

READINGS
FROM
ENGLISH LITERATURE



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PREFACE

This book of selections from English prose has been compiled with a definite purpose in view. It is meant to be used as a book for non-detailed study for students of High Schools in India. The selections chosen are therefore sufficiently representative of that portion of light English literature which pupils in High School Forms may reasonably be expected to read within a given time. Note has also been taken in planning this selection that English does not occupy today the position it occupied in the country before August 1947.

English literature is very rich and a number of excellent selections could easily be produced. But when the requirements of the High Schools in India are kept in mind, the task becomes fairly difficult. Then again there is so much difference between a book for intensive reading and a book for non-intensive reading. The latter must provide, in the first instance, extracts, which deal with things occurring in ordinary life or with matters which have an interest or meaning for young people and are examples of good, straightforward, living English prose. Again the extracts should be full of gaiety and joy because the teaching of language or literature of this type is always very fruitful with young children.

These considerations have been kept in view while compiling this book. It contains stories, descriptions of persons and places, tales of adventure, amusement, and sports, narratives of gallant deeds, and prose of argument and exposition. Such extracts will also acquaint the reader with different styles of prose and will provide him with delightful reading which is the chief end of a rapid reading book.

A brief introductory note relating to the life and works

of the author has been given at the beginning of each selection. At the end textual notes are also added where they are really necessary, where a word is unusual or where an ordinary dictionary may fail to give the required reference.

Questions on subject-matter have also been inserted to judge the pupil's capacity for reproducing the main ideas of the text in their own words.

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I

PLAYING THE GAME

[This lesson is taken from **My Magazine** which is a very popular magazine for school-children. This gives us an idea of the game of life and the spirit in which we must all play it.]

Alan's mother came to the gate to see him off.

"Good-bye, Alan, do your best," she called out.

"Rather, Mummy," answered Alan, and, waving his hand, he ran out of the gate and up the road.

Do his best! Of course he would. For Alan was playing in the school cricket match and was mightily proud of being chosen to play. He had practised bowling with his father for weeks now, and Daddy said he was shaping well. Daddy was nearly as excited as Alan over the match, and he promised that if Alan's side won he would buy him a bicycle.

No wonder Alan was excited!

On his way to the sports ground Alan had to pass the little three-cornered meadow, and as he reached it, he saw a very old man leaning heavily on his stick. As Alan passed he called out to him.

"Can I help you?" asked Alan kindly, going up to him.

"Perhaps you will let me take your arm, little boy," said the old man in a thin, cracked voice.

“This road is so hilly, and the wind is almost too much for me.”

“Rather!” said Alan, for he knew he could easily make up what time he had lost by running when he left the old man.

But the poor old gentleman leaned heavily on Alan’s sturdy little arm and tottered along like a baby. So slowly did he walk that five minutes had gone before they were half-way up the road.

Alan explained to the old man that he was on his way to a cricket match and that he must not be late, but he seemed not to hear him.

“Where do you live, sir?” called Alan at last in the old man’s ear.

“Up the road and some way round the corner,” he answered in his thin, weak voice. “I should be so much obliged if you could see me home. You look a very kind little boy.”

See him home? And they were still a long way off! If only he could walk a little faster. Why, the teams would be already on the field, and the captain would be wondering why he did not come.

Suddenly the old man stumbled over a loose paving-stone and fell heavily on the ground.

“Don’t leave me, little boy,” murmured the old man.

“No, I will stay here,” said Alan, and he sat down beside him, for he felt sure that some one would come that way soon.

Alan stared anxiously up and down the road



during the minutes that followed. The minutes almost seemed like hours. Then, at last, turning the corner came a jolly-looking policeman. Alan could have shouted for joy.

“I’ll see this gentleman home, little boy,” he said after Alan had explained what had happened.

Then Alan ran off, and flew as fast as his legs would carry him to the sports ground. But the game had started when he arrived.

“Why, it’s you, Alan,” said his teacher, who was standing just inside the entrance. “You’re not much good if you can’t come up to time. We have put in young Harold Banks in your place. Fortunately, he’s putting some good balls over.”

Alan bit his lip. How could he explain? He turned away and made his way slowly home.

His father opened the door.

“Bravo, Alan,” he said, patting his little son on the back.

“But, Daddy,” began Alan. But his father interrupted him.

“It’s all right, old man,” he said. “You see, I came up behind that policeman and he told me what had happened, so I knew you were playing the game although it wasn’t on the cricket-pitch. So I went back into the High Street and bought the bicycle I promised you. It’s a beauty. And, Alan, we’re proud of you, your Mother and I.”

And in the classroom next morning the boys gave Alan three loud cheers, as only school-boys can, for in some mysterious fashion they too had learned all about his kind act.

My Magazine

NOTES

Playing the Game : Observing the rules of the game while playing it. Here it means—doing the right thing or doing one’s duty in the best manner.

To put some good balls over : To bowl well.

QUESTIONS

1. State in your words how Alan played the game in his own way.
2. Why does the author choose the title “Playing the Game”, for this story?

II

SHANTINIKETAN

[The following lesson is an extract from a letter written by Rev. C. F. Andrews, who was a close associate and co-worker of the poet Rabindranath Tagore. In this letter he gives a description of the life led by the children at Shantiniketan. "Shantiniketan" means "Abode of Peace." This school was founded by Rabindranath Tagore at Bolpur (Bengal) and was later developed into a University known as Vishwabharati. It is a co-educational school where boys and girls study together.]

There are stories told about Shantiniketan, which will one day be legends of the Bengal village people. The Maharshi (Dr. Tagore's father), long years ago, came to the spot just as the sun was setting. He sat beneath the two chattim trees, which were covered with white flowering creepers, and meditated upon God, while night came down over the open plain. When the moon appeared in all its splendour, he was still wrapt in prayer. At the time of the golden morning sunrise the Maharshi was still seated. His heart, all through the wakeful night, filled to overflowing with the joy of the love of God. He said to himself, "This is my place of rest, the end of my pilgrimage." And he remained there year after year. He gave to the spot its present name, Shantiniketan, the Home of Peace.

I will now describe to you one day in the Ashram with the boys. Long before sunrise, our boys are awake. The choristers are the first to rise, and they go round the Ashram, singing their morning hymn. ◦

After an interval, each boy takes his *asan*, his square of carpet, into the fields and sits down on it to meditate in his own place, alone. Later on, before the school work begins, the boys all stand together in the shade of the trees and sing their hymn to God.

Till about half past ten, the work of the school goes on. We have no class rooms. The boys sit with their teachers, in the open air, under the trees. There are no large classes. A group of eight or ten boys will be seated round the teacher asking him questions. Very few books are used. A great part of the education is carried on through conversation. The boys soon learn to open out all their difficulties to their teachers; and the teachers get keenly interested in the boys' questions and answers. Such living education can never be dull.

When the morning work is over, the boys bathe and go to their meal. About two o'clock in the afternoon the school classes begin again, but at this time the work is chiefly with the hand as well as with the mind. Handwork is practised, and a boy's own natural tastes are very soon discovered. Some prefer carpentering; others prefer mechanical work; others enjoy spinning and



weaving; others become skilled craftsmen or painters; others are musicians.

There is a very little book-work in the afternoon. School is over at about four o'clock, and then there is a rush to get first into the great open fields for football.

In the evening, at sunset, they return from the fields and sit down at once, for a short time, to meditate in silence.

As night comes on, fairy stories are told; short dramas are recited; our Gurudeva's songs are sung, and the different school gatherings are held.

By nine o'clock, all are glad to retire to rest; and again the choristers go round the Ashram singing their last evening hymn. There can be no question as to the happiness of the life of our boys.

Their faces tell the story of their joy and their freedom. There is no freer life in India than the life of the children at Shantiniketan.

‘ Pita nosi ’—‘ Thou art our father,’ ‘ Pita no bodhi ’—‘ Teach us to know Thee as our father ’: The poet usually takes this daily prayer, which the boys have learnt to recite.

Who can explain the children’s love for their Gurudeva, their poet, their teacher? It is a well-known sight to see them running up to him the moment he appears from his room and comes among them. Equally wonderful is it to see him taking the little boys in his Bengali and English classes, or singing to them some song which has been recently composed. The children are his inspiration. They are also his audience and his critics. That is why his greatest songs are ever young.

C. F. Andrews

NOTES

The Maharshi : The great sage.

Asan : Seat.

Choristers : A party singing in chorus.

Gurudeva : The poet, Rabindranath Tagore, is thus addressed by his students.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe a day in the life of the boys at Shantiniketan.
2. Describe briefly the beauty of Shantiniketan, mentioning the spirit of peace and joy and the free life of its scholars.
3. Compare a day in the life of a student at Shantiniketan with that of a boy in our schools.

III

THE BITER BIT

[This extract is taken from **The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan** by James Morier. The whole book may be read with great interest. The following lesson provides great fun, as the barber is required to pay heavily for his mischief.]

“ In the reign of the Caliph Haroun-al-Rashid, of happy memory, there lived in the city of Bagdad, a celebrated barber, of the name of Ali Sakal. He was so famous for a steady hand and dexterity in his profession, that he could shave a head, and trim a beard and whiskers, with his eyes blindfolded, without once drawing blood. There was not a man of any fashion at Bagdad who did not employ him, and such a run of business had he, that at length he became proud and insolent, and would scarcely ever touch a head whose master was not at least a Beg or an Aga. Wood for fuel was always scarce and dear at Bagdad, and as his shop consumed a great deal, the wood-cutters brought their loads to him in preference, almost sure of meeting with a ready sale. It happened one day, that a poor wood-cutter, new in his profession, and ignorant of the character of Ali Sakal, went to his shop, and offered him for sale a load of wood, which he had just brought from a considerable

distance in the country, on his ass. Ali immediately offered him a price, making use of these words, "For all the wood that was upon the ass." The wood-cutter agreed, unloaded his beast, and asked for the money. "You have not given me all the wood yet," said the barber; "I must have the pack-saddle (which is chiefly made of wood) into the bargain; that was our agreement." "Now!" said the other, in great amazement, "Who ever heard of such a bargain? It is impossible." In short, after many words and much altercation, the over-bearing barber seized the pack-saddle, wood and all, and sent away the poor peasant in great distress. He immediately ran to the Cadi, and stated his grief. The Cadi was one of the barber's customers, and refused to hear the case. The wood-cutter applied to a higher judge; he also patronised Ali Sakal, and made light of the complaint. The poor man then appealed to the mufti himself, who, having pondered over the question, at length settled that it was too difficult a case for him to decide, no provision being made for it in the Koran; and therefore he must put up with his loss. The wood-cutter was not disheartened; but forthwith got a scribe to write a petition to the Caliph himself, which he duly presented on Friday, the day when he went in state to the mosque. The Caliph's punctuality in reading petitions was well known, and it was not long before the wood-cutter was called to his presence. When he had approached

the Caliph, he knelt and kissed the ground; and then placing his arms straight before him, his hands covered with the sleeves of his cloak, and his feet close together, he awaited the decision of his case. "Friend," said the Caliph, "the barber has words on his side—you have equity on yours. The law must be defined by words, and agreements must be made by words; the former must have its course, or it is nothing; and agreements must be kept, or there would be no faith between man and man; therefore the barber must keep all his wood: but—" Then calling the wood-cutter close to him, the Caliph whispered something in his ear, which none but he could hear, and then sent him away quite satisfied."

Here then I (Hajji Baba of Ispahan) made a pause in my narrative, and said (whilst I extended a small tin cup which I held in my hand), "Now my noble audience, if you will give me something, I will tell you what the Caliph said to the wood-cutter." I had excited great curiosity, and there was scarcely one of my hearers who did not give me a piece of money.

"Well then," said I, "the Caliph whispered to the wood-cutter what he had to do, in order to get satisfaction from the barber, and what that was. I will now relate. The wood-cutter having made his obeisances, returned to his ass, which was tied without, took it by the halter, and proceeded to his home. A few days after, he applied to the barber, as if nothing had happened between



them, requesting that he, and a companion of his from the country, might enjoy the dexterity of his hand; and the price at which both operations were to be performed was settled. When the wood-cutter's crown had been properly shorn, Ali Sakal asked where his companion was. "He is just standing without here," said the other, "and he shall come in presently." Accordingly he went out, and returned, leading his ass after him by the halter. "This is my companion," said he, "and you must shave him." "Shave him!" exclaimed the barber, in the greatest surprise; "it is enough that I have consented to demean myself by touching you, and do you insult me by asking me to do as much to your ass? Away with you, or I'll send you both to *Jehannum*;" and forthwith drove him out of his shop.

