of Nature* and compiled a list of the *Hundred Best Books*.

William Morris: (1834-1896) was a poet, socialist and versatile craftsman. His *Earthly Paradise* and *Life and Death of Jason* reveal his narrative art. The phrase 'idle singers of an empty day' occurs as a haunting refrain to *Earthly Paradise*.

QUESTIONS

1. 'It is autumn, not spring, with our language.' Substantiate.

or

Explain and justify the title—*Among the Ruins*.

2. Distinguish the use and the abuse of nouns.

IX. PROFESSIONS FOR WOMEN (Page 127)

Professions for Women was a paper that Virginia Woolf read to the Women's Service League. It was reprinted by her husband in 1941 in *The Death of The Moth and other Essays*.

The subjection of women was a favourite topic on which she loved to speak and write. The root of the evil, as she saw it, was economic slavery. The only honourable profession for a woman, till the other day, was domestic drudgery. Even now, when women can own property and enter any profession, they are not wholly free to speak or write or even think as they please. They are still judged by man-made standards of womanly conduct. This repression is particularly fatal to art. No creative work is possible so long as the artist is asking herself anxiously at every turn whether she is sweet and lady-like. *Professions for Women* is a plea

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for intellectual freedom and artistic integrity. It calls upon women to break that idol of womanly perfection which may be called the Angel in the House. And it asserts their right to follow where their inspiration leads them and to explore all sides of human nature, even the physical and the sexual.

In the midst of all this wicked wit and fun and feminism, there is an island of quiet loveliness. It is the short passage describing the activity of the creative imagination.

Fanny Burney : Frances Burney, later, Madame D'Arblay (1752-1840), belonged to Dr. Johnson's circle and sketched it in her Diary. Her first and best work, *Evelina* (1778), originated the novel of domestic life and manners in England.

Harriet Martineau : (1802-1876) was a vigorous journalist and social reformer. She wrote a novel (*Deerbrook*) and a historical romance, as well as stories for the young.

Jane Austen lived an uneventful life (1775-1817) in the country and wrote six novels which are regarded as masterpieces of domestic comedy. She observed and depicted a limited circle of life but within that limit she achieved absolute perfection. *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma* and *Persuasion* are her best and best-known works.

George Eliot : Pen-name of Mary Ann Evans (1819-1880), the most learned of women novelists. She has portrayed English life with humour, tolerance and psychological insight in *Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Silas Marner*, *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Middlemarch*, etc.

Paris, Vienna, Berlin : Places where art schools flourished.

The Angel in the House : Name of a long poem in which Coventry Patmore (1823-1896) has idealized married love and given it a mystical meaning. Virginia Woolf makes the Angel in the House a symbol of the domestic dependent who must always be sweet and serviceable to her men-folk.

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The mysterious noisings etc.: Suggestive metaphor taken from the movements of a fish.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the nature and significance of Angel in the House.
2. What are the obstacles for a woman writing a book?

X. KAMALA NEHRU (Page 139)

The death of Kamala Nehru in 1936 was a turning point in her husband's life. Little was left to him of private life and interests. He returned to India and threw himself into the national struggle.....

It is not often that Pandit Nehru displays emotion. When he does, the effect is all the more impressive. In his account of his wife's last days and death, there is something more than grief. He blames himself for lost opportunities; he might have understood her better and earlier; he ought to have given her more of himself. In retrospect, he sees in her, not only a loving wife and loyal comrade but a symbol of Indian womanhood.

Kamala: This is a rather idealized portrait but is essentially true. Kamala Nehru was not merely the wife of her husband but a fighter and heroine in her own right. Her gracious and very human personality appears also in the *Autobiography*. (See also Mrs. Huthee Singh's *With No Regrets*.)

Pearl Buck: An American journalist and novelist. Good *Earth* is the most famous of her novels and portrays modern Chinese life with sympathy and insight.

A brief while between two long prison terms: To be exact, eleven days: August 12th to 23rd, 1934, when Kamala Nehru was seriously ill.

QUESTIONS

1. Sketch the character of Kamala Nehru.
2. How did Pandit Nehru and his wife solve the 'problem of human relationship'?
3. Describe the last days and the death of Kamala Nehru.

XI. DISCOVERY OF INDIA (Page 155)

The theme of this chapter, as well as the whole book, is India's unity in diversity. In looking for it and explaining it, Pandit Nehru shows his grasp of reality and also the quality of his patriotism. He never loses himself in high-sounding abstractions. He does not call his countryman, The Chosen Race or God's own people. And whereas some would have us return to the ways of the past, he warns us that 'There is only one-way traffic in Time'.

It is worth noting that he begins by making fun of 'anthropomorphic entities' and then goes on to conjure up a very human and haunting image of India by the magic of words. But there is nothing wrong or ridiculous in making such lovely myths. They spring from a deep impulse of human nature.

She was like some ancient palimpsest: India has absorbed many cultures and ideas, one after another. They have become part of the mental make-up of the people. A mind so covered with layer upon layer of cultural influences may well be compared to a palimpsest.

Ancient India, like ancient China, was a world in itself: Pandit Nehru admires China and the Chinese greatly because their culture is flexible and based on reason and morality.

Mountain valley in Kashmir: Nehruji, for all his internationalism, has local loyalties. Kashmir and its hills are never far from his thoughts. He could say with the poet—

*'For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.'*

Glimpses of dark corridors: Ignorance and superstition.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the search for India.
2. Indicate the nature of the unity of India.
3. How does Pandit Nehru explain the 'witchery' of his 'lady with a past'?



