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Thought and Experience in Prose

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Preface

'If you wish to have a faculty for reading, read; if for writing, write.' This ancient precept of the philosopher Epictetus, when properly understood, is as sound today as it was more than eighteen centuries ago. Reading is a complex and deliberate discipline, an art acquired not by mere cursory attention but by thoughtful and critical, even at times laborious, practice. 'Words are tyrannical things,' as Somerset Maugham reminds us; 'they exist for their meanings, and if you will not pay attention to these, you cannot pay attention at all.' Reading requires that we translate symbols that may have sharply different meanings in different contexts, that we know how to read between the lines, how to catch the tone of a passage or get the 'feel' of a phrase or a sentence; that we recognize the large outlines and architecture of the whole writing in order to estimate the importance of each detail. To read well is, as Thoreau says (in his essay, 'Reading,' reprinted in this book), an exercise that will 'task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem.' Yet whatever the labor, the ability to read maturely puts us on the road to that goal which another of our authors, Cardinal Newman, assigns to university training as a whole: it enables us 'to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant.'

In selecting the materials for this volume of prose we have sought to provide sufficient variety of subject matter and interest in order that first-year college students might learn and practice mature reading. Our choice has been governed by our own experience with American freshmen and other undergraduates. It is unnecessary here to follow custom by deploring the weakness of such students as readers; to inquire whether this be due to the decline of classical studies in the schools, to 'progressive' education, or to vocational curricula; or to seek other scapegoats. Instead we might profitably remember that at least since the time of Quintilian, one of the best

professors of literature, teachers have always complained of their pupils' troubles with reading.

Yet if reading, in the fullest sense, is by its nature difficult—if, in fact, a lifetime is too short for complete mastery—why shouldn't students have difficulty with it? Our hope is that they may come to see what critical reading means: namely, comprehension of the fundamental relations between logic and language, and of the complexities, levels, and methods of expression in language. Above all, we hope that they may experience the excitement of intellectual discovery through language. For this they need practice, and always more practice, in the patient analysis of words, sentences, paragraphs, and whole compositions. 'What else is our object in teaching,' asked Quintilian, 'save that our pupils should not always require to be taught?' Other than this object, we have in this book no special axes to grind, no novel theories about reading or writing to propagate.

The selections will appeal to different tastes, to be sure, but they are all well written and suggestive, and therefore instructive. Included are specimens of biography, dramatic dialogue, historical narrative, fiction, personal essays, letters, and arguments. Some old favorites are reprinted, but there are many writings fresh to anthologies. A good many deal with ethical, political, and other philosophical or near-philosophical topics. We hope these will recommend themselves to teachers who prefer something more substantial than the contemporary editorials, feature articles, and other journalistic pieces that occupy, or used to occupy, so much space in collegiate books of readings. That sort of writing has its place, but as a rule it is not demanding enough to be educational. Having been originally timely, it is too soon untimely. A reader needs to test himself against writing done in other generations and other societies than his own or he will never know how to read anything but today's newspaper and popular fiction—and those badly.

These selections can be, and will be, used in any order a teacher likes. While we admit the impossibility of imposing upon the collection any absolute arrangement, we call attention to the connections between selections. No work exists or can be read in a vacuum. Every intelligent expression of human thought and experience is part of a dense web of relationship between idea and idea. Each selection in this volume is a center from which radiate lines of relationship: directly with several other pieces, indirectly with all others. This principle we should like to stress. Illustrations of it will be found in the study questions as well as in the selections themselves.

Explanatory notes and questions for study are added for those who want them. We have no desire to come between the student and the instructor, who will use the book to suit his own methods and his own students. Some students may safely ignore the questions; others should find them helpful in mastering the texts. These questions, not oppressively numerous, deal for the most part with meanings, with ideas and relations between ideas, and with diction. They ought to enable readers to see more clearly the main points in the text, to make more sense of words and structure.

The notes explain enough of the allusions, proper names, and foreign phrases to help the student understand what he is reading without, we hope, explaining too much. Notes are a 'calculated risk' and may easily furnish too little or too much information. One cannot always assume that students of freshman age know any of the more useful foreign languages ancient or modern, any classical mythology worth mentioning, or any but the commonest allusions to Shakespeare or the Bible. Worst of all is their ignorance of history. These are discouraging facts and might invite cynical reflections, like those of the Greek satirist who wondered how some people could have been so 'carefully miseducated.' Yet we must remember that students in every generation are 'up' on certain classes of knowledge while cheerfully unconcerned or unfamiliar with the depth of their ignorance in other realms. Aristotle himself would have needed a multitude of footnotes to understand many facts about the physical world which any freshman in our time takes for granted. Of history (all kinds), however, and of the great masterpieces of ethical and imaginative literature, today's student usually knows much less than is creditable. If, therefore, some of our explanatory notes seem elementary or superfluous at first glance, we are nevertheless confident that they will prove useful to many readers.

The date at the foot of the first page of each selection is that of first publication. Most of our texts are taken from the first edition or an authoritative reprint of the first edition; some are from later editions ascertained to be reliable. Except in a very few places we have left spelling and punctuation as we found them. References in the notes to Shakespeare's works use the numbering of the Oxford edition by W. J. Craig. We are happy to thank those who have allowed us to use materials covered by copyright; acknowledgment of each permission is given in an appropriate note. We are grateful to colleagues and to the staff of the Oxford University Press for their advice and assistance.

We hope this book will be serviceable to the teachers and students for

whom we made it. If a few of the extracts seem unusual in a book of readings for freshmen, let the critic remember the remarks of A. N. Whitehead: 'Whenever a text-book is written of real educational worth, you may be quite certain that some reviewer will say that it will be difficult to teach from it. Of course it will be difficult to teach from it. If it were easy, the book ought to be burned; for it cannot be educational. In education, as elsewhere, the broad primrose path leads to a nasty place.'

Craig R. Thompson
John Hicks

January 1951

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THOUGHT AND EXPERIENCE IN PROSE

Max Black

THE USES OF LANGUAGE

¶[These pages on the uses (and abuses) of language form the first chapter of the section on language in Max Black's *Critical Thinking*, a widely used introduction to logic.

Mr. Black (1909—), a graduate of the universities of Cambridge and London, has taught in this country at the University of Illinois and at Cornell University, where he is now Professor of Philosophy He has written *The Nature of Mathematics* (1933) and *Language and Philosophy* (1949), and has edited a volume of essays, *Philosophical Analysis* (1950).

> In every tongue the speaker labours under great inconveniences, especially on abstract questions, both from the paucity, obscurity, and ambiguity of the words, on the one hand, and from his own misapprehensions, and imperfect acquaintance with them, on the other —*George Campbell*, 1776.

1. Introduction. Ever since men began to reflect critically about their own thinking, the wisest of them have been acutely aware of the imperfections of the language in which their thought must be expressed. The greatest of the Greek philosophers [1] constantly returned to this theme, and centuries later we find that Francis Bacon echoes the ancient complaint and lists the 'false notions' generated by the 'common tongue' as one of the main hindrances to the advancement of knowledge. Every important advance in science and scholarship has required a reform in terminology; and thinkers, as ingenious as they were public-spirited, have labored to invent artificial languages, systems of notations, and a bewildering tangle of other symbolic aids to accurate thinking. Yet after thousands of years of criticism and improvement, the chorus of complaint con-

[1 See, for example, the story of Theuth in Plato's *Phaedrus*, 274–5.]

From *Critical Thinking*, 1946. Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc.

tinues; and experts insist today, more emphatically than ever, upon the importance of critical study of language and its relation to thought. The brave new science of 'semantics,' a discipline still in swaddling-clothes, already has many interesting results to its credit; and its many enthusiastic followers are actively exploring its implications for logic, aesthetics, education, psychiatry, and other subjects.

Semantics, for all its importance, is too intricate and controversial a subject for presentation in an elementary introduction to 'critical thinking.' We shall therefore not attempt any systematic account of the nature of language and its relation to the objects of thought. Nevertheless, our dealings with specimens of actual reasoning have shown us the importance of attention to the language in which ideas are expressed, because ideas are communicated to us in language, criticism of thought must also be criticism of its vehicle. We shall undertake the relatively modest task of developing just so much theory of language (or 'semantics') as will be useful in criticizing the types of reasoning we are likely to encounter.

This part of the book may therefore be regarded as a practical handbook to *the linguistic problems which arise in the criticism of reasoning.*

2. THE COMPLEXITY OF LANGUAGE. When we read a sentence, or understand conversation, we are responding to SIGNS. It is characteristic of a sign that a person who understands it is led to attend to *something other than the sign itself;* the headline 'HURRICANE DUE TOMORROW,' considered as an object in its own right, is a mere string of blotches in ink; it is a sign for the reader because it leads him to think of something quite different from printer's ink—the approaching storm, the precautions that need to be taken, and so forth

Signs need not be *linguistic.* A herd of animals taking to flight on hearing a warning cry from a sentinel, a man entering a dining-room at the sound of a gong, a doctor diagnosing the visible symptoms of a disease, a spider set in motion by a twitch of its web, are all *interpreting signs.* These examples also illustrate the point that quite primitive organisms can interpret non-linguistic signs.

If such instances of elementary sign-interpretation are contrasted with the process of reading a book, hearing a speech, or otherwise responding to complex uses of language, a number of important points of difference may be noted.

1. *Linguistic signs are artificial, while the simplest kinds of non-linguistic signs are natural.*

If a flash of lightning causes me to expect a clap of thunder, it is

because the two kinds of event normally occur together; but the presence of pepper in a can would not result in the appearance of the word 'pepper' on the can *but for human intervention*. Men have to agree that certain noises and marks shall cause interpreters to attend to certain objects (their 'meanings') before there can be *language*. We notice, however, that some non-linguistic signals (such as the cones hoisted to warn of the approach of a storm) can also be artificial.

Let us agree to use the word SIGNAL as an abbreviation for the phrase 'the simplest kind of sign.' (This agrees fairly well with the customary meaning of the word 'signal.')

2. *Response to signals is stereotyped and undifferentiated, while response to linguistic signs is variable and complex.*

The presence of a dog will cause a cat to bristle with anticipatory fear; but a man's response to the remark 'a lion has escaped from the circus' will vary with circumstances. The spoken sentence is constructed out of *component signs* (the words) arranged in a conventional *order*; and the man responds to the components and to their arrangement as well as to the sentence as a whole. He is able to understand an isolated word (such as the word 'lion' appearing alone on a sheet of paper); and he can interpret a sentence *he has never seen before*, if it is composed of known words in a known arrangement. The natural signals to which animals respond always occur in association with the things to which they refer; but the users of a *language* have learned to deploy and re-deploy linguistic signs in an endless variety of sign situations; they can therefore anticipate novelty and respond to situations of radically new types.

3. *Signals normally indicate a single object, while linguistic signs tend to serve a number of different purposes simultaneously.*

The spoor [2] of a wild animal may tell the skillful hunter a great deal about the beast that made it; yet consider how much more is conveyed to the sensitive listener by even the most trivial remark. If we hear a stranger say 'I've missed that tram again!' we may learn something about a tram, but we may sometimes learn even more about the speaker—that she is annoyed, is not disposed to be friendly, is in a hurry to go somewhere, and was educated in the Middle West! Nor is this an exceptional case. Because men and women express their feelings and attitudes as well as their beliefs by means of language, all talk conveys information about much more than its ostensible subject. And because language is a social product, the result of interaction between persons sharing common purposes, any individual

[2 Track.]

utterance also conveys information about the *community of language-users* to which the speaker belongs.

These three differences between fully developed language and the simplest kinds of non-linguistic signs give us but a glimpse of the full complexity of language. No doubt they are differences of degree, and 'the metaphysician,' as Anatole France[3] said, 'has only the perfected cry of monkeys and dogs with which to construct the system of the World.' Yet the differences are important: we shall find that failure to be aware of them, and to appreciate some of their consequences, is responsible for much fallacious reasoning.

3. THE MANY PURPOSES SERVED BY LANGUAGE. Any spoken utterance will usually express feelings, attitudes, desires, and beliefs, and will convey information (either true or false) about the speaker and other objects. But there is such a tremendous variety of human transactions in which language is used, that the appropriate response to a particular utterance may vary widely according to the circumstances of its use. Everybody understands that the spoken words 'Pass down the bus, please' are primarily intended to cause the passengers to move and are not said for the purpose of giving information about the conductor; and it is equally obvious that the remark 'This bus is over-loaded' is a *statement*, not a request or command, even though it, too, causes the passengers to move. When we contrast 'statements' with 'questions,' 'requests,' 'commands,' 'exclamations,' or 'prayers,' we are recognizing *different ways in which language can be used*. Such crude distinctions, however, hardly begin to do justice to the variety of different uses of language.

In order to see how variable the correct response to language may be, let us examine the following two utterances, *both of which are 'statements'*:

(1) 'A body immersed in a fluid is acted upon by an upward force equal in magnitude to the weight of the fluid displaced' (from a text).

(2) 'The apples were falling like great drops of dew to bruise themselves an exit from themselves' (D. H. Lawrence).

The first statement makes a certain *claim* concerning the behavior of solid bodies and fluids: it is intended to produce in us (the readers) a definite belief which can be tested and confirmed by actual observation of the weight of bodies immersed in a fluid. Should observation prove that the belief does not accord with the facts, we should be justified in calling the writer a liar. In formulating a supposition to be tested against experi-

[3 French novelist and critic (1844–1924).]

ence in this way, we are behaving in the way intended by the scientist who made the statement. Since the statement (1) was used in order to produce such beliefs and testing procedures, our interpretation was *appropriate*.

It would, of course, be absurdly inappropriate to interpret the second statement in similar fashion. Only a very stupid reader would ask 'What apples is he talking about? How big are the drops of dew? How can an apple *make an exit from itself*?' Such questions are stupid because the poet has no intention of producing beliefs which could be tested in a manner appropriate to a scientific statement. And to call him a 'liar' because his statement could not be confirmed in the laboratory would serve only to reveal our own misunderstanding of what poetry 'is all about'. For the poet's intention, here as elsewhere, is to embody and communicate an aesthetic experience in words which will in turn create further aesthetic enjoyment.

And there are many other ways in which language can be used. Consider, for instance, these words, which might be spoken by any departing guest to his hostess:

(3) 'Thank you for a lovely party—we've had a delightful time.'

Sometimes the guest has had anything but a pleasant time; * but he is not for that reason to be regarded as dishonest. To insist that 'a really truthful person' would, if necessary, say 'Good-bye, I've had a very dull and uncomfortable time' would be to repeat the mistake which occurs when poetry is treated as if it were science. A formula of polite thanks is not intended, or understood, as a factual claim (nor as a snatch of poetry!). Questions of truth and falsity are no more applicable to such *ceremonial* uses of language than they are to a handshake.

The moral of such examples is that *all intelligent criticism of any instance of language in use must begin with understanding of the motives and purposes of the speaker in that situation*. Unfortunately, the type of case which causes trouble in practice is that in which the kind of use made of language is not transparently clear, as in our examples. Language is often used to *conceal* motives and purposes; and human motives and purposes are notoriously mixed. One and the same utterance may convey factual information (true or false), embody aesthetic insight, express social conformity, or do a number of other things *all at the same time*. For this reason, any attempt to isolate 'pure' types of language uses (such as 'sci-

* The actress, Beatrice Lillie, is reported to have made the parting remark, 'Don't think I haven't had a wonderful time—because I haven't!'

entific,' 'poetic,' 'ceremonial,' and so on) would be of little help to us. In the next two sections we formulate distinctions applying, in varying degree, to *all* uses of language.

4. SOME WORKING DISTINCTIONS. *Personal and impersonal aspects of utterance.* We have already said that any utterance normally gives some information about the speaker himself, as well as other matters. Let us, therefore, refer to the PERSONAL and IMPERSONAL ASPECTS of an utterance. By the first term we shall mean the information given about the speaker, and more especially about the attitudes, feelings, and wishes which caused him to make the utterance; by the second whatever other information may be conveyed by the utterance. The personal aspects may be further divided into EXPRESSIVE and DYNAMIC aspects. The utterance is expressive insofar as it is caused by the speaker's feelings or attitudes, *without any desired effect upon a hearer;* an involuntary cry of pain or joy is markedly expressive in this sense. The utterance is dynamic insofar as it is caused by the speaker's desire to produce actions or other effects in a hearer; a command or a question is markedly dynamic in this sense. Actual utterances vary widely in the relative importance of their expressive, dynamic, and impersonal aspects.

Statement and suggestion. No human utterance explicitly symbolizes all that it conveys to the hearer: we must constantly 'read between the lines.' One important consequence of this has already been mentioned. A speaker very rarely says: 'I want you to feel that I am a thoroughly likable person of the sort you can trust; I am not much interested in internationalism or state rights except in so far as some knowledge of these subjects is necessary to persuade you to trust me.' Such devastating frankness would be self-defeating; but many a speaker talks in such a way as to convey the same impression; and intelligent understanding of the utterance requires an awareness of much more than is 'said in so many words.' The *general setting* of the utterance (whether it be predominantly 'scientific' or 'poetic,' intended to produce approval, result in actions, and so on) is not usually symbolized explicitly.

Let us examine a striking instance of 'reading between the lines.' In answering a letter recently, a certain Senator began his reply with the words 'My dear Wop'—an action which led to considerable indignation on the part of his correspondent and many of the lady's sympathizers. Furious letters were written to Congress and the newspapers, and the Senator's action was denounced at meetings of protest as 'undemocratic' and 'un-American.'

Why all this fuss about three words? A foreigner, not thoroughly familiar with the subtleties of the English language, would find on enquiry, that 'Wop' means about the same as 'Italian' or 'person of Italian origin.' 'Why, then,' he might wonder, in his naive way, 'is it so insulting to an American to be accused of having Italian ancestors?' The answer is, of course, that 'Wop' is a term of powerful *abuse*, conventionally used as a way of expressing a high degree of contempt for the person addressed. The three words might be expanded in some such way as this: 'Madam, the usual rules of politeness require me to use the words "My dear so-and-so." I show my contempt for you and your opinions by refusing even to call you by your name. I am pretty sure that you can't be an American; I suspect that you are of Italian origin; and I regard Italians in general as inferior and degenerate.'

Yet the abusive Senator did not *say* all this 'in so many words'—even though most of it is quite clearly understood by his readers. Offense is properly taken at the insulting suggestions of the utterance, rather than at its explicitly formulated content.

The unformulated implications and suggestions of an utterance are not always abusive. Often we convey feelings of approval, enjoyment, or appreciation by gesture, tone of voice, and choice of words. The means employed are so flexible and variable that usually we are hardly aware of them, even while constantly responding to their influence. A large part of the information conveyed by utterance is *suggested, not stated.*

When a purported fact, a wish, a judgment of value, and so forth, are conveyed by means of a symbol conventionally used for that purpose we shall say the fact, wish, and so on, has been STATED; when information is conveyed by means not conventionally reserved for that purpose we shall say that that information has been SUGGESTED. Thus, a STATEMENT is an explicitly formulated assertion, command, desire, judgment and so forth, while a SUGGESTION is understood, though not explicitly formulated. (It is, however, hard to draw a sharp line between suggestion and statement, as here defined. Sometimes, of course, there can be no doubt at all that an important part of a given utterance has been suggested, though not explicitly symbolized. The man who asks 'when did you start smoking so heavily' has not *actually said* 'you are smoking heavily.')

All human languages rely, to an astonishing degree, upon what is understood, though not said 'in so many words.' It has been reported of the Eskimoes that 'Their phrases are as sober as their faces. A gleam in an Eskimo's eye tells you more than half a dozen of our sentences concerning

desire, repugnance, or another emotion. Each Eskimo's word is like that gleam: it suggests at once what has happened and what is to come. . .' (Gontran de Poncins, *Kabloona*, page 247). The more articulate languages of Western civilization though not as suggestive as those of the Eskimo still retain a tremendous suggestive power.

Emotive and neutral language. Among the most effective suggestions conveyed in human utterance are those expressive of the speaker's *feelings* (and especially feelings of approval or disapproval). Not only *feelings* are conveyed by suggestion: Any statement about 'impersonal' matters of fact makes use of tacit assumptions, which are suggested, not stated. Nevertheless, the uses of suggestion to communicate the nature of a speaker's feelings are particularly important, for the following reasons:

1. Suggested feelings concerning a person or object can powerfully influence people's opinions. To call a man a 'Red' is already to turn an audience against him; to call him a 'dirty Red,' in certain contexts, is practically to condemn him outright. Such 'name-calling' is usually more successful than explicit statement or reasoned argument.

2. Feelings, especially strong feelings, concerning a person or object spontaneously find expression in the use of 'satisfying' symbols. (All praise and abuse tends to become poetic!) An angry man tends to *show* his anger rather than talk *about* it: thus the means by which he expresses his feelings will be a suggestion, not a statement. In general, suggestion is the most 'natural' means of conveying a feeling.

Much attention has accordingly been given, in recent times, to the use of those signs which particularly lend themselves to the expression and communication of feelings. Such symbols are termed EMOTIVE, and are contrasted with NEUTRAL symbols. An emotive word, then, is one expressive of strong feelings (especially of approval or disapproval) on the part of the speaker. The use of emotive words has a tendency to produce similar feelings in the hearer.

The English language has a few words reserved for the expression of feeling and used for no other purpose—exclamations like 'Shame!' 'Hurrah!' 'Encore!' While these words are highly emotive according to our definition, they express very generalized feelings. For this reason (and because they are so seldom used in discourse) they have negligible influence in determining people's views concerning *specific* topics.

If an advertiser wants to predispose the man in the street in favor of his product, he will probably adopt more subtle means to recommend it. Suppose he is selling a dentifrice consisting of powdered beef bone (an actual

case): the slogan 'Hurrah for powdered beef bone!' is unlikely to enlist many customers for the new product, even though repeated by the thousand in newspaper advertisements and on the radio. For the words 'powdered beef bone' have suggestions which are unfavorable to the advertiser's purpose: we have all seen raw beef bones, and we tend to think of an unappetizing mess of blood-stained splinters, not at all the sort of stuff we would choose for cleaning the teeth. How much better then from the advertiser's standpoint to label the product 'Numin' (the name actually chosen). Instead of the *negative* emotive force of 'powdered beef bone,' we have a *positive* emotive appeal of the substitute term, 'Numin.' For the latter has a scientific flavor, as of some new vitamin, and can therefore be relied upon to be attractive to the man in the street.

The device used in this instance to stimulate a favorable reaction to a certain object (the dentifrice) consists in *the choice of a name having agreeable associations*. The English language is very rich in words approximately equivalent in *explicit* meaning, while markedly divergent in their emotive associations and suggestions.

The terms 'government official,' 'bureaucrat,' and 'public servant' have much the same explicit meaning, yet the first is neutral, the second abusive and the last honorific. 'Liquidation of the opposition' sounds a great deal more agreeable than 'torture and murder of the minority.' A man may 'talk eloquently' or 'jabber'; a statesman may 'have the gift of compromise' or be a 'slippery trimmer'; a friend is 'understandably confused,' an enemy 'has gone a bit off his noodle'; all these examples having been found in a single newspaper editorial.

The list of examples could be indefinitely extended, for nearly all the words we use are colored with some shade of respect or contempt, and every notion can be so worded as to make its subject seem either admirable or ridiculous.

The expression and influence of attitudes by means of such highly emotive words as those we have cited should be too obvious to escape notice. *But these cases are not exceptional.* The view that only in 'propaganda' and abuse is language used emotively is none the less profoundly mistaken for being widely held. We must insist, to the contrary, that language is *normally* used to express attitudes and exert influence as well as to convey explicit statement: it is as much of an exception for language to be 'uncolored' or neutral as for matter to be without odor.

Since the emotive and suggestive influence of language is so strong, we must take account of it in our general program of establishing principles

and standards of right thinking. (If on the other hand, we were to neglect these aspects of language, and to pay attention only to what is explicitly stated in neutral terms, we should be behaving like a pilot who refused to take account of any part of an iceberg that was not visible above the water.) By discussing a concrete example in detail, we shall now illustrate the types of critical procedure which are appropriate.

5. ANALYSIS OF A SPECIMEN OF HIGHLY EMOTIVE WRITING. A recent newspaper editorial opened with this sentence:

(A) 'A fabulously rich playboy, who got tired of his ponies, got the idea that he would like to repudiate the free enterprise that privileged his grandfather to endow him with so many million dollars he could never hope to count them.'

This passage tells us a great deal more about the editorial writer (or his employer) than about the millionaire who is the target of his abuse. Yet the passage does contain a little *impersonal* information (true or false); and the first step in analysis is to make this content explicit. An experienced journalist who happened to read (A) would immediately 'discount' much of what was said. What this probably means, he might comment, when you get down to the kernel of hard fact, is:

(B) 'The rich man in question is supporting federal control of industry.'

After the invective of (A), this partial translation appears very insipid: clearly the writer had little interest in conveying the information expressed by (B).

We proceed, therefore, to identify the *emotive suggestions* of the original passage. A convenient way of doing this is to begin by picking out (say by underlining) all the words and phrases which seem to make a notable contribution to the total impression intended. After this has been done, we try to state explicitly the nature of the suggestion conveyed in each case. Proceeding in this fashion, we get the following analysis:

LANGUAGE USED	SUGGESTION CONVEYED
'playboy,' 'ponies'	X (the man in question) is an idler and gambler
'fabulously rich'	X is excessively wealthy
'so many million dollars he could never hope to count them'	
'got tired of'	X is irresponsible—makes decisions for no good reason
'got the idea'	

LANGUAGE USED	SUGGESTION CONVEYED
'would like to repudiate'	
'privileged'	X has received special and unearned
'endow'	favors

It will be seen that these suggestions reinforce each other in painting the picture of a highly unattractive character. The malice of the writer's intention is obvious when the various suggestions are combined in a single explicit statement, in some such fashion as this:

(C) The man in question is an idle gambler, who has far more money than he deserves, and is now irresponsibly using the vast financial power which he did nothing to earn.

This last statement, if made explicitly, might well be libellous and expose its author to a legal suit for damages. Yet even so it would probably be less effective than the hints and innuendoes of the original passage (A). In all such cases the rule holds that the outspoken accusation is less dangerous than the whispered calumny.

A good way of neutralizing the suggestive power of the original passage is to replace the crucial emotive terms and phrases by others having *opposite emotive tendency* (but approximately the same explicit content). In this way we get the following substitute for (A):

(D) A very wealthy American sportsman has decided to oppose the system of unregulated commercial trading which enabled his grandfather to leave him his large fortune.

(You would do well to compare versions A and D very carefully, in order to decide for yourself whether the latter can be regarded as a 'fair translation' of the former.)

It still remains for us to determine whether the suggestions contained in the original passage (and explicitly formulated in C) are to be regarded as justified. *We must guard carefully against assuming that the implicit suggestions of an utterance can be automatically rejected without further examination, just because they are suggested and not explicitly stated.* Such an assumption would be grossly mistaken; for there are many occasions on which the expression of our feelings is perfectly justified.

We take as a second instance of highly emotive language, a passage from one of Garrison's [4] speeches:

[4 William Lloyd Garrison (1805–79), abolitionist and journalist.]

I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation; No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; But urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not retreat a single inch,—AND I WILL BE HEARD.

This is the language of a man laboring under strong emotions conveyed in words well fitted to communicate indignation. Shall we say that he is wrong to have the feelings or to attempt to communicate them? Or that he ought to resort to the pallid and ineffective use of 'neutral' language? Surely not. But to grant the right of Garrison or anybody else to express feelings and attitudes towards a subject by the most effective means he can find to hand, is a very different thing from admitting without further examination that the specific emotion or attitude is justified. The suggestions of eloquence, rhetoric or poetry, insofar as they consist of claims which might be true or false, must submit to enquiries into their evidence, general credibility, consistency; if their moving appeals to our feelings are justified, they should survive such examination without a stain on their character.

Returning to our original example, then, we must ask *what evidence* is provided for the claim formulated in (C). In this particular instance, the answer is quickly given: for *no reasons at all* are brought forward in support of the scurrilous accusation. So while we admit the editorial writer's general privilege of accusing his subject of idleness, impractibility, and so forth, in the manner he has chosen, we may object strenuously that in the case at issue his accusation is presented as a bare assertion, destitute of any supporting evidence in its favor. Our summing up of the value of passage (A) might take some such form as this: 'The passage is intended to arouse prejudice against its subject, by representing him as idle, irresponsible, and undeservedly wealthy. It appeals successfully to the reader's presumed dislike of these qualities. But it offers no particle of evidence in support of its hostile contention.'

6. SUGGESTED RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CRITICISM OF EMOTIVELY TONED UTTERANCE. The painstaking analysis illustrated in the last section will be too elaborate for everyday use: life is too short for us to be always ferreting out the full emotive implications of what we read and hear. It is nevertheless of great value as a training in critical awareness of the suggestive overtures of human utterance to perform a few such exercises in great

detail. When this is done, the following suggestions for procedure may be helpful:

1. *Begin by reading the passage slowly, carefully, and calmly several times, noting any points in the utterance which seem to deserve further examination.* (You will pardon this insistence upon so elementary and obvious a point. Experience shows that once the excitement of the chase has been aroused, there is a tendency to 'discover' sinister or profound implications in a passage, *before even reading it with any degree of attention!*)

2. *State the general intention and context of the utterance.* [*E.g.* 'This is a report of a new scientific discovery made to an audience thoroughly familiar with the general background, and made by a man who is trying to suppress all that is personal in the circumstances he is describing.' Or 'This is an advertisement whose main object is to arouse curiosity concerning a mysteriously labelled new product; it is designed to appeal especially to women to make them more receptive to later "follow-ups." ' It is useful also to try to determine *the evidence used in arriving at this verdict concerning the general nature of the symbolic situation.*]

3. *Extract the words and phrases in the passage which are particularly effective in conveying the desired suggestion.* [Crude instances of this, such as those discussed in the last section, are easily detected. More subtle suggestion, *e.g.* those due to the general style of a passage, may easily escape notice. It is an excellent practice here, as throughout this training, to compare one's results with those of those working independently on the same passage. Hunting down the reason for disagreement will often bring to light unsuspected resources of the language used.]

4. *Make the suggestions of each word explicit, and combine the partial suggestions in a single statement.* [This has been illustrated by the analysis preceding version (C) above. You will soon find, on trial, that the suggestions of a word or phrase can be made explicit only in a rough and approximate way. Paraphrasing the implicit content largely neutralizes its emotive influence. Instead of extracting the implicit content in this way, a useful variation is to rewrite the original passage *reversing the emotive effect of the critical terms,* as illustrated in statement (D) above.]

5. *Formulate, in neutral language, the impersonal content of the original passage.* [The products of steps 4 and 5 should together approximate in informative content to the original passage.]

6. *Determine the evidence in favor of the original passage, as now elaborated. . .*

Jacques Barzun

HOW TO WRITE AND BE READ

¶ Mr. Barzun's *Teacher in America*, first published in 1944 and reprinted four times the following year, is a refreshing, sensible, and very readable book on teaching. Even a teacher can enjoy it. If perhaps it is bounded a little too much by Columbia, that is excusable, for Mr. Barzun is a Columbia graduate and now Professor of History there. His other works are *The French Race* (1932), *Race* (1937), *Of Human Freedom* (1939), *Darwin, Marx, Wagner* (1941), *Romanticism and the Modern Ego* (1943), and *Berlioz and the Romantic Century* (1950).

Here and there a touch of good grammar for picturesqueness.—*Mark Twain.*

WRITING comes before reading, in logic and also in the public mind. No one cares whether you read fast or slow, well or ill, but as soon as you put pen to paper, somebody may be puzzled, angry, bored, or ecstatic; and if the occasion permits, your reader is almost sure to exclaim about the schools not doing their duty. This is the oldest literary tradition, of which here is a modern instance:—

WHAT KIND OF TEACHING IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS?
BY 'DISGUSTED'

Recently a letter came into my office from a boy who described himself as a first-year high school student. He wanted *infirmation* about *Africia*, because for his project in the social studies class he had *chozen Africia*. If we could not help him, *were* could he write? In closing, he was ours *sinceerly*. His handwriting was comparable to that of my 6-year-old nephew.

Too bad, but I am not alarmed. This student of 'Africia' may or may not learn to spell: it is not nearly so important as his diction and his sentence

FROM *Teacher in America*. Copyright 1944, 1945 by Jacques Barzun. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co.

structure, which the plaintiff withheld, though they would have better enabled us to judge what the schools were really doing. What I fear about this boy is that when grown-up and provided with a secretary who can spell, he will write something like this:—

DEAR SIR:—

As you know, security prices have been advancing rapidly in the recent past *in belated recognition of the favorable fundamentals that exist.* [Italics mine]

What is decadent about this I shall shortly explain. Meantime, the fact should be faced squarely that good writing is and has always been extremely rare. I do not mean fine writing, but the simple, clear kind that everyone always demands—from others. The truth is that Simple English is no one's mother tongue. It has to be worked for. As an historian, I have plowed through state papers, memoirs, diaries, and letters, and I know that the ability to write has only a remote connection with either intelligence, or greatness, or schooling. Lincoln had no schooling yet became one of the great prose writers of the world. Cromwell went to Cambridge and was hardly ever able to frame an intelligible sentence. Another man of thought and action, Admiral Lord Howe, generally refrained from writing out his plan of battle, so as to save his captains from inevitable misunderstanding. Yet Howe managed to win the famous First of June [1] by tactics that revolutionized the art, and led directly to Nelson's Trafalgar plan—itself a rather muddled piece of prose. Let us then start with no illusion of an imaginary golden age of writing.

Which leaves the problem of doing the best with what nature gives us. And here I have some convictions born of long struggle, with myself and with others. First, I pass by all considerations of penmanship and elementary spelling to remark only that I think it a mistake to start children writing on typewriters, and worse yet to let them grow up unable to do anything but print capitals.

Above the beginner's level, the important fact is that writing cannot be taught exclusively in a course called English Composition. Writing can only be taught by the united efforts of the entire teaching staff. This holds good of any school, college, or university. Joint effort is needed, not merely to 'enforce the rules'; it is needed to insure accuracy in every subject. How can an answer in physics or a translation from the French or an historical

[1 In a naval battle fought 1 June 1794 he won a great victory over the French. At Trafalgar in 1805 Nelson destroyed the French fleet.]

statement be called correct if the phrasing is loose or the key word wrong? Students argue that the reader of the paper knows perfectly well what is meant. Probably so, but a written exercise is designed to be read; it is not supposed to be a challenge to clairvoyance. My Italian-born tailor periodically sends me a postcard which runs: 'Your clothes is ready and should come down for a fitting.' I understand him, but the art I honor him for is cutting cloth, not precision of utterance. Now a student in college must be inspired to achieve in all subjects the utmost accuracy of perception combined with the utmost artistry of expression. The two merge and develop the sense of good workmanship, of preference for quality and truth, which is the chief mark of the genuinely educated man.

This is obviously a collective task, in which every department and every faculty has a common stake. But it is not enough to give notice that these are the faculty's sentiments. Even supposing that all teachers were willing and able to exert vigilance over written work, there would still be many practical problems of detail. And first, what motive for writing well can the student be made to feel? There is only one valid motive: the desire to be read. You will say that most students have no urge either to write or to be read. True, but (*a*) they know that they have to write and (*b*) most of them want to be well thought of. They should accordingly be made to see that reading the ordinary student paper can be a nuisance and a bore to the teacher, and that the proper aim of writing should be to make it a pleasure. This is another way of saying that most school writing is bad because student and teacher play at writing and reading instead of taking it seriously. The teacher expects second-rate hokum and the student supplies it. Let the teacher assert his rights just as the students do: in many college classes the men protest—quite rightly—when they are asked to read a dull or ill-organized book. Similarly, the instructor may warn the students that when they turn in filler and padding, jargon and lingo, stuff and nonsense, he will mark them down, not only in his grade book, but in his violated soul.

Naturally, this conscious brutality must go with a helping hand; in fact a revision of all usual practices is in order. The embargo on hokum will already work a healthy elimination of bad prose. Then the long Term Paper must be discarded and replaced with the short essay, not more than five typewritten pages in length. Students always ask how long a final paper should be and they are absolutely right in believing that most instructors are impressed by mere bulk. But when one knows how difficult it is to articulate even three measly thoughts around a single point, it is folly to

ask eighteen-year-olds to produce thirty- or forty-page monographs that shall be readable. What they produce is an uncarded mattress of quotations, paraphrase, 'however's,' and 'Thus we see's.' Size being aimed at, there is no time for rewriting or reordering the material culled from half a dozen books, and the main effort goes into the irrelevant virtues of neat typing, plentiful footnotes, and the mannerisms of scholarship.

The short paper—and I speak from a large pile accumulated over twelve years—aims and arrives at different ends. It answers the reader's eternal question: Just what are you trying to tell me? It is in that spirit that student writing must be read, corrected, and if need be rewritten. When first presented, it must already be a second or third draft. The only reason I can think of for the somewhat higher average of good writing in France is that the *brouillon* is a national institution. The *brouillon* (literally: scrambled mess) is the first draft, and even the concierge [2] writing to the police about anarchists on the third floor begins with a *brouillon*, later found by his heirs.

Of course it is no use telling an American boy or girl that the essay must be written, laid aside, and rewritten at least once before handing in: the innocents do not know what to do after their first painful delivery. So the simplest thing is to ask early in the term for a good five-page essay, which turns out to be pretty bad. This is fully annotated by the reader and turned back before the next one is called for. But the corrections on it are not merely the conventional *sp.*, *ref.*, *punc.*, and *awk.* which the writers have seen in their margins from the seventh grade on. The comments are intensely and painfully personal, being the responses that an alert reader would feel if he were encountering the essay in print. The result is that even the best students feel abashed, if not actually resentful. To which one can only say that they should resent the neglect in which all their previous teachers have left them.