The wood-cutter immediately went to the Caliph, was admitted to his presence, and related his case. "'Tis well," said the Commander of the Faithful: "bring Ali Sakal and his razors to me this instant," he exclaimed to one of his officers; and in the course of ten minutes the barber stood before him. "Why do you refuse to shave this man's companion?" said the Caliph to the barber: "was not that your agreement?" Ali, kissing the ground, answered, "'Tis true, O Caliph, that such was our agreement; but who ever made a companion of an ass before or who ever before thought of treating it like a true believer?" "You may

say right," said the Caliph: "but at the same time, who ever thought of insisting upon a pack-saddle being included in a load of wood? No, no, it is the wood-cutter's turn now. To the ass immediately, or you know the consequences." The barber was then obliged to prepare a great quantity of soap, to lather the beast from head to foot, and to shave him in the presence of the Caliph and of the whole court, whilst he was jeered and mocked by the taunts and laughing of all the by-standers. The poor wood-cutter was then dismissed with an appropriate present of money, and all Bagdad resounded with the story, and celebrated the justice of the Commander of the Faithful."

*James Morier: The Adventures of
Hajji Baba of Ispahan*

NOTES

Caliph : The religious head of the Muslims.

Beg, Aga : Titles of nobility.

altercation : Quarrel.

Cadi : Civil Judge.

mufti : Moslem priest.

Koran : Sacred Book of the Muslims.

made his obeisances : Bowed as a sign of respect.

Jehannum : Hell.

Commander of the Faithful : The title of a Moslem ruler.

True believer : One who believes in the Prophet.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the trick by which Ali Sakal deprived the wood-cutter of his pack-saddle.
2. Relate the trick of the wood-cutter by which he was able to obtain redress of the wrong done to him. How was he helped by the Caliph?
3. Relate any other story that you know in which somebody was made a victim of an intelligent joke.

IV

ASHOKA, THE BELOVED OF THE GODS

[Śri Jawaharlal¹ Nehru (born 1889) is an international figure. He is a great patriot and a brilliant writer who has been forced by circumstances to become a statesman. His chief works are: **Autobiography, Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History.** This extract is taken from **Glimpses of World History.** • This book is written in the form of letters.]

Ashoka succeeded in 268 B.C. to a great empire, which included the whole of North and Central India and extended right up to Central Asia. With the desire, perhaps, of bringing into his empire the remaining parts in the south-east and south, he started the conquest of Kalinga in the ninth year of his reign. Kalinga lay on the east coast of India, between the Mahanadi, Godavari and Kistna rivers. The people of Kalinga fought bravely, but they were ultimately subdued, after terrible slaughter. This war and slaughter affected Ashoka so deeply that he was disgusted with war and all its work. Henceforth there was to be no war for him. Nearly the whole of India, except a tiny tip in the south, was under him; and it was easy enough for him to complete the conquest of this little tip. But he refrained.

Fortunately, for us, we have Ashoka's own

words, telling us of what he thought and what he did. In numerous edicts which were carved out in the rock or on metal, we still have his message to his people and to posterity. You know that there is such an Ashoka pillar in the fort at Allahabad. There are many others in our province.

In these edicts, Ashoka tells us of his horror and remorse at the slaughter which war and conquest involve. The only true conquest, he says, is the conquest of self and the conquest of men's hearts by the *Dharma*.

One of the edicts announces that Ashoka would not tolerate any longer the slaughter or captivity of even a hundredth or thousandth part of the number killed and made captive in Kalinga.

Ashoka further explains that true conquest consists in the conquest of men's hearts by the Law of Duty or Piety, and that he had already won such real victories, not only in his own dominions, but in distant Kingdoms.

The law, to which reference is made repeatedly in these edicts, was the Law of the Buddha. Ashoka became an ardent Buddhist and tried his utmost to spread the *Dharma*. But there was no force or compulsion. It was only by winning men's hearts that he sought to make converts. Men of religion have seldom, very seldom, been as tolerant as Ashoka.

So Ashoka, the beloved of the Gods—*Devanam-priya*—sent his messengers and ambassadors to the

Kingdoms of the West in Asia, Europe, and Africa. To Ceylon he sent his own brother, Mahendra, and sister, Sangamitra, and they are said to have carried a branch of the sacred Peepal tree from Gaya. Do you remember the peepal tree we saw in the temple at Anuradhapura? We are told that this was the very tree which grew out of that ancient branch.

In India Buddhism spread rapidly. And as the *Dharma* was for Ashoka, not just the repetition of empty prayers and the performance of *Pujahs* and ceremonies, but the performance of good deeds and social uplift, all over the country public gardens and hospitals and wells and roads grew up. Special provision was made for the education of women. Four great university towns—Takshasila or Taxila in the far North, near Peshawar, Mathura, vulgarly spelt Muttra now by the English, Ujjain in Central India, and Nalanda near Patna in Bihar—attracted students not only from India, but from distant countries—from China to Western Asia—and these students carried back home with them the message of Buddha's teaching. Great monasteries grew up all over the country—*Viharas* as they were called. There were apparently so many round about Pataliputra, or Patna, that the whole province came to be known as Vihara, or, as it is called now, Bihar. But, as often happens, these monasteries soon lost the inspiration of teaching and of thought, and became just places where people followed a certain routine and worship.

Ashoka's passion for protecting life extended to animals also. Hospitals especially meant for them were erected, and animal-sacrifice was forbidden.

So ruled Ashoka for thirty-eight years, trying his utmost to promote peacefully the public good. He was always ready for public business; "at all times and at all places, whether I am dining or in the ladies' apartments, in my bedroom or in my closet, in my carriage or in my palace gardens, the official reports should keep me constantly informed of the people's business." If any difficulty arose, a report was to be made to him immediately "at any hour and at any place," for, as he says, "work I must for the commonweal."

Ashoka died in 226 B.C. Sometime before his death he became a Buddhist monk.

We have few remains of Mauryan Times. But what we have are practically the earliest so far discovered of Aryan civilization in India—for the moment we are not considering the ruins of Mohenjo-Daro. In Samath, near Benares, you can see the beautiful Ashoka's pillar with the lions on the top.

Of the great city of Pataliputra, which was Ashoka's capital, nothing is left. Indeed over 1500 years ago, 600 years after Ashoka, a Chinese traveller, Fa-Hien, visited the place. The city flourished then and was rich and prosperous, but even then Ashoka's palace of stone was in ruins. Even these ruins impressed Fa-Hien, who says in his travel record that they did not appear to be human work.

The palace of massive stone is gone, leaving no trace behind, but his edicts still speak to us in a language we can understand and appreciate. And we can still learn much from them. This letter has grown long and may weary you. I shall finish it with a small quotation from one of Ashoka's edicts.

“ All sects deserve reverence for one reason or other. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect and at the same time does service to the sects of other people.”

Jawaharlal Nehru: Glimpses of World History

NOTES

Kalinga : Comprising the present Northern Circars.

edict : Order proclaimed by authority.

conquest of self : Control of one's desires so as to check evil.

the Law of Piety : The central doctrine of Buddhism which teaches a man to “ Love even thy enemies.”

Anuradhapura : A place of historical interest in Ceylon.

Mohenjo-Daro : “ The City of the Dead,” excavated in the Larkana District (Sind), revealing a civilization about 5,000 years old.

QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on Ashoka, the Beloved of the Gods.
2. Describe Ashoka's dharma and the steps he took to spread it.
3. What is the significance of “ Ashoka Pillar ” and “ Ashoka Chakra ” in the free India of today?

V

SINDBAD THE SAILOR—SEVENTH AND LAST VOYAGE

[The following lesson is taken from **The Arabian Nights Entertainments**. This book contains a series of wonderful and interesting stories which are said to have been narrated to the Emperor by the daughter of his Wazir. In this selection are narrated the sufferings of Sindbad the Sailor on his last voyage. He had already made six voyages, and this is an account of his seventh voyage.]

After my sixth voyage, I had quite made up my mind that I would go to sea no more. I was old enough to appreciate a quiet life after all the risks I had run in search of adventure. My only desire now was to end my days in peace. With this determination strong in my mind, I was leading a life of ease and pleasure, when, one day, while I was entertaining a number of my friends, an officer of Caliph Haroun-al-Rashid came to me and commanded me to accompany him to the royal presence. Accordingly I went with him to the Hall of Audience, where the Caliph addressed me in the following words: “We have sent for you, Sindbad, because we need your services. We have chosen you to bear a letter and many royal gifts to the King of Serendib in return for his message of friendship.”

The Caliph's command fell upon me like a thunderbolt. "Commander of the Faithful," I answered, "I am ready to obey you in everything, but I humbly pray you to remember that I have undergone unheard-of sufferings in all my voyages, and so have vowed never again to leave Baghdad." With this, I gave him a long account of my strange adventures. He listened to me patiently and said: "I admit that indeed you have had some extraordinary experiences, but I do not see why they should deter you from doing as I wish. You have only to go straight to Serendib and give my message; then you are free to come back and do as you will. But go you must, my honour and dignity demand it."

Seeing that there was no help for it, I declared myself willing to obey; and the Caliph, delighted at having his own way, gave me a thousand sequins for the expenses of the journey. In a short while, I set sail from Belsora, and reached Serendib in safety. Here, when I had disclosed my errand, I was taken to the presence of the king, who greeted me with joy. "Welcome, Sindbad," he cried, "I have heard of you so often that I now rejoice to see you in the flesh."

After thanking him for the honour that he did me, I displayed the Caliph's costly gifts. The King of Serendib expressed his satisfaction at the Caliph's friendliness, and entertained me royally for a number of days before he would consent to let me go. Finally he dismissed me with many

presents, and I lost no time in going on board a ship which was ready to sail immediately.

For four days all went well, but on the fifth day we had the misfortune to fall in with pirates who seized our vessel, killing all who resisted, and making prisoners of those who had the prudence to submit. They forced us to put on vile raiment, and taking us to a distant land, sold us as slaves. It was my good fortune to fall into the hands of a wealthy merchant, who took me home with him, clothed and fed me well, and asked me what I could do.

I answered that I was a rich merchant, and therefore had not learnt any profession. "Tell me," said he, "can you shoot with a bow?" I replied that it had been one of the pastimes of my youth, and that with practice, my skill might come back to me. Upon this, he gave me a bow and arrows, and mounting me upon his own elephant, took me into the depths of a vast forest, which lay far from the town. When we reached the wildest part of it, we stopped, and my master said to me: "This forest swarms with elephants. Hide yourself in this great tree and shoot at all that pass you. When you have succeeded in killing one, come and tell me." Saying this, he furnished me with a stock of provisions and returned to the town.

I now found myself alone in the forest. I climbed up a huge tree, and making myself as comfortable as circumstances would permit, began

my watch. That night I saw nothing, but just after sunrise the next morning a large herd of elephants came crashing and trampling by. I let fly several arrows, and succeeded in wounding one of the huge animals fatally. When the others had retired to a safe distance, I came down from my hiding place in the tree, and ran to the town to



tell my master the good news. He was well pleased with my success, praised me for my skill, and regaled me with good dishes. Then we went back to the forest together and dug a mighty ditch in which we buried the elephant, so that my master might secure the ivory in due time.

For two months I hunted thus, stationing

myself in different trees on different days. Not a day passed without killing an elephant. One morning, I was surprised to see a herd of elephants which, instead of passing the tree I was on, paused and completely surrounded it, trumpeting horribly and shaking the very ground with their heavy tread. When I saw that their eyes were fixed upon me, I was so terrified that the arrows fell down from my shaking hands. I had indeed great reason for my terror for, an instant later, the largest of the animals wound his trunk round the stem of my tree, and with one mighty effort tore it up by the roots, bringing me to the ground entangled in its branches. I thought now that my last hour was surely come, but the huge creature, picking me up gently enough, set me upon its back, where I clung more dead than alive, and followed by the whole herd, turned and crashed off into the dense forest. It seemed to me a long time before I was once more set upon my feet by the elephant, and I stood as if in a dream watching the herd, which turned and trampled off in another direction, soon to be hidden by the dense underwood. Then, recovering myself, I looked about me, and found that I was standing upon the side of a great hill, strewn, as far as I could see on either hand, with bones and tusks of elephants. "This then must be the elephant's burying-place," I said to myself, "and they must have brought me here that I might cease to persecute them, because I want nothing but their tusks, and here lie more

than I could carry away in a life-time.”

I now made for the city as fast as I could go, not seeing a single elephant by the way, which convinced me that they had retired deeper into the forest to leave the way open to the Ivory Hill. I did not know how I could sufficiently admire their sagacity. After a day and a night I reached my master's house, and was received by him with joyful surprise. “Ah! poor Sindbad,” he cried, “I was wondering what could have become of you. When I went to the forest, I found the tree newly uprooted, the arrows lying beside it, and I feared I should never see you again. Pray tell me how you escaped death.”

I soon satisfied his curiosity, and the next day, we went together to the Ivory Hill. He was overjoyed when he found that I had told him nothing but the truth. When we had loaded our elephant with as many tusks as it could carry, and were on our way back to the city, he said: “My brother—since I can no longer treat as a slave one who has enriched me thus—take your liberty, and may Heaven prosper you. I will no longer conceal from you that these wild elephants have killed numbers of our slaves every year. You alone have escaped the wiles of these animals, therefore you must be under the special protection of Heaven. Now through you the whole town will be enriched without further loss of life. Therefore you shall not only receive your liberty, but also a fortune such as is meet, for

the services you have rendered.” To which, I replied, “ Master, I thank you and wish you all prosperity. For myself I desire only my liberty.” “ It is well,” he answered, “ the monsoon will soon bring the ivory ships hither, then I will send you on your way with somewhat to pay your passage.”

So I stayed with him till the time of the monsoon, and every day we added to our store of ivory till all his warehouses were overflowing with it. By this time other merchants had learnt the secret, but there was enough and to spare for all. When the ships at last arrived, my master himself chose the one in which I was to sail, and put on board for me a good store of choice provisions. He pressed upon me also ivory in abundance and all the costliest curiosities of the country. We parted the best of friends. I left the ship at the first port I came to, not feeling at ease on the sea after all that had happened to me. I disposed of my ivory for gold, and bought many rare and costly presents. I joined a caravan of merchants, and after a long and tedious journey, reached Baghdad in safety.

My first care was to present myself before the Caliph and give him a full account of my embassy and adventures. He assured me that my long absence had disquieted him much, but he had nevertheless hoped for the best. As to my adventures among the elephants, he heard it with amazement, declaring that he could not have believed it, had not my truthfulness been well-known to him.

I took my leave of him, well satisfied with the honours and rewards he bestowed upon me. From that time I have rested from my labours, and given myself up wholly to my family and my friends.

Arabian Nights (Abridged)

NOTES

Caliph : Title of the religious head of all Mohammadans. Haroun was the Caliph as well as the King of Baghdad.

Hall of Audience : An apartment in which the King gave audience to his subjects and heard their complaints.

Commander of the Faithful : The formal way of addressing the Caliph. The faithful are the Mohammadans.

sequin : A gold coin.

Balsora : A famous port and trading centre in the Persian Gulf.

caravan : A large group of traders travelling together.

QUESTIONS

1. Give the story of the seventh voyage of Sindbad the Sailor in your own words.
2. Give the details of the shooting of the elephants by Sindbad and the discovery of the Ivory Hill.
3. Briefly describe any other adventure that you know of, similar to that of Sindbad.

VI

BROTHERLY LOVE

[Dr. Annie Besant was a remarkable English lady who worked for the freedom of India. She was elected President of the Indian National Congress. • Dr. Besant was a great educationist.

She has rendered the story of the Ramayana into simple English prose, under the title "Shri Ramachandra." This extract deals with the meeting between Rama and Bharata at Chitrakuta.]

Now round him (Bharata) came the counselors, the great men of the Kingdom, praying him to seat himself on the empty throne, but firmly and sternly he refused—"In our race it hath ever been for the first born to rule, and you who are wise should not urge me to transgress the rule. Rama, our eldest brother, shall certainly be King, and I will remain in the forest for the fourteen years." And he bade them call out the army, and set men to smooth the forest way, that Rama might come back to his Kingdom with all the pomp of royalty.

In vain was regal state offered to him: "I am not the King," was his steadfast answer. In vain did Vasishtha himself bid him assume the Kingdom conferred on him by his father. "How should I deprive Rama of his Kingdom?" was his grave reply. "He deserves the Kingdom just as Dasha-

ratha did. I bow down to Rama, gone to the forest wilds. I will follow Rama. That best of men is King." Unshaken by all temptation, steadfast in duty, Bharata stood unmoved, resolute to serve and not to reign.

Joyous indeed was the vast procession that set forth to lead Rama home, to hail him King. Thousands of citizens went with the army, all talking with delight of Ramachandra's return. And they went happily onwards, till the broad stream of Ganga barred their way. There Guha, King of the Nishadas, had prepared an army to stop their passage, fearing harm to Rama, but himself went to meet Bharata in order to find out what might be his intentions. In answer to Bharata's question as to the whereabouts of Bharadvaja's hermitage, Guha said gently that he knew well the place; but what intention had he as to Rama, for his vast army seemed to presage danger. Then with calm, unclouded face, void of all evil intent, Bharata answered with quiet patience: "May the time never come when I shall do wrong to Rama. Thou shouldst not fear me—Raghava is my elder brother, dear to me as was my father himself. I go to bring back Rama, dwelling in the woods. Other thought have I none, and I speak the truth, O Guha!"

Then Guha, delighted, praised Bharata, who was taking so much pains to give up a Kingdom which had come to him without his seeking and

could have been held by him unchallenged: "Truly thy eternal fame shall spread over all the earth." And Guha related to Bharata, greedy for news of his brother, how the exiles had spent the night and showed him the bed of grass on which Rama and Sita had slept, while Lakshmana watched by them bow in hand.

On the following day Bharata crossed the Ganga and having encamped the army in the forest round Prayag Bharata himself went with Vasishthā, after putting off his armour and weapons, to visit Bharadvaja. Again to Bharata's grief, he was accused of harbouring ill intentions to his brother, but, ever steadfast in patient meekness, he showed no resentment, and only repeated that he was going to bring his brother home. Then Bharadvaja blessed him, telling him that he knew his intention, and wished only to increase the firmness of his purpose, and bade him stay that night and rest with him.

On the morrow, directed by Bharadvaja, Bharata set forth again towards Chitrakuta and arriving there his men began to search the wood, and presently caught sight of a column of smoke, showing the presence of men. Hearing of this, Bharata stopped the search and set forth himself with but two companions to seek his much-loved brother.

Meanwhile Ramachandra was living happily in the forest with his wife, his younger brother serving them with faithful devotion. One day as they sat taking food, a rush of frightened animals was

heard, and Rama sent his brother to climb a tree and find the cause of the disturbance. And Lakshmana cried loudly to his brother to arm himself and place Sitæ in safety in the cave, for Bharata was coming with an army to slay them. Angrily he shouted that he would now slay Bharata, for whose sake they were suffering exile. Gently Rama answered, soothing the anger born of love, that he wished for no Kingdom stained by a brother's blood. Surely Bharata was coming out of love to seek them, for never had he wronged his brothers, even in thought. Or, if Lakshmana himself wished to be King, Bharata, asked by him, would place the Kingdom in his hands. With quick repentance Lakshmana cast aside his anger, and coming down from the tree, he entered the cottage with Ramachandra and Sita to await events.

Now Bharata and Shatrughna, followed by Sumantra, were searching the wood, and presently came to the leaf-thatched cottage, and caught sight of Rama seated within upon the ground, with his wife and brother, his hair matted, and clad in bark and deer-skin. With a cry he rushed forward and flung himself at Rama's feet: "O noble one! O noble one!" he sobbed, choked by overmastering grief: "Rama, worthy of earth's noblest Kingdom, clad thus as a poor ascetic, his royal locks matted, with a deer-skin for regal seat!"

Then Rama clasped Bharata fondly in his arms, and lovingly asked him what had brought

him to the forest, and where was their father, was he living or had he gone to the other world? Surely the Kingdom had not been wrested from Bharata, he being still young? Question after question, as to the welfare of the Kingdom and as to Bharata's own diligence in ruling, poured from Rama's lips, overjoyed to see one coming from the land he loved so well. But why had Bharata come there, he who was a King, in deer-skin and with matted locks like an ascetic—for Bharata had clad himself in ascetic wise and matted his hair, in token of his resolve not to wear the crown.

Briefly answered Bharata that their father, heart-broken, had gone to heaven, and that he himself had come to fetch home his brother, who must at once take his father's seat. Then Rama replied gently, but firmly, that his father had sent him to dwell for fourteen years in the forest, while he had assigned the Kingdom to Bharata: each must do his own work, obeying their father's will.

Thither came Vasishtha, and the Queen of Dasharatha, and reunited in the forest, mothers and sons again met, and passed the sad night together, one in grief as they had ever been one in joy. On the morrow, Bharata addressed his elder brother bidding him take the Kingdom, which needed his strong protection. Only by becoming King could he (Rama) free his father from sin, undo the evil wrought by Kaikeyi and release himself (Bharata) from the crime of ousting his elder

brother. Warmly and vehemently he pleaded, but Rama remained unshaken, firm, unmoved. To Bharata's words were added others, and Vasishtha himself, with all the authority of his sacred office, commanded Rama to assume the crown, declaring that, as his Guru, he assured him that in so doing he would act rightly. But even by this highest authority Rama, firm in duty, could not be swayed. "What my father had commanded must not be made untrue." Then Bharata declared that he would stay in the forest also, but Rama bade him return to his proper work, as neither of them must disobey their father. At length Bharata, falling at his brother's feet, prayed him at least to appoint whom he would as regent of his realm, and Rama, praising him for his submission, bade his brother rule the land; and on Bharata's prayer, he gave him his gold-adorned sandals, sign and emblem of his royalty delegated for a while into his brother's hands. And Bharata swore that for the fourteen years of Rama's exile he would wear the cloth and hair of the ascetic, and live on fruits and roots outside the royal city, making the sandals the sign of the absent monarch, that the people might ever remember that Rama was their King.

And thus in truth he did. For, returning to Ayodhya, he led the Queens to the palace, and then himself departed to Nandigram, where he proclaimed that he held the Kingdom but in trust, and that the sandals representing the absent Rama,

must alone be sheltered by the royal umbrella. When Rama returned he would himself replace them on Rama's feet and yield to him his Kingdom. Thus Bharata the dutiful ruled the land as Rama's regent living as an ascetic until Rama should return.

Dr. Annie Besant : Shri Ramachandra

NOTES

to transgress : to break the law.

to presage : to foretell.

void of : devoid of, free from.

Raghava : another name of Rama.

to harbour : to entertain.

wrested : taken away by force.

in token of : as a sign of.

assigned : given, granted.

QUESTIONS

1. Write briefly about the meeting between Guha and Bharata.
2. Give a brief account of the meeting between the brothers at Chitrakuta.
3. Relate briefly the advice given to Bharata by his counsellors and his reply to them.
4. From the above story, what estimate do you form of the character of (a) Rama, (b) Lakshmana and (c) Bharata?

VII

THE GYPSIES

[Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) earned a great reputation by his Bengali poetry, drama and fiction. He became known to the world outside India after the publication of **Gitanjali**, for which he was awarded a Nobel Prize in 1913.

The following passage about the gypsies is taken from **Glimpses of Bengal**, a volume of Tagore's letters translated from Bengali. The present letter was written from a village in East Bengal at the time when the poet was quite young. It gives a complete picture of the gypsies—and their unique kind of life.]

Just in front of my window, on the other side of the stream, a band of gypsies have ensconced themselves, putting up bamboo frame-works covered over with split-bamboo mats and pieces of cloth. There are only three of these little structures, so low that you cannot stand upright inside. Their life is lived in the open, and they only creep under these shelters at night, to sleep huddled together.

That is always the gypsies' way: no home anywhere, no landlord to pay rent to, wandering about as it pleases them with their children, their pigs, and a dog or two; and on them the police keep a vigilant eye.

I frequently watch the doings of the family nearest me. They are dark but good-looking, with fine, strongly-built bodies, like north-west country

folk. Their women are handsome, and have tall slim, well-knit figures; and with their free and easy movements, and natural independent airs, they look to me like swarthy Englishwomen.

The man has just put the cooking-pot on the fire, and is now splitting bamboos and weaving baskets. The woman first holds up a little mirror to her face, then puts a deal of pains into wiping and rubbing it, over and over again, with a moist piece of cloth; and then, the folds of her upper garment adjusted and tidied, she goes, all spick and span, up to her man and sits beside him, helping him now and then in his work.

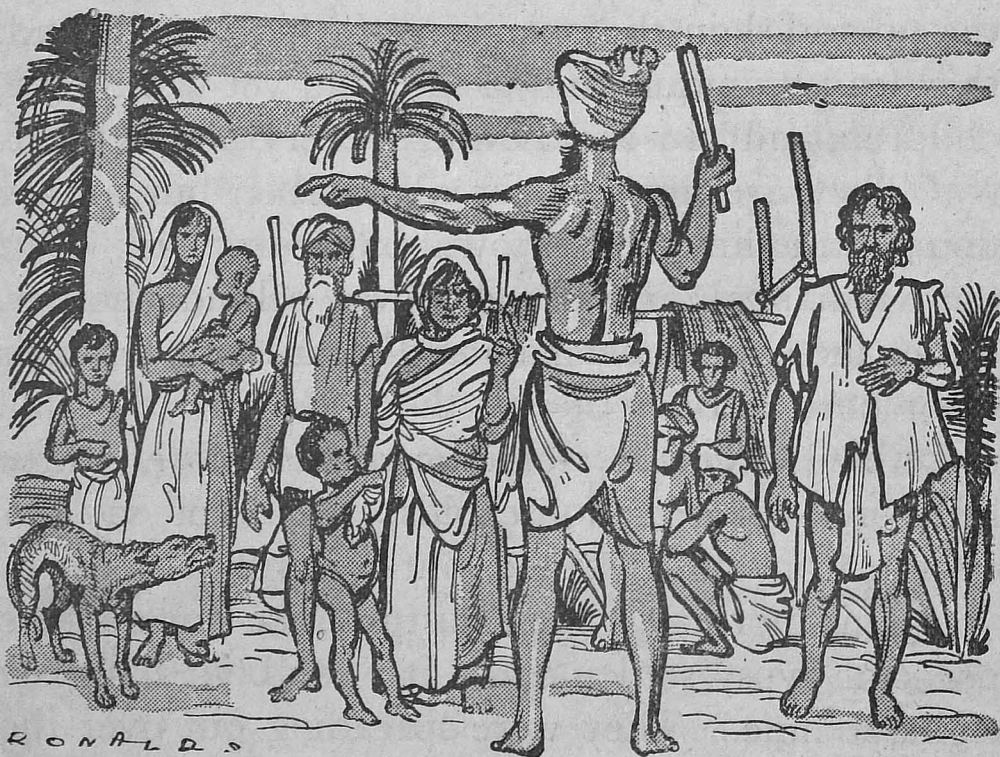
These are truly children of the soil, born on it somewhere, bred by the wayside, here, there, and everywhere, dying anywhere. Night and day under the open sky, in the open air, on the bare ground, they lead a unique kind of life; and yet work, love, children, and household duties—everything is there.