This neglect has not damaged their grammar so much as their vocabulary. Since the last thing any writer learns is the uses of words, it is no wonder if untutored youths of ability write like the stockbroker whom I quoted about 'favorable fundamentals that exist'—spineless, vague, and incoherent prose. Indeed, the exact parallel comes this moment under my hand, taken from a very able student's report on Newman's *University Sketches:* 'A University that rests on a firm financial foundation has the greater ability to unleash the minds of its students.' Despite the difference in names, the stockbroker is that boy's putative father. Their failure comes

[2 Doorman.]

from a like inattention to meaning—their own and that of the words they use.

This means that words and tone are the main things to be taught. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation do not precede but follow in the order of importance. They follow also quite naturally in the order of facility. Accordingly, the teacher-critic must slowly and carefully explain to the student what each word conveys in its particular context. I find that in the essay just cited I have written such comments as: 'I can't follow—This repeats in disguise—"avocational fruit" suggests alligator pears: why?—We now have about eight "problems" on hand: Begin!—What! more issues and problems?—Commercial lingo—Who is "we"?—Why "cradle": the metaphor is lost—Who says this?—"Patina" is not "clothing"—Don't scold and then trail off in this way—This is your point at last.' In addition, images are changed, synonyms proposed, and bad sentences recast, sometimes in alternative ways, in order to show precisely how the original misleads and how clarity is to be reached.

Tone grows naturally out of diction, but the choice of words betrays feelings of which the young writer is usually unaware. 'Are you pleading, denouncing, coaxing, or laughing? Do you back up this exaggeration? Why suddenly talk down, or turn pedant? If you want to change the mood inside the piece, you must modulate, otherwise your reader will stumble and you will lose him.' The student who learns to quiz himself in this fashion over his first draft is learning not only something about English, about writing, and about thinking, but about the human heart as well.

At the risk of tediousness I repeat that what has to be done is to dramatize the relation between writer and reader. The blunt comments are just a device to break the spell of routine, and though they administer an unpleasant shock at first, they are also flattering. 'Somebody cares about what I want to say.' The teacher is no longer a paid detective hunting stray commas.

To point these lessons up in minute detail to a student of average powers is of course time-consuming—but what else is the teacher there for? Time spent on reading and writing, in any subject, is never a waste, and the reward almost always comes, often astonishingly great. The excitement aroused by the discovery that words live is like finding that you can balance on skates. A new world of motion and of feeling is opened out to the student, a source of some anguish balanced by lifelong delight. George Gissing[3] writes somewhere that he saw an excursion steamer advertised as

[3 English essayist and novelist (1857–1903).]

being 'Replete with Ladies' Lavatories' and he comments on how many people could pass by the sign without a smile. My own favorite recollection is of a guarantee pasted on a modest shop window: 'Hats fitted to the head exclusively'—fun in every ad and at the company's expense.

The pleasure to be taken in words is as innocent and satisfying as the moral effect is clear: unless words are used deftly to set the imagination on its travels, language, literature, conversation, and friendship are full of snares. Much of our modern anxiety about the tyranny of words and of our desire for foolproof Basic [4] comes from the uneasy suspicion that we have lost the art of diction and with it the control over our own minds. This is more serious than it seems, for there is no doubt that the world outside the school largely checks what present instruction attempts, as we shall see. But having spoken of the imagination, let me first meet a likely objection to the advice here proposed. I can fancy some reader for whom school compositions were torture shaking a skeptical head and saying: 'Most young children have very little to say and school assignments blot out even that little.' I agree and the second great practical problem is, What to ask boys and girls to write about?

The don'ts are easy. Don't ask them for 'A vacation experience,' or 'My most embarrassing moment,' or 'I am the Mississippi River.' Such topics will only elicit the driest kind of hokum, though to be fair I must say that they are an improvement on the older practice of expecting infant moralizing and 'What the flag means to me.' Although as a child I enjoyed writing—history chiefly—I can remember the blankness of mind that overtook me when we had to do a *dissertation morale*. I still have a school text with some of those themes checked as having been done—for example: *'The Faithful Dog.*—A poor man has resolved to drown his dog. Thrown into the river, the dog tries to scramble up the bank, but his master lunges out to kill him with a stick. In so doing, he slips and falls. The dog saves him. Remorse of the owner.'

I regret to say that French school life is stuffed with such thorns as these, but I am not sure that the opposite 'progressive' extreme of turning children into researchers on their own is desirable either. The eleven-year-old son of a friend of mine once told me that he was writing a 'project' on Papyrus. Why papyrus? Well, the class had been 'doing' Egypt and each child was assigned one aspect of Egyptian civilization. Where was the

[4 A kind of English developed mainly to help foreigners learn something of the language. It has a vocabulary of about 850 'basic' words. Some books, including the Bible and Plato's *Republic*, have been entirely translated into Basic.]

information to come from? From encyclopedias, museums, friends, and paper manufacturers—hence such letters to strangers as the one about 'Africia' quoted earlier. As I see it, two things are wrong with this scheme. One is that it gives a false freedom; the other is that it hardly trains in the art of composing. Did this boy care at all about Egypt, let alone about the technicalities of papyrology? A child should select a topic that truly engages his interest. To eliminate pretense he must be helped to do this by means of questions and suggestions. At any age, it is very reassuring to be told that you don't really want to write about the Tariff. After two or three casts a real subject emerges, satisfactory to both parties.

Next should come into play the single good feature of the French dissertation, namely its furnishing a plan or program. Depending on the child's age a briefer or longer table of contents should be set out for each theme, either in logically organized form, or pell-mell for the student himself to disentangle. After all, what is wanted is prose, not a riot of fancy. In my experience, even examination questions are answered better when they consist of five or six sentences outlining a topic for discussion. This means further that brevity should never be accounted a fault in itself. After thirty, we can all spin tall tales, mostly secondhand,* but students, even of college age, have had very little conscious experience of life or books and it is no wonder their minds are bone dry. One should moreover keep in view the possibility that in some of them brevity may come from genius. American schoolmarms who relate the anecdote of Lincoln's 'failure' with the Gettysburg Address are just as likely to say at one glance, 'Jane, this is too short.' How do they know? Perhaps they unwittingly agree with the Gettysburg crowd that Everett's speech,[5] being longer, was better.

Some secondary schools, particularly the private ones, require the writing of verse as well as of prose. If the students are really shown how to go about versifying and are not expected to be 'poetic,' there is no harm in it. Verse writing is excellent practice for the prose writer and the striving for correct

* No course, therefore, should ever be called Creative Writing. Let us have at least a collective modesty and leave to charlatans the advertising of 'How to Write Powerful Plays.'

[5 Edward Everett made a long speech on the same occasion (the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg) on which Lincoln delivered his famous address. Lincoln's was so brief that it disappointed some people and some newspapers. But it should be remembered that many persons had traveled long distances to Gettysburg in order to hear the President; and that although long orations were the fashion then, Lincoln spoke only for a minute or two. It is easy to conjecture that he was finished before some members of his audience had settled down to listening to him; naturally they were disappointed.]

rhythm and rhyme gives the student of literature a feeling for words that may not otherwise be obtained. What can be done in this way before college by a gifted teacher has been shown by the experience of my friend, the poet Dudley Fitts, formerly at Choate and now at Andover. In collegiate circles, it is now well known that a freshman prepared under him is a literate, sometimes a polished writer, who can be safely allowed to skip into advanced work. No doubt Fitts has had his failures like all of us, but it is the successes we are looking for and that count in leavening the mass.

I am not so foolish as to think that carrying out my few suggestions would get rid of illiterate A.B.'s. I am too conscious of my initial point about 'Education,' which is that the school does not work in a vacuum but rather in a vortex of destructive forces. As regards writing, we in the twentieth century must offset not only the constant influence of careless speech and the indifference of parents, but the tremendous output of jargon issuing from the new mechanical means at man's disposal. Worst of all, circumstances have conspired to put the most corrupting force at the very heart of the school system. It is not newspapers, radio scripts, and movies that spoil our tongue so much as textbooks, official documents, commencement speeches, and learned works.*

The rise, at the turn of the century, of what James called 'the softer pedagogy' is responsible for a debasement of language beyond all bounds of forgiveness. The desire to be kind, to sound new, to foster useful attitudes, to appear 'scientific,' and chiefly also the need to produce rapidly, account for this hitherto unheard-of deliquescence. In the victims, the softness goes to the very roots of the mind and turns it into mush. And among the 'new' educators thus afflicted, the Progressive vanguard has naturally outstripped the rest. I shall not multiply examples from catalogues, reports, and speeches, though over the years I have gathered a blush-making collection. I want only to identify the evil because it spreads like the plague.

It consists mainly of what our forefathers called 'cant phrases,' strung together without continuity, like wash on a line. At a faculty meeting, a teacher asks the Director of Admissions why there seem to be more music students applying than before. The Director replies, 'Well, I should say that the forces undergirding the process are societal.' Or a committee chair-

* See Mr. Maury Maverick's excellent denunciation of what he calls Gobbledygook in the *New York Times* for May 21, 1944. The rebuttals attempting to show that roundabout expressions spare shocks to the sick are hardly to the point. The healthy ought to be able to stand directness and even mention of 'death and taxes.' 'Loss of life' and 'fiscal levies' cost just as much in the end.

man wants to know what we do next. 'I think,' says the secretary, 'that we should go on to institute actual implementation.'

Teachers steeped in this medium are bound to ooze it out themselves, particularly if weekly and daily they receive official instructions like these: 'Specify the kinds of change or permanence the student seems to crave, reject, or fear; the reasons given for liking-disliking, giving up-persistence; complaining-boasting. . . It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the observations of characteristics associated with age and background are not being made in the general area of adolescent behavior but under specific and limited conditions—those set by the aims, emphases, and assumptions of one particular faculty.* Moreover, the observations of what appear to be the interests of freshmen conceal a possible ambiguity. The term "interests" may refer to fairly superficial interests in the sense of surprise, pleasure, enjoyment, which are comparatively temporary; or "interests" may involve an awakening curiosity which leads to consistent inquiry along the lines of some project.' The reader must imagine not merely a paragraph taken at random, but pages and pages of similar woolly abstractions, mimeographed at the rate of nine and one-half pounds per person per semester. If the words 'specific' and 'objective' were blotted out of the English language, Progressive Education would have to shut up . . . shop.

As for students in teachers' colleges, the long climb up the ladder of learning comes to mean the mastering of this ghoulish *Desperanto*, so that with the attainment of the M.A. degree, we get the following utterance:—

> In the proposed study I wish to describe and evaluate representative programs in these fields as a means of documenting what seems to me a trend of increasing concern with the role of higher education in the improvement of interpersonal and intergroup relations and of calling attention in this way to outstanding contributions in practice.

Some readers might think this quotation very learned and highbrow indeed. But in fact it says nothing definite. It only embodies the disinclination to think. This is a general truth, and nothing is more symptomatic of the whole jargon than the fantastic use and abuse it makes of the phrase 'in terms of.' The fact is worth a moment's attention. 'In terms of' used to refer to things that had terms, like algebra. 'Put the problem in terms of *a* and *b*.' This makes sense. But in educational circles today 'in terms of' means any connection between any two things. 'We should grade students

* I regret to say that 'faculty' here means 'faculty member'—a usage so far confined to the progressive schools.

in terms of their effort'—that is, *for* or *according to* their effort. The *New York Public Library Bulletin* prints: 'The first few months of employment would be easier . . . and more efficient in terms of service . . .'—that is, would yield more efficient service. But no one seems to care how or when or why his own two ideas are related. The gap in thought is plugged with 'in terms of.' I have been asked, 'Will you have dinner with me, not tonight or tomorrow, but *in terms of* next week?' A modern Caesar would write: 'All Gaul is to be considered in terms of three parts.' *

From this Educator's patois, easily the worst English now spoken, we ought to pass to the idiom of textbooks, since they are written either by educators or by teachers. Happily, there is a standard set by other books—trade books—and it is not true that all textbooks are as badly written as those on education. On the contrary, it is very encouraging that the leading ones in every field are usually well planned *and* well written. The success of Morison and Commager's *Growth of the American Republic* [6] is only the most recent case in point. Students, nevertheless, are asked to read many ill-written books. There is no excuse for this, though it is by no means the only source of error. We must remember that students do not read only books; they read what every man reads, and this would do no harm—it does no harm—when the mind is trained to resilience by the kind of writing practice I have advocated.

Unfortunately, with the vast increase in public schooling since 1870, an entirely new notion of what is good English has come to prevail. Awakened by free schooling, the people have shown worthy intentions. They want to be right and even elegant, and so become at once suspicious of plainness and pedantic. They purchase all sorts of handbooks that make a fetish of spelling, of avoiding split infinitives, of saying 'it is I' (with the common result of 'between you and I')—in short, dwell on trivialities or vulgarisms which do not affect style or thought in the slightest. But with this intolerance towards crude and plain error goes a remarkable insensitivity to inflated nonsense. Most bad journalism is only highbrow verbosity, yet the popular mind continues to believe that the pedantry which it likes is simple and the simplicity which it finds hard is complex. Here is the opening of a serial thriller in a Boston paper:—

Strange things happen in Chinatown. But even that exotic and perverse district seldom presented drama as fantastic as the secret that hid among the silk

* The objectionable phrase is now to be found in newspapers, business reports, and private correspondence. It is a menace *in terms of* the whole nation.

[6 A chapter of this work is reprinted on pp. 300–321.]

and jade and porcelain splendors of the famous House of the Mandarin on Mulberry Lane.

There is a certain art in this, and I take note of 'porcelain splendors' as the *mot juste* for bathtubs on exhibit. But the passage as a whole contains nothing but arty and highfalutin words, joined by the good will of the reader rather than the mind of the writer. Still, every newspaper reader feels he understands it. Take now a well-known sentence composed of common words, all but two of them single syllables: 'If there are more trees in the world than there are leaves on any one tree, then there must be at least two trees with the same number of leaves.' Read this aloud and almost any listener will respond with 'Huh? Say that again.' For this sentence records a thought, and the Chinatown 'drama' did not.

The close logic in the truly 'simple' sentence makes the contrast sharper, but it would be just as sharp between a feeling clearly put and a feeble attempt to thrill. Thus there is a superstition that the novels of Henry James are written in a 'difficult style.' Yet if you examine them, you will find that the words and sentences—in *The Ambassadors*, for example—are in themselves quite usual. But the feelings they convey are unusual and subtle, and require attention. At the same time they also compel it, which is all that an artist takes pains for in writing.

Conversely, the only thing that can be asked of a writer is that he should know his own meaning and present it as forcibly as he can. The rule has not changed since Byron affirmed that 'easy writing makes damned hard reading.' Hence there is great value, as I think, in having college graduates recognize good prose when they see it, know that a tolerable paragraph must have gone through six or seven versions, and be ready to follow athletically on the trail of articulate thoughts, rather than look for the soapy incline to muddled meaning.

One does not have to go very far for the enjoyment of precise, sinewy writing. The same newspaper that furnishes tripe for the morning meal also brings such rarer tidbits as these: 'They [the robot bombs] are of much the same shape and size as a small fighter plane, with stubby wings. They come over with tails aglow from the propelling rocket force, like little meteors moving at a nightmare pace by dark, and by day like little black planes with tails afire.' This is perfection; and here is poetry: 'Mr. McCaffrey, himself the father of two children, *and therefore schooled in apprehension*, ran across the street . . . shouting a warning.'

When the daily reporter, harried by falling bombs or hustled by a city

editor, can write like this, it is depressing to return to agencies closer to the school and find verbal laziness encouraged and imbecility taken for granted. One publisher of reference works sends out a circular stressing the fact that his books give the pronunciation of 'all difficult—"hard-to-say"—words.' Is this where we are after fifty years of quasi-universal literacy? Is the word 'difficult' so difficult that it has to be translated in its own sentence? The question is one for readers, and it is to the subject of reading that I now turn.

Henry David Thoreau
READING

[On Thoreau and *Walden* see p. 383.

With a little more deliberation in the choice of their pursuits, all men would perhaps become essentially students and observers, for certainly their nature and destiny are interesting to all alike. In accumulating property for ourselves or our posterity, in founding a family or a state, or acquiring fame even, we are mortal; but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident. The oldest Egyptian or Hindoo philosopher raised a corner of the veil from the statue of the divinity; and still the trembling robe remains raised, and I gaze upon as fresh a glory as he did, since it was I in him that was then so bold, and it is he in me that now reviews the vision. No dust has settled on that robe; no time has elapsed since that divinity was revealed. That time which we really improve, or which is improvable, is neither past, present, nor future.

My residence was more favorable, not only to thought, but to serious reading, than a university; and though I was beyond the range of the ordinary circulating library, I had more than ever come within the influence of those books which circulate round the world, whose sentences were first written on bark, and are now merely copied from time to time on to linen paper. Says the poet Mîr Camar Uddîn Mast, 'Being seated to run through the region of the spiritual world; I have had this advantage in books. To be intoxicated by a single glass of wine; I have experienced this pleasure when I have drunk the liquor of the esoteric doctrines.' I kept Homer's Iliad on my table through the summer, though I looked at his page only now and then. Incessant labor with my hands, at first, for I had my house to finish [1] and my beans to hoe at the same time, made more study impos-

[1 See 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' (pp. 383–88).]

From *Walden*, 1854.

sible. Yet I sustained myself by the prospect of such reading in future. I read one or two shallow books of travel in the intervals of my work, till that employment made me ashamed of myself, and I asked where it was then that *I* lived.

The student may read Homer or Æschylus in the Greek without danger of dissipation or luxuriousness, for it implies that he in some measure emulate their heroes, and consecrate morning hours [2] to their pages. The heroic books, even if printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times; and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and valor and generosity we have. The modern cheap and fertile press, with all its translations, has done little to bring us nearer to the heroic writers of antiquity. They seem as solitary, and the letter in which they are printed as rare and curious, as ever. It is worth the expense of youthful days and costly hours, if you learn only some words of an ancient language, which are raised out of the trivialness of the street, to be perpetual suggestions and provocations. It is not in vain that the farmer remembers and repeats the few Latin words which he has heard. Men sometimes speak as if the study of the classics would at length make way for more modern and practical studies; [3] but the adventurous student will always study classics, in whatever language they may be written and however ancient they may be. For what are the classics but the noblest recorded thoughts of man? They are the only oracles which are not decayed, and there are such answers to the most modern inquiry in them as Delphi and Dodona [4] never gave. We might as well omit to study Nature because she is old. To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, the steady intention almost of the whole life to this object.[5] Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. It is not enough even to be able to speak the language of that nation by which they are written, for there is a memorable interval between the spoken and the written language, the language heard and the language read. The one is

[2] On the sacredness of morning see 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' (pp. 388–90).]

[3] See selections by Arnold (pp. 120–37), Foerster (pp. 138–49), and Livingstone (pp. 150–65).]

[4] Two celebrated shrines where the oracles of Apollo and Zeus were delivered.]

[5] Compare this passage on the strenuousness of reading with that from his *Journal* (quoted on pp. 40–41) about the exacting discipline of writing.]

commonly transitory, a sound, a tongue, a dialect merely, almost brutish, and we learn it unconsciously, like the brutes, of our mothers. The other is the maturity and experience of that; if that is our mother tongue, this is our father tongue, a reserved and select expression, too significant to be heard by the ear, which we must be born again in order to speak. The crowds of men who merely *spoke* the Greek and Latin tongues in the middle ages were not entitled by the accident of birth to *read* the works of genius written in those languages; for these were not written in that Greek or Latin which they knew, but in the select language of literature. They had not learned the nobler dialects of Greece and Rome, but the very materials on which they were written were waste paper to them, and they prized instead a cheap contemporary literature. But when the several nations of Europe had acquired distinct though rude written languages of their own, sufficient for the purposes of their rising literatures, then first learning revived, and scholars were enabled to discern from that remoteness the treasures of antiquity. What the Roman and Grecian multitude could not *hear*, after the lapse of ages a few scholars *read*, and a few scholars only are still reading it.

However much we may admire the orator's occasional bursts of eloquence, the noblest written words are commonly as far behind or above the fleeting spoken language as the firmament with its stars is behind the clouds. *There* are the stars, and they who can may read them. The astronomers forever comment on and observe them. They are not exhalations like our daily colloquies and vaporous breath. What is called eloquence in the forum is commonly found to be rhetoric in the study. The orator yields to the inspiration of a transient occasion, and speaks to the mob before him, to those who can *hear* him; but the writer, whose more equable life is his occasion, and who would be distracted by the event and the crowd which inspire the orator, speaks to the intellect and heart of mankind, to all in any age who can *understand* him.

No wonder that Alexander carried the Iliad with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. A written word is the choicest of relics. It is something at once more intimate with us and more universal than any other work of art. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. It may be translated into every language, and not only be read but actually breathed from all human lips; —not be represented on canvas or in marble only, but be carved out of the breath of life itself. The symbol of an ancient man's thought becomes a modern man's speech. Two thousand summers have imparted to the monuments of Grecian literature, as to her marbles, only a maturer golden and

autumnal tint, for they have carried their own serene and celestial atmosphere into all lands to protect them against the corrosion of time. Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations. Books, the oldest and the best, stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They have no cause of their own to plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the reader his common sense will not refuse them. Their authors are a natural and irresistible aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings or emperors, exert an influence on mankind. When the illiterate and perhaps scornful trader has earned by enterprise and industry his coveted leisure and independence, and is admitted to the circles of wealth and fashion, he turns inevitably at last to those still higher but yet inaccessible circles of intellect and genius, and is sensible only of the imperfection of his culture and the vanity and insufficiency of all his riches, and further proves his good sense by the pains which he takes to secure for his children that intellectual culture whose want he so keenly feels; and thus it is that he becomes the founder of a family.

Those who have not learned to read the ancient classics in the language in which they were written must have a very imperfect knowledge of the history of the human race; for it is remarkable that no transcript of them has ever been made into any modern tongue, unless our civilization itself may be regarded as such a transcript. Homer has never yet been printed in English, nor Æschylus, nor Virgil even,—works as refined, as solidly done, and as beautiful almost as the morning itself; for later writers, say what we will of their genius, have rarely, if ever, equalled the elaborate beauty and finish and the lifelong and heroic literary labors of the ancients. They only talk of forgetting them who never knew them. It will be soon enough to forget them when we have the learning and the genius which will enable us to attend to and appreciate them. That age will be rich indeed when those relics which we call Classics, and the still older and more than classic but even less known Scriptures of the nations, shall have still further accumulated, when the Vaticans shall be filled with Vedas and Zendavestas [6] and Bibles, with Homers and Dantes and Shakspeares, and all the centuries to come shall have successively deposited their trophies in the forum of the world. By such a pile we may hope to scale heaven at last.

The works of the great poets have never yet been read by mankind, for only great poets can read them. They have only been read as the multitude read the stars, at most astrologically, not astronomically. Most men have

[6 Sacred scriptures of the ancient Hindus and Parsees. Like Emerson, Thoreau was deeply impressed by Oriental poetry and philosophy.]

learned to read to serve a paltry convenience, as they have learned to cipher in order to keep accounts and not be cheated in trade; but of reading as a noble intellectual exercise they know little or nothing; yet this only is reading, in a high sense, not that which lulls us as a luxury and suffers the nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we have to stand on tiptoe to read and devote our most alert and wakeful hours to.

I think that having learned our letters we should read the best that is in literature, and not be forever repeating our a b abs, and words of one syllable, in the fourth or fifth classes, sitting on the lowest and foremost form all our lives. Most men are satisfied if they read or hear read, and perchance have been convicted by the wisdom of one good book, the Bible, and for the rest of their lives vegetate and dissipate their faculties in what is called easy reading. There is a work in several volumes in our Circulating Library [7] entitled Little Reading, which I thought referred to a town of that name which I had not been to. There are those who, like cormorants and ostriches, can digest all sorts of this, even after the fullest dinner of meats and vegetables, for they suffer nothing to be wasted. If others are the machines to provide this provender, they are the machines to read it. They read the nine thousandth tale about Zebulon and Sephronia, and how they loved as none had ever loved before, and neither did the course of their true love run smooth,—at any rate, how it did run and stumble, and get up again and go on! how some poor unfortunate got up on to a steeple, who had better never have gone up as far as the belfry; and then, having needlessly got him up there, the happy novelist rings the bell for all the world to come together and hear, O dear! how he did get down again! For my part, I think that they had better metamorphose all such aspiring heroes of universal noveldom into man weathercocks, as they used to put heroes among the constellations, and let them swing round there till they are rusty, and not come down at all to bother honest men with their pranks. The next time the novelist rings the bell I will not stir though the meeting-house burn down. 'The Skip of the Tip-Toe-Hop, a Romance of the Middle Ages, by the celebrated author of "Tittle-Tol-Tan," to appear in monthly parts; a great rush; don't all come together.' All this they read with saucer eyes, and erect and primitive curiosity, and with unwearied gizzard, whose corrugations even yet need no sharpening, just as some little four-year-old bencher his two-cent gilt-covered edition of Cinderella,—without any improvement, that I can see, in the pronunciation, or accent, or emphasis, or any more skill in extracting or inserting the moral. The result is dulness of sight, a

[7 In Concord.]

stagnation of the vital circulations, and a general deliquium and sloughing off of all the intellectual faculties. This sort of gingerbread is baked daily and more sedulously than pure wheat or rye-and-Indian in almost every oven, and finds a surer market.

The best books are not read even by those who are called good readers. What does our Concord culture amount to? There is in this town, with a very few exceptions, no taste for the best or for very good books even in English literature, whose words all can read and spell. Even the college-bred and so called liberally educated men here and elsewhere have really little or no acquaintance with the English classics; and as for the recorded wisdom of mankind, the ancient classics and Bibles, which are accessible to all who will know of them, there are the feeblest efforts any where made to become acquainted with them. I know a woodchopper, of middle age, who takes a French paper, not for news as he says, for he is above that, but to 'keep himself in practice,' he being a Canadian by birth; and when I ask him what he considers the best thing he can do in this world, he says, beside this, to keep up and add to his English. This is about as much as the college bred generally do or aspire to do, and they take an English paper for the purpose. One who has just come from reading perhaps one of the best English books will find how many with whom he can converse about it? Or suppose he comes from reading a Greek or Latin classic in the original, whose praises are familiar even to the so called illiterate; he will find nobody at all to speak to, but must keep silence about it. Indeed, there is hardly the professor in our colleges, who, if he has mastered the difficulties of the language, has proportionally mastered the difficulties of the wit and poetry of a Greek poet, and has any sympathy to impart to the alert and heroic reader; and as for the sacred Scriptures, or Bibles of mankind, who in this town can tell me even their titles? Most men do not know that any nation but the Hebrews have had a scripture. A man, any man, will go considerably out of his way to pick up a silver dollar; but here are golden words, which the wisest men of antiquity have uttered, and whose worth the wise of every succeeding age have assured us of;—and yet we learn to read only as far as Easy Reading, the primers and class-books, and when we leave school, the 'Little Reading,' and story books, which are for boys and beginners; and our reading, our conversation and thinking, are all on a very low level, worthy only of pygmies and manikins.

I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than this our Concord soil has produced, whose names are hardly known here. Or shall I hear the name of Plato and never read his book? As if Plato were my townsman and I

never saw him,—my next neighbor and I never heard him speak or attended to the wisdom of his words. But how actually is it? His Dialogues, which contain what was immortal in him, lie on the next shelf, and yet I never read them. We are under-bred and low-lived and illiterate; and in this respect I confess I do not make any very broad distinction between the illiterateness of my townsman who cannot read at all, and the illiterateness of him who has learned to read only what is for children and feeble intellects. We should be as good as the worthies of antiquity, but partly by first knowing how good they were. We are a race of tit-men, and soar but little higher in our intellectual flights than the columns of the daily paper.

It is not all books that are as dull as their readers. There are probably words addressed to our condition exactly, which, if we could really hear and understand, would be more salutary than the morning or the spring to our lives, and possibly put a new aspect on the face of things for us. How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book. The book exists for us perchance which will explain our miracles and reveal new ones. The at present unutterable things we may find somewhere uttered. These same questions that disturb and puzzle and confound us have in their turn occurred to all the wise men; not one has been omitted; and each has answered them, according to his ability, by his words and his life. Moreover, with wisdom we shall learn liberality. The solitary hired man on a farm in the outskirts of Concord, who has had his second birth and peculiar religious experience, and is driven as he believes into silent gravity and exclusiveness by his faith, may think it is not true; but Zoroaster,[8] thousands of years ago, travelled the same road and had the same experience; but he, being wise, knew it to be universal, and treated his neighbors accordingly, and is even said to have invented and established worship among men. Let him humbly commune with Zoroaster then, and through the liberalizing influence of all the worthies, with Jesus Christ himself, and let 'our church' [9] go by the board.

We boast that we belong to the nineteenth century and are making the most rapid strides of any nation. But consider how little this village does for its own culture. I do not wish to flatter my townsmen, nor to be flattered by them, for that will not advance either of us. We need to be provoked,—goaded like oxen, as we are, into a trot. We have a comparatively decent system of common schools, schools for infants only; but excepting

[8 Founder of the ancient Persian religion.]

[9 Thoreau never attended church.]

the half-starved Lyceum [10] in the winter, and latterly the puny beginning of a library suggested by the state, no school for ourselves. We spend more on almost any article of bodily aliment or ailment than on our mental aliment. It is time that we had uncommon schools, that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men and women. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities, with leisure—if they are indeed so well off—to pursue liberal studies the rest of their lives. Shall the world be confined to one Paris or one Oxford forever? Cannot students be boarded here and get a liberal education under the skies of Concord? Can we not hire some Abelard [11] to lecture to us? Alas! what with foddering the cattle and tending the store, we are kept from school too long, and our education is sadly neglected. In this country, the village should in some respects take the place of the nobleman of Europe. It should be the patron of the fine arts. It is rich enough. It wants only the magnanimity and refinement. It can spend money enough on such things as farmers and traders value, but it is thought Utopian to propose spending money for things which more intelligent men know to be of far more worth. This town has spent seventeen thousand dollars on a town-house, thank fortune or politics, but probably it will not spend so much on living wit, the true meat to put into that shell, in a hundred years. The one hundred and twenty-five dollars annually subscribed for a Lyceum in the winter is better spent than any other equal sum raised in the town. If we live in the nineteenth century, why should we not enjoy the advantages which the nineteenth century offers? Why should our life be in any respect provincial? If we will read newspapers, why not skip the gossip of Boston and take the best newspaper in the world at once?—not be sucking the pap of 'neutral family' papers, or browsing 'Olive-Branches' here in New England. Let the reports of all the learned societies come to us, and we will see if they know any thing. Why should we leave it to Harper & Brothers and Redding & Co. to select our reading? As the nobleman of cultivated taste surrounds himself with whatever conduces to his culture,—genius—learning—wit—books—paintings—statuary—music—philosophical instruments, and the like; so let the village do,—not stop short at a pedagogue, a parson, a sexton, a parish library, and three selectmen, because our pilgrim forefathers got through a cold winter once on a bleak rock with these. To act collectively is according to the spirit of our institutions; and I am confident

[10 Thoreau lectured occasionally at the Concord Lyceum.]
[11 French philosopher and theologian (1079–1142).]

that, as our circumstances are more flourishing, our means are greater than the nobleman's. New England can hire all the wise men in the world to come and teach her, and board them round the while, and not be provincial at all. That is the *uncommon* school we want. Instead of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men. If it is necessary, omit one bridge over the river, go round a little there, and throw one arch at least over the darker gulf of ignorance which surrounds us.

Henry Seidel Canby

SENTENCE MAKER

¶[Henry Seidel Canby (1878—) graduated from Yale and has been on the staff of that university, either as active teacher (1900–1922) or as occasional lecturer, for half a century. Since 1924 he has been associated also with *The Saturday Review of Literature*, first as editor and later as chairman of the board of editors. In addition to having written an excellent biography of Thoreau (1939), Mr. Canby has done a study of Walt Whitman (1943) and numerous books on writing; he is one of the editors of the *Literary History of the United States* (1948). His *Alma Mater* (1936) is a pleasant account of 'the Gothic Age of the American college.' *American Memoir*, a volume of reminiscences, appeared in 1947.

THOREAU'S WRITING was to an unusual extent a by-product of his experience. His profession was living, yet, as with all those born to be men of letters, his life seemed incomplete until he had got it described satisfactorily in words. 'You . . . have the best of me in my books,' he wrote to an admirer in Michigan, Calvin H. Greene, and of course he was right. Therefore, as was natural, he took his writing seriously, and was rich in self-criticism as all writers should be, but are not.

It took him most of the 1840's to get rid of Carlyle's religio-mystical view [1] of literature, which made preachers of the young men of Thoreau's generation. When, in the fifties, his reading swung from literature toward science, he shrugged off this stale generalizing, for there was neither time

[1 His *Sartor Resartus* had appeared in 1833–4, *Heroes and Hero Worship* in 1841, and *Past and Present* in 1843. Thoreau published an essay, 'Thomas Carlyle and His Works,' in 1847.]

FROM *Thoreau*, 1939. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company and of the author.

nor inclination for it. It is only rarely that, after 1850, he writes about a literary masterpiece, for he was no longer studying in that school. Yet it is precisely in this last decade of his life that he makes the shrewdest comments on the art of writing—which is natural, for he had then matured his own. And here he is worth listening to, as is any first-rate writer who tries to analyze his own processes. Not the most philosophic perhaps, but certainly the most valuable, criticism we have is the occasional comment of a good writer on how to write—which means almost invariably how he writes himself.

It was a decade, as we have already seen, of crowded experiences for him with men, women, nature, and the state. There was plenty to write about, so that his Journal sometimes has sudden expansions for a day's thought and adventure which must have taken hours to set in order and express. The whole into which he hoped to fit his parts eluded his grasp, but his faith was firm that if he could reduce his observations to perfect sentences, somehow they would see the light, reach their mark, accomplish their destiny. This optimism has been justified, but only by the labor of many editors, and the enthusiasm of readers searching the trackless Journal for his best.

It was the sentence—a *sententia*—that most occupied his thought. The sentence was his medium—whatever he does and writes about, however often he rewrites or enriches, the fruit of it can be found ripened in a sentence. In the revision of 'Walden' for the press, it was doubtful sentences that he threw out, then looked them over, and took back the good ones. They smelled right, as he says, using quaintly his keenest sense as if it could extend itself to words. Naturally he writes best about writing when he is writing about sentences, and these remarks have a biographical value, for they describe as no one else can do the man's mind at work. Only in those deeply impassioned pages about his Sister,[2] so strongly felt as to be scarcely articulate, does he fail to get sentences equal to the emotional intensity or the intellectual insight of his experience. And these, of course, were not meant for publication. With Bacon, Shakespeare, Pope, Doctor Johnson, the makers of the English Bible, and Benjamin Franklin, he belongs among the great makers of the English sentence. Therefore his account of his own practice is interesting.

Two principles, especially, guided him in his writing as, sitting under a pasture oak, he set down his things seen or thought about, or, upstairs in the house on Main Street, worked his notes into his Journal. The first prin-

[2 Emerson's second wife, Lidian. See Mr. Canby's biography, pp. 155–63, 348–53.]

ciple might be called intuition made articulate, a favorite idea with all the romantic Transcendentalists:[3]

April 1. Sunday. 1860 . . . The fruit a thinker bears is *sentences*,—statements or opinions. He seeks to affirm something as true. I am surprised that my affirmations or utterances come to me ready-made,—not fore-thought,—so that I occasionally awake in the night simply to let fall ripe a statement which I had never consciously considered before, and as surprising and novel and agreeable to me as anything can be. As if we only thought by sympathy with the universal mind, which thought while we were asleep. There is such a necessity [to] make a definite statement that our minds at length do it without our consciousness, just as we carry our food to our mouths. This occurred to me last night, but I was so surprised by the fact which I have just endeavored to report that I have entirely forgotten what the particular observation was.

That is the difficulty, of course, with these flashes from a mind in which the heat of long brooding turns to light—if they are not recorded on some sensitive film they are lost and gone, often irrevocably. It was Thoreau's practice to wait for the flash and then anxiously develop the impression until a sentence was made that was true to the original inspiration, yet communicable to the reader. 'There is no more Herculean task than to think a thought about this life and then get it expressed.' To write that way is dangerous, since the flow of thought is checked while expression is made perfect; yet it is hard not to believe that here is the secret of Thoreau's durability. The rifle is more penetrating than the shotgun; the line is remembered when the poem is forgot.

But these sudden luminosities of thought or irradiations of experience were seldom made articulate at the first trial:

Jan. 26. 1852 . . . Whatever wit has been produced on the spur of the moment will bear to be reconsidered and reformed with phlegm. The arrow had best not be loosely shot. The most transient and passing remark must be . . . made sure and warranted, as if the earth had rested on its axle to back it, and all the natural forces lay behind it. The writer must direct his sentences as carefully and leisurely as the marksman his rifle. . . If you foresee that a part

[3 A group of New England writers, including Emerson and Thoreau, who accepted and expressed in their writings the principles of transcendentalism. This was a species of the romantic, idealistic philosophy, stressing the authority of the individual's mind and conscience and therefore the urgency of independence from custom, external authority, and society. 'What is popularly called Transcendentalism among us is Idealism; Idealism as it appears in 1842.' This sentence is from Emerson's 'The Transcendentalist,' which is the best account. Thoreau wrote of himself: 'The fact is I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot' (*Journal*, 5 March 1853).]

of your essay will topple down after the lapse of time, throw it down now yourself.