They are not idle for a moment, but always doing something. Her own particular task over, one woman plumps herself down behind another, unties the knot of her hair and cleans and arranges it for her; and whether at the same time they fall to talking over the domestic affairs of the three little mat-covered households, I cannot say for certain from this distance, but shrewdly suspect it.

This morning a great disturbance invaded the peaceful gypsy settlement. It was about half-past eight or nine. They were spreading out over the

mat roofs tattered quilts and sundry other rags, which serve them for beds, in order to sun and air them. The pigs with their litters, lying in a hollow all of a heap and looking like a slab of mud, had been routed out by the two canine members of the family, who fell upon them and sent them roaming in search of their breakfast, squealing their annoyance at being interrupted in enjoyment of the sun after the cold night. I was writing my letter and absently looking out now and then when the hubbub suddenly commenced.

I rose and went to the window, and found a crowd gathered round the gypsy hermitage. A superior-looking personage was flourishing a stick and indulging in the strongest language. The



headman of the gypsies, cowed and nervous, was apparently trying to offer explanations. I gathered that some suspicious happenings in the locality had led to this visitation by a police officer.

The woman, so far, had remained sitting, busily scraping lengths of split bamboo as serenely as if she had been alone and no sort of row going on. Suddenly, however, she sprang to her feet, advanced on the police officer, gesticulated violently with her arms right in his face, and gave him, in strident tones, a piece of her mind. In the twinkling of an eye three-quarters of the officer's excitement had subsided; he tried to put in a word or two of mild protest but did not get a chance, and so departed crestfallen, a different man.

After he had retreated to a safe distance, he turned and shouted back: "All I say is, you'll have to clear out from here!"

I thought my neighbours opposite would forthwith pack up their mats and bamboos and move away with their bundles, pigs and children. But there is no sign of it yet. They are still nonchalantly engaged in splitting bamboos, cooking food, or completing a toilet.

Rabindranath Tagore: Glimpses of Bengal

NOTES

Gypsies : wandering people who do not settle at a place.

ensconced : put in a safe place.

airs : manners.

spick and span : clean and neat.

46 READINGS FROM ENGLISH LITERATURE

quilts : a bed-covering filled with wool or feathers or cotton.

dab : a small lump of anything soft or moist.

canine : adj. from dog.

gesticulated : made signs by means of hands and face.

nonchalantly : without showing any eagerness or interest.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe a day in a gypsy's life on the basis of this story and your personal observation.
2. Describe the police-officer's visit to the gypsy camp and his conversation with the gypsies.
3. Give an account of any wandering tribes you have seen in this country.

VIII

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

[Sir George W. Cox (1827-1902) devoted his life to writing histories and legends. His books on mythology have been very popular. Here is an example of a Greek myth. The myths of the ancient Greeks, like myths of the Indian classics, are the most famous and they play a very important part in modern European literature.]

The Greeks tell us that Orpheus had a lyre given to him by Apollo, and that he played upon it so exquisitely that all things, animate and inanimate, were charmed by it. We have known how Krishna, playing on his flute, was able to charm men and women who forgot all worldly concerns as soon as they heard the tune.]

In the pleasant valleys of a country which was called Thessaly, there lived a man whose name was Orpheus. Every day he made soft music with his golden harp, and sang beautiful songs such as no one had ever heard before. And whenever Orpheus sang, then everything came to listen to him, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear; and even clouds sailed along more gently and brightly in the sky when he sang, and the stream which ran close to his feet made a softer noise to show how glad his music made it.

Now Orpheus had a wife who was called Eurydice, whom he loved very dearly. • All through the winter when the snow was on the hills, and all



through the summer when the sunshine made everything beautiful, Orpheus used to sing to her; and Eurydice sat on the grass by his side while the beasts came round to listen, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear him.

But one day when Eurydice was playing with some children on the bank of the river, she trod upon a snake in the long grass, and the snake bit her. And by and by she began to be very sick, and Eurydice knew she must die. So she told the children to go to Orpheus (for he was far away), and say how sorry she was to leave him, and that she loved him always very dearly; and then she put her head down upon the soft grass, and fell

asleep and died. Sad indeed was Orpheus when the children came to tell him that Eurydice was dead. He felt so wretched that he never played upon his golden harp, and he never opened his lips to sing; and the beasts that used to listen to him wondered why Orpheus sat all alone on the green bank where Eurydice used to sit with him, and why it was that he never made any more of his beautiful music. All day long he sat there, and his cheeks were then wet with his tears. At last he said, "I cannot stay here any more; I must go and look for Eurydice. I cannot bear to be without her, and perhaps the king of the land where people go after they are dead will let her come back and live with me again."

So he took his harp in his hand, and went to look for Eurydice in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down into his golden cup before the night comes on. And he went on and on a very long way, till at last he came to a high and dark gateway. It was barred across with iron bars, and it was bolted and locked so that nobody could open it. It was a wretched and gloomy place, because it was covered with clouds and mist. In front of this great gateway there sat a monstrous dog, with three heads, and six eyes, and three tongues; and everything was dark around, except his eyes, which shone like fire, and which saw everyone that dared to come near. Now when Orpheus came looking for Eurydice, the dog raised his three

heads, and opened his three mouths, and gnashed his teeth at him, and roared terribly; but when Orpheus came nearer, the dog jumped upon his feet and got himself ready to fly at him and tear him to pieces. Then Orpheus took down his harp and began to play upon its golden strings. And the dog Cerberus (for that was his name) growled and snarled and showed the great white teeth which were in his three mouths; but he could not help hearing the sweet music, and he wondered why it was that he did not wish any more to tear Orpheus in pieces. Very soon the music made him very quiet and still, and at last lulled him to sleep; and only his heavy breathing told that there was any dog there. So when Cerberus had gone to sleep, Orpheus passed by him and came up to the gate, and he found it wide open, for it had come open of its own accord while he was singing. And he was glad when he saw this, for he thought that now he should see Eurydice.

So he went on and on a long way, until he came to the palace of the King; and there were guards placed before the door who tried to keep him from going in, but Orpheus played upon his harp, and then they could not help letting him go.

So he went into the great hall, where he saw the King and Queen sitting on a throne; and as Orpheus came near, the King called out to him with a loud and terrible voice, "Who are you, and how dare you to come here? Do you not know

that no one is allowed to come here till after he is dead? I will have you chained and placed in a dungeon, from which you will never be able to get out.” Then Orpheus said nothing; but he took his golden harp in his hand and began to sing more sweetly and gently than ever, because he knew that, if he liked to do so, the King could let him see Eurydice again. And as he sang, the face of the King began to look almost glad, and his anger passed away, and he began to feel how much happier it must be to be gentle and loving than to be angry and cruel. Then the King said, “ You have made me feel happy with your sweet music, although I have never felt happy before, and now tell me why you have come, because you must want something or other, for otherwise no one would come, before he was dead, to this sad and gloomy land of which I am the King.” Then Orpheus said, “ O King, give me back my dear Eurydice, and let her go from this gloomy place and live with me on the bright earth again.” So the King said that she should go. And the King said to Orpheus, “ I have given you what you wanted, because you sang so sweetly, and when you go back to the earth from this place, your wife whom you love shall go up after you: but remember that you must never look back until she has reached the earth, for if you do, Eurydice will be brought back here, and I shall not be able to give her to you again, even if you should sing more sweetly and gently than ever.”

Now Orpheus was longing to see Eurydice, and he hoped that the King would let him see her at once; but when the King said that he must not try to see her till she had reached the earth, he was quite content, for he said, " Shall I not wait patiently a little while, that Eurydice may come and live with me again?" So he promised the King that he would go up to the earth without stopping to look behind and see whether Eurydice was coming after him.

Then Orpheus went away from the palace of the King, and he passed through the dark gateway, and the dog Cerberus did not bark or growl, for he knew that Orpheus would not have been allowed to come back if the King had not wished it. So he went on and on a long way; and he became impatient, and longed more and more to see Eurydice. At last he came near to the land of living men, and he saw just a little streak of light, where the sun was going to rise from the sea; and presently the sky became brighter, and he saw everything before him so clearly that he could not help turning round to look at Eurydice. But ah! she had not yet quite reached the earth, and so now he lost her again. He just saw something pale and white, which looked like his own dear wife; and he just heard a soft gentle voice, which sounded like the voice of Eurydice, and then it all melted away. And still he thought that he saw that pale white face, and heard that soft and gentle voice, which said, " O Orpheus,

Orpheus, why did you look back? How dearly I loved you, and how glad I should have been to live with you again; but now I must go back, because you have broken your promise to the King, and I must not even kiss you, and say how much I love you.”

And Orpheus sat down at the place where Eurydice was taken away from him; and he could not go on any further, because he felt so miserable. There he stayed day after day, and his cheek became more pale, and his body weaker and weaker, till at last he knew that he must die. And Orpheus was not sorry; for although he loved the bright earth, with all its flowers and soft grass and sunny streams, he knew that he could not be with Eurydice again until he had left it. So at last he laid down his head upon the earth, and fell asleep, and died: and then he and Eurydice saw each other in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down at night into his golden cup, and were never parted again.

Sir George Cox: Tales of Ancient Greece

NOTES

Cerberus : pronounced Ser-ber-us.

Eurydice : pronounced Yur-id-iss-ee.

Thessaly : a land in Greece.

The land where people go after they are dead : known as “Hades” in Greek mythology.

gnashed : pressed together in anger.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in your own words the story of Orpheus who tried to bring back his wife to earth.
2. What was the effect of Orpheus singing and of the music of his harp on Nature, on animals and on the inhabitants of 'Hades.'

IX

THE TWO FRIENDS OF SYRACUSE .

[Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1902) wrote many novels, perhaps the most famous being "The Heir of Redclyffe," and several collections of shorter tales of real life and history. Among these was "A Book of Golden Deeds," from which the following story is taken. In this lesson is described the ideal friendship between Damon and Pythias.]

Syracuse was a great Greek city, built in Sicily, and full of all kinds of Greek art and learning; but it was a place of danger at the end of the fourth century, before the Christian era, for it had fallen under the tyranny of a man of strange and capricious temper, though of great abilities, namely, Dionysius. He is said to have been originally only a clerk in a public office, but his talents raised him to continually higher situations, and at length, in a great war with the Carthaginians who had many settlements in Sicily, he became General of the army and then found it easy to establish his power over the city.

This power was not according to the laws, for Syracuse ought to have been governed, like most other cities, by a Council of Magistrates. But Dionysius was an exceedingly able man, and made the city much more rich and powerful. He defeated the Carthaginians, and rendered Syracuse by far the chief city in the island; and he contrived to

make every one so much afraid of him that no one durst attempt to overthrow his power. He was a good scholar, and very fond of philosophy and poetry; and he delighted to have learned men around him, and he had naturally a generous spirit. But the sense that he was in a position that did not belong to him and that every one hated him for assuming it, made him very harsh and suspicious.

It is of him that the story is told, that he had a chamber hollowed in the rock near his state prison, and constructed with galleries to conduct sounds like an ear, so that he might overhear the conversation of his captives. Of him too is told that famous anecdote which has become a proverb. On hearing a friend, named Damocles, express a wish to be in his situation for a single day, he took him at his word, and Damocles found himself at a banquet with everything that could delight his senses—delicious food, costly wine, flowers, perfumes, music—but with a sword, with the point almost touching his head, and hanging by a single horse-hair! This was to show the condition in which a usurper lived!

Thus Dionysius was in constant dread. He put one barber to death for boasting that he held a razor to the tyrant's throat every morning. He was said to have put a man, named Antiphon, to death for answering him, when he asked what was the best kind of brass, "That of which the statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were made!"

These were the two Athenians, who had killed the sons of Pisistratus the tyrant, so that the jest was most effective, but its boldness might have gained forgiveness for it. One philosopher, named Philoxenus, he sent to a dungeon for finding fault with his poetry. He afterwards composed another piece, which he thought so superior, that he could not be content without sending for this adverse critic to hear it. When he had finished reading it, he looked to Philoxenus for a compliment, but the philosopher only turned round to the guards, and said dryly, "Carry me back to prison." This time Dionysius had the sense to laugh, and forgive his honesty.

All these stories may not be true but they show what was the character of the man of whom they were told, how stern and terrible was his anger, and how easily it was incurred. Among those who came under it was one named Pythias, who was sentenced to death, according to the usual fate of those who fell under his suspicion.

Pythias had lands and relations in Greece, and he entreated as a favour to be allowed to return thither and arrange his affairs, engaging to return within a specified time to suffer death. The tyrant laughed his request to scorn. Once safe out of Sicily, who would answer for his return? Pythias made reply that he had a friend who would become security for his return, and while Dionysius, the miserable man who trusted nobody, was ready to

scoff at his simplicity, Damon came forward and offered to become surety for his friend, engaging to suffer death in place of Pythias if he did not return according to promise.

Dionysius, much astonished, consented to let Pythias go, marvelling what would be the issue of the affair. Time went on, and Pythias did not appear. The Syracusans watched Damon, but he showed no uneasiness. He said he was sure of his friend's truth and honour, and that, if any accident had caused the delay of his return, he should rejoice in dying to save the life of one so dear to him.

Even to the last day, Damon continued serene and content, however it might fall out; nay, even when the very hour drew nigh and still no Pythias.



His trust was so perfect that he did not even grieve at having to die for a faithless friend who had left him to the fate to which he had unwarily pledged himself. It was not Pythias' own will, but the winds and waves, so he still declared, when the decree was brought and the instructions of death made ready. The hour had come, and a few moments more would have ended Damon's life, when Pythias duly presented himself, embraced his friend, and stood forward himself to receive his sentence, calm, resolute, and rejoiced that he had come in time.

Dionysius looked on more struck than ever. He felt that neither of such men must die. He reversed the sentence of Pythias, and calling them to his judgment-seat, he entreated them to admit him as a third in their friendship. Yet all the time he must have known it was a mockery that he should be ever such as they were to each other—he who had lost the very power of trusting, and constantly sacrificed others to secure his own life, whilst they counted not their lives in comparison with their truth to their word and love to one another. No wonder that Damon and Pythias have become proverbial for true friendship strong unto death.

Charlotte Mary Yonge: A Book of Golden Deeds

NOTES

Capricious : unreasonable.

Dionysius : he died in 368 B.C.

Carthaginians : the people of Carthage—a famous city state in North Africa. The Romans destroyed it in 147 B.C.

Chamber in the rock : it was called the “ Ear of Dionysius.”

A proverb : when one is in great danger he is said to have the sword of Damocles hanging over him.

Pisistratus : a tyrant of Athens.

QUESTIONS

1. Imagine you are Damon. Relate the story of Damon and Pythias in your own words.
2. Imagine yourself to be Dionysius. Tell the story of Damon and Pythias from his point of view.
3. Write short answers to the following:
 - (a) What sort of man was Dionysius?
 - (b) What is the story of Damocles?
 - (c) What was the story of Antiphon?
 - (d) What was the story of the poet Philoxenus?

X

A VENETIAN BARBER

[Mark Twain (1835-1910) is the pen name of S. L. Clemens, one of the best American humorists. He was a writer of historical and biographical treatises. His best known works are **A Tramp Abroad**, **The Adventures of Tom Sawyer**, **Huckleberry Finn**, and **Innocents Abroad**.

The following extract is taken from the last-named book. Mark Twain with his friends, the Doctor, Dan and others—"the boys"—was on a tour in Europe. At Milan they had a shave at the hands of a barber who had not the "dexterity in his profession" of an Ali Sakal.]

I was writing in our front room this afternoon and trying hard to keep my attention on my work and refrain from looking out upon the canal. I was resisting the soft influences of the climate as well as I could, and endeavouring to overcome the desire to be indolent and happy. The boys sent for a barber. They asked me if I would be shaved. I reminded them of my tortures in Genoa, Milan, Como; of my declaration that I would suffer no more on Italian soil. I said, "Not any for me, if you please."

I wrote on. The barber began on the doctor. I heard him say—"Dan, this is the easiest shave I have had since we left the ship." He said again, presently—"Why, Dan, a man could go to sleep with this man shaving him." Dan took the chair.

Then he said—"Why, this is Titian. This is one of the old masters." I wrote on. Directly Dan said—"Doctor, it is perfect luxury. The ship's barber isn't anything to him." My rough beard was distressing me beyond measure. The barber was rolling up his apparatus. The temptation was too strong. I said—

"Hold on, please. Shave me also." I sat down in the chair and closed my eyes. The barber soaped my face, and then took his razor and gave me a rake that well-nigh threw me into convulsions. I jumped out of the chair; Dan and the doctor were both wiping blood off their faces and laughing.

I said it was a mean, disgraceful fraud.

They said that the misery of the shave had gone so far beyond anything they had ever experienced before, that they could not bear the idea of losing such a chance of hearing a cordial opinion from me on the subject.

It was shameful. But there was no help for it. The skinning was begun and had to be finished. The tears flowed with every rake, and so did the fervent execrations. The barber grew confused, and brought blood every time. I think the boys enjoyed it better than anything they have seen or heard since they left home.

Mark Twain: Innocents Abroad

NOTES

Genoa, Milan, Como : towns in Italy.

Titian : one of the greatest of Italian painters. The barber was as skilful in his profession as Titian was in his art.

rake : a sharp cut.

cordial opinion : an ironical statement because the opinion could not be cordial at all.

Execrations : curses.

QUESTIONS

1. Give the experiences of Mark Twain and his party with the Venetian barber.
2. What is your idea of a barber in an Indian village?

XI

GOODBYE TO SCHOOL

[A former President of the Board of Education in Great Britain sent this message to students who had come to the end of their school career. It is reproduced below, as it is hoped that the message may also be of use and benefit to Indian students.]

You are now about to leave school, and before you go we desire to send you our best wishes for your future welfare.

Although you are parting from school in which you have spent so many years we hope you will not forget it and think that your education is finished. In whatever trade or profession you desire to follow, you will soon find that, if you are ambitious to succeed in it, you must continue your education.

Success in life is not easily secured, it only comes to those who work hard and continue learning.

Very soon you will require to choose a trade or profession. Choose with the greatest care, and avoid as far as you can any occupation that leads nowhere. Aim rather at work that has in it the promise of an interesting and happy future; and, if at first you are forced to take a job that can only last for a short time, try to get one, as soon as possible, that is to your liking. If at any time you are in doubt as to the choice you should make, do not hesitate to ask advice from one of your teachers.

Success in life depends largely on good health. Keep your body fit, and by cleanliness, fresh air, regular habits, and suitable recreations, make yourself strong to play the game, and to do it in every sense of the words. Avoid anything that will sap your strength. Smoking in your youth stunts the body, and clouds the brain. Be temperate in all things and beware of drink. It is the deadly enemy of health and efficiency.

Above all, remember that your character is a priceless possession. Keep it therefore untarnished. Be truthful in all things, courteous and considerate to everybody, fair to your rivals, kind and helpful to all who are weak and suffering, and do not be afraid to have the courage to stand up for what is good, pure and noble. Avoid gambling in every form, it is a mean game—trying to get something for nothing and at somebody's cost.

Make provision for hard times. In your leisure hours, avoid mere idling. Fill such hours with interesting hobbies, good books, and with companionships and associations calculated to exercise over you an influence for good. To a large extent you will be known by the company you keep.

With a sound mind in a sound body, a good character, courteous manners, and loyalty to the duties of your religion and its high ideals, you will, by God's grace, be a credit to your family, a good citizen, and, in your whole life, a real success.

We wish you all that is best.

NOTES

that leads nowhere : which is of no purpose.

to stand up for : to support the cause of.

to play the game : literally it means to observe the rules of the game. Here it means to do the right thing or doing one's duty.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the important things that the students should remember and follow in their life?
2. "Character is a priceless possession." Write about five paragraphs on good character.

XII

THE PRODIGAL SON

[This story of the Prodigal Son is taken from the New Testament, which deals with the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The Bible is not only a religious book, it is great literature.

The parable of the Prodigal Son has been called "the most perfect short story in the world." A parable is a story which teaches some truth. This parable was told by Jesus to drive home the truth that "Joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."]

A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of the country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and

am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.' ” And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, “ Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” But the father said to his servants, “ Bring forth the first robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” And they began to be merry.

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he



came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, "Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound." And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends." And he said unto him, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost and is found."

New Testament

NOTES

Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me : the elder son received a double portion while the younger one received only one portion according to the laws of the Jews.

to feed swine : this was unfortunate as the Jews consider swine as very unclean.

husk : a kind of coarse fruit.

the first robe : the best robe. Whenever a guest arrived, it was customary among the Jews to offer him good robes to put on.

kill the fatted calf : this has become a proverb now, meaning "to welcome with the best of everything."

QUESTIONS

1. Write the story of the Prodigal Son in your own words.
2. What moral do you derive from this story?

XIII

ABRAHAM AND THE STRANGER

[Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was a great American patriot, writer, diplomat and scientist. He entered life as a very poor boy and concluded it in wealth and honour far above that of most men.

The following story, which is of Persian origin, emphasises the need for toleration. It is written in the language of the Bible.]

And it came to pass after these things, that Abraham sat in the door of his tent about the going down of the sun.

And behold a man, bowed with age, came from the way of the wilderness, leaning on a staff.

And Abraham arose and met him, and said unto him, "Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night, and thou shalt arise early on the morrow, and go on thy way."

But the man said, "Nay, for I will abide under this tree."

And Abraham pressed him greatly; so he turned, and they went into the tent, and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat.

And when Abraham saw that the man blessed not God, he said unto him, "Wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, creator of heaven and earth?"

And the man answered and said, "I do not

worship the God thou speakest of, neither do I call upon his name; for I have made to myself a god, which abideth always in mine house, and provideth me with all things.”

And Abraham’s zeal was kindled against the man, and he arose and fell upon him, and drove him forth with blows into the wilderness.

And at midnight God called unto Abraham, saying, “Abraham, where is the stranger?”

And Abraham answered and said, “Lord, he would not worship Thee, neither would he call upon Thy name; therefore have I driven him out from before my face, into the wilderness.”

And God said, “Have I borne with him these ninety and eight years, and nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion against Me; and couldst not thou, that art thyself a sinner, bear with him one night?”

And Abraham said, “Let not the anger of the Lord wax hot against His servant: lo, I have sinned; forgive me, I pray thee.”

And Abraham arose, and went forth into the wilderness, and sought diligently for the man, and found him, and returned with him to the tent; and when he had entreated him kindly, he sent him away on the morrow with gifts.

Benjamin Franklin

NOTES

came to pass : happened.

behold : look.

unleavened : made without yeast.

blessed not God : Christians always say “ grace ” to thank God for giving them their daily bread.

zeal : anger.

fell upon : attacked.

borne with him : suffered him.

wax hot : be roused

on the morrow : the next day.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in your own words the story of Abraham and the stranger.
2. What was Abraham's fault in the above story and how did he show his repentance for it?
3. Write any other story, you know of, in which a lesson has been taught on the value of tolerance.

XIV

SANCHO PANZA AS JUDGE

[Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616) was a Spanish novelist and wrote the story of **Don Quixote** which is a very popular classic. The hero of the story, Don Quixote de la Mancha, is a Spanish gentleman who set out in search of knightly adventures, accompanied by a peasant named Sancho Panza. Many mishaps befall this knight-errant which may be read in the book.

A nobleman made Sancho the Governor of a place called Barataria, and was much amused at the manner in which Sancho did his duties as Governor and Judge. The incident narrated in this lesson brings out the sharp intellect and robust commonsense that Sancho Panza possessed.]

Two old men presented themselves before him. One of them carried a cane in his hand for a staff; the other, who had no staff, said to Sancho, "My Lord, some time ago I lent this man ten crowns of gold to oblige and serve him, upon condition that he should return them on demand. I let some time pass without asking for them, being loth to put him to a greater strait to pay me than he was in when I lent them. But at length, thinking it full time to be repaid, I asked him for my money more than once, but to no purpose. He not only refuses payment, but denies the debt and says I never lent him any such sum, or if I did, that he had already paid me. I have no witness of the loan, nor has he of the payment which he pretends to have made, but

which I deny. Yet if he will swear before your worship that he has returned the money, I from this minute acquit him before God and the world.”

“What say you to this, old gentleman?” quoth Sancho. “I confess, my Lord,” replied the old fellow, “that he did lend me the money, and if your worship pleases to hold down your wand of justice, since he leaves it to my oath, I will swear I have really and truly returned it to him.” The Governor accordingly held down his wand, and the old fellow, seeming encumbered with his staff, gave it to his creditor to hold while he was swearing.

And then taking hold of the cross of the wand, he said it was true indeed the other had lent him ten crowns, but that he had returned them to him into his own hand, but having, he supposed, forgotten it, he was continually dunning him for them. Upon this his lordship the Governor demanded of the creditor what he had to say in reply to the solemn declaration he had heard. He said that he submitted, and could not doubt but that his debtor had sworn the truth; for he believed him to be an honest man and a good Christian; and that, as the fault must have been in his own memory, he would thenceforward ask him no more for his money. The debtor now took his staff again, and bowing to the Governor, went out of court.