Inspiration pricking him on, he writes several such sentences as these lines describe: 'I feel the spur of the moment thrust deep into my side. The present is an inexorable rider.' Then, with a shift of theme: 'The truest account of heaven is the fairest, and I will accept none which disappoints expectation.' Here are other comments:

Nov. 12. 1851 . . . Those sentences are good and well discharged which are like so many little resiliencies from the spring floor of our life. . . Sentences uttered with your back to the wall. . . Sentences in which there is no strain.

Aug. 22. 1851 . . . It is the fault of some excellent writers—De Quincey's first impressions [4] on seeing London suggest it to me—that they express themselves with too great fullness and detail. They . . . lack moderation and sententiousness. They . . . say all they mean. Their sentences are not concentrated and nutty. Sentences which suggest far more than they say, which have an atmosphere about them, which do not merely report an old, but make a new, impression . . . to frame these, that is the *art* of writing. Sentences which are expensive, towards which so many volumes, so much life, went; which lie like boulders on the page, up and down or across; which contain the seed of other sentences, not mere repetition, but creation; which a man might sell his grounds and castles to build. If De Quincey had suggested each of his pages in a sentence and passed on, it would have been far more excellent writing. His style is nowhere kinked and knotted up into something hard and significant, which you could swallow like a diamond, without digesting.

That last sentence describes the way Thoreau wrote, and the reason for reading him deliberately. To skim his pages, except in parts of 'Cape Cod' or in 'The Maine Woods' or in some of the 'Excursions,' is like walking rapidly down a gallery of fine paintings. Even with every assistance from theme and narrative, as in 'Walden,' Thoreau's work reads slowly—which is not always a virtue, but often a fault, like the faults of paradox and exaggeration, of which he accused himself. He favored his best sentences at the expense of his chapters and paragraphs. They contained the most of him.

His second principle of writing was native to a man who put the art of life ahead of the art of literature. It was, to be vital:

Sept. 2. 1851 . . . We cannot write well or truly but what we write with gusto. The body, the senses, must conspire with the mind. Expression is the

[4 See the opening pages of 'The Nation of London' in De Quincey's *Autobiographic Sketches.*]

act of the whole man, that our speech may be vascular. The intellect is powerless to express thought without the aid of the heart and liver and of every member.

Jan. 30. Friday. 1852 . . . It is in vain to write on chosen themes. We must wait till they have kindled a flame in our minds. There must be the copulating and generating force of love behind every effort destined to be successful. The cold resolve gives birth to, begets, nothing. . . Obey, report.

July 14. 1852. A writer who does not speak out of a full experience uses torpid words, wooden or lifeless words, such words as 'humanitary,' which have a paralysis in their tails.

And finally, by way of warning, the original of Barrett Wendell's often quoted phrase, 'a diarrhoea of words and constipation of thought':

Dec. 31. 1851 . . . The . . . creative moment . . . in the case of some too easy poets . . . becomes mere diarrhoea, mud and clay relaxed. The poet must not have something pass his bowels merely; that is women's poetry. He must have something pass his brain and heart and bowels, too. . . So he gets delivered.

The rhetorical quality that many feel, even in Thoreau's best writing, is sometimes only a tone and attitude which he sustains, like a good lecturer, through all of such a book as the 'Week' or 'Walden.' Yet I think that the difficulty which the modern reader finds in what seems to him the stylized writing of 'Walden,' or even of the 'Excursions,' has a more important source in this habit of the packed and intensely expressive sentence. Our education in science, or its derivatives, has made us more inductive in our mental processes than were our immediate ancestors. We are accustomed to the kind of writing—especially in newspapers and magazines—that assembles facts, which we call news. The packed statement, which is a deduction handed over for our thinking, is unfamiliar and inspires distrust. Our writing escapes the dogmatic by being dilute and often inconclusive. It is easy to abbreviate, as the success of such magazines as *The Reader's Digest* has shown. We write, not by sentences, not even by paragraphs, but in a stream directed at one outlet. The reading of poetry has decreased in proportion to the increase of this homeopathic way of writing, for the effectiveness of poetry is an effectiveness of charged words and lines. If it is not to have high specific gravity, it would be better to write it in prose. Thoreau suffers from this changed habit of reading, since his sentences, with their backs to the wall, and their feet on Mother Earth, differ from poetry in this respect only in a freer rhythm.

Yet there is no intentional obscurity. 'I am thinking,' he wrote one day, 'by what long discipline and at what cost a man learns to speak simply at last.' Nor was there any literary affectation in his creed, although it cannot be denied that, like his contemporaries, he let his words strut and crow now and then with the 'Walden' cock. 'Why, the roots of *letters*,' he says aptly, 'are *things*. Natural objects and phenomena are the original symbols or types which express our thoughts and feelings, and yet American scholars,[5] having little or no root in the soil, commonly strive with all their might to confine themselves to the imported symbols alone. All the true growth and experience, the living speech, they would fain reject as "Americanisms." ' 'It is a great art in the writer to improve from day to day just that soil and fertility which he has. . .' 'Your mind must not perspire,'—which last, if said of walking out-of-doors, was surely meant for writing indoors also.

The art of writing is much broader and more complex than Thoreau's remarks on sentence-making imply. There is no doubt, however, that his particular art has a survival value much greater than any novelty in his ideas. But, inevitably, it became a perfectionist art, and so a curb upon free writing. Whoever writes by sentences writes slowly, and will often follow his own nose instead of his theme. And being perfectionist, this art made the completion of any whole exceedingly difficult, because each sentence had to be a finished production. He used the spot light instead of the flood. No wonder, then, that, as a student of nature trying to put between the covers of a book an account of that age-old Concord scene in which man had found a new home, Thoreau's work was left half done. Nevertheless, he mopped up his trenches as he crossed them, and left a noble sentence for each significant experience.

[5 'No truer American existed than Thoreau. His preference of his country and condition was genuine, and his aversation from English and European manners and tastes almost reached contempt' (Emerson, 'Thoreau').]

Virginia Woolf

HOW SHOULD ONE READ A BOOK?

¶ On Virginia Woolf and *The Second Common Reader* see p. 352.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, I want to emphasise the note of interrogation at the end of my title. Even if I could answer the question for myself, the answer would apply only to me and not to you. The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions. If this is agreed between us, then I feel at liberty to put forward a few ideas and suggestions because you will not allow them to fetter that independence which is the most important quality that a reader can possess. After all, what laws can be laid down about books? The battle of Waterloo was certainly fought on a certain day; but is *Hamlet* a better play than *Lear*? Nobody can say. Each must decide that question for himself. To admit authorities, however heavily furred and gowned, into our libraries and let them tell us how to read, what to read, what value to place upon what we read, is to destroy the spirit of freedom which is the breath of those sanctuaries. Everywhere else we may be bound by laws and conventions—there we have none.

But to enjoy freedom, if the platitude is pardonable, we have of course to control ourselves. We must not squander our powers, helplessly and ignorantly, squirting half the house in order to water a single rose-bush; we must train them, exactly and powerfully, here on the very spot. This, it may be, is one of the first difficulties that faces us in a library. What is 'the very spot'? There may well seem to be nothing but a conglomeration and huddle of confusion. Poems and novels, histories and memoirs, diction-

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aries and blue-books; books written in all languages by men and women of all tempers, races, and ages jostle each other on the shelf. And outside the donkey brays, the women gossip at the pump, the colts gallop across the fields. Where are we to begin? How are we to bring order into this multitudinous chaos and so get the deepest and widest pleasure from what we read?

It is simple enough to say that since books have classes—fiction, biography, poetry—we should separate them and take from each what it is right that each should give us. Yet few people ask from books what books can give us. Most commonly we come to books with blurred and divided minds, asking of fiction that it shall be true, of poetry that it shall be false, of biography that it shall be flattering, of history that it shall enforce our own prejudices. If we could banish all such preconceptions when we read, that would be an admirable beginning. Do not dictate to your author; try to become him. Be his fellow-worker and accomplice. If you hang back, and reserve and criticise at first, you are preventing yourself from getting the fullest possible value from what you read. But if you open your mind as widely as possible, then signs and hints of almost imperceptible fineness, from the twist and turn of the first sentences, will bring you into the presence of a human being unlike any other. Steep yourself in this, acquaint yourself with this, and soon you will find that your author is giving you, or attempting to give you, something far more definite. The thirty-two chapters of a novel—if we consider how to read a novel first—are an attempt to make something as formed and controlled as a building: but words are more impalpable than bricks; reading is a longer and more complicated process than seeing. Perhaps the quickest way to understand the elements of what a novelist is doing is not to read, but to write; to make your own experiment with the dangers and difficulties of words. Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on you—how at the corner of the street, perhaps, you passed two people talking. A tree shook; an electric light danced; the tone of the talk was comic, but also tragic; a whole vision, an entire conception, seemed contained in that moment.

But when you attempt to reconstruct it in words, you will find that it breaks into a thousand conflicting impressions. Some must be subdued; others emphasised; in the process you will lose, probably, all grasp upon the emotion itself. Then turn from your blurred and littered pages to the opening pages of some great novelist—Defoe, Jane Austen, Hardy. Now you will be better able to appreciate their mastery. It is not merely that we are in the presence of a different person—Defoe, Jane Austen, or Thomas

Hardy—but that we are living in a different world. Here, in *Robinson Crusoe*, we are trudging a plain high road; one thing happens after another; the fact and the order of the fact is enough. But if the open air and adventure mean everything to Defoe they mean nothing to Jane Austen. Hers is the drawing-room, and people talking, and by the many mirrors of their talk revealing their characters. And if, when we have accustomed ourselves to the drawing-room and its reflections, we turn to Hardy, we are once more spun round. The moors are round us and the stars are above our heads. The other side of the mind is now exposed—the dark side that comes uppermost in solitude, not the light side that shows in company. Our relations are not towards people, but towards Nature and destiny. Yet different as these worlds are, each is consistent with itself. The maker of each is careful to observe the laws of his own perspective, and however great a strain they may put upon us they will never confuse us, as lesser writers so frequently do, by introducing two different kinds of reality into the same book. Thus to go from one great novelist to another—from Jane Austen to Hardy, from Peacock to Trollope, from Scott to Meredith—is to be wrenched and uprooted; to be thrown this way and then that. To read a novel is a difficult and complex art. You must be capable not only of great fineness of perception, but of great boldness of imagination if you are going to make use of all that the novelist—the great artist—gives you.

But a glance at the heterogeneous company on the shelf will show you that writers are very seldom 'great artists'; far more often a book makes no claim to be a work of art at all. These biographies and autobiographies, for example, lives of great men, of men long dead and forgotten, that stand cheek by jowl with the novels and poems, are we to refuse to read them because they are not 'art'? Or shall we read them, but read them in a different way, with a different aim? Shall we read them in the first place to satisfy that curiosity which possesses us sometimes when in the evening we linger in front of a house where the lights are lit and the blinds not yet drawn, and each floor of the house shows us a different section of human life in being? Then we are consumed with curiosity about the lives of these people—the servants gossiping, the gentlemen dining, the girl dressing for a party, the old woman at the window with her knitting. Who are they, what are they, what are their names, their occupations, their thoughts, and adventures?

Biographies and memoirs answer such questions, light up innumerable such houses; they show us people going about their daily affairs, toiling, failing, succeeding, eating, hating, loving, until they die. And sometimes

as we watch, the house fades and the iron railings vanish and we are out at sea; we are hunting, sailing, fighting; we are among savages and soldiers; we are taking part in great campaigns. Or if we like to stay here in England, in London, still the scene changes; the street narrows; the house becomes small, cramped, diamond-paned, and malodorous. We see a poet, Donne, driven from such a house because the walls were so thin that when the children cried their voices cut through them.[1] We can follow him, through the paths that lie in the pages of books, to Twickenham;[2] to Lady Bedford's Park,[3] a famous meeting-ground for nobles and poets; and then turn our steps to Wilton, the great house under the downs, and hear Sidney read the *Arcadia* to his sister; and ramble among the very marshes and see the very herons that figure in that famous romance; and then again travel north with that other Lady Pembroke, Anne Clifford,[4] to her wild moors, or plunge into the city and control our merriment at the sight of Gabriel Harvey [5] in his black velvet suit arguing about poetry with Spenser. Nothing is more fascinating than to grope and stumble in the alternate darkness and splendour of Elizabethan London. But there is no staying there. The Temples [6] and the Swifts, the Harleys [7] and the St. Johns [8] beckon us on; hour upon hour can be spent disentangling their quarrels and deciphering their characters; and when we tire of them we can stroll on, past a lady in black wearing diamonds, to Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith and Garrick; or cross the channel, if we like, and meet Voltaire and Diderot,[9] Madame du Deffand;[10] and so back to England and Twickenham—how certain places repeat themselves and certain names!—where Lady Bedford had her Park once and Pope lived later, to Walpole's home at Strawberry Hill.

[1 Donne had twelve children]

[2 In the eighteenth century Pope and Horace Walpole (see note 11) lived there.]

[3 Lady Bedford is remembered for her friendship with the poets Jonson, Drayton, Chapman, Donne, and Daniel.]

[4 Wife of the Earl of Dorset and later of the Earl of Pembroke. She died in 1676. Portions of her diary have been published.]

[5 A Cambridge scholar, controversialist, and critic; friend of Spenser. There is an excellent account of him in Virginia Woolf's 'The Strange Elizabethans,' in *The Second Common Reader*.]

[6 Sir William Temple (1628–99), important both as an author and as a diplomat. Swift lived in his house for a few years.]

[7 Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford (1661–1724). See next note.]

[8 Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678–1751), Tory Secretary of State. He and Harley were leaders of the Tory government of 1710–14. Both were friends of Swift.]

[9 French critic and philosopher (1713–84).]

[10 French noblewoman; correspondent of Walpole, Voltaire, and other notables.]

But Walpole [11] introduces us to such a swarm of new acquaintances, there are so many houses to visit and bells to ring that we may well hesitate for a moment, on the Miss Berrys' doorstep, for example, when behold, up comes Thackeray; he is the friend of the woman whom Walpole loved; so that merely by going from friend to friend, from garden to garden, from house to house, we have passed from one end of English literature to another and wake to find ourselves here again in the present, if we can so differentiate this moment from all that have gone before. This, then, is one of the ways in which we can read these lives and letters; we can make them light up the many windows of the past; we can watch the famous dead in their familiar habits and fancy sometimes that we are very close and can surprise their secrets, and sometimes we may pull out a play or a poem that they have written and see whether it reads differently in the presence of the author. But this again rouses other questions. How far, we must ask ourselves, is a book influenced by its writer's life—how far is it safe to let the man interpret the writer? How far shall we resist or give way to the sympathies and antipathies that the man himself rouses in us—so sensitive are words, so receptive of the character of the author? These are questions that press upon us when we read lives and letters, and we must answer them for ourselves, for nothing can be more fatal than to be guided by the preferences of others in a matter so personal.

But also we can read such books with another aim, not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers. Is there not an open window on the right hand of the bookcase? How delightful to stop reading and look out! How stimulating the scene is, in its unconsciousness, its irrelevance, its perpetual movement—the colts galloping round the field, the woman filling her pail at the well, the donkey throwing back his head and emitting his long, acrid moan. The greater part of any library is nothing but the record of such fleeting moments in the lives of men, women, and donkeys. Every literature, as it grows old, has its rubbish-heap, its record of vanished moments and forgotten lives told in faltering and feeble accents that have perished. But if you give yourself up to the delight of rubbish-reading you will be surprised, indeed you will be overcome, by the relics of human life that have been cast out to moulder. It may be one letter—but what a vision it gives! It may be a few sentences—but what vistas they suggest! Sometimes

[11 Horace Walpole (1717–97), son of Sir Robert Walpole (Prime Minister, 1715–17, 1721–42); famous for his letters. The Berry sisters were friends and correspondents of his.]

a whole story will come together with such beautiful humour and pathos and completeness that it seems as if a great novelist had been at work, yet it is only an old actor, Tate Wilkinson,[12] remembering the strange story of Captain Jones; it is only a young subaltern [13] serving under Arthur Wellesley [14] and falling in love with a pretty girl at Lisbon; it is only Maria Allen [15] letting fall her sewing in the empty drawing-room and sighing how she wishes she had taken Dr. Burney's good advice and had never eloped with her Rishy. None of this has any value; it is negligible in the extreme; yet how absorbing it is now and again to go through the rubbish-heaps and find rings and scissors and broken noses buried in the huge past and try to piece them together while the colt gallops round the field, the woman fills her pail at the well, and the donkey brays.

But we tire of rubbish-reading in the long run. We tire of searching for what is needed to complete the half-truth which is all that the Wilkinsons, the Bunburys,[16] and the Maria Allens are able to offer us. They had not the artist's power of mastering and eliminating; they could not tell the whole truth even about their own lives; they have disfigured the story that might have been so shapely. Facts are all that they can offer us, and facts are a very inferior form of fiction. Thus the desire grows upon us to have done with half-statements and approximations; to cease from searching out the minute shades of human character, to enjoy the greater abstractness, the purer truth of fiction. Thus we create the mood, intense and generalised, unaware of detail, but stressed by some regular, recurrent beat, whose natural expression is poetry; and that is the time to read poetry when we are almost able to write it.

> Western wind, when wilt thou blow?
> The small rain down can rain.
> Christ, if my love were in my arms,
> And I in my bed again!

The impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation except that of the poem itself. What profound depths

[12] He published his *Memoirs* in 1790.]

[13] See Philip Guedalla, *Wellington* (1931), p. 232.]

[14] The Duke of Wellington.]

[15] Dr. Burney's stepdaughter. When abroad she had married Martin Rishton ('Rishy'), 1772. See Fanny Burney D'Arblay's *Early Diary*. Dr. Burney (1726–1814) was a noted musician and historian of music.]

[16] Sir Henry Edward Bunbury wrote valuable *Narratives* (1849, 1852) of the Napoleonic wars.]

we visit then—how sudden and complete is our immersion! There is nothing here to catch hold of; nothing to stay us in our flight. The illusion of fiction is gradual; its effects are prepared; but who when they read these four lines stops to ask who wrote them, or conjures up the thought of Donne's house or Sidney's secretary; or enmeshes them in the intricacy of the past and the succession of generations? The poet is always our contemporary. Our being for the moment is centred and constricted, as in any violent shock of personal emotion. Afterwards, it is true, the sensation begins to spread in wider rings through our minds; remoter senses are reached; these begin to sound and to comment and we are aware of echoes and reflections. The intensity of poetry covers an immense range of emotion. We have only to compare the force and directness of

> I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
> Only remembering that I grieve,

with the wavering modulation of

> Minutes are numbered by the fall of sands,
> As by an hour glass; the span of time
> Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it;
> An age of pleasure, revelled out, comes home
> At last, and ends in sorrow; but the life,
> Weary of riot, numbers every sand,
> Wailing in sighs, until the last drop down,
> So to conclude calamity in rest,

or place the meditative calm of

> whether we be young or old,
> Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
> Is with infinitude, and only there;
> With hope it is, hope that can never die,
> Effort, and expectation, and desire,
> And something evermore about to be,

beside the complete and inexhaustible loveliness of

> The moving Moon went up the sky,
> And no where did abide:
> Softly she was going up,
> And a star or two beside—

or the splendid fantasy of

And the woodland haunter
Shall not cease to saunter
When, far down some glade,
Of the great world's burning,
One soft flame upturning
Seems, to his discerning,
Crocus in the shade.

to bethink us of the varied art of the poet; his power to make us at once actors and spectators; his power to run his hand into character as if it were a glove, and be Falstaff or Lear; his power to condense, to widen, to state, once and for ever.

'We have only to compare'—with those words the cat is out of the bag, and the true complexity of reading is admitted. The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading; it must be completed, if we are to get the whole pleasure from a book, by another. We must pass judgment upon these multitudinous impressions; we must make of these fleeting shapes one that is hard and lasting. But not directly. Wait for the dust of reading to settle; for the conflict and the questioning to die down; walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently. It will float to the top of the mind as a whole. And the book as a whole is different from the book received currently in separate phrases. Details now fit themselves into their places. We see the shape from start to finish; it is a barn, a pig-sty, or a cathedral. Now then we can compare book with book as we compare building with building. But this act of comparison means that our attitude has changed; we are no longer the friends of the writer, but his judges; and just as we cannot be too sympathetic as friends, so as judges we cannot be too severe. Are they not criminals, books that have wasted our time and sympathy; are they not the most insidious enemies of society, corrupters, defilers, the writers of false books, faked books, books that fill the air with decay and disease? Let us then be severe in our judgments; let us compare each book with the greatest of its kind. There they hang in the mind the shapes of the books we have read solidified by the judgments we have passed on them—*Robinson Crusoe, Emma, The Return of the Native.* Compare the novels with these—even the latest and least of novels has a right to be judged with the best. And so with poetry—when the intoxication of rhythm has died down and the splendour of words has faded a visionary shape will return to us and this must be compared with

Lear, with *Phèdre*,[17] with *The Prelude*; or if not with these, with whatever is the best or seems to us to be the best in its own kind. And we may be sure that the newness of new poetry and fiction is its most superficial quality and that we have only to alter slightly, not to recast, the standards by which we have judged the old.

It would be foolish, then, to pretend that the second part of reading, to judge, to compare, is as simple as the first—to open the mind wide to the fast flocking of innumerable impressions. To continue reading without the book before you, to hold one shadow-shape against another, to have read widely enough and with enough understanding to make such comparisons alive and illuminating—that is difficult; it is still more difficult to press further and to say, 'Not only is the book of this sort, but it is of this value; here it fails; here it succeeds; this is bad; that is good.' To carry out this part of a reader's duty needs such imagination, insight, and learning that it is hard to conceive any one mind sufficiently endowed; impossible for the most self-confident to find more than the seeds of such powers in himself. Would it not be wiser, then, to remit this part of reading and to allow the critics, the gowned and furred authorities of the library, to decide the question of the book's absolute value for us? Yet how impossible! We may stress the value of sympathy; we may try to sink our own identity as we read. But we know that we cannot sympathise wholly or immerse ourselves wholly; there is always a demon in us who whispers, 'I hate, I love,' and we cannot silence him. Indeed, it is precisely because we hate and we love that our relation with the poets and novelists is so intimate that we find the presence of another person intolerable. And even if the results are abhorrent and our judgments are wrong, still our taste, the nerve of sensation that sends shocks through us, is our chief illuminant; we learn through feeling; we cannot suppress our own idiosyncrasy without impoverishing it. But as time goes on perhaps we can train our taste; perhaps we can make it submit to some control. When it has fed greedily and lavishly upon books of all sorts—poetry, fiction, history, biography—and has stopped reading and looked for long spaces upon the variety, the incongruity of the living world, we shall find that it is changing a little; it is not so greedy, it is more reflective. It will begin to bring us not merely judgments on particular books, but it will tell us that there is a quality common to certain books. Listen, it will say, what shall we call *this*? And it will read us perhaps *Lear* and then perhaps the *Agamemnon*[18] in order to bring out that common

[17] Tragedy by Racine, 1677.]
[18] Tragedy by Aeschylus, 458 B.C.]

quality. Thus, with our taste to guide us, we shall venture beyond the particular book in search of qualities that group books together; we shall give them names and thus frame a rule that brings order into our perceptions. We shall gain a further and a rarer pleasure from that discrimination. But as a rule only lives when it is perpetually broken by contact with the books themselves—nothing is easier and more stultifying than to make rules which exist out of touch with facts, in a vacuum—now at last, in order to steady ourselves in this difficult attempt, it may be well to turn to the very rare writers who are able to enlighten us upon literature as an art. Coleridge and Dryden and Johnson, in their considered criticism, the poets and novelists themselves in their unconsidered sayings, are often surprisingly relevant; they light up and solidify the vague ideas that have been tumbling in the misty depths of our minds. But they are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading. They can do nothing for us if we herd ourselves under their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge. We can only understand their ruling when it comes in conflict with our own and vanquishes it.

If this is so, if to read a book as it should be read calls for the rarest qualities of imagination, insight, and judgment, you may perhaps conclude that literature is a very complex art and that it is unlikely that we shall be able, even after a lifetime of reading, to make any valuable contribution to its criticism. We must remain readers; we shall not put on the further glory that belongs to those rare beings who are also critics. But still we have our responsibilities as readers and even our importance. The standards we raise and the judgments we pass steal into the air and become part of the atmosphere which writers breathe as they work. An influence is created which tells upon them even if it never finds its way into print. And that influence, if it were well instructed, vigorous and individual and sincere, might be of great value now when criticism is necessarily in abeyance; when books pass in review like the procession of animals in a shooting gallery, and the critic has only one second in which to load and aim and shoot and may well be pardoned if he mistakes rabbits for tigers, eagles for barndoor fowls, or misses altogether and wastes his shot upon some peaceful cow grazing in a further field. If behind the erratic gunfire of the press the author felt that there was another kind of criticism, the opinion of people reading for the love of reading, slowly and unprofessionally, and judging with great sympathy and yet with great severity, might this not improve the quality of his

work? And if by our means books were to become stronger, richer, and more varied, that would be an end worth reaching.

Yet who reads to bring about an end however desirable? Are there not some pursuits that we practise because they are good in themselves, and some pleasures that are final? And is not this among them? I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards—their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble—the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, 'Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.' [19]

[19 'You can never be wise unless you love reading' (Dr. Johnson, in a letter, 25 September 1770).]

W. Somerset Maugham

WRITER AND READER

¶ To hear what a successful writer has to say about his art is always instructive and often enjoyable. Mr. Maugham's *The Summing Up* is as agreeable a book as his best plays and novels. Naturally it is of most interest to readers acquainted with those plays and novels, but even a person who had not read *Of Human Bondage, Cakes and Ale, The Moon and Sixpence, Rain, The Circle,* or *Our Betters* would find *The Summing Up* a provocative account of a writer's development, of his artistic principles, and of his philosophical reflections. It 'is not an autobiography nor is it a book of recollections,' Mr. Maugham says. It is a summing up, written to 'give a coherent picture of my feelings and opinions.'

Since this book appeared (1938), Mr. Maugham has published *A Writer's Notebook* (1949), a different sort of book, and a less considerable one, but not to be missed by anyone who likes *The Summing Up.*

I

I HAVE NEVER had much patience with the writers who claim from the reader an effort to understand their meaning. You have only to go to the great philosophers to see that it is possible to express with lucidity the most subtle reflections. You may find it difficult to understand the thought of Hume,[1] and if you have no philosophical training its implications will doubtless escape you; but no one with any education at all can fail to understand exactly what the meaning of each sentence is. Few people have written English with more grace than Berkeley.[2] There are two sorts of obscurity that you find in writers. One is due to negligence and the

[1 Scottish philosopher and historian (1711–76). See pp. 370–75.]

[2 Irish divine and philosopher (1685–1753).]

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other to wilfulness. People often write obscurely because they have never taken the trouble to learn to write clearly. This sort of obscurity you find too often in modern philosophers, in men of science, and even in literary critics. Here it is indeed strange. You would have thought that men who passed their lives in the study of the great masters of literature would be sufficiently sensitive to the beauty of language to write if not beautifully at least with perspicuity. Yet you will find in their works sentence after sentence that you must read twice to discover the sense. Often you can only guess at it, for the writers have evidently not said what they intended.

Another cause of obscurity is that the writer is himself not quite sure of his meaning. He has a vague impression of what he wants to say, but has not, either from lack of mental power or from laziness, exactly formulated it in his mind and it is natural enough that he should not find a precise expression for a confused idea. This is due largely to the fact that many writers think, not before, but as they write. The pen originates the thought. The disadvantage of this, and indeed it is a danger against which the author must be always on his guard, is that there is a sort of magic in the written word. The idea acquires substance by taking on a visible nature, and then stands in the way of its own clarification. But this sort of obscurity merges very easily into the wilful. Some writers who do not think clearly are inclined to suppose that their thoughts have a significance greater than at first sight appears. It is flattering to believe that they are too profound to be expressed so clearly that all who run may read, and very naturally it does not occur to such writers that the fault is with their own minds which have not the faculty of precise reflection. Here again the magic of the written word obtains. It is very easy to persuade oneself that a phrase that one does not quite understand may mean a great deal more than one realizes. From this there is only a little way to go to fall into the habit of setting down one's impressions in all their original vagueness. Fools can always be found to discover a hidden sense in them. There is another form of wilful obscurity that masquerades as aristocratic exclusiveness. The author wraps his meaning in mystery so that the vulgar shall not participate in it. His soul is a secret garden into which the elect may penetrate only after overcoming a number of perilous obstacles. But this kind of obscurity is not only pretentious; it is shortsighted. For time plays it an odd trick. If the sense is meagre time reduces it to a meaningless verbiage that no one thinks of reading. This is the fate that has befallen the lucubrations of those French writers who were seduced by the example of Guillaume Apollinaire. But occasionally it throws a sharp cold light on what had seemed profound and

thus discloses the fact that these contortions of language disguised very commonplace notions. There are few of Mallarmé's [2] poems now that are not clear; one cannot fail to notice that his thought singularly lacked originality. Some of his phrases were beautiful; the materials of his verse were the poetic platitudes of his day.

II

Simplicity is not such an obvious merit as lucidity. I have aimed at it because I have no gift for richness. Within limits I admire richness in others, though I find it difficult to digest in quantity. I can read one page of Ruskin with delight, but twenty only with weariness. The rolling period, the stately epithet, the noun rich in poetic associations, the subordinate clauses that give the sentence weight and magnificence, the grandeur like that of wave following wave in the open sea; there is no doubt that in all this there is something inspiring. Words thus strung together fall on the ear like music. The appeal is sensuous rather than intellectual, and the beauty of the sound leads you easily to conclude that you need not bother about the meaning. But words are tyrannical things, they exist for their meanings, and if you will not pay attention to these, you cannot pay attention at all. Your mind wanders. This kind of writing demands a subject that will suit it. It is surely out of place to write in the grand style of inconsiderable things. No one wrote in this manner with greater success than Sir Thomas Browne, but even he did not always escape this pitfall. In the last chapter of *Hydriotaphia* the matter, which is the destiny of man, wonderfully fits the baroque splendour of the language, and here the Norwich doctor produced a piece of prose that has never been surpassed in our literature; but when he describes the finding of his urns in the same splendid manner the effect (at least to my taste) is less happy. When a modern writer is grandiloquent to tell you whether or no a little trollop shall hop into bed with a commonplace young man you are right to be disgusted.

But if richness needs gifts with which everyone is not endowed, simplicity by no means comes by nature. To achieve it needs rigid discipline. So far as I know ours is the only language in which it has been found necessary to give a name to the piece of prose which is described as the purple patch; it would not have been necessary to do so unless it were characteristic. English prose is elaborate rather than simple. It was not always so. Nothing could be more racy, straightforward and alive than the prose of Shakespeare; but it must be remembered that this was dialogue written to

[2 Apollinaire (1880–1918) and Mallarmé (1842–98) were influential French poets.]

be spoken. We do not know how he would have written if like Corneille he had composed prefaces to his plays. It may be that they would have been as euphuistic as the letters of Queen Elizabeth. But earlier prose, the prose of Sir Thomas More, for instance, is neither ponderous, flowery nor oratorical. It smacks of the English soil. To my mind King James's Bible has been a very harmful influence on English prose. I am not so stupid as to deny its great beauty. It is majestical. But the Bible is an oriental book. Its alien imagery has nothing to do with us. Those hyperboles, those luscious metaphors, are foreign to our genius. I cannot but think that not the least of the misfortunes that the Secession from Rome brought upon the spiritual life of our country is that this work for so long a period became the daily, and with many the only, reading of our people. Those rhythms, that powerful vocabulary, that grandiloquence, became part and parcel of the national sensibility. The plain, honest English speech was overwhelmed with ornament. Blunt Englishmen twisted their tongues to speak like Hebrew prophets. There was evidently something in the English temper to which this was congenial, perhaps a native lack of precision in thought, perhaps a naïve delight in fine words for their own sake, an innate eccentricity and love of embroidery, I do not know; but the fact remains that ever since, English prose has had to struggle against the tendency to luxuriance. When from time to time the spirit of the language has reasserted itself, as it did with Dryden and the writers of Queen Anne, it was only to be submerged once more by the pomposities of Gibbon and Dr. Johnson. When English prose recovered simplicity with Hazlitt, the Shelley of the letters and Charles Lamb at his best, it lost it again with De Quincey, Carlyle, Meredith and Walter Pater. It is obvious that the grand style is more striking than the plain. Indeed many people think that a style that does not attract notice is not style. They will admire Walter Pater's, but will read an essay by Matthew Arnold without giving a moment's attention to the elegance, distinction and sobriety with which he set down what he had to say.

The dictum that the style is the man is well known. It is one of those aphorisms that say too much to mean a great deal. Where is the man in Goethe, in his birdlike lyrics or in his clumsy prose? And Hazlitt? But I suppose that if a man has a confused mind he will write in a confused way, if his temper is capricious his prose will be fantastical, and if he has a quick, darting intelligence that is reminded by the matter in hand of a hundred things he will, unless he has great self-control, load his pages with metaphor and simile. There is a great difference between the magnilo-

quence of the Jacobean writers, who were intoxicated with the new wealth that had lately been brought into the language, and the turgidity of Gibbon and Dr. Johnson, who were the victims of bad theories. I can read every word that Dr. Johnson wrote with delight, for he had good sense, charm and wit. No one could have written better if he had not wilfully set himself to write in the grand style. He knew good English when he saw it. No critic has praised Dryden's prose more aptly. He said of him that he appeared to have no art other than that of expressing with clearness what he thought with vigour. And one of his Lives [4] he finished with the words: 'Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.' But when he himself sat down to write it was with a very different aim. He mistook the orotund for the dignified. He had not the good breeding to see that simplicity and naturalness are the truest marks of distinction.

For to write good prose is an affair of good manners. It is, unlike verse, a civil art. Poetry is baroque. Baroque is tragic, massive and mystical. It is elemental. It demands depth and insight. I cannot but feel that the prose writers of the baroque period, the authors of King James's Bible, Sir Thomas Browne, Glanville,[5] were poets who had lost their way. Prose is a rococo art. It needs taste rather than power, decorum rather than inspiration and vigour rather than grandeur. Form for the poet is the bit and the bridle without which (unless you are an acrobat) you cannot ride your horse; but for the writer of prose it is the chassis without which your car does not exist. It is not an accident that the best prose was written when rococo with its elegance and moderation, at its birth attained its greatest excellence. For rococo was evolved when baroque had become declamatory and the world, tired of the stupendous, asked for restraint. It was the natural expression of persons who valued a civilized life. Humour, tolerance and horse sense made the great tragic issues that had preoccupied the first half of the seventeenth century seem excessive. The world was a more comfortable place to live in and perhaps for the first time in centuries the cultivated classes could sit back and enjoy their leisure. It has been said that good prose should resemble the conversation of a well-bred man. Conversation is only possible when men's minds are free from pressing anxieties.

[4 'Addison,' in *Lives of the English Poets.*]

[5 Seventeenth-century divine. His *Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661) is remembered because it contains the story from which Matthew Arnold made his poem 'The Scholar Gipsy.']

Their lives must be reasonably secure and they must have no grave concern about their souls. They must attach importance to the refinements of civilization. They must value courtesy, they must pay attention to their persons (and have we not also been told that good prose should be like the clothes of a well-dressed man, appropriate but unobtrusive?), they must fear to bore, they must be neither flippant nor solemn, but always apt; and they must look upon 'enthusiasm' with a critical glance. This is a soil very suitable for prose. It is not to be wondered at that it gave a fitting opportunity for the appearance of the best writer of prose that our modern world has seen, Voltaire. The writers of English, perhaps owing to the poetic nature of the language, have seldom reached the excellence that seems to have come so naturally to him. It is in so far as they have approached the ease, sobriety and precision of the great French masters that they are admirable.

III

I have read that Anatole France tried to use only the constructions and the vocabulary of the writers of the seventeenth century whom he so greatly admired. I do not know if it is true. If so, it may explain why there is some lack of vitality in his beautiful and simple French. But simplicity is false when you do not say a thing that you should say because you cannot say it in a certain way. One should write in the manner of one's period. The language is alive and constantly changing; to try to write like the authors of a distant past can only give rise to artificiality. I should not hesitate to use the common phrases of the day, knowing that their vogue was ephemeral, or slang, though aware that in ten years it might be incomprehensible, if they gave vividness and actuality. If the style has a classical form it can support the discreet use of a phraseology that has only a local and temporary aptness. I would sooner a writer were vulgar than mincing; for life is vulgar, and it is life he seeks.