Sancho, having observed the defendant take his staff and walk away, and noticing also the resignation of the plaintiff, began to meditate and laying



the forefinger of his right hand upon his forehead, he continued for a short time apparently full of thought. And then raising his head, he ordered the old man with the staff to be called back. When he had returned, "Honest friend," said the Governor, "give me that staff, for I have occasion for it."

"With all my heart," answered the old fellow, and delivered it into his hand. Sancho took it, and immediately giving it to the other old man, he said, "There take that, and go about your business in God's name, for you are now paid."

"I paid, my Lord?" answered the old man, "What! Is this cane worth ten gold crowns?"

"Yes," quoth the Governor, "or I am the greatest dunce in the world; and it shall now

appear whether or not I have a head to govern a whole kingdom.”

He then ordered the cane to be broken in court; which being done, ten crowns of gold were found within it. All the spectators were struck with admiration and began to look upon their new Governor as a second Solomon. They asked him how he had discovered that the ten crowns were in the cane. He told them that, having observed the defendant give it to the plaintiff to hold, while he took his oath that he had truly restored the money into his own hands, and that being done he took his staff again, it came into his head that the money in dispute must be enclosed within it.

Miguel de Cervantes: Don Quixote

NOTES

loth : unwilling.

strait : difficulty.

to acquit : to declare not guilty.

to dun : to make continuous requests for payments of debts.

have occasion for : have need for.

Solomon : A King of Israel in the tenth century B.C., who was famed for his wisdom.

QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief account of the dispute between the two old men.
2. How did Sancho discover the trick played by the debtor?
3. Give any other story you know about any other judge as shrewd as Sancho Panza.

XV

THE ORIGIN OF OPIUM

[The Rev. Lal Behari Day was an Indian Christian who has written a number of interesting stories about Indian life. Among his works **Bengal Peasant Life** and **Folk-tales of Bengal** are the most popular. The present story is taken from his latter book.]

Once upon a time there lived on the banks of the holy Ganga a Rishi, who spent his days and nights in the performance of religious rites and in meditation upon God. From sunrise to sunset he sat on the river bank engaged in devotion, and at night he took shelter in a hut of palm-leaves which his own hand had raised in a bush hard by. There were no men and women for miles around. In the hut, however, there was a mouse, which used to live upon the leavings of the Rishi's supper. As it was not in the nature of the sage to hurt any living thing, our mouse never ran away from him, but, on the contrary, went to him, touched his feet and played with him. The Rishi, partly in kindness to the little brute, and partly to have some one by to talk to at times, gave the mouse the power of speech. One night the mouse, standing on its hind legs and joining together its forelegs reverently, said to the Rishi, "Holy sage, you have been so kind as to give me the power to speak like men. If it will not displease your reverence, I have one more boon to

ask.” “What is it?” said the Rishi. “What is it, little mouse? Say what you want.” The mouse answered, “When your reverence goes in the day to the river side for devotion, a cat comes to the hut to catch me. And had it not been for fear of your reverence, the cat would have eaten me up long ago; and I fear it will eat me some day. My prayer is that I may be changed into a cat that I may prove a match for my foe.” The Rishi became propitious to the mouse, and threw some holy water on its body, and it was at once changed into a cat.

Some nights after, the Rishi asked his pet, “Well, little puss, how do you like your present life?” “Not much, your reverence,” answered the cat. “Why not?” demanded the sage. “Are you not strong enough to hold your own against all the cats in the world?” “Yes,” rejoined the cat. “Your reverence has made me a strong cat, able to cope with all the cats in the world. But I do not now fear cats, I have got a new foe. Whenever your reverence goes to the river side, a pack of dogs comes to the hut, and sets up such a loud barking that I am frightened out of my life. If your reverence will not be displeased with me, I beg you to change me into a dog.” The Rishi said, “Be turned into a dog,” and the cat forthwith became a dog.

Some days passed, when one night the dog said thus to the Rishi: “I cannot thank your reverence enough for your kindness to me. I was but a poor mouse, and you not only gave me

speech but turned me into a cat, and again you were kind enough to change me into a dog. As a dog, however, I suffer a great deal of trouble, I do not get enough food: my only food is the leavings of your supper, but that is not sufficient to fill the maw of such a large beast as you have made me. O, how I envy those apes who jump about from tree to tree, and eat all sorts of delicious fruits! If your reverence will not get angry with me, I pray that I be changed into an ape.” The kind-hearted sage readily granted his pet’s wish, and the dog became an ape.

Our ape was at first wild with joy. He leaped from one tree to another, and sucked every luscious fruit he could find. But his joy was short-lived. Summer came on with its drought. As a monkey he found it hard to drink water out of a river or of a pool; and he saw the wild boars splashing in the water all the day long. He envied their lot, and exclaimed, “O, how happy those boars are! All day their bodies are cooled and refreshed by water. I wish I were a boar.” Accordingly at night he recounted to the Rishi the troubles of the life of an ape and the pleasures of that of a boar, and begged of him to change him into a boar. The sage, whose kindness knew no bounds, complied with his pet’s request, and turned him into a wild boar. For two whole days our boar kept his body soaking wet, and on the third day, as he was splashing about in his favourite element, whom should he see but the

King of the country riding on a richly caparisoned elephant. The King was out hunting, and it was only by a lucky chance that our boar escaped being bagged. He dwelt in his own mind on the dangers attending the life of a wild boar, and envied the lot of the stately elephant who was so fortunate to carry about the King of the country on his back. He longed to be an elephant, and at night besought the Rishi to make him one.

Our elephant was roaming about in the wilderness, when he saw the King out hunting. The elephant went towards the King's suite with the view of being caught. The King, seeing the elephant at a distance, admired it on account of its beauty, and gave orders that it should be caught and tamed. Our elephant was easily caught, and taken into the royal stables, and was soon tamed. It so chanced that the Queen expressed a wish to bathe in the waters of the holy Ganga. The King, who wished to accompany his royal consort, ordered that the newly-caught elephant should be brought to him. The King and Queen mounted on his back. One would suppose that the elephant had now got his wishes, as the King had mounted on his back. But no. There was a fly in the ointment. The elephant, who looked upon himself as a lordly beast, could not brook the idea that a woman, though a Queen, should ride on his back. He thought himself degraded. He jumped up so violently that both the King and Queen fell to the

ground. The King carefully picked up the Queen, took her in his arms, asked her whether she had been much hurt, wiped off the dust from her clothes with his handkerchief, and tenderly kissed her a hundred times. Our elephant, after witnessing the King's caresses, scampered off to the woods as fast as his legs could carry him. As he ran he thought within himself thus: "After all, I see that a Queen is the happiest of all creatures. Of what infinite regard is she the object! The King lifted her up, took her in his arms, made many tender enquiries, wiped off the dust from her clothes with his own royal hands, and kissed her a hundred times! O, the happiness of being a Queen! I must tell the Rishi to make me a Queen!" So saying the elephant, after traversing the woods, went at sunset to the Rishi's hut, and fell prostrate on the ground at the feet of the holy sage. The Rishi said, "Well, what's the news? Why have you left the King's stud?" "What shall I say to your reverence? You have been very kind to me. You have granted every wish of mine. I have one more boon to ask, and it will be the last. By becoming an elephant I have got only my bulk increased, but not my happiness. I see that of all creatures a Queen is the happiest in the world. Do, holy father, make me a Queen." "Silly child," answered the Rishi, "how can I make you a Queen? Where can I get a kingdom for you, and a royal husband to boot? All I can do is to change you into an exquisitely beauti-

ful girl, possessed of charms to captivate the heart of a prince, if ever the Gods grant you an interview with some great prince.” Our elephant agreed to the change; and in a moment the sagacious beast was transformed into a beautiful young lady, to whom the holy sage gave the name of Postomani, or the poppy-seed lady.

Postomani lived in the Rishi’s hut and spent her time in tending the flowers and watering the plants. One day, as she was sitting at the door of the hut during the Rishi’s absence, she saw a man dressed in a very rich garb come towards the cottage. She stood up and asked the stranger who he was, and what he had come there for. The stranger answered that he had come a hunting in those parts, that he had been chasing in vain a deer, that he felt thirsty, and that he had come to the hut of the hermit for refreshment.

Postomani: Stranger, look upon this cot as your own house. I’ll do everything I can to make you comfortable. I am only sorry we are too poor suitably to entertain a man of your rank, for if I mistake not you are the King of this country.

The King smiled. Postomani then brought out a water-pot, and made as if she would wash the feet of her royal guest with her own hands, when the King said, “Holy maid, do not touch my feet, for I am only a Kshatriya, and you are the daughter of a holy sage.”

Postomani: Noble sir, I am not the daughter

of the Rishi, neither am I a Brahmani girl; so there can be no harm in my touching your feet. Besides, you are my guest, and I am bound to wash your feet.

King: Forgive my impertinence. What caste do you belong to?

Postomani: I have heard from the sage that my parents were Kshatriyas.

King: May I ask you whether your father was a King, for your uncommon beauty and your stately demeanour show that you are a born princess.

Postomani, without answering the question, went inside the hut, brought out a tray of the most delicious fruits, and set it before the King. The King, however, would not touch the fruits till the maid had answered his questions. When pressed hard Postomani gave the following answer: "The holy sage says that my father was a King. Having been overcome in battle, he, along with my mother, fled into the woods. My poor father was eaten up by a tiger, and my mother at that time was brought to bed of me, and she closed her eyes as I opened mine. Strange to say, there was a beehive on the tree at the foot of which I lay; drops of honey fell into my mouth and kept me alive with the spark of life till the kind Rishi found me and brought me into his hut. This is the simple story of the wretched girl who now stands before the King."

King: Call not yourself wretched. You are

the loveliest and most beautiful of women. You would adorn the palace of the mightiest sovereign.

The upshot was that the King made love to the girl and they were joined in marriage by the Rishi. Postomani was treated as the favourite Queen and the former Queen was in disgrace. Postomani's happiness, however, was short-lived. One day as she was standing by a well, she became giddy, fell into the water and died. The Rishi then appeared before the King and said: "O King, grieve not over the past. What is fixed by fate must come to pass. The Queen, who has just been drowned, was not of royal blood. She was born a mouse; I then changed her successively, according to her own wish, into a cat, a dog, an ape, a boar, an elephant, and a beautiful girl. Now that she is gone, do you again take into favour your former Queen. As for my reputed daughter, through the favour of the Gods I'll make her name immortal. Let her body remain in the well; fill the well up with earth. Out of her flesh and bones will grow a tree which shall be called after her, Posto, that is the Poppy tree. From this tree will be obtained a drug called opium, which will be celebrated as a powerful medicine through all ages, and which will always be either swallowed or smoked as a wonderful narcotic to the end of time. The opium swallower or smoker will have one quality of each of the animals to which Postomani was transferred. He will be mischievous like a mouse, fond of milk like a cat, quarrelsome like a dog, filthy like

an ape, savage like a boar, and high-tempered like a Queen.”

Rev. Lal Behari Day: Folk Tales of Bengal

NOTES

Rishi : a holy sage.

bagged : killed.

suite : people who followed the king.

to boot : in addition.

narcotic : a drug which relieves pain and brings sleep.

high-tempered : getting angry quickly.

QUESTIONS

1. Give the story of the origin of opium in your own words.
2. Through what changes did the mouse pass until it became a Queen?
3. What are the qualities of an opium-eater, according to the writer?
4. How did Postomani misrepresent herself before the King?

XVI

STUDENTS AND THE VACATION

[Mahatma Gandhi was born on 2nd October, 1869 and died on the 30th January, 1948. He spent his whole life in the building of India's independence. He was a great saint, a politician, a great social reformer and a writer of good English.

The following piece contains Gandhiji's reply to a letter addressed to him by some students of Allahabad who wanted to know what they should do in vacation. Gandhiji published his reply in **Young India** along with the letter from the students. *Young India* was edited by Gandhiji from 1919 to 1922, when he was imprisoned. He resumed the editorship in April, 1924. The second volume of the reprint carries on up to 1926. "The Story of My Experiments with Truth," is his autobiography.]

During the U. P. tour I received the following letter from Allahabad students:

"With reference to your article in a recent issue of *Young India* on rural civilization, we beg to say that we appreciate your suggestion of going back to villages after finishing our education. But this statement is not a sufficient guide for us. We want some definite outline clearly chalked out for us, and what we are expected to do. We are tired of hearing indefinite and vague suggestions. We have a burning desire to do everything for our countrymen, but, we do not know where to begin definitely, and what hopes we may entertain as to

the probable results and benefits from our labours. What will be the source of obtaining our income from Rs. 15 to Rs. 150, as suggested by you? We hope, you will very kindly throw light on these points in your address to the student-gathering, or in some issue of your esteemed paper."

Though I dealt with the matter in one of my addresses to students, and though a definite programme has been placed before students in these pages, it is worth while reiterating and, perhaps, more pointedly, the scheme adumbrated before.

The writers of the letter want to know what they may do after finishing their studies. I want to tell them that the grown-up students and, therefore, all college students should begin village work, even whilst they are studying. Here is a scheme for such part-time workers.