I think that we English authors have much to learn from our fellow authors in America. For American writing has escaped the tyranny of King James's Bible and American writers have been less affected by the old masters whose mode of writing is part of our culture. They have formed their style, unconsciously perhaps, more directly from the living speech that surrounds them; and at its best it has a directness, a vitality and a drive that give our more urbane manner an air of languor. It has been an advantage to American writers, many of whom at one time or another have been reporters, that their journalism has been written in a more trenchant,

nervous, graphic English than ours. For we read the newspaper now as our ancestors read the Bible. Not without profit either; for the newspaper, especially when it is of the popular sort, offers us a part of experience that we writers cannot afford to miss. It is raw material straight from the knacker's yard,[6] and we are stupid if we turn up our noses because it smells of blood and sweat. We cannot, however willingly we would, escape the influence of this workaday prose. But the journalism of a period has very much the same style; it might all have been written by the same hand; it is impersonal. It is well to counteract its effect by reading of another kind. One can do this only by keeping constantly in touch with the writing of an age not too remote from one's own. So can one have a standard by which to test one's own style and an ideal which in one's modern way one can aim at. For my part the two writers I have found most useful to study for this purpose are Hazlitt and Cardinal Newman. I would try to imitate neither. Hazlitt can be unduly rhetorical; and sometimes his decoration is as fussy as Victorian Gothic. Newman can be a trifle flowery. But at their best both are admirable. Time has little touched their style; it is almost contemporary. Hazlitt is vivid, bracing and energetic; he has strength and liveliness. You feel the man in his phrases, not the mean, querulous, disagreeable man that he appeared to the world that knew him, but the man within of his own ideal vision. (And the man within us is as true in reality as the man, pitiful and halting, of our outward seeming.) Newman had an exquisite grace, music, playful sometimes and sometimes grave, a woodland beauty of phrase, dignity and mellowness. Both wrote with extreme lucidity. Neither is quite as simple as the purest taste demands. Here I think Matthew Arnold excels them. Both had a wonderful balance of phrase and both knew how to write sentences pleasing to the eye. Both had an ear of extreme sensitiveness.

If anyone could combine their merits in the manner of writing of the present day he would write as well as it is possible for anyone to write.

IV

Young persons, who are anxious to write, sometimes pay me the compliment of asking me to tell them of certain books necessary for them to read. I do. They seldom read them, for they seem to have little curiosity. They do not care what their predecessors have done. They think they know everything that it is necessary to know of the art of fiction when they have read two or three novels by Mrs. Woolf, one by E. M. Forster, several by

[6 Slaughterhouse for useless horses.]

D. H. Lawrence and, oddly enough, the *Forsyte Saga*. It is true that contemporary literature has a vividness of appeal that classical literature can never have and it is well for a young writer to know what his contemporaries are writing about and how. But there are fashions in literature and it is not easy to tell what intrinsic value there is in a style of writing that happens to be the vogue at the moment. An acquaintance with the great works of the past serves as a very good standard of comparison. I have sometimes wondered whether it is due to their ignorance that many young writers, notwithstanding their facility and cleverness, their skilful technique, so frequently fizzle out. They write two or three books that are not only brilliant, but mature, and then they are done for. But that is not what enriches the literature of a country. For that you must have writers who can produce not just two or three books, but a great body of work. Of course it will be uneven, because so many fortunate circumstances must go together to produce a masterpiece; but a masterpiece is more likely to come as the culminating point of a laborious career than as the lucky fluke of untaught genius. The writer can only be fertile if he renews himself and he can only renew himself if his soul is constantly enriched by fresh experience. There is no more fruitful source of this than the enchanting exploration of the great literatures of the past.

For the production of a work of art is not the result of a miracle. It requires preparation. The soil, be it ever so rich, must be fed. By taking thought, by deliberate effort, the artist must enlarge, deepen and diversify his personality. Then the soil must lie fallow. Like the bride of Christ, the artist waits for the illumination that shall bring forth a new spiritual life. He goes about his ordinary avocations with patience; the subconscious does its mysterious business; and then, suddenly springing, you might think from nowhere, the idea is produced. But like the corn [7] that was sown on stony ground it may easily wither away; it must be tended with anxious care. All the power of the artist's mind must be set to work on it, all his technical skill, all his experience, and whatever he has in him of character and individuality, so that with infinite pains he may present it with the completeness that is fitting to it.

But I am not impatient with the young when, only at their request, I insist, I advise them to read Shakespeare and Swift, and they tell me that they read *Gulliver's Travels* in their nursery and *Henry IV* at school; and if they find *Vanity Fair* unendurable and *Anna Karenina* footling it is their own affair. No reading is worth while unless you enjoy it. There is at

[7 Matthew, xiii, 3–23.]

least this to be said for them that they do not suffer from the self-conceit of knowledge. They are not withdrawn by a wide culture from sympathy with the common run of men who are after all their material. They are nearer to their fellows and the art they practise is not a mystery, but a craft on the same footing as any other. They write novels and plays as unaffectedly as other men build motorcars. This is much to the good. For the artist, the writer especially, in the solitariness of his own mind constructs a world that is different from other men's; the idiosyncrasy that makes him a writer separates him from them and the paradox emerges that though his aim is to describe them truthfully his gift prevents him from knowing them as they really are. It is as though he wanted urgently to see a certain thing and by the act of looking at it drew before it a veil that obscured it. The writer stands outside the very action he is engaged in. He is the comedian who never quite loses himself in the part, for he is at the same time spectator and actor. It is all very well to say that poetry is emotion remembered in tranquillity; but a poet's emotion is specific, a poet's rather than a man's, and it is never quite disinterested. That is why women with their instinctive common sense have so often found the love of poets unsatisfying. It may be that the writers of the present day, who seem to be so much nearer to their raw material, ordinary men among ordinary men, rather than artists in an alien crowd, may break down the barrier that their peculiar gift cannot but raise and so come nearer to the plain truth than has ever been done before. But then you have to make up your mind about the relations between truth and art.

Joseph Conrad

Preface to THE NIGGER OF THE 'NARCISSUS'

¶ Few great artists have meditated more seriously or more wisely upon their art than Conrad did. He knew which novelists had most to teach him. But he knew, too, what he wanted to do as a writer, and his doctrine of art was his own; it came out of his own character and his own experience. 'My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*. That—and no more, and it is everything. If I succeed, you shall find there according to your deserts: encouragement, consolation, fear, charm—all you demand and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask.'

The best affirmation of Conrad's artistic creed was written near the beginning of his career. It appeared at the end of *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus,'* which was published serially in 1897 (his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*, came out in 1895). This postscript was later published as a preface to editions of *The Nigger*.

A WORK that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line. And art itself may be defined as a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect. It is an attempt to find in its forms, in its colours, in its light, in its shadows, in the aspects of matter and in the facts of life, what of each is fundamental, what is enduring and essential—their one illuminating and convincing quality—the very truth of their existence. The artist, then, like the thinker or the scientist, seeks the truth and makes his appeal. Impressed by the aspect of the world the thinker plunges into ideas, the scientist into facts—whence, presently, emerging they make their

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appeal to those qualities of our being that fit us best for the hazardous enterprise of living. They speak authoritatively to our common-sense, to our intelligence, to our desire of peace or to our desire of unrest; not seldom to our prejudices, sometimes to our fears, often to our egoism—but always to our credulity. And their words are heard with reverence, for their concern is with weighty matters; with the cultivation of our minds and the proper care of our bodies: with the attainment of our ambitions: with the perfection of the means and the glorification of our precious aims.

It is otherwise with the artist.

Confronted by the same enigmatical spectacle the artist descends within himself, and in that lonely region of stress and strife, if he be deserving and fortunate, he finds the terms of his appeal. His appeal is made to our less obvious capacities: to that part of our nature which, because of the war-like conditions of existence, is necessarily kept out of sight within the more resisting and hard qualities—like the vulnerable body within a steel armour. His appeal is less loud, more profound, less distinct, more stirring—and sooner forgotten. Yet its effect endures forever. The changing wisdom of successive generations discards ideas, questions facts, demolishes theories. But the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom; to that in us which is a gift and not an acquisition—and, therefore, more permanently enduring. He speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives: to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain: to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation—and to the subtle but invincible, conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity—the dead to the living and the living to the unborn.

It is only some such train of thought, or rather of feeling, that can in a measure explain the aim of the attempt, made in the tale which follows, to present an unrestful episode in the obscure lives of a few individuals out of all the disregarded multitude of the bewildered, the simple and the voiceless. For, if there is any part of truth in the belief confessed above, it becomes evident that there is not a place of splendour or a dark corner of the earth that does not deserve, if only a passing glance of wonder and pity. The motive, then, may be held to justify the matter of the work; but this preface, which is simply an avowal of endeavour, cannot end here—for the avowal is not yet complete.

Fiction—if it at all aspires to be art—appeals to temperament. And in

truth it must be, like painting, like music, like all art, the appeal of one temperament to all the other innumerable temperaments whose subtle and resistless power endows passing events with their true meaning, and creates the moral, the emotional atmosphere of the place and time. Such an appeal to be effective must be an impression conveyed through the senses; and, in fact, it cannot be made in any other way, because temperament, whether individual or collective, is not amenable to persuasion. All art, therefore, appeals primarily to the senses, and the artistic aim when expressing itself in written words must also make its appeal through the senses, if its high desire is to reach the secret spring of responsive emotions. It must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the colour of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music—which is the art of arts. And it is only through complete, unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance; it is only through an unremitting never-discouraged care for the shape and ring of sentences that an approach can be made to plasticity, to colour; and the light of magic suggestiveness may be brought to play for an evanescent instant over the commonplace surface of words: of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of careless usage.

The sincere endeavour to accomplish that creative task, to go as far on that road as his strength will carry him, to go undeterred by faltering, weariness or reproach, is the only valid justification for the worker in prose. And if his conscience is clear, his answer to those who, in the fulness of a wisdom which looks for immediate profit, demand specifically to be edified, consoled, amused; who demand to be promptly improved, or encouraged, or frightened, or shocked, or charmed, must run thus:—My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*. That—and no more, and it is everything. If I succeed, you shall find there according to your deserts: encouragement, consolation, fear, charm—all you demand and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask.

To snatch in a moment of courage, from the remorseless rush of time, a passing phase of life, is only the beginning of the task. The task approached in tenderness and faith is to hold up unquestioningly, without choice and without fear, the rescued fragment before all eyes and in the light of a sincere mood. It is to show its vibration, its colour, its form; and through its movement, its form, and its colour, reveal the substance of its truth—disclose its inspiring secret: the stress and passion within the core of each convincing moment. In a single-minded attempt of that kind, if one be deserving and fortunate, one may perchance attain to such clearness of

sincerity that at last the presented vision of regret or pity, of terror or mirth, shall awaken in the hearts of the beholders that feeling of unavoidable solidarity; of the solidarity in mysterious origin, in toil, in joy, in hope, in uncertain fate, which binds men to each other and all mankind to the visible world.

It is evident that he who, rightly or wrongly, holds by the convictions expressed above cannot be faithful to any one of the temporary formulas of his craft. The enduring part of them—the truth which each only imperfectly veils—should abide with him as the most precious of his possessions, but they all: Realism, Romanticism, Naturalism, even the unofficial sentimentalism (which like the poor,[1] is exceedingly difficult to get rid of,) all these gods must, after a short period of fellowship, abandon him—even on the very threshold of the temple—to the stammerings of his conscience and to the outspoken consciousness of the difficulties of his work. In that uneasy solitude the supreme cry of Art for Art, itself, loses the exciting ring of its apparent immorality. It sounds far off. It has ceased to be a cry, and is heard only as a whisper, often incomprehensible, but at times and faintly encouraging.

Sometimes, stretched at ease in the shade of a roadside tree, we watch the motions of a labourer in a distant field, and after a time, begin to wonder languidly as to what the fellow may be at. We watch the movements of his body, the waving of his arms, we see him bend down, stand up, hesitate, begin again. It may add to the charm of an idle hour to be told the purpose of his exertions. If we know he is trying to lift a stone, to dig a ditch, to uproot a stump, we look with a more real interest at his efforts; we are disposed to condone the jar of his agitation upon the restfulness of the landscape; and even, if in a brotherly frame of mind, we may bring ourselves to forgive his failure. We understood his object, and, after all, the fellow has tried, and perhaps he had not the strength—and perhaps he had not the knowledge. We forgive, go on our way—and forget.

And so it is with the workman of art. Art is long and life is short,[2] and success is very far off. And thus, doubtful of strength to travel so far, we talk a little about the aim—the aim of art, which, like life itself, is inspiring, difficult—obscured by mists. It is not in the clear logic of a triumphant conclusion; it is not in the unveiling of one of those heartless secrets which are called the Laws of Nature. It is not less great, but only more difficult.

To arrest, for the space of a breath, the hands busy about the work of

[1 John, xii, 8.]

[2 This maxim is attributed to Hippocrates, fifth century B.C.]

the earth, and compel men entranced by the sight of distant goals to glance for a moment at the surrounding vision of form and colour, of sunshine and shadows; to make them pause for a look, for a sigh, for a smile—such is the aim, difficult and evanescent, and reserved only for a very few to achieve. But sometimes, by the deserving and the fortunate, even that task is accomplished. And when it is accomplished—behold!—all the truth of life is there: a moment of vision, a sigh, a smile—and the return to an eternal rest.

Robert E. Sherwood

HOW F. D. R.'S SPEECHES WERE WRITTEN

¶ In the notes to his *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* (a scene from which is reprinted on pp. 499–504 of this book) Mr. Sherwood, reminding us that after Lincoln's election in 1860 Stephen A. Douglas assisted in the composition of the First Inaugural Address, observes that 'There was ghost-writing in high places even then.' For nearly five years during the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mr. Sherwood was playing the part of a useful ghost himself. Ghost-writing in high places is going to vex future historians, who will have to guess who wrote a statesman's works, but historians of the Roosevelt era will get invaluable assistance from Mr. Sherwood's record of F. D. R.'s speeches and how they were written. It seems clear that the main ideas and many of the memorable phrases of those speeches were the President's own; the task of working them into coherent discourse was performed by the 'ghosts.'

These pages are from Mr. Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins* (1948), probably the most important of the numerous revelations so far published of the inner history of the Roosevelt administration.

As I HAVE SAID, Hopkins did not originate policy and then convince Roosevelt it was right. He had too much intelligence as well as respect for his Chief to attempt the role of mastermind. He made it his job to provide a sounding board for discussions of the best means of attaining the goals that the President set for himself. Roosevelt liked to think out loud, but his greatest difficulty was finding a listener who was both understanding and entirely trustworthy. That was Hopkins—and this was the process that Rosenman [1] and I watched over and over again in the prepa-

[1 Judge Samuel I. Rosenman of New York, one of the President's most trusted unofficial aides.]

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ration of the speeches and messages in which Roosevelt made known his policies to the nation and to the world. The work that was put in on these speeches was prodigious, for Roosevelt with his acute sense of history knew that all of those words would constitute the bulk of the estate that he would leave to posterity and that his ultimate measurement would depend on the reconciliation of what he said with what he did. Therefore, utmost importance was attached to his public utterances and utmost care exercised in their preparation. In the previous chapter I have mentioned the Cleveland speech [2] which took a night and a day to prepare, but such speed in preparation was unusual, even for a campaign speech, which was necessarily a creature of the moment. The important speeches sometimes required a week or more of hard labor, with a considerable amount of planning before the intensive work started. I don't know what was the record number of distinct drafts of a single speech but it must have been well over twelve, and in the final draft there might not be one sentence that had survived from the first draft. There were of course numerous routine speeches of a ceremonial nature which were not considered of major significance—but, in wartime, even in these Roosevelt was aware that he had a world audience and that everything he said might be material for the propaganda which flooded the air waves. If such a speech were opening a Bond Drive, a first draft would be prepared in the Treasury Department; if it were launching a new campaign for funds for the Red Cross, the Community Chest, National Brotherhood Week, etc., the organization concerned would send in suggestions as to what it wanted the President to say. This submitted material was almost always so rhetorical, so studiously literary, that it did not sound at all like Roosevelt's normal style and it had to be subjected to the process of simplification or even oversimplification that he demanded. He was happiest when he could express himself in the homeliest, even tritest phrases, such as 'common or garden,' 'clear as crystal,' 'rule of thumb,' 'neither here nor there,' 'armchair strategists,' or 'simple as ABC.'

When he wanted to give a speech for some important purpose, whether it was connected with a special occasion or not, he would discuss it first at length with Hopkins, Rosenman and me, telling us what particular points he wanted to make, what sort of audience he wished primarily to reach and what the maximum word limit was to be (he generally put it far too low). He would dictate pages and pages, approaching his main topic, sometimes hitting it squarely on the nose with terrific impact, sometimes rambling so

[2 During the 1940 Presidential campaign.]

far away from it that he couldn't get back, in which case he would say, 'Well—something along those lines—you boys can fix it up.' I think he greatly enjoyed these sessions, when he felt free to say anything he pleased, uttering all kinds of personal insults, with the knowledge that none of it need appear in the final version. When he stopped dictating, because another appointment was due or it was time to go to bed, we would go to the Cabinet Room in the West Wing and start reading through all the assembled material. The President kept a special 'Speech Folder' into which he put newspaper clippings that he had marked, indicating either his approval of some sentiment expressed or indignation that such falsehood should get into print (he could not always remember what the marking signified). There were also all sorts of letters from all sorts of people, known and unknown, containing suggestions as to what he should say, and there were random bits of his own dictation, thoughts that had suddenly occurred to him during preceding days and weeks which might be useful sometime. All of this material was sifted, and added to the newly dictated material with the aid of scissors and paste and a few connecting clauses, until something resembling a coherent speech was put together and fair copies of it made. It was generally two or three times too long. When the President was free to see us again, we handed him this draft and he looked immediately at the last page to see its number, whereupon he announced that at least ninety-two per cent of it must be cut. He then started to read through it, pausing frequently to dictate 'Insert A,' 'Insert G,' etc. Each time he decided to dictate something he said, 'Grace—take a law,' a line he gladly borrowed from the Kaufman-Hart-Rodgers musical show, 'I'd Rather Be Right,' in which George M. Cohan played the part of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The President himself had never seen this show but he enjoyed what he heard about it.

When he had finished dictating inserts, the speech was far longer than it had been and farther from any coherent form. We then returned to the Cabinet Room and started a second draft. This process went on day and night. Sometimes, while the work was in progress, events would intervene —for instance: on a Sunday evening in July, 1943, we were at Shangri-la [8] finishing up a speech devoted primarily to home-front problems—price stabilization, rationing, manpower, etc.—when news came of the fall of Benito Mussolini, and the speech had to be started all over again; this, however, was a pleasure for all.

Most of Roosevelt's work on speeches was done during the evening. We

[8 The President's country lodge in Maryland.]

would gather for the standard cocktail ceremony in the Oval Study at 7:15. The President sat behind his desk, the tray before him. He mixed the ingredients with the deliberation of an alchemist but with what appeared to be a certain lack of precision since he carried on a steady conversation while doing it. His bourbon old-fashioneds were excellent, but I did not care for his Martinis, in which he used two kinds of vermouth (when he had them) and sometimes a dash of absinthe. Hopkins occasionally talked him into making Scotch whisky sours, although he didn't really like them. The usual canapés of cream cheese or fish paste on small circles of toast were served, also popcorn. Roosevelt was an extremely mild drinker—he did not have wine with meals except at large, formal dinners, and I don't recall ever having seen him drink brandy or other liqueurs or a highball; but he certainly loved the cocktail period and the stream of small talk that went with it.

Dinner was generally served in the study about 7:45. It ill becomes a guest to say so, but the White House cuisine did not enjoy a very high reputation. The food was plentiful and, when simple, good—but the chef had a tendency to run amuck on fancy salads. There was one favorite in particular which resembled the productions one finds in the flossier type of tea shoppe: it was a mountain of mayonnaise, slices of canned pineapple, carved radishes, etc. It was served frequently and each time the President merely looked at it and shook his head and murmured sadly, 'No, thank you.' Once when this happened, Sam Rosenman laughed and said, 'Mr. President, you've been in this House for eight years, and for all I know you'll be here eight years more—but they'll never give up trying to persuade you to find out what that salad really tastes like.' Roosevelt was always grateful for delicacies, particularly game, which friends sent in to enliven his diet. I never heard him complain about food or anything else in the way of service, but he did complain bitterly about the security supervision of every article of food sent to him. Once he said, 'I happen to be very fond of roasted peanuts. But if somebody wanted to send me a bag of peanuts, the Secret Service would have to X-ray it and the Department of Agriculture would have to open every shell and test every kernel for poison or high explosives. So, to save trouble, they would just throw the bag away and never tell me about it.' Deeply moved by this, Rosenman and I went to the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street and bought a large bag of peanuts and sneaked it in to the President. He put it under his coat and ate the whole contents.

After dinner he sat on the couch to the left of the fireplace, his feet up

on the stool specially built for him, and started reading the latest speech draft. Grace Tully sat next to him, taking more dictation until Dorothy Brady or Toinette Bachelder came in to relieve her. Sometimes Roosevelt read the speech out loud, to see how it sounded, for every word was judged not by its appearance in print but by its effectiveness over the radio. About 10 o'clock, a tray with drinks was brought in. The President sometimes had a glass of beer but more often a horse's neck (ginger ale and lemon peel). He was by now yawning and losing interest in the speech and he usually went to bed before eleven. During these evening sessions, the telephone almost never rang. Now and then a dispatch might be brought in, which Roosevelt would read and pass on to Hopkins without a word or a change of expression, but otherwise one would have thought this house the most peaceful, remote retreat in a war-wracked world.

After leaving the Study, we would spend most of the night in the Cabinet Room producing another draft which would go to the President with his breakfast in the morning. Sometimes we would send a call for help to Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, who would come in late at night to help bring a diffuse speech into focus. More than once, before the White House windows were blacked out after Pearl Harbor, Mrs. Roosevelt saw the lights burning in the Cabinet Room at 3:00 A.M. and telephoned down to tell us we were working too hard and should go to bed. Of course, the fact was that she herself was sitting up working at that hour.

We had to get up early in the morning to be ready for summons in case the President wanted to work on the speech before his first appointment. We generally had breakfast on trays in Hopkins' room and it was rarely a cheerful gathering. The draft that had been completed a few hours previously looked awful in the morning light and the judgment on it that we most often expressed was, 'I only hope that the reputation of Franklin Delano Roosevelt does not depend on this terrible speech.'

After the session in the President's bedroom, Rosenman and I went over to the Cabinet Room to await the summons. The signal bells announced the President's approach to his office and we stood by the French windows leading out to the colonnade and watched him go by in his armless, cushionless, uncomfortable wheelchair, pushed by his Negro valet, Chief Petty Officer Arthur Prettyman. Accompanying him was the detail of Secret Service men, some of them carrying the large, overflowing wire baskets of papers on which he had been working the night before and the dispatches that had come in that morning. When Fala came abreast of the wheelchair as it rolled along, Roosevelt would reach down and scratch his neck. This

progress to the day's work by a crippled man was a sight to stir the most torpid imagination; for here was a clear glimpse of the Roosevelt that the people believed him to be—the chin up, the cigarette holder tilted at what was always described as 'a jaunty angle' and the air of irrepressible confidence that whatever problems the day might bring, he would find a way to handle them. The fact that this confidence was not always justified made it none the less authentic and reassuring.

When I saw the President go by on these mornings, I felt that nobody who worked for him had a right to feel tired. That was not an unusual feeling: it went all through the wartime Administration in Washington, extending to all sorts of people, some of whom disagreed with him politically and most of whom never laid eyes on him. It was, I think, Henry Pringle [4] who, when working in a government agency shortly after Pearl Harbor, suggested as a wall slogan for bureaucrats' offices: EXHAUSTION IS NOT ENOUGH!

The speeches had to be checked and counterchecked with various departments and agencies, most of all with the Army and Navy; many speeches that were sent over to the War Department came back with corrections and suggestions penciled in the handwriting of General Marshall. The work of the so-called 'ghost writers' consisted largely of the painstaking, arduous verification of facts and figures. We felt, 'The *New York Times* can make mistakes—the *World Almanac* can make mistakes—but the President of the United States must not make mistakes.' This constant thought imposed a harrowing responsibility. After 1940, the White House had its resident statistician—Isador Lubin, the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, who was constantly available and incalculably valuable to Roosevelt and to Hopkins in checking every decimal point.

Although the speeches were usually seen in advance by the War and Navy Departments and sometimes (though not always) by the State Department, they were kept otherwise under close wraps of secrecy. There were always various eminent officials who wanted to know what the President was going to say. They were particularly anxious to make sure that he was going to include the several pages of material that they had submitted on their own particular departments. They knew they could get nowhere with Hopkins in their quest of inside information; so they concentrated on Rosenman, who would fob them off with the misstatement that, 'The President is weighing that in his mind right now.' We used to derive enjoyment from the thought of various important personages around

[4 Journalist and biographer.]

Washington listening to the Presidential broadcasts and then, as the strains of 'The Star Spangled Banner' broke out at the finish, cursing, 'He didn't use a *word* of that stuff that I sent him.' It was even more enjoyable to picture the amazed expression of some anonymous citizen in Council Bluffs who had written a letter to the President and then heard something from that letter incorporated in a Fireside Chat.

On the final two days of preparation of a speech Roosevelt would really buckle down to serious work and then what had seemed a formless, aimless mess of words would begin to assume tautness and sharpness. He studied every implication for its effect on various groups in the nation and on allies and enemies and neutrals. He paid a great deal of attention to the punctuation, not for its correctness but for its aid or hindrance to him in reading the speech aloud. Grace Tully liked to insert a great many commas, and the President loved to strike them out. He once said to her, 'Grace! How many times do I have to tell you not to waste the taxpayers' commas?' He liked dashes, which were visual aids, and hated semicolons and parentheses. I don't think he ever used the sonorous phrase, 'And I quote—.' If he had to have quotation marks, he did not refer to them, knowing they would appear in the printed version.

In the final draft of a speech, every word was counted and Roosevelt finally decided the precise number that he would be able to crowd into thirty minutes. His sense of timing was phenomenal. His normal rate was 100 words a minute, but he would say, 'There are some paragraphs in this speech that I can take quickly so I can handle a total of 3,150 words'—and that did not mean 3,162. At other times, he would feel that he had to be deliberate in his delivery and the words would have to be cut to 2,800. This cutting was the most difficult work of all because, by the time we had come to the ninth or tenth draft, we felt sure the speech had been boiled down to the ultimate monosyllable. Roosevelt's estimates were rarely off more than a split second on his broadcasts. Speeches before audiences were difficult to estimate, of course, because crowd responses are unpredictable, but he was generally accurate even on these. In the Teamsters' speech,[5] the roars of laughter and applause were so frequent and prolonged that the speech ran some fifteen minutes overtime, but that did not upset Roosevelt at all despite the fact that, since it was a campaign speech, the Democratic National Committee had to pay the heavy excess charges.

When a speech was finally closed up, about six o'clock in the evening,

[5 A speech delivered during the 1944 campaign at a dinner of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in Washington.]

the President was wheeled over to Dr. McIntire's office for the sinus treatments that were a regular part of his day. Then he went upstairs for cocktails and dinner, after which he chatted or worked on his correspondence or his stamp albums, without seeming to give much attention to the final reading copy of his speech which was typed on special limp paper, to avoid rustling noises as he turned the pages, and bound in a black leather loose-leaf folder. But when he started to broadcast he seemed to know it by heart. When he looked down at his manuscript, he was usually not looking at the words he was then speaking but at the next paragraph to determine where he would put his pauses and which of his large assortment of inflections he would employ. As one who has had considerable experience in the theater, I marveled at the unfailing precision with which he made his points, his grace in reconciling the sublime with the ridiculous, as though he had been rehearsing these lines for weeks and delivering them before audiences for months. Those who worked with him on speeches were all too well aware that he was no slave to his prepared text. He could and did ad-lib at will, and that was something which always amused him greatly. During the days of preparation, Hopkins, Rosenman and I would sometimes unite in opposition to some line, usually of a jocose nature, which the President wanted to include. It was our duty to make every effort to avoid being yes men and so we kept at him until we had persuaded him that the line should be cut out; but, if he really liked it well enough, he would keep it in mind and then ad-lib it, and later would be full of apologies to us for his 'unfortunate slip of the tongue.' He was almost always immensely good humored about the arguments we offered him—he liked to appear persecuted and complain that 'They won't let me say anything of my own in my own speech.' There were times, however, when he was worn out and angered by something else and then he would be cantankerous with us because we were the only convenient targets; we learned that on such occasions it was best to shut up and to revive our arguments later after he had had some rest and felt more amiable. Referring again to my experience in the theater, I can testify that he was normally the most untemperamental genius I have ever encountered. That is one of the reasons why he was able to sleep so well at night.

During the campaign of 1940, Carl Sandburg came to call at the White House and had a long talk with the President who said to him, 'Why don't you go down to Missy LeHand's office and dictate some of the things you've just been saying to me?' Sandburg did so and said, among other things:

The Gettysburg speech of Abraham Lincoln or the farewell address of Robert E. Lee to his Army, would be, in our American street talk, 'just a lot of words,' unless we look behind the words, unless we see words throwing long shadows—and out of the shadows arises the mystery of man consecrated to mystic causes. . .

If we go back across American history we find that as a nation among the other nations of the world this country has never kept silence as to what it stands for. For a hundred and fifty years and more we have told the world that the American Republic stands for a certain way of life. No matter what happened to the map of Europe, no matter what changes of government and systems went on there, no matter what old thrones and dynasties crashed to make way for something else, no matter what new philosophies and orbits of influence were proclaimed, America never kept silence.

Despite his strenuous avoidance of solemnity, and the frivolousness and irrelevance of his small talk when he was off the record, Roosevelt knew that he was the voice of America to the rest of the world. In the darkest days before and after Pearl Harbor he expressed the hopes of civilized humanity. Churchill's was the gallant voice of the unconquerable warrior, but Roosevelt's was the voice of liberation, the reassurance of the dignity of man. His buoyancy, his courage, his confidence renewed hope in those who feared that they had forever lost it. Roosevelt seemed to take his speeches lightly, but no one knew better than he that, once he had the microphone before him, he was speaking for the eternal record—his words were, as Sandburg said, 'throwing long shadows.'

In a foreword to an anthology of Roosevelt speeches, Harry Hopkins wrote:

Roosevelt made many great speeches. But some were not so good. He occasionally did not try, because he was frankly bored. A President of the United States has to speak many times on subjects which do not interest him. He would prefer to read a book or go to bed.

This was particularly true of the last two years of Roosevelt's life, when he made just as few speeches as possible and rarely appeared to take a great deal of interest in those that he did make. The time of challenge when words were the only weapons had at last passed and great and terrible events were speaking for themselves. He seemed to relax to save himself for the time when events would cease and words would again become the instruments of international politics.

THE STORY OF JOSEPH

¶ It is safe to assert that more new English translations of the Bible were published in the first half of the twentieth century than in the preceding three hundred years. In some respects the gap between the King James Bible of 1611 and its complete revision in 1885 was fortunate, for if the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century versions were by modern standards of scholarship defective, they were nevertheless felicitous in style. Tyndale and Coverdale had an instinctive feeling for language as well as a passion to 'search the scriptures'; perhaps the two things are not unrelated. These men and the makers of the Geneva version of 1560 and Rheims-Douai of 1582–1609, and above all the committee that gave us the so-called Authorized or King James Bible of 1611 made the Bible popular literature in English.

From the present standpoint all these translations had very serious faults. Textual criticism and textual and archaeological discoveries in the past century have so vastly advanced our knowledge of the Bible that new translations or drastic revisions become imperative. However splendid the phrases and rhythms of Tudor or Jacobean versions, accuracy and an idiom more intelligible to the plain reader of the present time are yet greater matters if the Bible is to be read and valued as it needs to be.

Of the completely fresh translations of the whole Bible into English in the twentieth century, probably the most successful are those by Dr. James Moffatt, a Scot; by Monsignor Ronald Knox, an Englishman; and by five American and Canadian scholars (Professors J. M. Powis Smith, Edgar J. Goodspeed, Theophile J. Meek, Alexander R. Gordon, and Leroy Waterman), who called theirs the 'American' translation. Concerning their rendering of the Old Testament (1927), Dr. Smith writes: 'It tries to be American in the sense that the writings of Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Wilson are American. This does not imply any limitation of our mother-tongue, but if anything an enrichment of it. Least of all does it mean that the translation is for Americans only; it aims at being easily understood wherever English is spoken. In general we have been loyal to the Hebrew in its use of symbolic and figurative language; occasionally where such figures would not be clear to the reader, we have translated the figure into more familiar terms.'

The Authorized or King James Version of the Bible was the work of a committee—one of the very few products of committee labor to have literary dis-

tinction. It was suggested in 1604 by a Puritan divine, Dr. Reynolds, and sponsored by the King. One subcommittee, as we should call it, worked at the project in London, another in Oxford, and a third in Cambridge. The fourth subcommittee, chosen from these three, revised their draft. The book was published in 1611.

The King James Version was based directly on the earlier translations of William Tyndale (1525ff.) and Miles Coverdale (1535), and on the revision of Coverdale's translation, the 'Great Bible' (1539). The Geneva Bible of 1560, which was the favorite version with the Puritans, and the Roman Catholic translation, the Rheims-Douai of 1582–1609, were also consulted by the makers of the Authorized Version. But the Tyndale and Coverdale translations were by far their most important aids.

I

JOSEPH, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

Now Israel[1] loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them,

'Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: for, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.'

[1 Jacob.]

FROM the Authorized Version of 1611.

II

AT THE age of seventeen Joseph used to accompany his brothers in looking after the flocks, being a mere lad alongside the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he was the son of his old age; so he made a long cloak for him. When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of his brothers, they hated him, and could not say a good word about him.

Joseph had a dream which he told to his brothers, so that they hated him all the more. He said to them,

'Listen to this dream that I have had. While we were binding sheaves in the field, my sheaf rose up and remained standing, while your sheaves gathered round it, and made obeisance to my sheaf!'

FROM *The Complete Bible, An American Translation*, 1931. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

And his brethren said to him,

'Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?'

And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said,

'Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.'

And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him,

'What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?'

And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph,

'Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them.'

And he said to him, 'Here am I.'

And he said to him,

'Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again.'

So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying,

'What seekest thou?'

And he said,

'I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks.'

His brothers said to him,

'Are you indeed to be king over us; would you actually rule us?'

So they hated him all the more for his dreams and for his words.

Then he had another dream which he recounted to his brothers.

'I have just had another dream,' he said, 'and the sun, moon, and eleven stars made obeisance to me!'

When he recounted it to his father and his brothers, his father reproved him, saying to him,

'What is this dream that you have had? Am I actually to come with your mother and your brothers, and make obeisance to the earth to you?'

But while his brothers became jealous of him, his father kept the matter in mind.

After his brothers had gone off to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem, Israel said to Joseph,

'Are not your brothers pasturing the flocks at Shechem? Come, let me send you to them.'

'I am ready,' he replied.

So he said to him,

'Go and see how your brothers are, and the flocks; and bring me back word.'

So he despatched him from the valley of Hebron; and he arrived at Shechem. But a man found him wandering about the country; so the man asked him,

'What are you looking for?'

'I am looking for my brothers,' he said; 'do tell me where they are pasturing the flocks.'

And the man said,

'They are departed hence; for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan."'

And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan. And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

And they said one to another, 'Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, "Some evil beast hath devoured him": and we shall see what will become of his dreams.'

And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said,

'Let us not kill him.'

And Reuben said unto them, 'Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him'; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren,

'What profit is it if we slay our

The man said,

'They have moved from here; for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan."'

So Joseph followed his brothers, and found them at Dothan. But they saw him in the distance, and before he could reach them, they plotted against him to kill him.

'There comes the dreamer yonder!' they said to one another. 'Come now, let us kill him, and throw him into one of the pits. We can say that a wild beast devoured him. Then we shall see what his dreams will come to.'

But when Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from their hands; so he said,

'Let us not take his life.'

'Do not shed any blood,' Reuben said to them; 'throw him into the pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him' (his idea being to save him from their hands, and restore him to his father).

As soon as Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his cloak (the long cloak that he was wearing), and seizing him, they threw him into the pit. The pit, however, was empty, with no water in it.

Then they sat down to eat a meal; but raising their eyes, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and laudanum, which they were engaged in taking down to Egypt. Thereupon Judah said to his brothers,

'What is the good of killing our

brother, and conceal his blood? Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh.'

And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, 'The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?'

And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said,

'This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.'

And he knew it, and said,

'It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.'

And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said,

'For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.'

Thus his father wept for him.

And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of

brother and covering up his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay hands on him; for after all he is our brother, our own flesh.'

His brothers agreed. Some Midianite traders passed by, so pulling Joseph up, they lifted him out of the pit. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver; and they took him to Egypt.

So when Reuben went back to the pit, there was no Joseph in the pit. Then he tore his clothes, and returning to his brothers, said,

'The boy is gone! And I, how can I go home?'

Then they took Joseph's cloak, and killing a goat, they dipped the cloak in the blood. So they soiled the long cloak, and then they brought it to their father, saying,

'We found this; see whether it is your son's cloak or not.'

Examining it, he said,

'It is my son's cloak! Some wild beast has devoured him; Joseph must be torn to pieces.'

Then Jacob tore his clothes, and girded himself with sackcloth, and mourned for his son for a long time. His sons and daughters all tried to console him, but he would not be consoled.

'No,' he said, 'I will go down mourning to Sheol to my son.'

Thus did his father weep for him.

When Joseph was taken down to Egypt, Potiphar, an Egyptian, an officer of Pharaoh, his head steward, bought him from the Ishmaelites who

the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat.

And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said,

'Lie with me.'

But he refused, and said unto his master's wife,

'Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand! There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?'

And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened

had taken him down there. The Lord was with Joseph, so that he became a prosperous man. He lived in the house of his master, the Egyptian; and his master noticed that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made everything prosper with him that he undertook; so Joseph found favor with him, and was made his personal attendant; then he made him superintendent of his household, and put him in charge of all his property. From the time that he made him superintendent of his household and all his property, the Lord blessed the house of the Egyptian for Joseph's sake, the Lord's blessing resting on everything that belonged to him, both indoors and outdoors. So he left everything that he had to Joseph's charge, and having him, gave no concern to anything, except the food that he ate.

Now Joseph was so handsome and good-looking that some time later the wife of his master took a fancy to Joseph, and said,

'Lie with me.'

But he refused, saying to his master's wife,

'Having me, my master is giving no concern to anything in the house, but has committed all his property to my charge; there is no one in this household greater than I; he has kept nothing from me except yourself, and that because you are his wife. How then can I commit this great crime, and sin against God?'

Though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her

not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying,

'Lie with me': and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, that she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying,

'See, he hath brought in a Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice; and it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.'

And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

And she spake unto him according to these words, saying,

'The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me; and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.'

And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, 'After this manner did thy servant to me'; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

solicitations to lie with her, or be with her. One day, however, when he went into the house to do his work, none of the household servants being anywhere in the house, she caught hold of his coat, saying,

'Lie with me.'

But he fled, leaving the coat in her hands, and went outdoors. When she saw that he had fled outdoors, leaving his coat in her hands, she called her household servants, and said to them,

'See how he has brought this Hebrew fellow into our house to violate us! He came into my room to lie with me, but I screamed; and as soon as he heard me scream and call, he fled, leaving his coat beside me, and went outdoors.'

So she left the coat beside her until his master came home, and then told him this same story.

'The Hebrew slave whom you brought into our house came into my room to violate me, but as soon as I screamed and called, he fled outdoors, leaving his coat beside me.'

When Joseph's master heard the statements of his wife who said to him, 'This is the way your slave treated me,' his anger blazed, and Joseph's master took him and threw him into the prison where state prisoners were confined. So he lay there in prison.

But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.

And it came to pass after these things that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward. And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison. And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying,

'Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?'

And they said unto him, 'We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.'

And Joseph said unto them,

The Lord, however, was with Joseph and was kind to him, and got him into the good graces of the jailer, so that the jailer put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the jail, and he looked after everything that was done there. The jailer exercised no oversight over anything in his charge, because the Lord was with him, and the Lord made whatever he undertook prosper.

Some time after these events the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt, so that Pharaoh became angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker, and put them in custody in the head steward's house, in the prison where Joseph was confined. The head steward intrusted Joseph with them, and he waited on them. After they had been in custody some time, they both had dreams on the same night, each having a dream of different meaning—the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt who were confined in the prison. When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were worried, so he asked Pharaoh's officers who were in custody with him in his master's house,

'Why do you look so gloomy today?'

'We have had dreams,' they replied, and there is no one to interpret them.'

Joseph said to them,

'Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.'

And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him,

'In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes; and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.'

And Joseph said unto him,

'This is the interpretation of it. The three branches are three days. Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.'

When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph,

'I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.'

And Joseph answered and said,

'This is the interpretation thereof.

'Does not dream interpretation belong to God? Pray recount them to me.'

So the chief butler recounted his dream to Joseph.

'In my dream,' he said to him, 'there was a vine in front of me, and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms shot up, its clusters ripened into grapes. With Pharaoh's cup in my hand, I took the grapes, and squeezing them into Pharaoh's cup, I placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand.'

Joseph said to him,

'This is its interpretation: the three branches represent three days; within three days Pharaoh shall summon you, and restore you to your position, so that you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as you used to do when you were his butler; so, if you will be good enough to keep me in mind when prosperity comes to you, do me the kindness of mentioning me to Pharaoh, and so liberate me from this house; for I was really kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and further, I have done nothing here that I should be put into a dungeon.'

When the chief baker found that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph,

'I too had a dream; in mine there were three open-work baskets on my head, and in the top basket was some of every kind of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head.'

Joseph answered,

'This is its interpretation: the three

The three baskets are three days. Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.'

And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

And it came to pass at the end of two full years that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians

baskets represent three days; within three days Pharaoh shall summon you, and hang you on a tree, and the birds shall eat the flesh off you.'

On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he held a feast for all his officials; and among his officials he summoned the chief butler and the chief baker. The chief butler he restored to his duties, so that he again placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand; but the chief baker he hanged, as Joseph had told them in his interpretation. The chief butler, however, did not keep Joseph in mind, but forgot him.

Two whole years later Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing beside the Nile, when seven beautiful, fat cows came up out of the Nile, and browsed in the sedge. After them seven other cows came up out of the Nile, ugly and thin, and stood beside the other cows on the bank of the Nile. Then the thin, ugly cows ate up the seven beautiful, fat cows, whereupon Pharaoh awoke. When he fell asleep again, he had a second dream: there were seven ears of grain growing on a single stalk, fine and plump, and after them there sprouted seven other ears, thin and blasted by the east wind. Then the thin ears swallowed up the seven fine, full ears, whereupon Pharaoh awoke, only to find it a dream!

Next morning he was so perturbed that he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. To them Pharaoh

of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying,

'I do remember my faults this day. Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker: and we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. And there was there with us a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.'

Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,

'I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.'

And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, 'It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.'

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,

'In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them,

recounted his dreams, but no one could interpret them for Pharaoh. Then the chief butler said to Pharaoh,

'I would today recall my offense, how Pharaoh became angry with his servants, and put them in custody in the house of the head steward, myself and the chief baker. On the same night we had dreams, he and I, each of us having a dream of different meaning. With us there was a Hebrew youth, a slave belonging to the head steward, and when we recounted our dreams to him, he interpreted them for us, giving each the proper interpretation of his dream. And it fell out just as he had indicated in the interpretation; I was restored to my position, while the other was hanged.'

Thereupon Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was brought hurriedly from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came into Pharaoh's presence.

'I have had a dream,' Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'but there is no one to interpret it. However, I have heard it said of you that you know how to interpret dreams.'

'Apart from God can Pharaoh be given a favorable response?' Joseph answered Pharaoh.

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph,

'I dreamed that I was standing on the bank of the Nile, when seven fat and beautiful cows came up out of the Nile, and browsed in the sedge. After them came up seven other cows, thin and very ugly and lean—I have

poor and very ill favoured and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness. And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine; and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good. And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them. And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.'

And Joseph said unto Pharaoh,

'The dream of Pharaoh is one. God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh. What God is about to do he showeth unto Pharaoh. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land. And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh never seen such poor cows in all the land of Egypt. Then the lean, ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows; they passed right into them, but no one would have known that they had done so—they looked just as bad as before. Then I awoke.

'In another dream I saw seven ears of grain growing on a single stalk, full and plump, and after them there sprouted seven other ears, withered, thin, and blasted by the east wind. Then the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump ears. I told this to the magicians, but there was no one to explain it to me.'

Joseph said to Pharaoh,

'Pharaoh's dream is simple; God would reveal to Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven fat cows represent seven years, and the seven plump ears represent seven years—it is a single dream. The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them represent seven years, and so do the seven empty ears blasted by the east wind; there are to be seven years of famine. It is as I told Pharaoh, God would show Pharaoh what he is about to do. Seven years of great plenty are coming throughout all the land of Egypt, but following them there will be seven years of famine, so that the plenty will all be forgotten in the land of Egypt; the famine will devastate the land, and the plenty will become quite unknown in the land because of that famine which is to follow; for it will be very severe. The fact that the dream was sent twice to Pharaoh in two

twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.'

And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants,

'Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?'

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,

'Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.'

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,

'See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.'

And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and

forms means that the matter is absolutely settled by God, and that God will soon bring it about. Now, then, let Pharaoh find a shrewd and prudent man, and put him in control of the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint officials over the land to forearm the land of Egypt during the seven years of plenty; let them collect all the food of these good years that are coming, and under the authority of Pharaoh store up grain for food in the cities, and hold it there. The food shall serve as a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to befall the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish from the famine.'

The proposal commended itself to Pharaoh and all his courtiers, and Pharaoh said to his courtiers,

'Can we find a man with the spirit of God in him like this one?'

So Pharaoh said to Joseph,

'Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so shrewd and prudent as you; you shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people shall be obedient to your commands; it is only in the matter of the throne itself that I shall be your superior.'

Thereupon Pharaoh said to Joseph,

'I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.'

And taking the signet ring from his finger, Pharaoh put it on Joseph's finger; he dressed him in linen robes, put a gold chain round his neck, and had him ride in the second of his chariots, with people shouting 'Bow

they cried before him, 'Bow the knee': and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,

'I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.'

And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt.

And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bore unto him. And Joseph called the name of the first born Manasseh. 'For God,' said he, 'hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.' And the name of the second called he Ephraim: 'For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.'

And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt,

down!' before him, thus putting him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

'Although I continue as Pharaoh,' said Pharaoh to Joseph, 'yet without your consent shall no one stir hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.'

Then Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-pancah, and married him to Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On; and Joseph's fame spread throughout the land of Egypt.

Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

After leaving the presence of Pharaoh, Joseph made a tour through the whole land of Egypt. During the seven years of plenty the land produced abundant crops; so he collected all the food of the seven years when there was plenty in the land of Egypt, and thus stored food in the cities, storing in each city the food from the fields around it. Joseph stored up grain like the sands of the sea, in great quantities, until he ceased to keep account of it; for it was past measuring.

Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh [forgetfulness]; 'For,' said he, 'God has made me forget all about my hardships and my father's home.' The name of the second he called Ephraim [fruitfulness]; 'For God has made me fruitful in the land of my misfortune.'

When the seven years of plenty that had prevailed in the land of Egypt

were ended. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians,

'Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.'

And the famine was over all the face of the earth. And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons,

'Why do ye look one upon another?' And he said, 'Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.'

And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, 'Lest peradventure mischief befall him.' And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made

came to an end, the seven years of famine set in, as Joseph had said.

There was famine in all lands, but throughout all the land of Egypt there was food.

When all the land of Egypt became famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for food; so Pharaoh announced to all Egypt,

'Go to Joseph, and do what he tells you.'

The famine spread all over the land, so Joseph threw open all that he had locked up, and sold grain to the Egyptians, since the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. People from all lands came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain; for the famine was severe all over the earth.

When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons,

'Why do you stare at one another? I have just heard,' he said, 'that there is grain in Egypt; go down there, and buy some for us there, that we may live and not die.'

So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt, since Jacob would not let Joseph's brother Benjamin go with his other brothers; 'Lest,' thought he, 'harm should befall him.' Thus the Israelites came with the rest to buy grain; for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

Now Joseph was the vizier of the land; it was he who sold the grain to all the people of the land. So Joseph's brothers came and prostrated themselves before him, with their faces to the ground. When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he

himself strange unto them, and spoke roughly unto them; and he said unto them,

'Whence come ye?'

And they said, 'From the land of Canaan to buy food.'

And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them,

'Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.'

And they said unto him,

'Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.'

And he said unto them, 'Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.'

And they said,

'Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.'

And Joseph said unto them,

'That is it that I spoke unto you, saying, "Ye are spies." Hereby ye shall be proved: by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies.'

'And he put them all together into

treated them as if he were a stranger, and spoke harshly to them.

'Where have you come from?' he said to them.

'From the land of Canaan to buy food,' they said.

Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. Remembering the dreams that he had had about them, Joseph said to them,

'You are spies; you have come to find out the condition of the land!'

'No, my lord,' they said to him, 'your servants have come to buy food. We are all sons of one man; we are honest men; your servants are not spies.'

'Not so,' he said to them; 'but you have come to find out the condition of the land.'

But they said,

'Your servants are brothers, twelve in all; we are sons of a certain man in the land of Canaan; the youngest is at present with our father, while the other is no more.'

But Joseph said to them,

'It is as I told you; you are spies. By this you shall be put to the proof: as Pharaoh lives, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of your number to fetch your brother, while the rest of you remain in custody. Thus shall your statements be put to the proof as to whether you are truthful or not. As Pharaoh lives, you are spies!'

So he bundled them off to prison

ward three days. And Joseph said unto them the third day,

'This do, and live; for I fear God. If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: but bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die.'

And they did so. And they said one to another,

'We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.'

And Reuben answered them, saying,

'Spake I not unto you, saying, "Do not sin against the child"; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.'

And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them. And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the

for three days, but on the third day Joseph said to them,

'Since I am one who fears God, you may save your lives, if you do this: if you are honest men, let one of you brothers remain confined in your prison and then the rest of you, go and take grain home to your starving households; but you must bring me your youngest brother. Thus shall your words be verified, and you shall not die.'

They proceeded to do so, saying to one another,

'Unfortunately, we were to blame about our brother, upon whose distress, when he pleaded with us for mercy, we gazed unmoved; that is why this distress has come to us.'

Then Reuben spoke up and said to them,

'Did I not say to you, "Do not sin against the lad"? But you paid no attention; so now comes a reckoning for his blood!'

They did not know that Joseph heard them; for the intermediary was between them. He turned from them, and wept. On coming back to them, he spoke to them, took Simeon from them, and imprisoned him in their presence. Joseph then ordered their receptacles to be filled with grain, the money of each of them to be replaced in his sack, and provisions to be given them for the journey. This was done for them. Then they loaded their asses with their grain, and departed.

At the camping-place for the night one of them opened his sack to give

inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth.

And he said unto his brethren, 'My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack': and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another,

'What is this that God hath done unto us?'

And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying,

'The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, "We are true men; we are no spies: we be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan." And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, "Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone: and bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land." '

And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. And Jacob their father said unto them,

'Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is

his ass some fodder, and there he saw his money in the mouth of his sack!

'My money has been put back! It is right here inside my sack!' he said to his brothers.

Thereupon their hearts sank, and they turned to one another in fear, saying,

'What is this that God has done to us?'

On reaching their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had befallen them:

'The man, the lord of the land, talked harshly to us, making us out to be spies of the land. But we said to him, "We are honest men; we are not spies. We are brothers on our father's side, twelve in all; one is no more, and the youngest is at present with our father in the land of Canaan." Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, "By this I shall find out whether you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, and taking something for your famishing households, be off; and then bring me your youngest brother. Thus shall I know that you are not spies, but honest men. I will restore your brother to you, and you will be free to trade in the land." '

When they came to empty their sacks, there was the money-packet of each in his sack! On seeing their money-packets, both they and their father were dismayed, and their father Jacob said to them,

'It is I that you bereave. Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and now

not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.'

And Reuben spoke unto his father, saying,

'Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.'

And he said,

'My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.'

And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them,

'Go again, buy us a little food.'

And Judah spake unto him, saying,

'The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, "Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you." If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food. But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, "Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you." '

And Israel said, 'Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?'

And they said, 'The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, "Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother?" and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that

you would take Benjamin! It is on me that all this falls.'

Reuben said to his father,

'You may kill my two sons if I do not bring him home to you! Put him in my charge, and I will bring him back to you.'

But he said,

'My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm were to befall him on the journey that you make, you would bring my gray hairs down to Sheol in sorrow.'

The famine continued severe in the land, so when they had finished eating all the grain which they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them,

'Go again, and buy us a little food.'

But Judah said to him,

'The man strictly warned us: "You cannot have audience with me unless your brother is with you." If you are ready to let our brother go with us, we will go down and buy food for you; but if you are not ready to let him go, we cannot go down; for the man said to us, "You cannot have audience with me unless your brother is with you." '

'Why did you bring this trouble on me,' said Israel, 'by telling the man that you had another brother?'

They said,

'The man persisted in asking about ourselves and our family—"Is your father still living? Have you another brother?" We only gave him the information demanded by these questions of his. How could we possibly

he would say, "Bring your brother down"? '

And Judah said unto Israel his father,

'Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: for except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.'

And their father Israel said unto them,

'If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds. And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man. And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.'

And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house,

'Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon.'

know that he would say, "Bring your brother down"?'

'Let the lad go with me,' said Judah to his father Israel; 'but we must go at once, if we would save our lives and not die, both we, you, and our dependents. I will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, you may blame me for it all my life; in fact if we had not wasted so much time, we could have made a second trip by now.'

Then their father Israel said to them,

'If it must be so, then do this: take some of the country's best in your receptacles, and take it down to the man as a present—a little balm, a little honey, gum, laudanum, pistachio nuts, and almonds. Also take double the money with you, and so take back with you the money that was replaced in the mouths of your sacks—perhaps there was a mistake. Take your brother too, and go, return to the man. May God Almighty grant you such kindness with the man that he will release your other brother for you, as well as Benjamin. As for me, as I am bereaved, I am bereaved.'

So the men took this present, and taking double the money with them, as well as Benjamin, they started off, went down to Egypt, and stood in the presence of Joseph. When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house-steward,

'Take the men home, kill an animal, and get it ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon.'

And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said,

'Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.'

And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, and said,

'O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food; and it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.'

And he said, 'Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money.'

And he brought Simeon out unto them.

And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon; for they heard that they should eat bread there. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their

The man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. On being brought to Joseph's house, the men became frightened, saying,

'It is because of the money which reappeared in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, so that he may devise some pretext against us, and falling upon us, take us into slavery, together with our asses.'

So they went up to Joseph's house-steward, and spoke to him at the doorway of the house.

'If you please, sir,' they said, 'we came down the first time specially to buy food, but when we reached the camping-place for the night, and opened our sacks, there was each man's money in the mouth of his sack —our money in full. Accordingly we have brought it back with us, and we have brought other money down with us to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.'

'Be at ease,' he said, 'do not be afraid! It must have been your God, the God of your fathers, who put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money.'

Then he brought Simeon out to them.

After bringing the men into Joseph's house, the man gave them water to wash their feet, and he gave them fodder for their asses. Then they set out the present in anticipation of Joseph's arrival at noon; for they had heard that they were to dine there. When Joseph came home, they brought him the present that they had carried into

hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare, and said, 'Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?'

And they answered, 'Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive.' And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said,

'Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me?'

And he said, 'God be gracious unto thee, my son.'

And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself and said,

'Set on bread.'

And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

And he commanded the steward of his house, saying,

the house, and bowed to the ground before him. He asked after their health.

'Is your father well,' he said, 'the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still living?'

'Your servant, our father, is well; he is still living,' they said, bowing in homage to him.

Raising his eyes, he saw his brother Benjamin, the son of his own mother, and said,

'Is this your youngest brother, of whom you told me?'

'May God be gracious to you, my son!' he said.

Thereupon Joseph hastily sought a place to weep; for his heart was deeply stirred at sight of his brother; he retired to his room, and wept there. Then he bathed his face, and came out, and controlling himself, said,

'Serve the meal.'

The meal was served, separately for him, for them, and for the Egyptians that were dining with him; for the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, because that would be abhorrent to the Egyptians. They were seated in his presence in order of age, from the oldest to the youngest, so that the men stared at one another in amazement. Portions were carried from his own table to them, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any other's. So they feasted, and drank with him.

He then gave orders to his house-steward,

'Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money.'

And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward,

'Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, "Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing." '

And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words. And they said unto him,

'Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing. Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.'

And he said, 'Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.'

Then they speedily took down every

'Fill the men's sacks as full as they will hold with food, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack; in the mouth of the sack belonging to the youngest put my cup, the silver cup, along with his money for the grain.'

He followed the instructions which Joseph gave.

With the dawn of morning the men with their asses were sent on their way. Although they had left the city, they had not gone far, when Joseph said to his house-steward,

'Run at once after the men, and when you overtake them, say to them, "Why have you returned evil for good? Why have you stolen my silver cup? Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, which in fact he uses for divination? It is a wicked thing that you have done." '

So he overtook them, and addressed these words to them; but they said to him,

'Why should my lord speak like this? Your servants would never think of doing such a thing! Why, we even brought you back from the land of Canaan the money that we found in the mouths of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your master's house? That one of your servants in whose possession it is found shall die, and the rest of us will become slaves to my lord.'

'Although it may indeed be just as you say,' he said, 'yet the one in whose possession it is found shall become my slave, but the rest of you shall be held blameless.'

Then each of them quickly lowered

man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground.

And Joseph said unto them,

'What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?'

And Judah said,

'What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.'

And he said, 'God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.'

Then Judah came near unto him, and said,

'Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, "Have ye a father, or a brother?" And we said unto my lord, "We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him." And thou saidst unto thy

his sack to the ground, and opened it, and search being made, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Thereupon they tore their clothes, and each having reloaded his ass, they returned to the city.

Judah and his brothers arrived at the house of Joseph, while he was still there, so they flung themselves on the ground before him.

'What is this that you have done?' Joseph said to them. 'Did you not know that a man like me would be sure to use divination?'

Judah said,

'What can we say to my lord? What can we urge? How can we prove our innocence? God has discovered the crime of your servants; here we are, the slaves of my lord, both we and he in whose possession the cup has been found.'

'I could not think of doing such a thing,' he said; 'only the man in whose possession the cup has been found shall be my slave; the rest of you are free to go back to your father.'

Then Judah went up to him, and said,

'If you please, my lord, let your servant speak a word in the ear of my lord, and your anger not blaze against your servant; for you are the equal of Pharaoh himself. My lord asked his servants, "Have you a father or a brother?" And we said to my lord, "We have an aged father, and a young brother, the child of his old age; his brother is dead, so that he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him." Then you said to your

servants, "Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him." And we said unto my lord, "The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die." And thou saidst unto thy servants, "Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more."

'And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, "Go again, and buy us a little food." And we said, "We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us." And thy servant my father said unto us, "Ye know that my wife bore me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said, 'Surely he is torn in pieces'; and I saw him not since: and if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

'Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, "If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever." Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead servants, "Bring him down to me that I may see him." But we told my lord, "The boy cannot leave his father; his father would die if he were to leave him." Whereupon you said to your servants, "Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you cannot have audience with me again."

'When we went back to your servant, my father, we reported to him the words of my lord. Then our father said, "Go again and buy a little food for us." But we said, "We cannot go down; if our youngest brother accompanies us, we can go down; for we shall not be allowed to have audience with the man unless our youngest brother is with us." Then your servant, my father, said to us, "You know that my wife bore me only two children; then one of them left me, and I think he must surely have been torn to pieces; for I have never seen him since. If then you take this one from me too, and harm befall him, you will bring down my gray hairs to Sheol in trouble."

'And now, when I rejoin your servant, my father, and the boy not with us, his life is so bound up with the boy's that he will die when he sees that there is no boy, and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant, our father, to Sheol in sorrow; for your servant went surety for the boy to my father, saying, "If I do not bring him back to you, let my father blame me for it all my life." Now then, pray let your servant remain in the boy's place as my lord's slave, but let the boy go back with his brothers;

stead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.'

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried,

'Cause every man to go out from me.'

And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren,

'I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?'

And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren,

'Come near to me, I pray you.'

And they came near. And he said,

'I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and

for how can I go back to my father unless the boy is with me, and witness the agony that would come to my father?'

Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, so he cried out,

'Have everyone withdraw from me.'

So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers; but he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and Pharaoh's household heard it. Joseph said to his brothers,

'I am Joseph. Is my father still living?'

But his brothers could not answer him, because they were so dismayed at being in his presence. So Joseph said to his brothers,

'Come nearer to me.'

When they came nearer, he said,

'I am your brother Joseph whom you sold into Egypt. Now do not be distressed nor angry with yourselves that you sold me here; for it was to save life that God sent me ahead of you; for it is two years now that the famine has prevailed in the land, but there are still five years in which there will be no plowing or reaping. God sent me ahead of you to insure you a remnant in the earth, and to be the means of a remarkable escape for you. So then it was not you, but God who sent me here, and made me a father to Pharaoh, lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry back to my father and say to him,

go up to my father, and say unto him, "Thus saith thy son Joseph, 'God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all thou hast: and there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.' " And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.'

And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying,

'Joseph's brethren are come': and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,

'Say unto thy brethren, "This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; and take your father and your households and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take your wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also

"Thus speaks your son Joseph: 'Since God has made me lord of all Egypt, come down to me without delay. You shall live in the land of Goshen, and be near me, you, your sons, your grandsons, your flocks, your herds, and all that belong to you; and there I will provide for you, lest you, your household, and all that belong to you come to want; for there are still five years of famine to come.' " You can see for yourselves and my brother Benjamin for himself that it is I who speak to you. You must tell my father all about my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; hurry and bring my father here.'

Then he fell on the neck of his brother Benjamin and wept, while Benjamin wept on his neck. He kissed all his brothers, and wept on their shoulders, after which his brothers talked with him.

When the news was received at Pharaoh's palace that Joseph's brothers had arrived, Pharaoh was delighted, as were also his courtiers. Pharaoh said to Joseph,

'Say to your brothers, "Do this: load your animals, go back to the land of Canaan, and taking your father and your households, come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, so that you shall eat the fat of the land. Also, carry out this order: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; convey your father in them, and come back. Never mind your goods; for the

regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours." '

And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them,

'See that ye fall not out by the way.'

And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, and told him, saying,

'Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.'

And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said,

'It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.'

And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.'

And he said, 'Here am I.'

And he said, 'I am God, the God of

best of the whole land of Egypt will be yours." '

The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them wagons in accord with the command of Pharaoh, and he also gave them provisions for the journey. To each of them he gave a festal garment, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five festal garments. To his father he sent likewise ten asses loaded with the best products of Egypt, and ten she-asses loaded with grain, bread, and provisions for his father on the journey. Then he sent his brothers away; and as they left, he said to them,

'Do not get too excited on the way.'

So they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan, to their father Jacob.

'Joseph is still living, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt,' they told him.

But he was so stunned that he would not believe them. However, when they told him all that Joseph had said to them, and he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to convey him, their father Jacob recovered.

'Enough!' said Israel; 'my son Joseph is still living; I will go and see him before I die.'

So Israel set out with all that belonged to him. On reaching Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. In a vision by night God spoke to Israel.

'Jacob! Jacob!' he said.

'Here I am,' he said.

'I am El, the God of your father,'

thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.'

And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

And Israel said unto Joseph, 'Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.'

And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house,

'I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, "My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; and the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have." And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation?

he said; 'do not be afraid to go down to Egypt; for there I will make you a great nation. I will myself go down to Egypt with you—yes, and I will bring you up again, when Joseph's hand shall close your eyes.'

Then Jacob set out from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel conveyed their father Jacob, with their little ones and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to convey him. Taking their live stock and the property which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, Jacob and all his family migrated to Egypt; his sons and his grandsons accompanied him, as well as his daughters and his grand-daughters; he brought all his family with him into Egypt.

Israel sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph in Goshen, to appear before him. On their arrival in the land of Goshen Joseph hitched the horses to his chariot, and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. When he presented himself to him, he fell on his neck, weeping again and again on his neck.

'Now at last I may die,' Israel said to Joseph, 'after having seen from your very self that you are still alive.'

Then Joseph said to his brothers and his father's household,

'I will go and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, "My brothers and my father's household who used to live in the land of Canaan have come to me. Since the men are shepherds, having to do with live stock, they have brought their flocks and herds and everything that they own." Accordingly, when Pharaoh summons you, and says to you,

raoh shall call you, and shall say, "What is your occupation?" that ye shall say, "Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers": that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.'

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said,

'My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.'

And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, 'What is your occupation?'

And they said unto Pharaoh, 'Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers.' They said moreover unto Pharaoh, 'For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.'

And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying,

'Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.'

And Joseph brought in Jacob his

"What is your occupation?" you must say, "Your servants have been concerned with live stock from our youth until now, both we and our fathers" —in order that you may settle in the land of Goshen; for shepherds are all abhorrent to the Egyptians.'

So Joseph came and told Pharaoh.

'My father and brothers,' he said, 'together with their flocks and herds and everything that they own, have come from the land of Canaan, and are now in the land of Goshen.'

Taking five of the ablest of his brothers, he presented them to Pharaoh.

'What is your occupation?' Pharaoh said to his brothers.

'Your servants are shepherds,' they said to Pharaoh, 'both we and our fathers. We have come to settle as immigrants in the land,' they said to Pharaoh; 'for there is no pasture for the flocks belonging to your servants, because the famine is so severe in the land of Canaan. Pray let your servants settle, then, in the land of Goshen.'

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph,

'Now that your father and brothers have joined you, the land of Egypt is at your disposal; settle your father and brothers in the best part of the land; let them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know of any competent men among them, put them in charge of my own live stock.'

Then Joseph brought his father Ja-

father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, 'How old art thou?'

And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, 'The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.'

And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said,

'Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.'

cob and presented him to Pharaoh, and Jacob paid his respects to Pharaoh.

'How old are you?' Pharaoh said to Jacob.

'The length of my life as an immigrant has been one hundred and thirty years,' Jacob said to Pharaoh; 'few and hard have been the years of my life; they have not equaled the number of years that my fathers lived in their lifetime as immigrants.'

After paying his respects to Pharaoh, Jacob withdrew from the presence of Pharaoh.

So Joseph settled his father and brothers, giving them property in the land of Egypt in the very best part of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. Joseph provided his father and brothers and all his father's household with food sufficient for the needs of the dependents.

There was now no food anywhere in the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the lands of Egypt and Canaan were languishing because of the famine. Joseph had gathered up all the money that was to be found in the lands of Egypt and Canaan in payment for the grain which was bought, and had brought the money to Pharaoh's palace. So when the money was exhausted in the lands of Egypt and Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, saying,

'Give us food; why should we die right under your eyes, just because our money is gone?'

And Joseph said, 'Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.'

And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him,

'We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands: wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.'

And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof. Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

Then Joseph said unto the people, 'Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is

'Give me your live stock,' said Joseph; 'I will give you food in exchange for your live stock, if your money is gone.'

So they brought their live stock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for horses, sheep, cattle, and asses; thus he supported them with food that year in exchange for all their live stock.

When that year was over, they came to him the next year, and said to him,

'We would hide nothing from my lord; but our money is gone, and our live stock has come into the possession of my lord; there is nothing left for my lord except our persons and our lands. Why should we perish before your very eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we and our land shall become feudatory to Pharaoh; but give us seed that we may live and not die, and the land not become a waste.'

So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for everyone of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was so severe on them. Thus the land became Pharaoh's, and the people themselves he transferred to the towns from one end of Egypt's domain to the other. It was only the priests' land that he did not buy; for the priests had a subvention from Pharaoh, and lived off the subvention which Pharaoh gave them; that was why they did not have to sell their land.

'Observe,' said Joseph to the people, 'that I have today bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Here is seed

seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your household, and for food for your little ones.'

And they said, 'Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.'

And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so that the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

for you to sow the land; a fifth of the crop you shall give to Pharaoh, and four fifths shall go to yourselves as seed for the fields, and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones.'

'You have saved our lives,' they said, 'we would thank my lord; and we will becomes slaves to Pharaoh.'

So Joseph made it a statute for the land in Egypt, which continues to this day, that a fifth of the produce should go to Pharaoh, the land of the priests alone being exempt from Pharaoh's claims.

So the Israelites settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen, where they acquired property, were prolific, and became very numerous.

Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for seventeen years, so that the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.

John Henry Newman

LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE

¶ In 1852 Newman published *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education, Addressed to the Catholics of Dublin.* These discourses he delivered after he had been appointed Rector of the Irish Catholic University, to which he devoted seven years of his life and for which he had high hopes, although they finally came to nothing. In 1859 he revised the *Discourses* and limited the title to *The Scope and Nature of University Education.* In 1873 he made further changes and added ten essays, dividing the book into 'University Teaching' and 'University Essays,' and gave the volume the title of *The Idea of a University.*

Newman's conception of a university was in some respects startlingly unlike that prevalent today. He thought of it solely as a place of teaching. It was not, for him, a place of research, least of all scientific research. On the other hand, his idea of liberal knowledge, of intellectual training for its own sake, was one that is as valid today as ever. He held that liberal education has nothing to do *per se* with morality or religion. Its function is to train the mind. As Woodrow Wilson once said when he was president of Princeton, 'The object of a university is intellect; as a university its only object is intellect.' Newman insists that liberal education, philosophy in short, is an end worth pursuing for itself. Religion and morality are more urgent, but they are the province of other agencies than the university.

I

. . . KNOWLEDGE is one thing, virtue is another; good sense is not conscience, refinement is not humility, nor is largeness and justness of view faith. Philosophy, however enlightened, however profound, gives no command over the passions, no influential motives, no vivifying principles.

FROM *The Idea of a University*, 1852, 1859, 1873.

Liberal Education makes not the Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman, it is well to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life;—these are the connatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of a University; I am advocating, I shall illustrate and insist upon them; but still, I repeat, they are no guarantee for sanctity or even for conscientiousness, they may attach to the man of the world, to the profligate, to the heartless,—pleasant, alas, and attractive as he shows when decked out in them. Taken by themselves, they do but seem to be what they are not; they look like virtue at a distance, but they are detected by close observers, and on the long run; and hence it is that they are popularly accused of pretence and hypocrisy, not, I repeat, from their own fault, but because their professors and their admirers persist in taking them for what they are not, and are officious in arrogating for them a praise to which they have no claim. Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man.

Surely we are not driven to theories of this kind, in order to vindicate the value and dignity of Liberal Knowledge. Surely the real grounds on which its pretensions rest are not so very subtle or abstruse, so very strange or improbable. Surely it is very intelligible to say, and that is what I say here, that Liberal Education, viewed in itself, is simply the cultivation of the intellect, as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence. Every thing has its own perfection, be it higher or lower in the scale of things; and the perfection of one is not the perfection of another. Things animate, inanimate, visible, invisible, all are good in their kind, and have a *best* of themselves, which is an object of pursuit. Why do you take such pains with your garden or your park? You see to your walks and turf and shrubberies; to your trees and drives; not as if you meant to make an orchard of the one, or corn or pasture land of the other, but because there is a special beauty in all that is goodly in wood, water, plain, and slope, brought all together by art into one shape, and grouped into one whole. Your cities are beautiful, your palaces, your public buildings, your territorial mansions, your churches; and their beauty leads to nothing beyond itself. There is a physical beauty and a moral: there is a beauty of person, there is a beauty of our moral being, which is natural virtue; and in like manner there is a beauty, there is a perfection, of the

intellect. There is an ideal perfection in these various subject-matters, towards which individual instances are seen to rise, and which are the standards for all instances whatever. The Greek divinities and demigods, as the statuary has moulded them, with their symmetry of figure, and their high forehead and their regular features, are the perfection of physical beauty. The heroes, of whom history tells, Alexander, or Cæsar, or Scipio, or Saladin, are the representatives of that magnanimity or self-mastery which is the greatness of human nature. Christianity too has its heroes, and in the supernatural order, and we call them Saints. The artist puts before him beauty of feature and form; the poet, beauty of mind; the preacher, the beauty of grace: then intellect too, I repeat, has its beauty, and it has those who aim at it. To open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know, and to digest, master, rule, and use its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties, application, flexibility, method, critical exactness, sagacity, resource, address, eloquent expression, is an object as intelligible (for here we are inquiring, not what the object of a Liberal Education is worth, nor what use the Church makes of it, but what it is in itself), I say, an object as intelligible as the cultivation of virtue, while, at the same time, it is absolutely distinct from it.

This indeed is but a temporal object, and a transitory possession; but so are other things in themselves which we make much of and pursue. The moralist will tell us that man, in all his functions, is but a flower which blossoms and fades, except so far as a higher principle breathes upon him, and makes him and what he is immortal. Body and mind are carried on into an eternal state of being by the gifts of Divine Munificence; but at first they do but fail in a failing world; and if the powers of intellect decay, the powers of the body have decayed before them, and, as an Hospital or an Almshouse, though its end be ephemeral, may be sanctified to the service of religion, so surely may a University, even were it nothing more than I have as yet described it. We attain to heaven by using this world well, though it is to pass away; we perfect our nature, not by undoing it, but by adding to it what is more than nature, and directing it towards aims higher than its own. . .

II

. . . That training of the intellect, which is best for the individual himself, best enables him to discharge his duties to society. The Philosopher, indeed, and the man of the world differ in their very notion, but the methods, by which they are respectively formed, are pretty much the same.

The Philosopher has the same command of matters of thought, which the true citizen and gentleman has of matters of business and conduct. If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world. It neither confines its views to particular professions on the one hand, nor creates heroes or inspires genius on the other. Works indeed of genius fall under no art; heroic minds come under no rule; a University is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracles of nature it has before now contained within its precincts. Nor is it content on the other hand with forming the critic or the experimentalist, the economist or the engineer, though such too it includes within its scope. But a University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society, he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak and when to be silent; he is able to converse, he is able to listen; he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably, when he has nothing to impart himself; he is ever ready, yet never in the way; he is a pleasant companion, and a comrade you can depend upon; he knows when to be serious and when to trifle, and he has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect. He has the repose of a mind which lives in itself, while it lives in the world, and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public, and supports him in retirement, without which good

fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm. The art which tends to make a man all this, is in the object which it pursues as useful as the art of wealth or the art of health, though it is less susceptible of method, and less tangible, less certain, less complete in its result. . .

III

. . . At this day the 'gentleman' is the creation, not of Christianity, but of civilization. But the reason is obvious. The world is content with setting right the surface of things; the Church aims at regenerating the very depths of the heart. She ever begins with the beginning; and, as regards the multitude of her children, is never able to get beyond the beginning, but is continually employed in laying the foundation. She is engaged with what is essential, as previous and as introductory to the ornamental and the attractive. She is curing men and keeping them clear of mortal sin; she is 'treating of justice and chastity, and the judgment to come:' she is insisting on faith and hope, and devotion, and honesty, and the elements of charity; and has so much to do with precept, that she almost leaves it to inspirations from Heaven to suggest what is of counsel and perfection. She aims at what is necessary rather than at what is desirable. She is for the many as well as for the few. She is putting souls in the way of salvation, that they may then be in a condition, if they shall be called upon, to aspire to the heroic, and to attain the full proportions, as well as the rudiments, of the beautiful.