The students should devote the whole of their vacation to village service. To this end, instead of taking their walks along beaten paths, they should walk to the villages within easy reach of their institutions, and study the condition of the village-folk and befriend them. This habit will bring them in contact with the villagers who, when the students actually go to stay in their midst, will, by reason of the previous occasional contact, receive them as friends rather than as strangers to be looked upon with suspicion. During the long vacation, the students will stay in the villages, and offer to conduct classes for adults, and to teach the rules of

sanitation to the villagers, and attend to the ordinary cases of illness. They will also introduce the spinning-wheel among them, teach them the use of every spare minute. In order that this may be done, students and teachers will have to revise their ideas of the uses of vacation. Often do thoughtless teachers prescribe lessons to be done during the vacation. This, in my opinion, is in any case a vicious habit. Vacation is just the period when students' minds should be free from the routine work, and be left free for self-help and original development. The village work, I have mentioned, is easily the best form of recreation and light instruction. It is obviously the best preparation for dedication to exclusive village service after finishing the studies.

The scheme for full village service does not now need to be elaborately described. Whatever was done during the vacation, has now to be put on a permanent footing. The villagers will also be prepared for a fuller response. The village life has to be touched at all points, the economic, the hygienic, the social and the political. The immediate solution of the economic distress is, undoubtedly, the wheel in the vast majority of cases. It at once adds to the income of the villagers, and keeps them from mischief. The hygienic includes insanitation and disease. Here, the student is expected to work with his own body and labour to dig trenches for burying excreta and other refuse and turning them into

manure, for cleaning wells and tanks, for building easy embankments, removing rubbish, and generally, to make the villages more habitable. The village worker has also to touch the social side, and gently persuade the people to give up bad customs and bad habits, such as untouchability, infant marriages, unequal matches, drink and drug evil, and many local superstitions. Lastly, comes the political part. Here, the worker will study the political grievances of the villagers and teach them the dignity of freedom, self-reliance and self-help in everything. This makes, in my opinion, complete adult education. But this does not complete the task of the village worker. He must take care and charge of the little ones, and begin their instruction, and carry on a night school for adults. This literary training is but part of a whole education course, and only a means to the larger end described above.

I claim that the equipment for this service is a large heart and a character above suspicion. Given these two conditions, every other needed qualification is bound to follow.

The last question is that of bread and butter. A labourer is worthy of his hire. The incoming President is organising a National Provincial Service. The All-India Spinners' Association is a growing and stable organisation. It furnishes young men with character an illimitable field for service. A living wage is assured. Beyond that there is no

money in it. You cannot serve both self and country. Service of self is strictly limited by that of the country, and hence excludes a living beyond the means of this absolutely poor country. To serve our villages is to establish *Swaraj*. Everything else is but an idle dream.

Mahatma Gandhi: Young India

NOTES

reiterating : repeating.

to adumbrate : to lay down a general idea or outline of.

original development : development by one's own efforts without the help of others.

dedication : setting apart for some special purpose.

elaborately : at length.

prepared for a fuller response : ready to take part in full measure.

wheel : the **Charkha**, the spinning wheel.

a large heart : very wide sympathies.

the incoming President : Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who was the President of the Congress at the time.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in your words a summary of the letter that the students wrote to Gandhiji.
2. What, according to Gandhiji, is the village-programme for the students to follow in the social, economic, political and hygienic spheres?
3. Discuss the details of work of the party of students who desire to go to a village in the summer vacation for village-service.

XVII

WHY THE CLEVER OXFORD SCHOLAR LOST HIS SUPPER

[The book from which this first tale is taken, is famous as one of the few works that Shakespeare is known to have used. He alludes to this book in **Much Ado about Nothing**. The work is anonymous so that nothing can be said about its author. The book was, however, printed in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and therefore contains an old type of English.]

A rich franklin in the country, having by his wife but one child and no more, for the great affection that he had to his said child found him at Oxford to school by the space of two or three years. This young scholar, in a vacation time for his disport, came home to his father.

It fortun'd afterward in a night, the father, the mother, and the said young scholar sitting at supper, having before them no more meat but only a couple of chickens, the father said this wise: Son, so it is that I have spent much money upon thee to find thee to school, wherefore I have great desire to know what has learned. To whom the son answered, and said: Father, I have studied sophistry, and by that science I can prove these two chickens in the dish be three chickens.

Marry, said the father; that would I fain see. The scholar took one of the chickens in his hand,

and said: Lo, here is one chicken; and incontinent he took both the chickens in his hand jointly and said, here is two chickens: and one and two maketh three. Ergo here is three chickens. Then the father took one of the chickens to himself, and gave another to his wife and said thus: Lo, I will have one of the chickens to my part, and thy mother shall have another, and because of thy good argument thou shalt have the third to thy supper, for thou gettest no more meat here at this time—which promise the father kept, and so the scholar went without his supper.

By this tale men may see that it is great folly to put one to school to learn any subtle science which hath no natural wit.

NOTES

fortuned : chanced to happen.

this wise : in this manner.

sophistry : art of using false arguments.

incontinent : at once; without hesitation.

ergo : for that reason.

QUESTIONS

1. Write out in your words why the Oxford scholar had to lose his dinner.
2. What is the moral to be drawn from the tale of the Oxford scholar?

XVIII

TIGHT CORNERS

[Edward Verrall Lucas (1868-1938) was born at Brighton, and was educated at University College, London. He is best known as a delightful essayist and as the biographer of Charles Lamb. In his literary career of more than forty years he wrote verses, novels, biographies and travel books.

“Tight Corners” is taken from **Giving and Receiving**. In this short piece there is a good amount of suspense and humour.]

The talk was running on the critical situations in which we had found ourselves—those of us whose lives were adventurous enough to comprise any.

One man had been caught by the tide in Brittany and escaped by the skin of his teeth. Another had been on an elephant when a wounded tiger charged at it. A third had been on the top storey of a burning house. A fourth was torpedoed in the War.

“But you all talk,” said one of the company, “as though tight corners were always physical affairs. Surely they can be tighter when they are mental. The tightest corner I was ever in was at Christie’s.”

“Christie’s?”

“Yes, I had been lunching rather well at a club in St. James’s Street with an old friend from abroad, and passing along King Street afterwards,

he persuaded me to look in at the sale-room. The place was full. They were selling Barbizon pictures, and getting tremendous sums for each: two thousand, three thousand, for little bits of things—forest scenes, pools at evening, shepherdesses, the regular subjects. Nothing went as low as three figures at all. Well, we watched for a little while and then I found myself bidding too—just for fun—I had exactly sixty-three pounds in the bank and not enough securities to borrow five hundred on, and here I was nodding away to the auctioneer like a bloatocrat.

“ ‘You’ll get caught,’ my friend said to me.

“ ‘No, I shan’t,’ I said. ‘I’m not going to run any risks.’

“ And for a long time I didn’t. And then a picture was put up and a short red-faced man in a new top-hat—some well-known dealer who had bought quite a number, electrified the room by starting the bidding at a figure little higher than any that he had yet given or that anything had reached. Although the previous lot had run into four figures they had all been modestly started at fifty guineas or a hundred guineas, with a gradual crescendo to which I had often been a safe contributor. But no sooner was the new picture displayed than the dealer made his sensational bid. ‘Four thousand guineas,’ he said.

“ There was a rustle of excitement, and at the end of it I heard my own voice saying, ‘And fifty!’

“ A terrible silence followed, during which the auctioneer looked inquiringly first at the opener and then at the company generally. To my surprise and horror the red-faced dealer gave no sign of life. I realized now, as I ought to have done at first, that he had shot his bolt.

“ ‘ Four thousand and fifty guineas offered,’ said the auctioneer, searching the room.

“ My heart stopped; my blood congealed. There was no sound but a curious smothered noise from my friend.

“ ‘ Four thousand and fifty guineas. Any advance on four thousand and fifty guineas?’—and the hammer fell. That was a nice pickle to be in! Here was I, with sixty-three pounds in the world and not five hundred pounds’ worth of securities, the purchaser of a picture which I didn’t want, for four thousand and fifty guineas, the top price of the day. Turning for some kindly support to my friend I found that he had left me; but not, as I feared at the moment, from baseness, but, as I afterwards discovered, in order to find a remote place in which to lean against the wall and laugh. Stunned and dazed as I was, I pulled myself together sufficiently to hand my card, nonchalantly (I hope), to the clerk who came for the millionaire collector’s name, and then I set to pondering on the problem what to do next. Picture after picture was put up and sold, but I saw none of them. I was running over the names of uncles and other persons

from whom it might be possible to borrow, but wasn't wondering if the money-lenders who talk so glibly about 'note of hand only' really mean it; speculating on the possibility of confessing my poverty to one of the Christie's staff and having the picture put up again. Perhaps that was the best way and yet 'how could I do it after all the other bids I had made? The staff looked so prosperous and unsympathetic, and no one would believe it was a mistake. A genuine mistake of such a kind would have been rectified at once.

"Meanwhile the sale came to an end, and I stood on the outskirts of the little knot of buyers round the desk who were writing cheques and giving instructions. Naturally I preferred to be the last. It was there that I was joined by my friend; but only for a moment, for upon a look at my face he rammed his handkerchief in his mouth and again disappeared. Alone I was to dree this awful weird. I have never felt such a fool or had colder feet. I believe I should have welcomed a firing party.

"And then the unexpected happened, and I realized that a career of rectitude sometimes has rewards beyond the mere consciousness of virtue. A voice at my ear suddenly said, 'Beg pardon, Sir, but was you the gent that bought the big Daubigny?'

"I admitted it.

"'Well, the gent who offered four thousand wants to know if you'll take fifty guineas for your bid.'

“ If ever a messenger of the high gods wore a green baize apron and spoke in husky Cockney tones this was he. I could have embraced him and wept for joy. Would I take fifty guineas? Why I would have taken fifty farthings. But how near the surface and ready, even in the best of us, is worldly guile! ‘ Is that the most he would offer?’ I had the presence of mind to ask.

“ ‘ It’s not for me to say,’ he replied. ‘ No ’arm in trying for a bit more, is there?’

“ ‘ Tell him I’ll take a hundred,’ I said.

“ And I got it.

“ When I found my friend I was laughing too, but he became grave at once on seeing the cheque.

“ ‘ Well, I’m hanged!’ he said. ‘ Of all the luck! I’m hanged!’

“ Then he said, ‘ Don’t forget that if it hadn’t been for me you wouldn’t have come into Christie’s at all.’

“ ‘ I shall never forget it,’ I said. ‘ Nor your deplorable mirth. Both are indelibly branded in letters of fire on my heart. My hair hasn’t gone white, has it?’ ”

E. V. Lucas : Giving and Receiving

NOTES

Christie’s : A famous firm of auctioneers in London, who specialize in the sale of valuable pictures and other works of art.

Barbizon pictures : Barbizon, a village in France, became famous in the middle of the last century, as a resort of

a famous group of painters, known as the Barbizon school. The pictures painted by the masters of this school became very valuable.

bloatocrat : a word invented by the author as a combination of ' bloated plutocrat,' a proud, wealthy man.

to dree this awful weird : to face this awful destiny.

Daubigny : a painting by Daubigny, one of the painters of the Barbizon School.

Cockney : The dialect and accent of the lower classes in London.

QUESTIONS

1. Recount the details of the tight corner in which a gentleman found himself at Christie's, and how he was saved from the situation.
2. Describe in your words a critical situation in which somebody found himself and the manner in which he escaped out of it.
3. What do you understand by a " tight corner " ? Describe briefly a tight corner as a physical affair and a tight corner as a mental affair.

XIX

FORGETTING

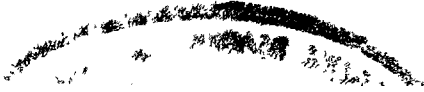
[Robert Lynd was born in Belfast in 1879 and died in London in 1949. He was educated at the Royal Academic Institution and later at Queen's College, Belfast. He wrote a large number of books; some of them are **Home Life in Ireland, The Pleasure of Ignorance, and The Blue Lion.**

He was an essayist of the first rank, though he always wrote short essays. "Forgetting" is taken from his collections of essays called **I Shudder to Think.** There is a great deal of serious thought and humour and sympathy in all his writings.]

A list of articles lost by railway travellers and now on sale at a great London station has been published, and many people who read it have been astonished at the absent-mindedness of their fellows. If statistical records were available on the subject, however, I doubt whether it would be found that absent-mindedness is common. It is the efficiency rather than the inefficiency of human memory that compels my wonder. Modern man remembers even telephone numbers. He remembers the addresses of his friends. He remembers the dates of good vintages. He remembers appointments for lunch and dinner. His memory is crowded with the names of actors and actresses and cricketers and footballers and murderers. He can tell you what

the weather was like in a long-past August, and the name of the provincial hotel at which he had a vile meal during the summer. In his ordinary life, again, he remembers almost everything that he is expected to remember. How many men in all London forget a single item of their clothing when dressing in the morning? Not one in a hundred. Perhaps not one in ten thousand. How many of them forget to shut the front door when leaving the house? Scarcely more. And so it goes on through the day, almost everybody remembering to do the right thing at the right moment till it is time to go to bed, and then the ordinary man seldom forgets to turn off the lights before going upstairs.