Such is the method, or the policy (so to call it), of the Church; but Philosophy looks at the matter from a very different point of view: what have Philosophers to do with the terror of judgment or the saving of the soul? Lord Shaftesbury [1] calls the former a sort of 'panic fear.' Of the latter he scoffingly complains that 'the saving of souls is now the heroic passion of exalted spirits.' Of course he is at liberty, on his principles, to pick and choose out of Christianity what he will; he discards the theological, the mysterious, the spiritual; he makes selection of the morally or esthetically beautiful. To him it matters not at all that he begins his teaching where he should end it; it matters not that, instead of planting the tree, he merely crops its flowers for his banquet; he only aims at the present life, his philosophy dies with him; if his flowers do but last to the end of his

[1 English philosopher (1671–1713). He held that virtue is a kind of beauty and is therefore governable by taste. Newman criticizes his opinions in the chapter from which this excerpt is taken, 'Liberal Knowledge Viewed in Relation to Religion.']

revel, he has nothing more to seek. When night comes, the withered leaves may be mingled with his own ashes; he and they will have done their work, he and they will be no more. Certainly, it costs little to make men virtuous on conditions such as these; it is like teaching them a language or an accomplishment, to write Latin or to play on an instrument,—the profession of an artist, not the commission of an Apostle.

This embellishment of the exterior is almost the beginning and the end of philosophical morality. This is why it aims at being modest rather than humble; this is how it can be proud at the very time that it is unassuming. To humility indeed it does not even aspire; humility is one of the most difficult of virtues both to attain and to ascertain. It lies close upon the heart itself, and its tests are exceedingly delicate and subtle. Its counterfeits abound; however, we are little concerned with them here, for, I repeat, it is hardly professed even by name in the code of ethics which we are reviewing. As has been often observed, ancient civilization had not the idea, and had no word to express it: or rather, it had the idea, and considered it a defect of mind, not a virtue, so that the word which denoted it conveyed a reproach. As to the modern world, you may gather its ignorance of it by its perversion of the somewhat parallel term 'condescension.' Humility or condescension, viewed as a virtue of conduct, may be said to consist, as in other things, so in our placing ourselves in our thoughts on a level with our inferiors; it is not only a voluntary relinquishment of the privileges of our own station, but an actual participation or assumption of the condition of those to whom we stoop. This is true humility, to feel and to behave as if we were low; not, to cherish a notion of our importance, while we affect a low position. Such was St. Paul's humility,[2] when he called himself 'the least of the saints;' such the humility of those many holy men who have considered themselves the greatest of sinners. It is an abdication, as far as their own thoughts are concerned, of those prerogatives or privileges to which others deem them entitled. Now it is not a little instructive to contrast with this idea, Gentlemen,—with this theological meaning of the word 'condescension,'—its proper English sense; put them in juxta-position, and you will at once see the difference between the world's humility and the humility of the Gospel. As the world uses the word, 'condescension' is a stooping indeed of the person, but a bending forward, unattended with any the slightest effort to leave by a single inch the seat in which it is so firmly established. It is the act of a superior, who protests to himself, while he commits it, that he is superior still, and that he is doing nothing else

[2 See Ephesians, iii, 8.]

but an act of grace towards those on whose level, in theory, he is placing himself. And this is the nearest idea which the philosopher can form of the virtue of self-abasement; to do more than this is to his mind a meanness or an hypocrisy, and at once excites his suspicion and disgust. What the world is, such it has ever been; we know the contempt which the educated pagans had for the martyrs and confessors of the Church; and it is shared by the anti-Catholic bodies of this day.

Such are the ethics of Philosophy, when faithfully represented; but an age like this, not pagan, but professedly Christian, cannot venture to reprobate humility in set terms, or to make a boast of pride. Accordingly, it looks out for some expedient by which it may blind itself to the real state of the case. Humility, with its grave and self-denying attributes, it cannot love; but what is more beautiful, what more winning, than modesty? what virtue, at first sight, simulates humility so well? though what in fact is more radically distinct from it? In truth, great as is its charm, modesty is not the deepest or the most religious of virtues. Rather it is the advanced guard or sentinel of the soul militant, and watches continually over its nascent intercourse with the world about it. It goes the round of the senses; it mounts up into the countenance; it protects the eye and ear; it reigns in the voice and gesture. Its province is the outward deportment, as other virtues have relation to matters theological, others to society, and others to the mind itself. And being more superficial than other virtues, it is more easily disjoined from their company; it admits of being associated with principles or qualities naturally foreign to it, and is often made the cloak of feelings or ends for which it was never given to us. So little is it the necessary index of humility, that it is even compatible with pride. The better for the purpose of Philosophy; humble it cannot be, so forthwith modesty becomes its humility.

Pride, under such training, instead of running to waste in the education of the mind, is turned to account; it gets a new name; it is called self-respect; and ceases to be the disagreeable, uncompanionable quality which it is in itself. Though it be the motive principle of the soul, it seldom comes to view; and when it shows itself, then delicacy and gentleness are its attire, and good sense and sense of honour direct its motions. It is no longer a restless agent, without definite aim; it has a large field of exertion assigned to it, and it subserves those social interests which it would naturally trouble. It is directed into the channel of industry, frugality, honesty, and obedience; and it becomes the very staple of the religion and morality held in honour in a day like our own. It becomes the safeguard of chastity, the

guarantee of veracity, in high and low; it is the very household god of society, as at present constituted, inspiring neatness and decency in the servant girl, propriety of carriage and refined manners in her mistress, uprightness, manliness, and generosity in the head of the family. It diffuses a light over town and country; it covers the soil with handsome edifices and smiling gardens; it tills the field, it stocks and embellishes the shop. It is the stimulating principle of providence on the one hand, and of free expenditure on the other; of an honourable ambition, and of elegant enjoyment. It breathes upon the face of the community, and the hollow sepulchre is forthwith beautiful to look upon.

Refined by the civilization which has brought it into activity, this self-respect infuses into the mind an intense horror of exposure, and a keen sensitiveness of notoriety and ridicule. It becomes the enemy of extravagances of any kind; it shrinks from what are called scenes; it has no mercy on the mock-heroic, on pretence or egotism, on verbosity in language, or what is called prosiness in conversation. It detests gross adulation; not that it tends at all to the eradication of the appetite to which the flatterer ministers, but it sees the absurdity of indulging it, it understands the annoyance thereby given to others, and if a tribute must be paid to the wealthy or the powerful, it demands greater subtlety and art in the preparation. Thus vanity is changed into a more dangerous self-conceit, as being checked in its natural eruption. It teaches men to suppress their feelings, and to control their tempers, and to mitigate both the severity and the tone of their judgments. As Lord Shaftesbury would desire, it prefers playful wit and satire in putting down what is objectionable, as a more refined and good-natured, as well as a more effectual method, than the expedient which is natural to uneducated minds. It is from this impatience of the tragic and the bombastic that it is now quietly but energetically opposing itself to the unchristian practice of duelling, which it brands as simply out of taste, and as the remnant of a barbarous age; and certainly it seems likely to effect what Religion has aimed at abolishing in vain.

Hence it is that it is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him; and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature: like an easy chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature

provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast;—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favours while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets every thing for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage,[3] that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain, because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds; who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candour, consideration, indulgence: he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits. If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it; he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devotion; he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful, or useful, to which he does not assent; he honours the min-

[3 This maxim is attributed to Bias of Pirene, one of the Seven Sages of ancient Greece.]

isters of religion, and it contents him to decline its mysteries without assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that, not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness and effeminacy of feeling, which is the attendant on civilization.

Matthew Arnold

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

¶ Arnold's 'Literature and Science' is a powerful defense of the role of letters in education. T. H. Huxley's 'Science and Culture,' to which it is in part a reply, was an equally clear and astute argument for the educational value of physical science. To judge merely by the present ratio of students of Greek to students of physics, Huxley was at least the better prophet; yet we hear many voices warning us that the need for the humanities was never greater than it is now. In considering such questions we need to read the 'best that has been thought and said' about them. Arnold's essay is a contribution we should not omit.

'Literature and Science' was originally a lecture delivered at the University of Cambridge. Arnold revised it for his American lecture tour of 1883–4 and afterwards published it in *Discourses in America*. The text printed here is this revised one.

PRACTICAL people [1] talk with a smile of Plato and of his absolute ideas; and it is impossible to deny that Plato's ideas do often seem unpractical and impracticable, and especially when one views them in connection with the life of a great work-a-day world like the United States. The necessary staple of the life of such a world Plato regards with disdain; handicraft and trade and the working professions he regards with disdain; but what becomes of the life of an industrial modern community if you take handicraft and trade and the working professions out of it? The base mechanic arts and handicrafts, says Plato, bring about a natural weakness in the principle of excellence in a man, so that he cannot govern the ignoble growths in him, but nurses them, and cannot understand fostering any other. Those who exercise such arts and trades, as they have their bodies, he

[1 See the selection by Macaulay, pp. 547–55.]

FROM *Discourses in America*, 1885.

says, marred by their vulgar businesses, so they have their souls, too, bowed and broken by them. And if one of these uncomely people has a mind to seek self-culture and philosophy, Plato compares him to a bald little tinker,[2] who has scraped together money, and has got his release from service, and has had a bath, and bought a new coat, and is rigged out like a bridegroom about to marry the daughter of his master who has fallen into poor and helpless estate.

Nor do the working professions fare any better than trade at the hands of Plato. He draws for us an inimitable picture of the working lawyer, and of his life of bondage; he shows how this bondage from his youth up has stunted and warped him, and made him small and crooked of soul, encompassing him with difficulties which he is not man enough to rely on justice and truth as means to encounter, but has recourse, for help out of them, to falsehood and wrong. And so, says Plato, this poor creature is bent and broken, and grows up from boy to man without a particle of soundness in him, although exceedingly smart and clever in his own esteem.

One cannot refuse to admire the artist who draws these pictures. But we say to ourselves that his ideas show the influence of a primitive and obsolete order of things, when the warrior caste and the priestly caste were alone in honour and the humble work of the world was done by slaves. We have now changed all that; the modern majority consists in work, as Emerson declares; and in work, we may add, principally of such plain and dusty kind as the work of cultivators of the ground, handicraftsmen, men of trade and business, men of the working professions. Above all is this true in a great industrious community such as that of the United States.

Now education, many people go on to say, is still mainly governed by the ideas of men like Plato, who lived when the warrior caste and the priestly or philosophical class were alone in honour, and the really useful part of the community were slaves. It is an education fitted for persons of leisure in such a community. This education passed from Greece and Rome to the feudal communities of Europe, where also the warrior caste and the priestly caste were alone held in honour and where the really useful and working part of the community, though not nominally slaves as in the pagan world, were practically not much better off than slaves, and not more seriously regarded. And how absurd it is, people end by saying, to inflict this education upon an industrious modern community, where very few indeed are persons of leisure, and the mass to be considered has not leisure, but is bound, for its own great good, and for the great good of the world at

[2 See Plato's *Republic*, VI, 495.]

large, to plain labour and to industrial pursuits, and the education in question tends necessarily to make men dissatisfied with these pursuits and unfitted for them!

That is what is said. So far I must defend Plato, as to plead that his view of education and studies is in the general, as it seems to me, sound enough, and fitted for all sorts and conditions of men, whatever their pursuits may be. 'An intelligent man,' says Plato, 'will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness, and wisdom, and will less value the others.' I cannot consider *that* a bad description of the aim of education, and of the motives which should govern us in the choice of studies, whether we are preparing ourselves for a hereditary seat in the English House of Lords or for the pork trade in Chicago.

Still I admit that Plato's world was not ours, that his scorn of trade and handicraft is fantastic, that he had no conception of a great industrial community such as that of the United States, and that such a community must and will shape its education to suit its own needs. If the usual education handed down to it from the past does not suit it, it will certainly before long drop this and try another. The usual education in the past has been mainly literary. The question is whether the studies which were long supposed to be the best for all of us are practically the best now; whether others are not better. The tyranny of the past, many think, weighs on us injuriously in the predominance given to letters in education. The question is raised whether, to meet the needs of our modern life, the predominance ought not now to pass from letters to science; and naturally the question is nowhere raised with more energy than here in the United States. The design of abasing what is called 'mere literary instruction and education,' and of exalting what is called 'sound, extensive, and practical scientific knowledge,' [8] is, in this intensely modern world of the United States, even more perhaps than in Europe, a very popular design, and makes great and rapid progress.

I am going to ask whether the present movement for ousting letters from their old predominance in education, and for transferring the predominance in education to the natural sciences, whether this brisk and flourishing movement ought to prevail, and whether it is likely that in the end it really will prevail. An objection may be raised which I will anticipate. My own studies have been almost wholly in letters, and my visits to the field of the natural sciences have been very slight and inadequate, although

[8 These quotations are from the instructions of Sir Josiah Mason for the founding of a college in Birmingham (opened 1880), now part of the University of Birmingham.]

those sciences have always strongly moved my curiosity. A man of letters, it will perhaps be said, is not competent to discuss the comparative merits of letters and natural science as means of education. To this objection I reply, first of all, that his incompetence, if he attempts the discussion but is really incompetent for it, will be abundantly visible; nobody will be taken in; he will have plenty of sharp observers and critics to save mankind from that danger. But the line I am going to follow is, as you will soon discover, so extremely simple, that perhaps it may be followed without failure even by one who for a more ambitious line of discussion would be quite incompetent.

Some of you may possibly remember a phrase of mine which has been the object of a good deal of comment; an observation to the effect that in our culture, the aim being *to know ourselves and the world*, we have, as the means to this end, *to know the best which has been thought and said in the world*.[4] A man of science, who is also an excellent writer and the very prince of debaters, Professor Huxley,[5] in a discourse at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's college at Birmingham, laying hold of this phrase, expanded it by quoting some more words of mine, which are these: 'The civilized world is to be regarded as now being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have for their proper outfit a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special local and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme.'

Now on my phrase, thus enlarged, Professor Huxley remarks that when I speak of the above-mentioned knowledge as enabling us to know ourselves and the world, I assert *literature* to contain the materials which suffice for thus making us know ourselves and the world. But it is not by any means clear, says he, that after having learnt all which ancient and modern literatures have to tell us, we have laid a sufficiently broad and deep foundation for that criticism of life, that knowledge of ourselves and the world, which constitutes culture. On the contrary, Professor Huxlev declares that he finds himself 'wholly unable to admit that either nations or individuals will really advance, if their outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical

[4 Arnold's quotations in this paragraph are from his 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' (1864).]

[5 Thomas Henry Huxley, biologist, writer, and defender of Darwinism. See his lecture, 'Science and Culture' (1880).]

science. An army without weapons of precision, and with no particular base of operations, might more hopefully enter upon a campaign on the Rhine, than a man, devoid of a knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, upon a criticism of life.'

This shows how needful it is for those who are to discuss any matter together, to have a common understanding as to the sense of the terms they employ,—how needful, and how difficult. What Professor Huxley says, implies just the reproach which is so often brought against the study of *belles lettres*,[6] as they are called: that the study is an elegant one, but slight and ineffectual; a smattering of Greek and Latin and other ornamental things, of little use for any one whose object is to get at truth, and to be a practical man. So, too, M. Renan [7] talks of the 'superficial humanism' of a school-course which treats us as if we were all going to be poets, writers, preachers, orators, and he opposes this humanism to positive science, or the critical search after truth. And there is always a tendency in those who are remonstrating against the predominance of letters in education, to understand by letters *belles lettres*, and by *belles lettres* a superficial humanism the opposite of science or true knowledge.

But when we talk of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, for instance, which is the knowledge people have called the humanities,[8] I for my part mean a knowledge which is something more than a superficial humanism, mainly decorative. 'I call all teaching *scientific*,' says Wolf,[9] the critic of Homer, 'which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources. For example: a knowledge of classical antiquity is scientific when the remains of classical antiquity are correctly studied in the original languages.' There can be no doubt that Wolf is perfectly right; that all learning is scientific which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources, and that a genuine humanism is scientific.

When I speak of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, therefore, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, I mean more than a knowledge of so much vocabulary, so much grammar, so many portions of authors in the Greek and Latin languages, I mean knowing the Greeks and Romans, and their life and genius, and what they were and did in the world; what we get from them, and what is its value. That, at least, is the ideal; and

[6] In ordinary usage, literature; but as Arnold remarks in this same paragraph, the term '*belles lettres*,' as sometimes used, implies an elegance or superficiality that he is careful to exclude from 'letters' and 'literature.']

[7] French writer on history and religion (1823–1892).]

[8] Compare the selections by Foerster (pp. 138–49) and Livingstone (pp. 150–65).]

[9] Eminent German classical scholar (1759–1824).]

when we talk of endeavouring to know Greek and Roman antiquity, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, we mean endeavouring so to know them as to satisfy this ideal, however much we may still fall short of it.

The same also as to knowing our own and other modern nations, with the like aim of getting to understand ourselves and the world. To know the best that has been thought and said by the modern nations, is to know, says Professor Huxley, 'only what modern *literatures* have to tell us; it is the criticism of life contained in modern literature.' And yet 'the distinctive character of our times,' he urges, 'lies in the vast and constantly increasing part which is played by natural knowledge.' And how, therefore, can a man, devoid of knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, enter hopefully upon a criticism of modern life?

Let us, I say, be agreed about the meaning of the terms we are using. I talk of knowing the best which has been thought and uttered in the world; Professor Huxley says this means knowing *literature*. Literature is a large word; it may mean everything written with letters or printed in a book. Euclid's *Elements* and Newton's *Principia* are thus literature. All knowledge that reaches us through books is literature. But by literature Professor Huxley means *belles lettres*. He means to make me say, that knowing the best which has been thought and said by the modern nations is knowing their *belles lettres* and no more. And this is no sufficient equipment, he argues, for a criticism of modern life. But as I do not mean, by knowing ancient Rome, knowing merely more or less of Latin *belles lettres*, and taking no account of Rome's military, and political, and legal, and administrative work in the world; and as, by knowing ancient Greece, I understand knowing her as the giver of Greek art, and the guide to a free and right use of reason and to scientific method, and the founder of our mathematics and physics and astronomy and biology,—I understand knowing her as all this, and not merely knowing certain Greek poems, and histories, and treatises, and speeches,—so as to the knowledge of modern nations also. By knowing modern nations, I mean not merely knowing their *belles lettres*, but knowing also what has been done by such men as Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Darwin. 'Our ancestors learned,' says Professor Huxley, 'that the earth is the centre of the visible universe, and that man is the cynosure of things terrestrial; and more especially was it inculcated that the course of nature had no fixed order, but that it could be, and constantly was, altered.' But for us now, continues Professor Huxley, 'the notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in

the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that nature is the expression of a definite order, with which nothing interferes.' 'And yet,' he cries, 'the purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the humanists in our day gives no inkling of all this!'

In due place and time I will just touch upon that vexed question of classical education; but at present the question is as to what is meant by knowing the best which modern nations have thought and said. It is not knowing their *belles lettres* merely which is meant. To know Italian *belles lettres*, is not to know Italy, and to know English *belles lettres* is not to know England. Into knowing Italy and England there comes a great deal more, Galileo and Newton amongst it. The reproach of being a superficial humanism, a tincture of *belles lettres*, may attach rightly enough to some other disciplines; but to the particular discipline recommended when I proposed knowing the best that has been thought and said in the world, it does not apply. In that best I certainly include what in modern times has been thought and said by the great observers and knowers of nature.

There is, therefore, really no question between Professor Huxley and me as to whether knowing the great results of the modern scientific study of nature is not required as a part of our culture, as well as knowing the products of literature and art. But to follow the processes by which those results are reached, ought, say the friends of physical science, to be made the staple of education for the bulk of mankind. And here there does arise a question between those whom Professor Huxley calls with playful sarcasm 'the Levites [10] of culture,' and those whom the poor humanist is sometimes apt to regard as its Nebuchadnezzars.[11]

The great results of the scientific investigation of nature we are agreed upon knowing, but how much of our study are we bound to give to the processes by which those results are reached? The results have their visible bearing on human life. But all the processes, too, all the items of fact, by which those results are reached and established, are interesting. All knowledge is interesting to a wise man, and the knowledge of nature is interesting to all men. It is very interesting to know, that, from the albuminous white of the egg, the chick in the egg gets the materials for its flesh, bones, blood, and feathers; while from the fatty yolk of the egg, it gets the heat and

[10 Members of the tribe of Levi had charge of the Hebrew temple and its sacred vessels.]

[11 Enemies; tyrants over the chosen people. Nebuchadnezzar was a Babylonian king; see the stories about him in the Old Testament.]

energy which enable it at length to break its shell and begin the world. It is less interesting, perhaps, but still it is interesting, to know that when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water. Moreover, it is quite true that the habit of dealing with facts, which is given by the study of nature, is, as the friends of physical science praise it for being, an excellent discipline. The appeal, in the study of nature, is constantly to observation and experiment; not only is it said that the thing is so, but we can be made to see that it is so. Not only does a man tell us that when a taper burns the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, as a man may tell us, if he likes, that Charon [12] is punting his ferry-boat on the river Styx, or that Victor Hugo [13] is a sublime poet, or Mr. Gladstone [14] the most admirable of statesmen; but we are made to see that the conversion into carbonic acid and water does actually happen. This reality of natural knowledge it is, which makes the friends of physical science contrast it, as a knowledge of things, with the humanist's knowledge, which is, say they, a knowledge of words. And hence Professor Huxley is moved to lay it down that, 'for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education.' And a certain President of the Section for Mechanical Science in the British Association [15] is, in Scripture phrase, 'very bold,' and declares that if a man, in his mental training, 'has substituted literature and history for natural science, he has chosen the less useful alternative.' But whether we go these lengths or not, we must all admit that in natural science the habit gained of dealing with facts is a most valuable discipline, and that every one should have some experience of it.

More than this, however, is demanded by the reformers. It is proposed to make the training in natural science the main part of education, for the great majority of mankind at any rate. And here, I confess, I part company with the friends of physical science, with whom up to this point I have been agreeing. In differing from them, however, I wish to proceed with the utmost caution and diffidence. The smallness of my own acquaintance with the disciplines of natural science is ever before my mind, and I am fearful of doing these disciplines an injustice. The ability and pugnacity of the partisans of natural science make them formidable persons to contradict. The tone of tentative inquiry, which befits a being of dim faculties and

[12 In classical mythology he ferried souls across the Styx.]
[13 The French poet. Arnold disapproved of him and his works.]
[14 Prime Minister, 1868–74, 1880–85, 1886, 1892–4.]
[15 The British Association for the Advancement of Science.]

bounded knowledge, is the tone I would wish to take and not to depart from. At present it seems to me, that those who are for giving to natural knowledge, as they call it, the chief place in the education of the majority of mankind, leave one important thing out of their account: the constitution of human nature. But I put this forward on the strength of some facts not at all recondite, very far from it; facts capable of being stated in the simplest possible fashion, and to which, if I so state them, the man of science will, I am sure, be willing to allow their due weight.

Deny the facts altogether, I think, he hardly can. He can hardly deny, that when we set ourselves to enumerate the powers which go to the building up of human life, and say that they are the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, and the power of social life and manners,—he can hardly deny that this scheme, though drawn in rough and plain lines enough, and not pretending to scientific exactness, does yet give a fairly true representation of the matter. Human nature is built up by these powers; we have the need for them all. When we have rightly met and adjusted the claims of them all, we shall then be in a fair way for getting soberness and righteousness, with wisdom. This is evident enough, and the friends of physical science would admit it.

But perhaps they may not have sufficiently observed another thing: namely, that the several powers just mentioned are not isolated, but there is, in the generality of mankind, a perpetual tendency to relate them one to another in divers ways. With one such way of relating them I am particularly concerned now. Following our instinct for intellect and knowledge, we acquire pieces of knowledge; and presently, in the generality of men, there arises the desire to relate these pieces of knowledge to our sense for conduct, to our sense for beauty,—and there is weariness and dissatisfaction if the desire is baulked. Now in this desire lies, I think, the strength of that hold which letters have upon us.

All knowledge is, as I said just now, interesting; and even items of knowledge which from the nature of the case cannot well be related, but must stand isolated in our thoughts, have their interest. Even lists of exceptions have their interest. If we are studying Greek accents it is interesting to know that *pais* and *pas*, and some other monosyllables of the same form of declension, do not take the circumflex upon the last syllable of the genitive plural, but vary, in this respect, from the common rule. If we are studying physiology, it is interesting to know that the pulmonary artery carries dark blood and the pulmonary vein carries bright blood, departing in this respect from the common rule for the division of labour between the veins

and the arteries. But every one knows how we seek naturally to combine the pieces of our knowledge together, to bring them under general rules, to relate them to principles; and how unsatisfactory and tiresome it would be to go on forever learning lists of exceptions, or accumulating items of fact which must stand isolated.

Well, that same need of relating our knowledge, which operates here within the sphere of our knowledge itself, we shall find operating, also, outside that sphere. We experience, as we go on learning and knowing,—the vast majority of us experience,—the need of relating what we have learnt and known to the sense which we have in us for conduct, to the sense which we have in us for beauty.

A certain Greek prophetess of Mantineia in Arcadia, Diotima [16] by name, once explained to the philosopher Socrates that love, and impulse, and bent of all kinds, is, in fact, nothing else but the desire in men that good should forever be present to them. This desire for good, Diotima assured Socrates, is our fundamental desire, of which fundamental desire every impulse in us is only some one particular form. And therefore this fundamental desire it is, I suppose,—this desire in men that good should be forever present to them,—which acts in us when we feel the impulse for relating our knowledge to our sense for conduct and to our sense for beauty. At any rate, with men in general the instinct exists. Such is human nature. And the instinct, it will be admitted, is innocent, and human nature is preserved by our following the lead of its innocent instincts. Therefore, in seeking to gratify this instinct in question, we are following the instinct of self-preservation in humanity.

But, no doubt, some kinds of knowledge cannot be made to directly serve the instinct in question, cannot be directly related to the sense for beauty, to the sense for conduct. These are instrument-knowledges; they lead on to other knowledges, which can. A man who passes his life in instrument-knowledges is a specialist. They may be invaluable as instruments to something beyond, for those who have the gift thus to employ them; and they may be disciplines in themselves wherein it is useful for every one to have some schooling. But it is inconceivable that the generality of men should pass all their mental life with Greek accents or with formal logic. My friend Professor Sylvester,[17] who is one of the first mathematicians in the world, holds transcendental doctrines as to the virtue of

[16 See Plato's *Symposium*.]

[17 J. J. Sylvester (1814–97) was a professor at Johns Hopkins, 1877–83, and at Oxford, 1883–97.]

mathematics, but those doctrines are not for common men. In the very Senate House and heart of our English Cambridge I once ventured, though not without an apology for my profaneness, to hazard the opinion that for the majority of mankind a little of mathematics, even, goes a long way. Of course this is quite consistent with their being of immense importance as an instrument to something else; but it is the few who have the aptitude for thus using them, not the bulk of mankind.

The natural sciences do not, however, stand on the same footing with these instrument-knowledges. Experience shows us that the generality of men will find more interest in learning that, when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, or in learning the explanation of the phenomenon of dew, or in learning how the circulation of the blood is carried on, than they find in learning that the genitive plural of *pais* and *pas* does not take the circumflex on the termination. And one piece of natural knowledge is added to another, and others are added to that, and at last we come to propositions so interesting as Mr. Darwin's famous proposition [18] that 'our ancestor was a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits.' Or we come to propositions of such reach and magnitude as those which Professor Huxley delivers, when he says that the notions of our forefathers about the beginning and the end of the world were all wrong, and that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes.

Interesting, indeed, these results of science are, important they are, and we should all of us be acquainted with them. But what I now wish you to mark is, that we are still, when they are propounded to us and we receive them, we are still in the sphere of intellect and knowledge. And for the generality of men there will be found, I say, to arise, when they have duly taken in the proposition that their ancestor was 'a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits,' there will be found to arise an invincible desire to relate this proposition to the sense in us for conduct, and to the sense in us for beauty. But this the men of science will not do for us, and will hardly even profess to do. They will give us other pieces of knowledge, other facts, about other animals and their ancestors, or about plants, or about stones, or about stars; and they may finally bring us to those great 'general conceptions of the universe, which are forced upon us all,' says Professor Huxley, 'by the progress of physical science.' But still it will be *knowledge* only which they give us; knowledge not put for us into relation with our sense for conduct, our sense

[18] In *The Descent of Man*, part III, ch. xxi.]

for beauty, and touched with emotion by being so put; not thus put for us, and therefore, to the majority of mankind, after a certain while, unsatisfying, wearying.

Not to the born naturalist, I admit. But what do we mean by a born naturalist? We mean a man in whom the zeal for observing nature is so uncommonly strong and eminent, that it marks him off from the bulk of mankind. Such a man will pass his life happily in collecting natural knowledge and reasoning upon it, and will ask for nothing, or hardly anything, more. I have heard it said that the sagacious and admirable naturalist whom we lost not very long ago, Mr. Darwin,[19] once owned to a friend that for his part he did not experience the necessity for two things which most men find so necessary to them,—religion and poetry; science and the domestic affections, he thought, were enough. To a born naturalist, I can well understand that this should seem so. So absorbing is his occupation with nature, so strong his love for his occupation, that he goes on acquiring natural knowledge and reasoning upon it, and has little time or inclination for thinking about getting it related to the desire in man for conduct, the desire in man for beauty. He relates it to them for himself as he goes along, so far as he feels the need; and he draws from the domestic affections all the additional solace necessary. But then Darwins are extremely rare. Another great and admirable master of natural knowledge, Faraday,[20] was a Sandemanian. That is to say, he related his knowledge to his instinct for conduct and to his instinct for beauty, by the aid of that respectable Scottish sectary, Robert Sandeman.[21] And so strong, in general, is the demand of religion and poetry to have their share in a man, to associate themselves with his knowing, and to relieve and rejoice it, that, probably, for one man amongst us with the disposition to do as Darwin did in this respect, there are at least fifty with the disposition to do as Faraday.

Education lays hold upon us, in fact, by satisfying this demand. Professor Huxley holds up to scorn mediæval education, with its neglect of the knowledge of nature, its poverty even of literary studies, its formal logic devoted to 'showing how and why that which the Church said was true must be true.' But the great mediæval Universities were not brought into

[19 It is true that he had lost his taste for literature, but he affirmed that 'if I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week' (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, ed. Francis Darwin, 1889, I, 81).]

[20 English physicist and chemist (1791–1867) who made revolutionary discoveries concerning electricity.]

[21 Leader of a small sect of independent Presbyterians in the eighteenth century.]

being, we may be sure, by the zeal for giving a jejune and contemptible education. Kings have been their nursing fathers, and queens have been their nursing mothers, but not for this. The mediæval Universities came into being, because the supposed knowledge, delivered by Scripture and the Church, so deeply engaged men's hearts, by so simply, easily, and powerfully relating itself to their desire for conduct, their desire for beauty. All other knowledge was dominated by this supposed knowledge and was subordinated to it, because of the surpassing strength of the hold which it gained upon the affections of men, by allying itself profoundly with their sense for conduct, their sense for beauty.

But now, says Professor Huxley, conceptions of the universe fatal to the notions held by our forefathers have been forced upon us by physical science. Grant to him that they are thus fatal, that the new conceptions must and will soon become current everywhere, and that every one will finally perceive them to be fatal to the beliefs of our forefathers. The need of humane letters, as they are truly called, because they serve the paramount desire in men that good should be forever present to them,—the need of humane letters, to establish a relation between the new conceptions, and our instinct for beauty, our instinct for conduct, is only the more visible. The Middle Age could do without humane letters, as it could do without the study of nature, because its supposed knowledge was made to engage its emotions so powerfully. Grant that the supposed knowledge disappears, its power of being made to engage the emotions will of course disappear along with it,—but the emotions themselves, and their claim to be engaged and satisfied, will remain. Now if we find by experience that humane letters have an undeniable power of engaging the emotions, the importance of humane letters in a man's training becomes not less, but greater, in proportion to the success of modern science in extirpating what it calls 'mediæval thinking.'

Have humane letters, then, have poetry and eloquence, the power here attributed to them of engaging the emotions, and do they exercise it? And if they have it and exercise it, *how* do they exercise it, so as to exert an influence upon man's sense for conduct, his sense for beauty? Finally, even if they both can and do exert an influence upon the senses in question, how are they to relate to them the results,—the modern results,—of natural science? All these questions may be asked. First, have poetry and eloquence the power of calling out the emotions? The appeal is to experience. Experience shows that for the vast majority of men, for mankind in general, they

have the power. Next, do they exercise it? They do. But then, *how* do they exercise it so as to affect man's sense for conduct, his sense for beauty? And this is perhaps a case for applying the Preacher's words: 'Though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, farther, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.' * Why should it be one thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say, 'Patience is a virtue,' and quite another thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with Homer,

τλητὸν γὰρ Μοῖραι θυμὸν θέσαν ἀνθρώποισιν—†

'for an enduring heart have the destinies appointed to the children of men'? Why should it be one thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with the philosopher Spinoza,[22] *Felicitas in ea consistit quod homo suum esse conservare potest*—'Man's happiness consists in his being able to preserve his own essence,' and quite another thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with the Gospel,[23] 'What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, forfeit himself?' How does this difference of effect arise? I cannot tell, and I am not much concerned to know; the important thing is that it does arise, and that we can profit by it. But how, finally, are poetry and eloquence to exercise the power of relating the modern results of natural science to man's instinct for conduct, his instinct for beauty? And here again I answer that I do not know *how* they will exercise it, but that they can and will exercise it I am sure. I do not mean that modern philosophical poets and modern philosophical moralists are to come and relate for us, in express terms, the results of modern scientific research to our instinct for conduct, our instinct for beauty. But I mean that we shall find, as a matter of experience, if we know the best that has been thought and uttered in the world, we shall find that the art and poetry and eloquence of men who lived, perhaps, long ago, who had the most limited natural knowledge, who had the most erroneous conceptions about many important matters, we shall find that this art, and poetry, and eloquence, have in fact not only the power of refreshing and delighting us, they have also the power,—such is the strength and worth, in essentials, of their authors' criticism of life,—they have a fortifying, and elevating, and quickening, and suggestive power, capable of wonderfully helping us to

* *Ecclesiastes*, viii, 17.

† *Iliad*, xxiv, 49.

[22] Famous Dutch philosopher, of Jewish descent (1632–77).]

[23] Matthew, xvi, 26.]

relate the results of modern science to our need for conduct, our need for beauty. Homer's conceptions of the physical universe were, I imagine, grotesque; but really, under the shock of hearing from modern science that 'the world is not subordinated to man's use, and that man is not the cynosure of things terrestrial,' I could, for my own part, desire no better comfort than Homer's line which I quoted just now,

τλητὸν γὰρ Μοῖραι θυμὸν θέσαν ἀνθρώποισιν—

'for an enduring heart have the destinies appointed to the children of men'!

And the more that men's minds are cleared, the more that the results of science are frankly accepted, the more that poetry and eloquence come to be received and studied as what in truth they really are,—the criticism of life by gifted men, alive and active with extraordinary power at an unusual number of points;—so much the more will the value of humane letters, and of art also, which is an utterance having a like kind of power with theirs, be felt and acknowledged, and their place in education be secured.

Let us therefore, all of us, avoid indeed as much as possible any invidious comparison between the merits of humane letters, as means of education, and the merits of the natural sciences. But when some President of a Section for Mechanical Science insists on making the comparison, and tells us that 'he who in his training has substituted literature and history for natural science has chosen the less useful alternative,' let us make answer to him that the student of humane letters only, will, at least, know also the great general conceptions brought in by modern physical science; for science, as Professor Huxley says, forces them upon us all. But the student of the natural sciences only, will, by our very hypothesis, know nothing of humane letters; not to mention that in setting himself to be perpetually accumulating natural knowledge, he sets himself to do what only specialists have in general the gift for doing genially. And so he will probably be unsatisfied, or at any rate incomplete, and even more incomplete than the student of humane letters only.

I once mentioned in a school-report, how a young man in one of our English training colleges having to paraphrase the passage in *Macbeth* beginning,

> Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?

turned this line into, 'Can you not wait upon the lunatic?' And I remarked what a curious state of things it would be, if every pupil of our national schools knew, let us say, that the moon is two thousand one hundred and

sixty miles in diameter, and thought at the same time that a good paraphrase for

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?

was, 'Can you not wait upon the lunatic?' If one is driven to choose, I think I would rather have a young person ignorant about the moon's diameter, but aware that 'Can you not wait upon the lunatic?' is bad, than a young person whose education had been such as to manage things the other way.

Or to go higher than the pupils of our national schools. I have in my mind's eye a member of our British Parliament who comes to travel here in America, who afterwards relates his travels, and who shows a really masterly knowledge of the geology of this great country and of its mining capabilities, but who ends by gravely suggesting that the United States should borrow a prince from our Royal Family, and should make him their king, and should create a House of Lords of great landed proprietors after the pattern of ours; and then America, he thinks, would have her future happily and perfectly secured. Surely, in this case, the President of the Section for Mechanical Science would himself hardly say that our member of Parliament, by concentrating himself upon geology and mineralogy, and so on, and not attending to literature and history, had 'chosen the more useful alternative.'

If then there is to be separation and option between humane letters on the one hand, and the natural sciences on the other, the great majority of mankind, all who have not exceptional and overpowering aptitudes for the study of nature, would do well, I cannot but think, to choose to be educated in humane letters rather than in the natural sciences. Letters will call out their being at more points, will make them live more.

I said that before I ended I would just touch on the question of classical education, and I will keep my word. Even if literature is to retain a large place in our education, yet Latin and Greek, say the friends of progress, will certainly have to go. Greek is the grand offender in the eyes of these gentlemen. The attackers of the established course of study think that against Greek, at any rate, they have irresistible arguments. Literature may perhaps be needed in education, they say; but why on earth should it be Greek literature? Why not French or German? Nay, 'has not an Englishman models in his own literature of every kind of excellence?' [24] As before, it is not on any weak pleadings of my own that I rely for convincing the

[24] An inexact quotation of Huxley's words.]

gainsayers; it is on the constitution of human nature itself, and on the instinct of self-preservation in humanity. The instinct for beauty is set in human nature, as surely as the instinct for knowledge is set there, or the instinct for conduct. If the instinct for beauty is served by Greek literature and art as it is served by no other literature and art, we may trust to the instinct of self-preservation in humanity for keeping Greek as part of our culture. We may trust to it for even making the study of Greek more prevalent than it is now. Greek will come, I hope, some day to be studied more rationally than at present; but it will be increasingly studied as men increasingly feel the need in them for beauty, and how powerfully Greek art and Greek literature can serve this need. Women will again study Greek, as Lady Jane Grey [25] did; I believe that in that chain of forts, with which the fair host of the Amazons are now engirdling our English universities, I find that here in America, in colleges like Smith College in Massachusetts, and Vassar College in the State of New York, and in the happy families of the mixed universities out West, they are studying it already.

Defuit una mihi symmetria prisca,—'The antique symmetry was the one thing wanting to me,' said Leonardo da Vinci; and he was an Italian. I will not presume to speak for the Americans, but I am sure that, in the Englishman, the want of this admirable symmetry of the Greeks is a thousand times more great and crying than in any Italian. The results of the want show themselves most glaringly, perhaps, in our architecture, but they show themselves, also, in all our art. *Fit details strictly combined, in view of a large general result nobly conceived;* that is just the beautiful *symmetria prisca* of the Greeks, and it is just where we English fail, where all our art fails. Striking ideas we have, and well executed details we have; but that high symmetry which, with satisfying and delightful effect, combines them, we seldom or never have. The glorious beauty of the Acropolis at Athens did not come from single fine things stuck about on that hill, a statue here, a gateway there;—no, it arose from all things being perfectly combined for a supreme total effect. What must not an Englishman feel about our deficiencies in this respect, as the sense for beauty, whereof this symmetry is an essential element, awakens and strengthens within him! what will not one day be his respect and desire for Greece and its *symmetria prisca,* when the scales drop from his eyes as he walks the London streets, and he sees such a lesson in meanness, as the Strand, for instance, in its true deformity! But here we are coming to our friend Mr. Ruskin's

[25 Great-granddaughter of Henry VII. Executed in 1554 because of her husband's and her father's complicity in rebellion against Mary Tudor.]

province,[26] and I will not intrude upon it, for he is its very sufficient guardian.

And so we at last find, it seems, we find flowing in favour of the humanities the natural and necessary stream of things, which seemed against them when we started. The 'hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits,' this good fellow carried hidden in his nature, apparently, something destined to develop into a necessity for humane letters. Nay, more; we seem finally to be even led to the further conclusion that our hairy ancestor carried in his nature, also, a necessity for Greek.

And, therefore, to say the truth, I cannot really think that humane letters are in much actual danger of being thrust out from their leading place in education, in spite of the array of authorities against them at this moment. So long as human nature is what it is, their attractions will remain irresistible. As with Greek, so with letters generally: they will some day come, we may hope, to be studied more rationally, but they will not lose their place. What will happen will rather be that there will be crowded into education other matters besides, far too many; there will be, perhaps, a period of unsettlement and confusion and false tendency; but letters will not in the end lose their leading place. If they lose it for a time, they will get it back again. We shall be brought back to them by our wants and aspirations. And a poor humanist may possess his soul in patience, neither strive nor cry, admit the energy and brilliancy of the partisans of physical science, and their present favour with the public, to be far greater than his own, and still have a happy faith that the nature of things works silently on behalf of the studies which he loves, and that, while we shall all have to acquaint ourselves with the great results reached by modern science, and to give ourselves as much training in its disciplines as we can conveniently carry, yet the majority of men will always require humane letters; and so much the more, as they have the more and the greater results of science to relate to the need in man for conduct, and to the need in him for beauty.

[[26] Ruskin (1819–1900) often wrote about the ugliness of Victorian life and urged people to take a different attitude toward art from that which he found prevalent among them.]

Norman Foerster

LIBERAL EDUCATION

¶ Norman Foerster (1878—) has been for many years one of the best-known teachers of literature in the United States. Educated at Harvard, he taught at the universities of Wisconsin and North Carolina; afterward he was Director of the School of Letters at the University of Iowa, 1930–44. He is the author of works on literary criticism and American literature (*American Criticism*, 1928; *The American Scholar*, 1929; *Towards Standards*, 1931). Deeply interested in the humanities and their role in American collegiate education, he has written several books (*The American State University*, 1937; *The Future of the Liberal College*, 1938; *The Humanities and the Common Man*, 1946) in which he argues cogently for the fundamental importance of 'humanistic' training.

AN EDUCATION inspired by the humanistic ideal will be a liberal education. It alone is fully worthy of the dignity of man. Its object is clear: to liberate the young from ignorance, prejudice, foolishness, and the like; to aid them to attain freedom through realization of their capacities as men and women. An education aiming at something less than the human is in so far barbarous, for example the slavish education of the totalitarian state,[1] or a vocational education which degrades men to tools. To be sure, men must have vocations, and therefore preparation ranging from a few weeks or months to a term of years, according to the calling selected, but such preparation, whether narrowly or broadly conceived, is not what we mean by liberal education.

When liberal education arose in ancient Greece, it was the discipline of free men—the unfree learned the vocations. Today the division is not

[1 Compare Livingstone, 'Education and the Training of Character' (pp. 150–65), which has many observations relevant to this essay.]

FROM *The Humanities and the Common Man*, 1946. Reprinted by permission of the University of North Carolina Press.

between classes but within the individual. To make a living he works forty hours a week, more or less; to live he has all the rest, to live freely, as he chooses. Only a relatively few men can have vocations that exercise their full humanity. The vast majority can feel free only in their free time, and they want more and more free time. Whatever the value of their vocational work to themselves and to the state, the value of their free time is even greater both to themselves and to the state as well. For the state needs citizens [2] even more than it needs shopkeepers, carpenters, bankers, lawyers, needs men who are more than instruments in the work of the world, who experience life in many ways, develop many interests, play a role in the formation of that public opinion which is the real government of the democratic state, and attain a morale high enough to sustain the state in peace and war. The most civilized state will, if resources and manpower are equal, be the strongest, happiest, and most memorable.

From the point of view of the American state, therefore, the function of liberal education, as President Roosevelt said at Jefferson's alma mater,[3] is that of 'training men for citizenship in a great republic.' 'This,' he went on to say, 'was in the spirit of the old America, and it is, I believe, in the spirit of the America of today. The necessities of our time demand that men avoid being set in grooves, that they avoid the occupational predestination of the older world. . . Every form of cooperative human endeavor cries out for men and women who, in their thinking processes, will know something of the broader aspects of any given problem.' Clearly, the states of the Union cannot afford, in their public universities, the multiplication of occupational curricula that offer what Edmund Burke [4] somewhere calls 'tricking short-cuts and little fallacious facilities.' Even in the professions liberal training is gravely hindered by the motivation of the student, who, as another of our presidents—Woodrow Wilson—put it, 'will be immersed in the things that touch his profit and loss, and a man is not free to think inside that territory.'

Liberal education is one thing and vocational education another, and no amount of sophistry about liberal education 'in a new sense of the term' will alter the fact. That they differ in principle has been recognized from ancient times to the present. As they were apart in ancient Greece, so they were in the Middle Ages, when an education in the seven liberal arts [5] was

[2] See Newman, p. 113: 'If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society.']

[3] Jefferson attended the College of William and Mary.]

[4] The great British orator and statesman (1729–97).]

[5] Grammar, rhetoric, logic, music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy.]

prescribed for every student before he turned to his professional preparation. They were apart again in the Renaissance. In the Mantuan school of Vittorino,[6] for instance, which merits a few words here because it blended so well the classical and Christian traditions, the aim, as stated by W. H. Woodward, was 'to lay foundations in liberal culture to serve as the necessary preliminaries to specific training for careers.' As a humanist educator, Vittorino da Feltre sought to create 'the complete citizen,' or, to say the same thing another way, 'to secure the harmonious development of mind, body, and character.' The curriculum was limited by the meagre scientific knowledge then available, but it supplemented the humanities with mathematics and some natural science (astrology was discarded for astronomy). Ancient culture was not pursued in abstraction but focused earnestly on the needs of the present. As for individual differences, Vittorino considered, 'almost with reverence, the tastes and bent of each of his pupils.' Before going on to professional study his pupils stayed with him 'until they had passed their twenty-first year.' On the whole, his school might well serve as a fruitful source of suggestion for the liberal college in modern America, as it has served for secondary education in modern Europe. Our high schools accomplish something in liberal education and could accomplish more, but under our system it is the responsibility of the college to complete the program, postponing occupational training till it *has* been completed—if necessary till the student has passed his twenty-first year.

But the beguiling hope persists: Could not liberal education be attempted *through* vocational education? Many persons, like John Dewey[7] in his article in *Fortune* in 1944, have argued that liberal education as we have known it from ancient till recent times is a relic of the pre-democratic and pre-scientific past, and that today the appropriate education must be technical and vocational. It is frankly admitted that our job-centered training has been too narrow and mechanical. So we should set about 'liberalizing our technical and vocational education.' How this is to be done has not been made very clear. One might suppose, to take a concrete example, that a course in Advanced Clothing would be so taught as to lead the student back to earlier conceptions of costume, eventually to Greek costume and hence to Greek art and hence to the whole Greek view of life, perhaps attracting the student to an elective in ancient civilization which he would 'feed into' his vocational preparation. But this is not what Dr. Dewey

[6 Compare Livingstone, 'Education and the Training of Character,' p. 159.]

[7 Contemporary American philosopher whose writings have had considerable influence on educational practices, especially in primary and secondary schools (see p. 146).]

means. His great object is to make the student modern, that is, scientific. The past, lingering in our conceptions and standards, is only a clog that prevents our going forward with undivided zeal toward 'the scientific way of life.' Vocational education must be liberalized by showing how modern industry rests on scientific processes. What this would seem to mean, in our course on Advanced Clothing, is that the student would be brought to 'awareness of the scientific processes embodied' in designing, constructing, and preserving clothing and in relating contemporary clothing to contemporary social forces. Whatever it means the net result might be the improvement of vocational education but could not be the improvement of liberal education.

If liberal education is not concerned with vocational skills, it is profoundly concerned with other skills and abilities. There are many things which the student, as a human being, should be able to do. He should be able to care for his body, his physical welfare. He should be able to speak, to read, to write, on a plane suited to his college years and later life. He should know how to think: how to think in the concrete terms of science, how to think in the abstract manner of mathematics and philosophy, and how to think (and feel and will) in the humanistic realm of value-judgments. He should be able to relate his growing abilities and knowledge in the gradual development of a philosophy of life to which he is willing provisionally to commit himself. He should be able to relate his developing philosophy to active experience in living, to complete the revolving circle of thought and action. Through the discipline of his entire nature he will come into ever fuller possession of himself as a human being and as a particular person.

Something like this set of skills and abilities is agreed upon by virtually all who profess belief in liberal education. The list may never be altogether the same, and differences in emphasis will appear, but on the whole the objectives are sufficiently agreed upon. There is a fundamental cleavage, however, between those who assert that liberal education is concerned only with abilities and those who assert that it involves both abilities and knowledge.

The tendency has been especially marked among educationists to limit the objectives to abilities, using knowledge only as means. What sort of person, they ask, do we want the student to be when we are through with him? What do we want to have happen to him in consequence of his education? Once we have decided upon the end-product, it will be easy to plan a curriculum and hire and fire teachers according to their success in chang-

ing the student as we want him changed. The student is to be conditioned, the teacher is to be approved or purged. This totalitarian parody of liberal education—I have stated it crudely because I have heard it stated crudely—shows some signs of becoming a menace in a society floundering for lack of assured values. America today has more reason than England had in 1935 to heed the warning then sounded by John Murray, principal of University College, Exeter. 'Any dictator,' he cried, 'might see his chance in the present state of the universities that have sold themselves to utility. If the universities have lost their humanism, or the prophetic and magisterial tones in preaching it, need a dictator hesitate? From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.'

Protection against this perversion is offered by those who assert that liberal education involves not only abilities but common knowledge, common knowledge not of anything at random but of the liberating best that man has said and done. Even if the goal were allowed to be abilities alone, it could be attained most effectively by the use of the best materials. After all is anyone so crass as to maintain that the history of Peru would do as well as the history of modern Europe, the literature of the Philippines as well as the literature of England, an African dialect as well as French, the science of numismatics as well as the science of biology? The knowledge to be learned may obviously be more or less relevant. Is there, then, a most relevant knowledge? Is there an indispensable best? If so, who shall say what it is? At this point the specialist professor will break down in utter helplessness. But even he, if he could drop his pose or his politics, would quickly begin a list of essentials, or of things so important that they might as well be called essentials. There is a large area of general agreement as to the best that man has said and done, large enough for the planning of a curriculum. This best will guard the student against conditioning to the intellectual fashions and veering passions of the day, fashions and passions to which the faculty itself is not immune. He will have at hand a standard by which to measure the instruction he is receiving. Even if the knowledge opened to him is not necessarily the best, it will have high value as common knowledge, shared knowledge, tending to unite his and other students' minds in common experience, common duties, common memories. Liberal education based on common knowledge is social education; vocational education separating youth into groups according to special interests is unsocial education.

When a common fund of knowledge has been selected, the liberal college will begin to take on a definiteness of type comparable to that of the

professional schools. Once this definiteness of type has been fully established in terms of objectives, curriculum and teaching methods, the uniform requirement of specific knowledge will seem no more arbitrary than it does today in training for the professions. If something like half of the total Bachelor's program is made common, the other half will be available for election among advanced liberal studies, or for concentration upon a segment of the field of learning, to be chosen according to individual differences in interest and ability and to be studied in the same liberal manner.

The Great Curriculum

What should the common studies be? In a humanistic reorientation, it goes without saying, the humanities will take on a new importance. But can we be satisfied with the thesis of President Conant [8] that a general education must be based on literature, the arts, and philosophy, even if we add history, which he has elsewhere predicted will be the most widely required study in the next fifty years? All these are humanities; is the humanistic spirit content to ignore science? The answer must be clear and unequivocal.

Historically, the answer is plain: an education permeated with the humanistic spirit has always included science. In ancient Greece, science —mathematics, astronomy, some natural history—was a part of liberal education. In the Renaissance, in the school of Vittorino, for example, it was likewise included. That science was sometimes disparaged by the humanists of the Renaissance is not surprising, in view of the scant knowledge of nature then existing. Science was little more than a promise or a hope, while the humanities had attained a dazzling achievement as far back as the fifth century B.C., indeed still earlier in the greatest of all poets, Homer. By the late nineteenth century this contrast had disappeared: science had arrived, it too had attained a dazzling achievement, and it claimed and won its place in education. If the zeal of its opponents was occasionally excessive, so was the zeal of its proponents. One must regret the mutual hostility of the two sides that attended the arrival of science in education and that lingers with us to this day, because it was not and is not justified.

The hostility is the result of mistaken attitudes. On the one side, scientists have often depreciated the humanities as not concerned with knowledge, on the assumption that there is only one kind of knowledge, scien-

[8 Of Harvard.]

tific knowledge. They have believed that science is competent, and alone competent, to deal securely and fruitfully with everything natural and human. All fields of knowledge should be freed of unvalidated guesses, armchair philosophizing, the drag of superstition, and be duly scientized. 'What knowledge is of most worth?' [9] 'The answer is always—Science.' This attitude, as I have already suggested, comes not from science but from philosophy, the philosophy of naturalism. On the other side: humanists have often depreciated the sciences as materialistic, as if they were responsible for the sordid world of the machine, of big business and little living, a world in which things are in the saddle and ride mankind.[10] When this has been their attitude, humanists have forgotten that the source of what they term materialism is, as Michael Pupin [11] rightly declared, not in 'any material structure raised by the genius of man,' but 'in the deepest depths of the human soul where selfishness and greed, hatred and fear' have displaced 'beauty and goodness.' The evil from which we suffer lies in the realm of the humanities. It was not caused by scientists and engineers and will never be destroyed by them.

Between a naturalistic philosophy reducing man wholly to the flux of nature and a humanistic philosophy emphasizing his distinctive humanity the conflict is real and, in the end, irreconcilable. But between science and the humanities there can be no real conflict whatever. That men in these two broad domains can come together in mutual respect was indicated, for instance, a number of years ago in a public statement. Fifteen distinguished American scientists (including such names as Walcott, Osborn, Conklin, Pupin, Mayo, Millikan)[12] issued a joint statement with a similar group of religious leaders and men of affairs, regretting the antagonism between men in the domains of science and the humanities, specifically religion. They declared: *'The purpose of science is to develop, without prejudice or preconception of any kind, a knowledge of the facts, the laws, and the processes of nature. The even more important task of religion, on the other hand, is to develop the consciences, the ideals, and the aspirations of mankind.'* The province of the one is natural knowledge; the province of the other is human values. So long as each stays within its bounds there can be no conflict. They are complementary, and should be co-

[9 Compare Arnold, 'Literature and Science,' pp. 120–37.]

[10 From Emerson's 'Ode Inscribed to W. H. Channing.']

[11 Physicist (1858–1935).]

[12 C. D. Walcott (1850–1927), geologist; H. F. Osborn (1857–1935), paleontologist; E. G. Conklin (1863—), biologist; C. H. Mayo (1865–1939), surgeon; R. A. Millikan (1868—), physicist. An essay by Conklin is reprinted in this volume, pp. 603–15.]

operative. We need to know *what is*, we need to know *what ought to be*, and we need to know how they may be related.

To say that science is concerned with judgments of fact and not with judgments of value is not, however, to deny that implications of value enter into science. It is precisely because of the value implications of science that the humanistic spirit wholeheartedly supports science. The human values implied and presupposed by science are twofold.

First, it is animated by the passion to know, the quest of knowledge for its own sake. There is no science save as men produce it, and men produce it because they value it as men. Among the 'aspirations of mankind' mentioned above, we must assign a high place to the desire for knowledge, including knowledge of nature—the physical and biological constitution and environment of our species. To this aspiration science owes its existence, as Dr. Einstein reminds us in a passage I have quoted.[13] To this aspiration science also owes its capacity to survive. Whenever the aspiration for truth for its own sake declines, science also declines. This happened, for instance, when a Nazi leadership sought to evoke the miracle of a 'German science.' American men of science were revolted by this perversion not as scientists (science revolts at nothing) but as humanists. The humanistic spirit has, as one of its first and finest attributes, a passion for the disinterested, impartial pursuit of truth. In the process of education it is communicated with difficulty, and demands time and hard work. Yet innumerable college graduates can say of some scientist what one of them, for example, said of his beloved teacher of zoology, Henry V. Wilson,[14] who 'first revealed to my hazy young mind the fact that there was a vast field of knowledge where Truth, within certain recognizable limits, was not a matter of opinion, nor of taste, nor a recollection of historical facts, but a thing of demonstrable law. . . He is the embodiment of the scientific spirit which seeks Truth always, without prejudices, without preconceptions, not caring where the search leads but careful always that in the utmost detail the distinction be preserved between that which is known and that which is supposed.' Now, this distinction is one which is nowhere so impressively

[13 Einstein said that whatever scientific method in the hand of man will produce 'depends entirely on the nature of the aims alive in mankind. Once these aims exist, the scientific method furnishes means to realize them. But it cannot furnish the aims themselves. The scientific method itself would not have led to anything, it would not even have been born at all without a passionate striving for clear understanding. Perfection of means and confusion of aims seem, in my opinion, to characterize our age.']

[14 Scientist (1863–1939), for many years a teacher at the University of North Carolina.]

communicated as in the sciences of nature, which consequently merit an important place in liberal education.

Secondly, science is animated by the desire for use. Knowledge is not only an end in itself, but a means to further ends. As Francis Bacon taught, knowledge is power, and may be aimed at 'the relief of man's estate,' 'inventions that may in some degree subdue and overcome the necessities and miseries of humanity' and also, we may add, contribute to man's chances of happiness. Science is thus instrumental in the achieving of values already defined by the humanistic spirit. For a hundred years the instrumental service of science has tended to obscure its intrinsic value, so that T. H. Huxley complained, as long ago as 1866, that science had been degraded to 'a sort of comfort-grinding machine.' On the intellectual plane the same tendency has led to a whole philosophy of instrumentalism, associated with the name of John Dewey. The motivation of this philosophy is human purpose, action, advantage, working experimentally in the overcoming of difficulties, and by a strange inversion truth itself is conceived as serviceability. This conclusion is not acceptable to the disinterested pursuit of truth which we call science. As W. T. Stace [15] has said, 'The ideal of the scientific mind has been, throughout the history of the west from Greek times to the present day, not to appraise theories by their capacity for helping human beings, but by their correspondence with the facts of the objective world. Of course science has sought, among other things, to discover truths which shall be of service to men. But it is a monstrous perversion to suggest that the quality of being serviceable to men is what, in the opinion of science, has rendered its discoveries true.'

The humanistic spirit, believing in the pursuit of truth as an end in itself, believing also in the use of truth as a means to further ends, must hereafter give unstinted support to the great sciences of nature set in motion by the Hellenic mind and accelerated enormously by our own age. What is to be said of the so-called sciences of man?

The social sciences are relatively new and undeveloped subjects. With the exception of political science, heir of a political philosophy already mature as far back as Plato and Aristotle, the sciences of man in society came into being only a century or two ago—economics in the eighteenth century, anthropology, sociology, and social psychology in the late nineteenth century. As a distinct group or academic division comparable to the natural sciences and the humanities, they date from the present century. They owe their existence, in the form in which we have them, mainly

[15 Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University.]

to a belief that the objectives and methods of the triumphant natural sciences should next be applied to the study of human society. In the words of a committee report, 'in social science, as in other sciences, an attempt is made to describe, rather than to evaluate, the subject matter. The goal is to understand the social order, to discover important concrete facts, and to find regularities that may be assumed to obtain beyond the cases observed and described.' A social scientist, emulating the impartiality of the natural scientist, is not in a position to choose, for example, between democracy and fascism, either in his studies or in his teaching. He is permitted no preferences, no fixed standards, no absolute values. 'As a scientist,' says Robert M. MacIver,[16] 'he must be content with his world of relative values. Whatever his own convictions may be, he must be constantly alert not to impose them on the changeful order of things.'

The impulse is admirable, but the results have been disappointing, and the suspicion is growing that methods and concepts drawn from natural science will not suffice for social science. The 'wavering and incalculable behavior' of man, in the phrase of F. W. Taussig,[17] suggests the enormous difficulty of a true science of man. The concept of cause and effect, as it appears in natural science, seems not to carry over to social science. Unlike other animate beings man is purposive, with a will that seems like the wind's will [18] of the poet. Besides, while social behavior may be observed with a good deal of precision, the attempt to generalize the facts in the form of hypotheses cannot lead to positive results because the scientific method of controlled experiment and verification is not available. The result is a prevailing haziness and sense of frustration. 'Twenty years hence,' said Torrens [19] in regard to political economy, 'there will scarcely exist a doubt respecting any of its fundamental principles.' Twenty years passed, one hundred and twenty years passed, and today the air is filled with more doubts than ever. Perhaps the best summary of the struggle of the social sciences to find themselves is that of Roscoe Pound,[20] who begins by saying that he has no quarrel with them, having taught jurisprudence for forty years from the sociological standpoint. 'But I do not deceive myself,' he says, 'as to those so-called sciences. So far as they are not descriptive, they are in continual flux. In the nature of things they cannot be sciences in the sense of physics or chemistry or astronomy. They have been organized as

[16 American sociologist (1882—).]
[17 American economist (1859–1940).]
[18 'A boy's will is the wind's will' (Longfellow, 'My Lost Youth').]
[19 English writer on economic and political subjects (1780–1864).]
[20 Former Dean of Harvard Law School.]

philosophies, have been worked out on the lines of geometry, have been remade to theories of history, have had their period of positivism, have turned to social psychology, and are now in an era of neo-Kantian [21] methodology in some hands and of economic determinism or psychological realism or relativist skepticism or phenomenonological intuitionism in other hands. They do not impart wisdom; they need to be approached with acquired wisdom. . . They are not foundation subjects. They belong in the superstructure.'

How the social sciences are eventually to find themselves and to establish themselves as an essential part of liberal education, I shall not venture to suggest. One thing, however, seems very clear. They will have to derive their methodology from their own subject matter, rather than from the natural sciences. Since their subject matter is man, they may be expected to draw closer to the humanities. Even the 'dismal science' of economics—dismal in its vicious circle of 'producing wealth to produce more wealth'—is capable of taking on a profound human relevance in the hands of a man like John Ruskin,[22] who does not look so foolish as he did in the good old days of classical political economy. A university professor wrote to me: 'We economists too often stress some mechanical adjustment of prices or production when the real need is men of character and insight who can direct and enlighten us.' Is there any reason why economists should not themselves be men of character and insight? In point of fact, the researches of our social scientists are largely directed by concepts of human values, despite professions of innocence. But the values are casually assumed, derived from the climate of opinion rather than earned by study and hard reflection. The social scientist of the future, one may venture to predict, will be obliged to bring his subject into more fruitful relation with the humanities, perhaps even to restore it to its humane matrix.

The curriculum of foundation studies, then, will be drawn mainly from the natural sciences and the humanities: the physical and the biological sciences, history, literature, art, and philosophy. It will offer, not hasty encyclopedic surveys of these fields, but a rich and intimate knowledge and experience of the best that man has learned and said and done in them. It will address the student, not as a future technician and specialist, but as a human being interested in understanding himself and his world.

[21 Referring to the revival or refinement of principles and methods laid down by the German philosopher Kant (1724–1804).]

[22 Ruskin (1819–1900) wrote voluminously on economics and social reform as well as on art and architecture.]

In this new task it cannot be expected to succeed until scholars in each subject have reconceived their aims and methods in the manner proposed, for one subject, by a recent collaborative book on *Literary Scholarship: Its Aims and Methods*. Only then will it be possible for us to undertake profitably the search for the concrete program of subjects and courses which will constitute the modern Great Curriculum equal in solidity and authority to the great curricula of past ages.

Reform within the subjects, if it has not advanced far, has at least begun. While it continues, we may welcome serious reflection upon the more general problem, as in the article by William C. DeVane [23] on 'American Education After the War,' the book entitled *Liberal Education Re-Examined* by a committee appointed by the American Council of Learned Societies, and the book on *The Rebirth of Liberal Education* written by Fred B. Millett [24] for the Rockefeller Foundation. We may welcome the ferment of curricular thought working everywhere today in our colleges and universities even though so much of it seems only frivolously modish and leads only to a meaningless tinkering dictated by political motives. Yet there is a danger that our preoccupation with curricula and organization and teaching procedures, in a word with machinery, will obscure the real problem. That problem, as I have tried to show, is the spirit and aim of the men who do the teaching, the faculty's philosophy of life and of education, which should give direction to all the practical decisions that must be made. A naturalistic philosophy has led the modern world, in totalitarian and democratic nations alike, toward a materialistic chaos and a resurgence of barbarism. An age of science has become an age of the misuse of science.[25] Whether the forces of darkness will be halted no man can say. But this one can affirm: that if America is to play a high and civilizing role in the rest of the twentieth century, it will need a humanistic philosophy of life based on the concept of the dignity of man, and a humanistic philosophy of education that will supply our democratic society with men and women of intelligence and character.

[23 Of Yale University.]
[24 Of Wesleyan University.]
[25 See Woodward, pp. 280–81 of this volume.]

Sir Richard Livingstone

EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF CHARACTER

¶ Sir Richard Livingstone (1880—) has been president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, since 1933, and when he wrote these pages he was vice-chancellor of the university. Throughout an honored career as scholar and educator he has labored to persuade more people to become more concerned with education, including the education of adults. A devoted Hellenist, he has emphasized in season and out of season the value of Hellenic ideals for modern society. He is thus a true follower of Matthew Arnold, and his criticism of society and culture is as pertinent to the middle of the twentieth century as Arnold's was to Victorian England. A good Hellenist is always up to date.

His books on Hellenism include *The Greek Genius and Its Meaning to Us* (1915), *The Pageant of Greece* (1923), *The Mission of Greece* (1928), *Greek Ideals and Modern Life* (1935); he edited *The Legacy of Greece* (1921). To discussions of education he has contributed *The Future in Education* (1941), *Education for a World Adrift* (1943), *Some Tasks for Education* (1946). The last-named book, from which the second chapter is reprinted here, originated as lectures given at the University of Toronto in 1945.

> Types of Governments correspond to the types of human nature. States are made, not from rocks and trees, but from the characters of their citizens which turn the scale and draw everything after them.—*Plato.*

IF THERE WERE such things as Political Shows, machinery for the preservation of peace would be among the exhibits. There, in a row, would stand a succession of designs from the Holy Alliance[1] (and earlier)

[1] Between Russia, Austria, and Prussia, 1815–22.]

FROM *Some Tasks for Education*, 1946. Reprinted by permission of the Oxford University Press.

down to the League of Nations, Treaties, Pacts, Covenants, Concerts of Europe, Military Conventions, Disarmament Projects, all of which began in hope and ended in failure. Many of them are powerful, many ingenious, but none have worked. Are the projects of our generation for preserving peace to be equally unsuccessful? It depends on whether we diagnose rightly the cause of our past failures.

Better institutions are greatly to be desired, but the efficiency of institutions, as of machines, depends on those who operate them. The fate of a new League or Concert of Nations will depend on those who work it. The evils of the world do not come, except in a minor degree, from bad political machinery and will not be cured by improving it. There is a truer philosophy in the Epistle of St. James.[2] 'From whence,' he asks, 'come wars and fightings among you?' 'Because,' we answer, 'the Disarmament Conference failed, or the League of Nations was imperfect, or no one had thought of Federal Union, or Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy [3] was weak.' St. James was not the most intellectual of the Apostles, but his reply is more to the point: 'Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have.' The language may be old-fashioned, but here is the plain truth. Fundamentally the political problem is a problem of human character.

Let those who doubt this truism read any period of history in detail. I emphasize the words 'in detail.' It is one of our greatest errors in studying history that we generally study it on a small scale, in textbooks and outlines of history. They have their value, but they leave us with little idea of what history is. In the textbook, history appears simple—much too simple. It becomes an affair of years, not, as it is in the making, of weeks, days, hours. The struggles, agonies, passions, and uncertainties of the time disappear; the lines and wrinkles are smoothed out, leaving a characterless and rather uninteresting face. Issues which at the time were confused seem clear, dénouements [4] obvious and inevitable, and we never realize how near to failure were triumphs that to us seem easy, or how close to success were complete and disastrous failures. The mischances and blunders of statesmen astonish us and we shut the book saying, like Puck, 'Lord, what fools these mortals be!' [5]

Such is history, read even in the best textbooks and outlines. They show

[2] Ch. iv, 1.]

[3] The diplomacy of appeasement. Neville Chamberlain was Prime Minister from 1937 until 1940.]

[4] Final revelations, outcomes.]

[5] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, ii, 115.]

only tendencies, trends, movements, results; they give the scheme of events as an aerial photograph gives the shape and plan of a town, but they reveal no more of what really happens than such a photograph reveals of the human life actually lived in the streets and houses of the town. To know that, you must leave your aeroplane, walk through the streets, enter the houses, and meet and mix with the inhabitants. Read textbooks by all means; but you will learn infinitely more from reading Macaulay's *History of England* or the three volumes of Trevelyan's *England Under Queen Anne*. There you will see what history is and what determines its course.

There are many determining factors: geography and geology, climate, economic conditions, scientific discovery; but above all there is the too often forgotten element of human nature. Not merely the accident of individual genius—the appearance of a Cromwell, a Chatham,[6] or a Churchill, a Frederick or a Napoleon, a Washington or a Lincoln—but the working of more ordinary human nature: intellectual qualities—wisdom, intelligence, judgment, foresight, and their opposites; but still more, moral qualities—disinterestedness, courage, honesty, a sense of justice and fair play, patience and self-mastery and the power to endure and wait and persevere in a clearly seen purpose, and *their* opposites: greed, ambition, vanity, pride, jealousy, bad temper, the uncontrolled tongue, the faint heart, the desire for ease and comfort. All these factors, eliminated from outline histories, are revealed under the microscope of a detailed study and are seen to be main determinants of the course of the world for achievement or frustration, success or failure, good or evil. Man is the real problem,[7] the old, the modern problem; for the new world is not so new: humanity changes its clothes but not its nature; Adam puts on a more elaborate and complicated dress but remains the old Adam.

At this point a reader may say: 'We have heard all this before: one cannot open a paper without finding someone saying that civilization is in danger of destruction because our growth in knowledge has far outstripped our growth in character. Why labour truisms which no one denies? You are preaching to the converted and boring them.'

I admit the justice of the criticism: I am talking truisms. But do we believe them to be true? And if so, why do we not do more about it? Why do we not try to bring our characters up to the level of our knowledge? Why do we not take seriously the words of Ruskin:[8] 'Education does not

[6 William Pitt (1708–78), English statesman and orator.]
[7 See Emerson's 'Politics,' pp. 210–21.]
[8 See p. 148.]

mean teaching people to know what they do not know; it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave.' As it is, though the future of civilization depends on an improvement in human character and conduct, we leave the problem almost untouched, and devote our energies to constructing political machinery, ignoring the brittle human nature which so easily snaps, throwing the whole factory out of working.

Progress in engineering has come largely from improved metals; the maker of an aeroplane or an automobile knows that success depends on the quality of his materials as well as on his manufacturing technique. Equally, progress in politics and life depends on getting improved human material —men who will keep the laws and covenants which are so easy to construct. The makers of states have yet to realize this, or at any rate to act as if they did. Innumerable books have been recently written about the future of the world and the problem of peace; they have discussed every conceivable economic and political project; but how many of them have shown any perception of the obvious truth that human character is the most important element in the problem, or devoted any thought to the question of its improvement?

A complicated society quickly enslaves its members to its own creations: the characteristic creations of the age are its science and its elaborate machinery, economic, social, political; they demand—and rightly—much knowledge and close attention; and they can easily make men their slaves. Some people frankly embrace the slavery and think that we shall be cured by more science, more economics, better foreign languages and a dose of sociology. The past gives no colour to such dreams. The advance of these studies, valuable in itself, has left us morally almost where we were before it began: men are not less greedy, less cruel, less false than they were hundreds of years ago. Even those who realize that this treatment is not improving the patient's health show little signs of appreciating the real disease. Most proposals for 'the reform of the curriculum' aim at making the patient at home in the mechanism of civilization and adept in its techniques. In this vast frame the microscopic speck of spirit for which the frame exists is unnoticed and neglected. Yet an age rich in material resources is one where human beings most need strengthening in spiritual insight and self-control, so that they can dominate the forces which they have created, and say to them in the words of the Stoic, ἔχω, οὐκ ἔχομαι, 'I am your master, you are not mine.' We talk wistfully of a moratorium for scientific invention. The only moratorium possible and needed is one on its misuse, which, if we were wise and good enough, we could ourselves impose.

The human problem is the more urgent at the moment because the whole moral basis of Western Civilization threatens to slide from under our feet. People talk, regretfully or lightly, of the decline of church-going, but hardly realize that it is the outward sign of the greatest change in the European view of life since the conversion of the Roman world to Christianity. For more than a thousand years the West, with but occasional questioning, has accepted a creed which ruled its thought and deeply coloured its conduct. That creed gave to what are called the Christian virtues and to the rights of the individual a supernatural sanction which is not found in the universe as interpreted by natural science. It inspired the shining examples of men and women who were the lights of their generation; for the rebellious, the heedless and the indifferent it built up a solid framework of traditional decent conduct within which their lives were lived; it was a court of appeal which asserted its law and condemned any infractions of it, and made offenders, if not penitent, at least uneasy. We can hardly expect, if the inspiration is lost, the framework shattered, and the court disowned, that things will go on quite as before, or that virtues will last when their basis and sanction disappears. Science has helped mankind greatly; but it gives no support to the theory of life commonly called humanism. 'The democratic liberalism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the triumph of the Stoic-Christian strain of thought.' But Darwin's theory of Natural Selection is, 'as it applies to human society, a challenge to the whole humanitarian movement. . . Instead of dwelling on the brotherhood of man, we are now directed to procure the extermination of the unfit. Again, the modern doctrines of heredity, gained partly from the experience of breeders of stock, partly from practical horticulturists, partly from the statistical researches of Francis Galton, Karl Pearson, and their school, partly from the laws of heredity discovered by Mendel,[9]—these doctrines have all weakened the Stoic-Christian ideal of democratic brotherhood.' *

We may not realize what we are losing but we can hardly mistake the effects of the loss. In the last twenty years the West, at the height of its civilization, has seen human nature guilty of crimes to which history has no parallel. The ruthless iniquity of Hitler's policy may be matched in the

[[9] Galton, (1822–1911), English meteorologist and anthropologist; Pearson (1857–1936), English scientist, known for his *Grammar of Science*; Abbot G. J. Mendel (1822–84), botanist, famous for experiments concerning heredity.]

* A. N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 44f.

past, but not the systematic extermination of the Jews or the horrors of the concentration camps. The cruelties of the Russian revolution exceed those of any other revolution in extent if not in degree, and are not less inhuman or shocking because they were associated with a great social reform. Less startling, though more significant, is the appearance in both countries of new philosophies to rule life—Blood and Soil in Germany, in Russia something more indeterminate which has not yet taken definite shape. Bolshevism and Nazism are sometimes called new 'religions.' Certainly they are the evidence of a void in the mind, of the need of some firm principle by which to govern life and conduct, a god to call upon, proclaim and worship. One cannot too often recall the profound words of Pascal,[10] 'It is the nature of man to believe and to love: if he has not the right objects for his belief and love, he will attach himself to wrong ones.' Are we providing our citizens with true objects of love and belief? If not, where will they fix their love and their belief?