There are, it must be admitted, some matters in regard to which the memory works with less than its usual perfection. It is only a very methodical man, I imagine, who can always remember to take the medicine his doctor has prescribed for him. This is the more surprising because medicine should be one of the easiest things to remember. As a rule, it is supposed to be taken before, during, or after meals, and the meal itself should be a reminder of it. The fact remains, however, that few but the moral giants remember to take their medicine regularly. Certain psychologists tell us that we forget things because we wish to forget them, and it may be that it is because of their antipathy to pills and potions that many people fail to remember them at the appointed hours. This does not explain,



however, how it is that a lifelong devotee of medicines like myself is as forgetful of them as those who take them most unwillingly. The very prospect of a new and widely advertized cure-all delights me. Yet, even if I have the stuff in my pockets, I forget about it as soon as the hour approaches at which I ought to swallow it. Chemists make their fortunes out of the medicine people forget to take.

The commonest form of forgetfulness, I suppose, occurs in the matter of posting letters. So common is it that I am always reluctant to trust a departing visitor to post an important letter. So little do I rely on his memory that I put him on his oath before handing the letter to him. As for myself, any one who asks me to post a letter is a poor judge of character. Even if I carry the letter in my hand I am always past the first pillar-box before I remember that I ought to have posted it. Weary of holding it in my hand, I then put it for safety into one of my pockets and forget all about it. After that, it has an unadventurous life till a long chain of circumstances leads to a number of embarrassing questions being asked, and I am compelled to produce the evidence of my guilt from my pocket. This, it might be thought, must be due to a lack of interest in other people's letters; but that cannot be the explanation, for I forget to post some even of the few letters that I myself remember to write.

As for leaving articles in trains and in taxis, I

am no great delinquent in such matters. I can remember almost anything, except books and walking-sticks, and I can often remember even books. Walking-sticks I find it quite impossible to keep. I have an old-fashioned taste for them, and I buy them frequently, but no sooner do I pay a visit to a friend's house or go a journey in a train, than another stick is on its way into the world of the lost. I dare not carry an umbrella for fear of losing it. To go through life without ever having lost an umbrella, has even the grimmest-jawed umbrella-carrier ever achieved this?

Few of us, however, have lost much property on our travels through forgetfulness. The ordinary man arrives at his destination with all his bags and trunks safe. The list of articles lost in trains during the year suggests that it is the young rather than the adult who forget things, and that sportsmen have worse memories than their ordinary serious-minded fellows. A considerable number of footballs and cricket-bats, for instance, were forgotten. This is easy to understand, for boys, returning from the games, have their imaginations still filled with the vision of the playing-field, and their heads are among the stars—or their hearts in their boots—as they recall their exploits or their errors. They are abstracted from the world outside them. Memories prevent them from remembering to do such small prosaic things as take the ball or the bat with them when they leave the train. For the rest of the

day, they are citizens of dreamland. The same may be said, no doubt, of anglers who forget their fishing-rods. Anglers are generally said—I do not know with what justification—to be the most imaginative of men, and the man who is inventing magnificent lies on the journey home after a day's fishing is bound to be a little absent-minded in his behaviour. The fishing-rod of reality is forgotten by him as he day-dreams over the feats of the fishing-rod of Utopia. His loss of memory is really a tribute to the intensity of his enjoyment in thinking about his day's sport. He may forget his fishing-rod, as the poet may forget to post a letter, because his mind is filled with matter more glorious. Absent-mindedness of this kind seems to me all but a virtue. The absent-minded man is often a man who is making the best of life and therefore has no time to remember the mediocre. Who would have trusted Socrates or Coleridge to post a letter? They had souls above such things.

The question whether the possession of a good memory is altogether desirable has often been discussed, and men with fallible memories have sometimes tried to make out a case for their superiority. A man, they say, who is a perfect remembering machine is seldom a man of the first intelligence, and they quote various cases of children or men who had marvellous memories and who yet had no intellect to speak of. I imagine, however, that on the whole the great writers and the great composers

of music have been men with exceptional powers of memory. The poets I have known have had better memories than the stock-brokers I have known. Memory, indeed, is half the substance of their art. On the other hand, statesmen seem to have extraordinarily bad memories. Let two statesmen attempt to recall the same event—what happened, for example, at some Cabinet meeting—and each of them will tell you that the other's story is so incorrect that either he has a memory like a sieve or is an audacious perverter of the truth. The frequency with which the facts in the autobiographies and speeches of statesmen are challenged suggests that the world has not yet begun to produce ideal statesmen—men who, like great poets, have the genius of memory and of intellect combined.

At the same time, ordinarily good memory is so common that we regard a man who does not possess it as eccentric. I have heard of a father who, having offered to take the baby out in a perambulator, was tempted by the sunny morning to pause on his journey and slip into a public-house for a glass of beer. Leaving the perambulator outside, he disappeared through the door of the saloon bar. A little later, his wife had to do some shopping which took her past the public-house, where to her horror she discovered her sleeping baby. Indignant at her husband's behaviour, she decided to teach him a lesson. She wheeled away the perambulator, picturing to

herself his terror when he would come out and find the baby gone. She arrived home, anticipating with angry relish the white face and quivering lips that would soon appear with the news, that the baby had been stolen. What was her vexation, however, when just before lunch her husband came in smiling cheerfully and asking: "Well, my dear, what's for lunch today?" having forgotten all about the baby and the fact that he had taken it out with him. How many men below the rank of a philosopher would be capable of such absent-mindedness as this? Most of us, I fear, are born with prosaically efficient memories. If it were not so, the institution of the family could not survive in any great modern city.

Robert Lynd: I Shudder to Think

NOTES

Certain psychologists : Freud and others who hold that we forget things that we do not like.

Utopia : the name of a book written by Thomas More in 1516, in which he describes an imaginary island with a perfect social and political system. The word has come to mean a world of ideal perfection.

Socrates : (469-399 B. C.); the great Greek philosopher.

Coleridge : (1772-1834); Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a great poet, critic and philosopher.

QUESTIONS

1. Give the summary of Robert Lynd's essay on "Forgetting."
2. Write a short essay of about two pages about things that you never forget to do and things that you often forget to do.
3. Relate from your own life an incident of your forgetfulness with its consequence.

XX

MY BROTHER

[Mrs. Krishna Hutheesing (born 1901) is the sister of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. She also suffered greatly for the cause of the country like other members of her family. Her writings are marked by sincerity and directness.

She gives a very frank account of her brother's good qualities as well as his weaknesses, in the following account which was published in the **Statesman** of Calcutta.]

He was in England when I was born, and though he came home for his holidays, I was too young to remember him; so my first recollection of him was when he came home in 1912.

We were then in Mussoorie, and as the day of his arrival came nearer, great preparations began to welcome him home. In those days, England was supposed to be at the other end of the world.

The great day arrived. My frail little mother was in a fever of excitement, rushing upstairs and downstairs seeing that all was in readiness to welcome home her beloved son.

I remember how lonely I was that day with everyone, even my governess, too busy to take any notice of me, and so while I played alone in the garden, I heard horse's hoofs and saw a young man come riding up to the house with my father and other friends. Suddenly all was commotion and bustle and there was a great deal of talk and

laughter. With a sinking heart I went into the house, and before I knew what had happened, I had been picked up by the young man and was kissed. I did not like it and rubbed off the kiss, as children will, much to my mother's annoyance. That was my first encounter with the brother who was to become so dear later on.

The first few months of our acquaintance were none too happy. Jawahar wanted me to do all sorts of daring tricks—ride bare-back on my pony, make it walk up steps or jump, and do many other tricks that were equally annoying. I resented it, but had to go through with it to prevent him from thinking that I was afraid. I disliked this brother, in spite of the lovely dolls and other gifts he brought to me, and I often wished him back in England! Perhaps I was jealous of him too, for in those days no one took much notice of me, while he was being fussed about constantly. I kept more and more aloof and my brother remained a stranger to me.

And so the years passed. When I was about twelve or thirteen, Jawahar one day offered to coach me in Mathematics. I did not like the idea very much but had to give in. Our first lesson was a great success, and I enjoyed it immensely, because he taught in a most fascinating and delightful manner. I looked forward to my lesson and for some time all went well. Then one day something went wrong, and he got irritated with me, and flung my books away—I was stricken dumb. Two

seconds later he apologised, but the harm was done and I was scared to death. From that day our lessons ended abruptly, and nothing could persuade me to renew them.

It was in 1921 that I got to know him a little better when I had to leave my English school and study at home. Naturally being in the house, I saw much more of Jawahar than I used to and got to know him better. Life, which had so far been a well-ordered and regulated affair, changed for one of uncertainty and constant change. With my father and brother going to prison now and then, no regular life at home was possible.

I often accompanied my mother to the various prisons to interview my father and Jawahar. I looked forward to these meetings, but it was at first hard to get used to the idea of seeing these two behind the grim prison walls, even though they had gone of their own free will. I always felt rather sad after an interview, but the ever cheerful smile my father and brother welcomed us with, made things look less gloomy as time went on. These used to be red-letter days for me and it was during this time that I learned to admire, and sort of hero-worship Jawahar. For my father I always did have this feeling. To me he was an unique person and there was no one in all the world like him, but I had hardly given Jawahar a thought. Now I developed a great admiration for him, but also feared him a little, as I had not forgotten his awful temper.

Day by day this fear lessened and he became infinitely dear.

It was in 1926 that I actually got to know my brother. His wife and daughter were living in a flat in Geneva, and I went to stay with them. Living in a tiny place in close contact with each other, we became friends and companions. Jawahar is a delightful comrade, always full of energy and good spirits.

We travelled together now and then—Paris, Brussels, Rome, Berlin. Usually we went to attend some conference or other, and being with Jawahar, I got an opportunity I might never have got on my own of meeting famous and interesting people; people of all nationalities and types. It was interesting experience and I enjoyed it very much. It was also good to see how everyone liked him and I used to feel very proud of him.

But he was not always light-hearted and gay. During those days in Europe, his wife was ill, most of the time in a sanatorium, making progress but very, very slowly; and often, if she were not too well or progress had been retarded, his eyes would hold an expression of unutterable sadness. He would lose his youthfulness and gay spirits and suddenly look old and weary.

As a nurse, Jawahar is a great success. He has unlimited patience, infinite gentleness and understanding, which go a long way in a sick room. I have often marvelled at him carrying on, not day

after day, but year after year, nursing either his wife or his invalid mother, without getting irritated or losing his patience.

He has a great love of outdoor life. He loves sport of all kinds, especially winter sports. In Switzerland he spent hours skating or ski-ing. But Jawahar has one great fault. He expects everyone to do things well and efficiently, whether at games or at work, and if one is not quick to learn or act, it annoys him terribly.

I once had a taste of this when we were in Switzerland. He wanted to teach me ski-ing, but the day we chose for our first lesson was not a very good one. It had not snowed for a couple of days and the snow which was on the ground had hardened, making it slippery. Every time I stood up and tried to walk I slipped down. The fault was partly mine, as I could not balance properly, and partly due to the slippery surface. After two days I had made little progress and was very unsteady on my feet. After every few steps, I slipped down. This annoyed him, and he lost all patience with me, and refused to teach me. He also prophesied that I would not learn to ski in a hundred years! Hurt and mortified, I asked a Swiss friend to teach me which he did; and three days later I was ski-ing by myself, and fairly well, though not too expertly, in spite of my brother's prediction.

To see him perhaps at his best and happiest one has to see him with little children. He loves

them and is tremendously popular with them, and no matter how busy he may be he always finds time to play with them.

Wherever he is, in prison or outside, in India or abroad, he never forgets certain occasions such as anniversaries or birthdays of his family or friends, and when one least expects it, a letter, telegram or present arrives. It is these thoughtful acts of his which make him so dear to us, apart from all the other qualities that have endeared him to his numerous friends and admirers.

As an elder brother, he has never laid down the law for my sister or me. To us both he has been, not just a 'big brother,' but a dearly loved friend and companion, has made himself very dear and very precious to us. We know he is always there to help and guide us if help and guidance are wanted. He never thrusts his views or advice on any of his family but, if consulted, is ever ready to help. He is a confidant in whom one can confide without fear of being ridiculed or rebuked, for one knows that being so utterly human himself he will never fail to understand or forgive.

Mrs. Krishna Hutheesing

NOTES

governess : woman teacher of young persons in a private family.

fussed about : talked much of.

red-letter days : very important days.

flat : a set of rooms.

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sanatorium : health resort.

ski-ing : walking with " skis " (wooden runners fastened under the feet).

confidant : a man in whom one can confide.

QUESTIONS

1. Write briefly what you gather about Jawaharlal Nehru from the above account.
2. What does the writer say about Jawaharlal Nehru as a nurse, as a friend and as an ' elder brother. '
3. Relate briefly what happened when Jawaharlal Nehru undertook to coach his sister in Mathematics and in ski-ing.



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