Education, it seems to me, is not enough concerned with these problems. Since the war, there has been a keener perception of its importance, a livelier interest in it; but the interest has been (at least in England) mainly in educational machinery—types of schools, curricula, and so forth—not in that major task of education, the improvement of character. Educators seem interested in providing for everything except the most important ingredient in life. Some schools, no doubt, do provide for it well; some do so moderately; none probably would disclaim it as one of their aims. But there is nothing in our modern educational theory comparable to Plato's *Republic*—still the greatest of all books on education. For Plato saw what we ignore, not only that education is the basis of the state, but that the ultimate aim and essence of education is the training of *character*—to be achieved by the discipline of the body, the will, and the intelligence; therefore, he planned his whole scheme to this end, yet in such a manner that intellectual education was in no way distorted or ignored, that the intellectual and the moral coincided. We, where we attack the problem at all, do so in an amateur and haphazard way.

It is not surprising that human character has not improved, for we have never taken its improvement seriously in hand. We have spent time and careful thought on physical health; but what have we done comparable for the health of the character? Our system of spiritual or ethical medicine (if I may so phrase it) is in much the same position as medicine itself in

[10 French writer on mathematics and religion (1623–62).]

the eighteenth century: good in patches, but wholly inadequate and generally unprogressive, and needing, if any real advance is to be made, hard thought, exact study, and methodical treatment.

Three objections will probably be made to the suggestion that we should do more to train human character for its tasks in the world. It will be said that we already do it; that it cannot be done; that it is very dangerous to attempt it.

Let us consider these objections in turn. Something has been done, it is true, to train human character; and here and there a success has been achieved which shows what immense advances are within our power if the problem is taken seriously. But in general the garden of school is tended by conscientious men, who are content with things as they are, but who have never considered whether methods of cultivation cannot be radically improved and better varieties of flowers produced. If anyone really thinks that we are tackling the problem effectively, he has only to open his eyes and look at the world, not ignoring his own people.

But we need not therefore exchange complacency for despair, or agree with critics who say that nothing can be done, that character cannot be changed, that men are fettered in the prison of human nature. We are like the man in Mark Twain's story who spent sixteen years in jail and then opened the door, which had been unlocked all the time, and walked out; we are in a prison in which humanity has been content to serve a needlessly long sentence and from which, with rather more effort, it could escape. For the remarkable thing is how easy it is to train character. Indeed, it is alarmingly easy. Consider what Hitler, who has justly been called an 'arch-educationist,' did in six years with German youth. Or turning to the school, consider what Thomas Arnold [11] of Rugby did, partly by the force of his character, partly by means deliberately chosen, but without any elaborate study of the problem.

I have much more sympathy with the third type of critic, who says that the moulding of character is too dangerous an operation to undertake. But I note that his attitude is that of the servant in the Parable of the Talents,[12] who was alarmed at the adventurous methods of his fellow servants, took no risks with his talent, and was condemned for not making use of his opportunities. And in fact you cannot educate a child at all without forming its mind. Do sensible parents bring up their children as greedy, dirty,

[11 Famous headmaster of Rugby School. He was the father of Matthew Arnold.]
[12 Matthew, xxv, 14–30.]

cruel, selfish, false? Be as libertarian as you will, you are still 'prejudicing' the mind in a particular direction—to libertarianism; the choice is yours, not the child's. You are 'conditioning' it to feel that a certain atmosphere, which you approve, is good, and that its opposite is bad.

If we really wish a child to grow up unwarped by any external influence, we must take a leaf out of the book of the Egyptian king who, wishing to discover the natural language of men, 'took two newborn children and gave them to a shepherd to bring up among his flocks. He gave charge that none should speak any word in their hearing; they were to lie by themselves in a lonely hut, and in due season the shepherd was to bring goats and give the children their milk. Psammetichus did this because he wished to hear what speech would first come from the children's lips, when they had passed the age of indistinct babbling.' * Our libertarians are less thorough in their experiments than Psammetichus.

Of course, any attempt to train character is dangerous and must be undertaken with full perception of its danger. Many notes must be harmonized if the full music of the human instrument is to sound: gentleness and courage, boldness and prudence, inquisitiveness and reverence, tolerance and firmness, confidence and humility, stability and freedom. It is a difficult and risky attempt to make a man, and it is tempting to turn aside from the task. But we have only to look round to see the disastrous results of declining it, as, for the most part, we have hitherto done.

There is, I believe, a sign of coming change, no greater at the moment than the 'little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand,' which Elijah [13] saw in the rainless skies over Carmel. The last war produced the phrase, 'self-determination,' out of which little good came. This war has produced another phrase, the 're-education' of enemy countries (in the last war we never talked of re-educating Germany), and the word has a significance beyond its surface meaning. It is the first sign that we are beginning to appreciate the true nature of the political problem, and to see that it is a question of human nature rather than of organization. It is only a hint: the idea at present is vague and limited to the re-education of our enemies. We have not yet decided what re-education means or how it is to be done, much less made any start with it; nor have we considered that we ourselves as well as Germany and Japan may need re-education. But the emergence of the phrase is significant of things to come. Re-education is what the

* Herodotus II. 2.

[13 I Kings, xviii, 44.]

world needs. It can be achieved only if we attack it frontally with clear knowledge of the aim in view and exact consideration of the best means to achieve it.

In a future not, one hopes, too distant, we may see something in education corresponding to the practice of medicine. If a person is inclined to bronchitis, if he is weak in some of his organs,—his heart, say, or his lungs,—a doctor prescribes for him a certain regimen. If he is rheumatic, he is warned not to do certain things and is told to do certain other things. In physical medicine a treatment is devised to preserve health and to guard against the particular disease to which the individual is inclined. Might we not, should we not, have a similar aim and comparable treatment in education to preserve the health of the character? Parents and, to some extent, schoolmasters try to produce antidotes to the undesirable tendencies of their pupils, but might not that practice be carried much further? Might we not devise a system of education which shall try to cure the weaknesses to which human beings are inclined and to encourage the virtues which they require? We do it to some extent, but might we not do it much more methodically and scientifically? No doubt a system of moral or spiritual medicine would be uncertain and tentative, but so also is physical medicine.

How should we proceed? We should decide what virtues we require and the best way to develop them. We should note the merits and defects of our own and other nations and try to discover their origins. We should consider the special weaknesses of our own age, the peculiar temptations and dangers, moral and spiritual, to which it is exposed, and how to counteract them. We shall get increasing help from psychologists, indispensable though dangerous advisers, whose theories may be advantageously checked by common sense, by the practical knowledge of which a great store is locked up in the minds of active teachers, and by the study of actual experiments in 'teaching men to behave as they do not behave,' in the making of character.

All great educational thinkers have been interested in the problem, but experiments are more instructive than theories, because theories show what is hoped, experiments what is achieved. Some of these experiments show how much can be done when a real attempt is made to mould character. One of the most interesting examples comes from England. It is unfortunate that Thomas Arnold, the great headmaster of Rugby, is best known in the present age from Lytton Strachey's caricature.[14] A real introduction

[14] In his *Eminent Victorians*.]

to the man and his work can be found in the Life written by one of his pupils, Dean Stanley. There we see an educator who knew what he wanted to do, held that education is, above all, concerned with character, and believed that character must be trained through the intellect as well as in other ways.

Arnold was as wholehearted in his aim as Plato, but his methods are less thought out, and they belong more to his own time. He is the greatest figure in English education, and he created an ideal, a type, and a method which have profoundly influenced the nation and still persist. One would study also such different experiments in character-making as that of Vittorino da Feltre,[15] and the training of a Jesuit, and many more, past and present. They must be studied objectively and without prejudice, with an eye to their failures and defects as well as to their success, that we may know not only what to imitate but what to avoid. Nor should we omit experiments that we may mistrust or condemn, such as those of Soviet Russia (of which we know very little at first hand) or of Nazi Germany.

Finally, we may learn something from a remarkable experiment to which England has recently been forcibly submitted. Since 1939 we have had an education in behaviour which may have done little for our knowledge or brains but has had a powerful and mainly beneficial effect on our characters. It has been given outside our schools and universities and by a rough teacher—the war. Britain between 1940 and 1945 was a better country than in 1939. There was infinitely less 'passive barbarism'; there was some of the littleness of man but far more of his greatness, in both sexes and in all classes and ranks of life. That is suggestive and instructive. 'The effect of the war on human character' would make a good subject of study for anyone interested in our problem. If we note what has given us this new spirit in war, we might devise means that would keep it alive in the difficult world of peace.

War gives a twofold education. It imposes a great common purpose on a nation, which burns up minor and meaner forces in its consuming flame. And it imposes the attitude and conduct which result from a common purpose. The nation becomes something like a society—a band of companions; in fact it becomes a nation. What lessons can our post-war education learn from the schoolmaster, war? How can we retain in peace these two things which war has temporarily taught us: a great common aim and the spirit of fellowship?

[15 Compare p. 140.]

I am proposing a methodical and thorough preparation for an important operation, and the following remarks are not intended to be anything but very elementary first aid. I suggest that there are two main elements of character training and that the work is incomplete if either is neglected; and I ask you to consider whether we take much trouble about either.

The first element is training in social behaviour, a difficult and generally neglected task. Self-centered, self-willed creatures as most of us naturally are, it is our fate to be citizens, members of a community. Men are born to four citizenships: they should be able to live as good members of their family, of their community, of their nation, and of the whole human society. How many of the world's troubles can be traced to a failure in one or other of these citizenships—to our never mastering the art of living with others, in the family, in the community, in the nation, in international relations! I have put them in order of ascending difficulty; in the art of living as good members of the human race, men have almost everything to learn.

Here I am speaking only of citizenship in the accepted sense—membership of a nation. It means that we must learn to live with others and respect their rights and feelings. It also means that we have to play a part in the community, make a contribution to it, often accept the decision of a majority which goes against our private interests, opinions, and desires. Otherwise the community will not prosper and may not survive, and in its shipwreck we shall be drowned.

Democracy, more than any other form of government, needs good citizenship. Under an absolutism or a dictatorship, men are forced to fall into line. But in a democracy things are not so simple. Freedom is of the essence of democracy: the completer the democracy, the completer the freedom. But it has to be the freedom of service self-chosen and sometimes of sacrifice self-imposed. That is not the instinct of the natural man; yet somehow that habit has to be acquired. If it is not acquired, the state goes to pieces, and in the end the autocrat appears who coerces its citizens into the duties which they were not willing of themselves to assume.

Here is the explanation of the breakdown of democracy in so many countries of the world. If citizenship does not exist, it has to be imposed. That is a stage through which every nation has to pass. At some time of its history it must go to school and learn the discipline, self-control, team spirit, and other qualities necessary if liberty is to be enjoyed. Hence certain aspects of Fascism, Nazism, Communism, and the authoritarian element in the present government of China. They are stages in the making of

national character, a training in qualities indispensable for national existence.

When I say this I may be accused of being a Nazi or a Fascist, these being at the moment, naturally enough, terms of popular abuse. But the charge will be unjust. I have no doubt that democracy is incomparably better than Fascism or Nazism, and that the human race will always move towards it, as the highest form of human society. But it is the most difficult form and it needs certain qualities whose rarity is shown by its frequent collapse. The Anglo-Saxon democracies seem perhaps to possess them. We seem to have acquired a sufficient quantum of public spirit, justice, fair play, consideration for others, to make democracy work.

Yet I doubt if there is much margin to spare. In England we are justly proud when we think of the men in the Forces, of the spontaneous self-creation of the Home Guard and Air Raid Wardens services, of the conduct of the ordinary person in a queue, of the general law-abiding spirit of the people. We feel less comfortable when we reflect on the black market, pilfering, profiteering both by employers and by employed, workers absenting themselves from work necessary to the economic recovery of the country for fear that they may earn enough money to be liable for income tax. How can we confirm our virtues and cure our weaknesses and make liberty and democracy secure? What is education doing about it? What can it do?

There is only one way to learn social habits: by living a life in which such habits automatically develop. Live in a society and in most cases you will become a social being. That is the secret of the British boarding school, hitherto the finest factory of citizenship in existence. Boarding schools, like everything else, have their defects, but they do train people to be members of a society; in them the egotist and careerist are discouraged; the individualist discovers the existence of other pebbles on the beach and learns how to fit in with them. A boy finds himself a member of something greater than himself and learns loyalty and service to it. These are the qualities of the good citizen.

Unfortunately in England we have given this or any other training to only a tiny minority, and have turned 80 per cent of the population out on the world at fourteen. The miracle is that they are in general so good; for their defects we are more to blame than they. We should give to the many some equivalent of the training that we have given to a few. Then we need have no fears for democracy.

We are beginning to give such a training. Let me mention some instances and suggest some possibilities. First in time and high in importance

is the nursery school, where in infant years the child learns to live in a community. Then the day school, through school societies and common activities, makes its contribution, though in the nature of things it can do much less than the boarding school. The more democratic its internal government, the more its pupils learn to manage their own lives, the better. May not some day schools in the future develop boarding departments, where a boy can spend some part of his school life? But, without this, school camps and camp schools can do valuable work. Scouts and Guides and Youth Movements are important schools of citizenship. Churches, guilds, trade and professional associations, trade-unions—all organizations in which men live as part of something greater than themselves—contribute. A period of national service bringing all classes together in a common life would carry it on. Finally, it would be crowned by residential adult colleges where people would live together, united in common interests and studies.

So far I have argued that we should give everyone a training in the habit of citizenship, I have suggested that we have neglected to do this, and I have roughly indicated some means by which it might be done. It is an indispensable part of the equipment needed by every citizen. But it is not the only equipment that he needs. Good citizenship and low civilization can go together. The Spartans in the ancient world, the Nazis in the modern, are examples of admirable public spirit and complete devotion to the state. Yet Sparta was not a high civilization, nor do we wish to become a second Nazi Germany.

Without social training no character is prepared for life. But by itself such training is incomplete and even dangerous, unless concurrently men learn to take a master, and the right master. If you ask what I mean by this, I will point to an example where civilized men have taken a master, to their great advantage and advancement. He can be found, presiding, unseen, in any true law court. For in accepting law, men disregard private prejudices and preferences, to serve voluntarily a master called Justice, who is the independent voice of Reason, that judge and litigant alike obey. It is the highest spiritual achievement of collective humanity; 'great as are the evils which society still owes to lawyers, the lawyer class has always been a civilizing agency. Their power represents at least the triumph of reason and education over caprice and brute force.' *

But law governs only a part of human life, and outside its kingdom anarchy reigns. To bring more of life under a great master is a major prob-

* Rashdall. *Mediaeval Universities* II. 457.

lem of our time. It hardly arises in societies where the mere burden of making a living masters a man's whole life. It hardly arises in totalitarian states, where a dictator tells his subjects whom and what they are to serve. It is less serious in societies governed by good fixed traditions, which no one questions or criticizes. But it is urgent in a world where the basic needs are satisfied. If it takes no master, the marks of such a world, however prosperous it may be, are lack of purpose and drive, a cynical scepticism unsure of itself, a disabling pessimism; if it takes the wrong master, it may exchange these for more spectacular disasters. The second type is a common phenomenon in history; the first is found only in prosperous civilizations, such as the Roman Empire and the advanced nations of our day.

Some men do take a master and serve it with devotion: religion, public or social service, art, literature, science or other activities of the mind, politics, power, money. They tend to be contented and, within the limits of their own powers and of their particular master's kingdom, successful—at least they have a clear purpose to occupy their energies and fortify their minds. Others are masterless men, drifting from one allegiance to another, according to the whim and impulse of the moment; there are two classical portraits in literature of this type—Ibsen's Peer Gynt,[16] and Plato's picture, in the *Republic*,[17] of what he calls the 'democratic' man. This type is ineffective, ignoble, in the end unhappy, and, as Plato saw and as the rise of Hitler illustrates, the material out of which, by reaction, dictatorships are made. Most of us probably fall between the two extremes. In judging any individual or nation, the most searching question that can be asked is: 'Whom has he taken for master, and how faithful is his service?'

What master should we take? Whom, even when we do not obey him, should we admit to be the legitimate sovereign over the whole of life? I would suggest that we might accept excellence as master. You may dismiss such an idea as a high-brow fancy. But in fact it is a general human instinct and practice to pursue excellence. No woman and few men would be pleased if you said that they did not know the difference between good and bad in dress. People interested in baseball or football are not satisfied with the second-rate. People engaged in commerce and industry would be annoyed if you suggested that their methods and organization were inferior. In everything from games to religion, from gardening to politics, there is a quest for excellence, for the first-rate.

A surgeon or a physician is trained by watching masters of the art at

[16] In the drama of the same name.]
[17] Bk. VIII.]

work, and learns from their excellence something unforgettable, not to be learned from lectures or books. In a school of architecture or painting, the pupil is shown in reproduction or otherwise the masterpieces of the art. The same principle holds for the teaching of law, of engineering, of every occupation, whether professional or technical: the learner is or should be brought in touch with the best practice of his art or trade, so that he has a standard to judge by, a mark at which to aim. In everything, we think it essential to know the best, however much we may come short of it. Always, soon or late, humanity turns to excellence as naturally as a flower turns to the sun: mankind crucifies Christ and executes Socrates, and they die amid derision and hatred; but in the end they receive the homage of the world. The first-rate is the accepted goal of humanity.

There are four fields in which excellence is the concern of everyone. First, a man should know the highest standards and best methods in his own job, so that he may do it as well as he can: professional pride, a sense of craftsmanship, are acknowledged virtues. But if he goes no further than this, he is a limited human being. Important parts of civilization are art and architecture, music and literature—flowers that grow out of the nature of man, reveal his character and adorn it; there too we should know what is first-rate and not be taken in by the second- or third-rate.

Next, if we are to have a first-rate community, everyone should know what is first-rate in national life and have an idea of the kind of state the Divine Architect might create with perfect human beings; then he will have an overruling ideal to guide him. With such an ideal, slums, disease, uneducated masses, hideous industrial towns, a disfigured countryside, would never have been or would have vanished long ago. It is common to sing Blake's words: [18]

> I will not cease from mental fight,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land.

An excellent ambition; but the building of Jerusalem needs mastery of design as well as laudable aspirations. It is part of patriotism to love the country one has, but part also to know how to make it really worthy of love.

Finally, everybne should know what is first-rate in human character and conduct, for on the achievement of this everything turns. Most people are fortunate enough to meet living examples of the first-rate in character. But

[18 In his *Milton*.]

the great sources of our knowledge in this field are religion and the subsidiary realms of literature, history, and the arts. A school or university which fails to show its students something of these models of human excellence sends them into life ignorant of the knowledge which they need most, and neglects the chief duty of education.

To sum up: my thesis has been that in most modern educational schemes the training of character, if not neglected, has been given a subordinate place; that we have very little, if anything, like the concentration on it in Plato's thought and in Arnold's practice; that nowhere have the tactics of attack been methodically thought out, though it is the crucial point, and should therefore be the centre of our system; that it needs exact and thorough study; and that we ought to undertake this study without delay, for time presses. When the atomic bombs fell on Japan, we had a glimpse of the precipice on whose edge we stand.

Our task in character training falls under two heads. We have to develop the qualities necessary for life in a community. But, by itself, such training has two dangers: it might produce either a world of human bees or ants, efficient but limited and static, or a highly disciplined mass like the Nazi youth, whose social virtues were directed to disastrous ends. Hence the importance of knowing the right end; and the right end is the first-rate in every province of life. This is the greatest of all branches of knowledge, and it should be the centre, though it is not the whole, of education.

May not the desire to make first-rate human beings and a first-rate society replace, or rather carry on, the spirit which united and inspired us in the war and be a master whom all would accept? Is not that in itself a sufficient motive for life? To see the vision of excellence, so far as our limitations allow; to get at least a glimpse of the unchanging values of the eternal world as they are revealed in whatever is beautiful and good in the material world of earth; to attempt to make one's infinitesimal contribution towards a society which will embody them more fully than does our own—to do that is to take seriously the tremendous words of Christ: 'Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.' [19]

[19 Matthew, v, 48.]

Gilbert Highet

THE AMERICAN STUDENT AS I SEE HIM

[Gilbert Highet (1906—), a native of Scotland and a graduate of Glasgow and Oxford, has been Professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia University since 1938 except for wartime service in the British Army. His recent book, *The Classical Tradition* (1949), is a stimulating survey of the Greek and Latin influences on Western literature. Earlier he had translated Werner Jaeger's imposing work on Greek culture, *Paideia* (1939–44).

It might not be unfair to remark that the present essay was based on the experience of two or three years in one metropolitan university. Mr. Highet writes that he would not say the same things if he were writing it today. For all that, it remains an excellent record of how the American student (or perhaps we should say the American student of the day before yesterday) impressed a European scholar who came here to teach him classics.

For Mr. Highet's ideas on teaching and teachers, see his *The Art of Teaching* (1950).

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR I have long known and long respected. The American student I met first as an ambitious but depressed graduate working in the hard Scottish medical schools; then as an exotic graft [1] on Oxford's gnarled trunk (like Vergil's tree, 'admiring strange new leaves and fruit unlike her own' [2]); and finally in several of the great universities of his own country. I like studying him, and he, by now inured to the fads of his preceptors, supports with surprising affability the endless process of being studied.

As far as I can judge, he is unlike any other student in the whole world.

[1 Rhodes scholars, apparently.]

[2 *Georgics*, II, 82.]

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For one thing, he often works three or four hours a day at some job which is at least extra-curricular, if not extra-mural.[3] My friends at St. Andrews and Glasgow were often poor—much poorer than the freshmen whom I see cheerfully filing clippings or toting luncheon trays—but in term-time they never worked at anything outside their studies. The vast mythology of Scottish education is full of stories about the crofter's son who lived all term in half a room on a barrel of oatmeal and a barrel of herrings brought from home, and then walked a hundred miles back to Inverquharity with the gold medal. And that ideal still persists. Occasionally British and French undergraduates do a little tutoring, and a dozen or two are book-shifters in the libraries or demonstrators in the labs; but they don't *work*. James Joyce's miserable Stephen Dedalus[4] in Dublin, drinking watery tea and eating fried bread while he fingered his parents' pawn tickets, would have been far better for a decent meal earned by honest work.

But it is not, or seldom, done. The feeling is that it would interfere with real work and equally real play: that it would keep the undergraduate from having his full share in the life of the university. And there is some truth in this. To spend three or four hours a day on something wholly unacademic nearly always narrows the student's interest in his academic work. He is apt to feel that it too can be done in the same way: two lectures, four hours at his job, four hours' study, and then stop. This therefore is one of the reasons why so few undergraduates in the universities here aspire to honors, compete for prizes, carry their interest in their courses further than the term paper. In France and Britain, on the other hand, it is common for lecturers to get notes from their undergraduate hearers questioning some statement, seeking a reference, asking for extended treatment of some difficulty. A not very intelligent pupil of my own at Oxford handed me a verse translation of six idylls of Theocritus, which he had made in his spare time during the two winter terms; in Jules Romains' *Les Hommes de Bonne Volonté* a student at the École Normale Supérieure translates and annotates the choric odes of Sophocles, just for fun; and, at all the British universities, essay and poem competitions are nearly always burdensome to mark, there are so many competitors. But they would not have the energy, or even the interest, to do all that, if they had to manage a laundry agency for four hours a day.

The American student himself feels this; for when he becomes a graduate student, a radical change comes over him—a change far greater than

[3 Compare Hutton, 'The Cult of the Average,' p. 180.]
[4 In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*]

the corresponding change in other countries. He will doggedly set himself to read and classify every Elizabethan sonnet, or memorize every decision arising out of the Snite Act; he will plunge into labyrinthine bibliographies, from whose depths he can be heard faintly crying, as if he battled with unseen monsters, and from which he emerges through the gate of ivory, pale but uplifted, like Aeneas [5] from the world of the dead; and when you and I make jokes to him, he will copy them and write 'laughter' in the margin. It is scarcely too much to say that he then feels himself for the first time to be a whole-time student; and the only thing to be regretted about this metamorphosis is that it often keeps him from being a whole-time member of the university, that he is so often debarred by it from games and societies and other junior academic activities. He feels, not without a certain justice, that he is paying for the comparative diffuseness of his undergraduate days. There is another way of putting this. No European country thinks that education is, or ought to be, wholly democratic. Not even the United States does, in the last resort—for, in awarding fellowships and scholarships, its universities base their distribution not on *need* but on *achievement*. The principle of competition, thus tacitly acknowledged, is carried much further in Europe. In France * the A. B. examination is a national contest, whose winners are rewarded not only with the civic tributes which the French know so well how to dispense, but with prizes, money, trips to Cambodia and certainty of a favorable start in their careers. The bad side of this is obvious—suicides are not at all uncommon among disappointed or overworked candidates, and a man's whole life can be darkened by a sense of his own inescapable inferiority, publicly and competitively demonstrated. But it makes the students read, and read hard. All scholarships in Britain (except a very few assigned to localities or family names) are awarded on the basis of a long and difficult competitive examination. And there are very many more scholarships there than there are in this country: scholarships are endowed and awarded by cities, counties, prep schools, 'public' schools, colleges, universities, alumni societies, guilds and national associations. Besides those, there are hundreds upon hundreds of rich scholarships dependent on the wills of long-dead benefactors. I went through one university on money left by a thread manufacturer who died about 1850, and through another on the rentals of farms bequeathed for

[5 *Aeneid*, VI, 893–8.]

* This refers of course to France before it was invaded by the Germans, and before its government determined to assist its conqueror in attaining his own ideal, *die Vernichtung Frankreichs*, 'the destruction of France.'

the purpose by a Court official of King James the First. It would not be too much to say that the rich man who, in the United States, gives $50,000 for cancer research, gives £10,000 in Britain to support 'a student who desires to enter the medical profession, said student to be selected by an examination on the fundamentals of . . .' The University of Oxford is thought to be full of the leisure class. Yet in 1937 60 per cent of its students were wholly or partially supported by scholarships; and all those scholarships had to be won by keen and difficult competition. From a certain Scots university there is one, and only one, scholarship which will take you to Oxford; and it is competed for by every student who wants it: pre-lawyers, chemists, historians, economists, mathematicians, philologists, they all sit there glowering at one another in the same examination room, and furiously laboring at the twelve three-hour papers on which their future depends. It is a painful ordeal; but it makes you study! Not only in France but in Britain too, enormous emphasis is laid on the exact position of a student in his class. Those who simply collect their grades and their clubs and leave are little regarded; must, practically speaking, have jobs waiting for them; find the higher careers closed. Those who try for honors find themselves arranged into a natural hierarchy, which, *ceteris paribus*,[6] represents their comparative chances of getting a good position when they graduate.

The American student, if I know him, would not care for this system. He would, I think, feel that it too highly rewarded the 'grind' and undervalued the character-building and social qualities of college life; he would conclude it was unfair to boys who happened to attend schools which gave them less careful preparation for academic competition; ultimately he would think that, by subjecting him to a constant implied pressure, it deprived him of a good deal of his liberty. And yet, it seems to me that it would do him good, and improve the service of schools and universities to individuals and to the state.

Take only one broad consideration. The development of government all over the world, in the democracies as well as in the despotisms, is towards a more numerous, more elaborate, and more highly trained bureaucracy. For good or bad, every national government now interests itself in the lives of its citizens far more closely than at any time since the Byzantine empire. Therefore it is necessary, year by year, for it to command a great supply of diverse and well-trained officials, mostly specialists of one kind or another. In the despotisms these officials are produced by the Party machine,

[6 Other things being equal.]

selected and trained by a system which is at least methodically similar to education. In the democracies they are at present produced and trained by no system, except in a few fields like jurisprudence and public health. In Great Britain the diplomatic service, the higher branches of the civil service, and certain other administrative departments are recruited by rigorous competitive examinations for which, in practice, candidates prepare throughout the universities and even during their last years at school. That system is thought to work well, although it is limited in extent. But many educators feel that the bureaucracies, both local and national, ought to be wholly staffed by men and women trained *on purpose*, and that in the democracies the schools and universities ought to be the organizations which produce and train them. Many a large store will not engage salesmen and saleswomen unless they are college graduates with noticeably good records; it is ludicrous that states and colleges should be less careful about choosing their executives. If we are to have a mandarinate, let us be as sensible as the Chinese in selecting our mandarins. If we want intelligent officials let us train them and discipline them and sift them by competitive examination and reward them with good, appropriate jobs, instead of letting our universities annually pour out a huge undifferentiated mass of graduates, from which only luck or exceptional perseverance will direct the right man to the right place in the social machine.

However, at present that is not done; and the American student, except in a few eccentric universities, estimates his achievement by time spent, which is quantitative, rather than by competitive achievement, which is qualitative. And yet he is at heart emulous. If it is presented civilly and winningly to him, he will welcome authority. He would welcome it still more if it were organized: if he felt that in school and at college its consistent purpose was to make him fit for a career which depended not entirely on his own whim, but on a long series of tests of his abilities and a constructive estimate of his character and capacity.

Another unique attribute characterizes the American student: his huge numbers. Can four real universities exist in one city? Can it be possible that in one state fifty or sixty thousand youths and maidens are capable of the activity required to absorb a university education? Are the inhabitants of California (whose very name derives from a romance describing the Earthly Paradise) so talented that they can every year produce a myriad of university graduates? And what educators could be at once so inspiring and so industrious as to teach, effectively, this enormous horde? Or, finally, can

the vast multitudes of adolescents in the United States all be so much more talented than their coevals in Canada, in France, in Sweden?

The paradox, of course, conceals a dichotomy. To put it bluntly and generally, the American student who is not preparing for a profession does not often go to the university in pursuit of higher education. He goes to complete the education which his school left incomplete. He has been badly schooled. It is not his fault, and not wholly the fault of the school. But it is a pity. It sometimes strikes me with a sense of pathos to read the grave works on education, ranging all the way from Mortimer Adler's *How to Read a Book* to the bulletins of the Carnegie Institute for Educational Research, which treat the American school system in total detachment from all others, as if it could learn nothing from Europe, and teach Europe nothing—still less other continents. Mr. Adler, in his efforts to teach his patients how to read books, makes one or two cursory references to the situation in Europe, and throughout the rest of his prescription treats the American student as a chimera bombinating in the void. But of course he finds it difficult to read Locke or Dante when he gets to college. He has seldom been compelled to read anything difficult in school. And a comparison, however invidious, would demonstrate that. I went to a perfectly ordinary school in Scotland, P.S.93 as it were. In my last three years (ages 15–18) we were forced to read and understand *Hamlet, Macbeth, Henry IV*, Chaucer's *Prologue* and *Knight's Tale, Polyeucte, Le Cid, Le Misanthrope, Eugénie Grandet, Seven Against Thebes, The Persians, Iliad* XVI and XVIII, *Aeneid* II, IV, and VI, Livy IX and several other books. And we read them. (Dickens and Scott and Thackeray and so on, we had read long before.) We had to, under that stringent discipline. We could write a character of Macduff or Célimène, we could reproduce the various explanations and emendations of the 'dram of eale' in *Hamlet*, we could compare the shields of Achilles and Aeneas, we could write little essays on Balzac's idea of realism. They were not very good; but they proved that we had read the books. And we were not alone. In Edinburgh they were doing the same. Bristol Grammar School was doing even more. Sheffield and Manchester and London and Newcastle were doing at least as much. French schools are still more arduous, although they concentrate more closely on the classics of their own tongue; and so, in a more limited way, were Scandinavian and Dutch schools, and even German schools before the despotism.

Now why does the average American student need to learn how to read

a book? Why does he approach *Hamlet* or *Crime and Punishment* with a mixture of awe and bravado, and usually look up from it with such puzzled delight and half-understood emotion? Manifestly because he has been ill taught at school. And, so far, that is nobody's fault: certainly not his; but there are two main reasons for the fact.

For one thing, the system of mass-education has nowhere else been applied to a population so huge and so various. Only a nation so gallant and so confident as the United States would have dreamt of administering approximately the same education to the children of long-settled western Europeans, recent central European immigrants, and many millions of emancipated Negroes, of whom Bigger Thomas [7] with his revolt and his tragedy may well be partially symbolic. Whenever I ask my pupils about their schooling they invariably say, if they went to public school, that they were held back by the size of the classes or by lazy and recalcitrant classmates. One of the best students I have ever had praised the history master at his public school most highly, but added that he was forced to devote himself almost wholly to the upper one third of his class. In one of his more frankly autobiographical essays Mr. James Thurber describes a tough school in Columbus, Ohio, as it was a generation ago; and even if we allow for humorous exaggeration there is still the ring of truth in the sentence about his enormous Negro protector, Floyd: 'I was one of the ten or fifteen male pupils in Sullivant School who always, or almost always, knew their lessons, and I believe Floyd admired the mental prowess of a youngster who knew how many continents there were and whether or not the sun was inhabited.' And the problem is complicated by the almost inevitable rigidity of the school system. It is true that many high schools have recently endeavored to work out special courses of study for pupils who are more intelligent than the average; but such readjustments are not yet common, are nearly everywhere tentative, and often meet with opposition. It is a task of almost inconceivable difficulty to raise the educational standards of an entire population; for at least two thirds of the boys and girls now leaving American schools are much more highly educated than their parents were. This difficulty does not exist in western European countries, and it fills me with admiration to see the courage and tenacity with which it is being faced here. But, in education more than in other things, each generation stands on the shoulders of its predecessor, and in another decade or so a great part of this difficulty will have been removed.

The other reason is the comparatively lax discipline of schools in the

[7 Principal character in Richard Wright's novel, *Native Son*.]

United States. High school pupils spend appreciably less time in school here than they do in Britain, and much less than they do in France. In school they spend less time on actual study, because of the surprising amount of attention paid to extra-curricular activities. They spend far less time on preparation at home. And there is much less *drive* behind their learning than there is in western European schools. In the last two years at an ordinary British city school, corresponding to a good high school here, the ordinary pupil averages at least five and a half hours of actual classroom work in school and three hours' preparation at home, with a minimum of six hours' preparation at week ends. The working hours of two good provincial lycées in France, where friends of mine taught during the early '30s, are literally almost double those of an American high school.* Any extra-curricular occupation, like producing the school magazine, or football practice, or rehearsing in the school orchestra, takes place outside working hours. And there is a constant disciplinary pressure to keep the pupils at work, to keep them actively attentive, to pull up the laggards and push on the leaders. Attendances are rigidly kept: an incident such as that reported in the New York papers in 1940, when a squad of policemen and truant officers 'combed' the cinemas on two different mornings and rounded up nearly two thousand school children A.W.O.L., is frankly inconceivable. If anything like it occurred in Europe it would be instantly followed by the discharge or demotion of dozens of school teachers. It may not be unfair to suggest that some of the laxity observable in American schools is due to the much higher proportion of women acting as teachers. Adolescent boys cannot be properly disciplined by women, and adolescent girls only with much difficulty. But there are other reasons, which are too well known or too controversial to be discussed here. The fact remains. The American high school student has a far better time, but he does far less work than his European counterpart.

Accordingly the American student, when he reaches college, is not so well prepared as the average European freshman. He has not read so much, and he does not know how to read and write so well. He does not buy nearly so many books for his own enjoyment, if indeed he buys any at all. One distinction seems to me particularly significant. English and French undergraduates are apt to publish little magazines in which they practise fine writing: the first sonnet, the first political manifesto, chapters from

* The same system at an earlier date is admirably described by the Abbé Ernest Dimnet in his autobiography, *My Old World* (Simon and Schuster, New York: 1935). Arduous as it was, he has nothing but praise for it.

the first autobiographical novel and so on. The American student hardly ever produces an imitation literary review. Instead, he produces an imitation of a daily newspaper, or occasionally an imitation of a comic weekly. Almost every distinguished contemporary French and British writer wrote his first publishable work when he was an undergraduate; almost no distinguished American writer wrote anything at college which in any way prefigured his later work.

If I have not misunderstood the fairly widespread movement towards establishing 'junior colleges' and the frequently emphasized distinction between the first biennium of college work and the second, they are based on this same fact: that some fairly intensive work is required to make up the deficiencies of the schools. Viewed in this light, the multitudinousness of the American student becomes (although still a little bewildering) intelligible and sympathetic.

The third quality which forces itself on the observer of the American student is his freedom. He will, without great heart-searching, move from one university to another—a thing almost never done in France or Britain, and in Germany chiefly by very earnest undergraduates in search of a particular kind of specialized teaching or even of a particular professor. He will give up college altogether with a facility which still amazes me, although the dean's office usually knows exactly what proportion of the student body can be expected to drop out annually. He will in college drop subjects on which he spent four years in school; and he will take eccentric subjects or anomalous combinations of subjects with complete nonchalance. He is infinitely less cut to pattern (even allowing for his numbers) than the European student. In an English university it is often possible to tell what particular college an undergraduate attends, and even what school he came from, after five minutes' general conversation; but seldom in the United States.

This has its good side and its bad. It makes the American student far more self-reliant—one of my chief difficulties in Oxford was handling the timid, sheltered, hampered boy who might prove to be brilliant and might almost equally well be defeated and crushed; such difficulties hardly ever present themselves here. But, on the other hand, it makes him rather irresponsible, and even restless and discontented. Far too much is left to his own choice, at a time when he is scarcely capable of making a choice. Thanks to the kindly laxity initiated by President Eliot,[8] he is free to take astronomy 17, comparative religion 1, government 33, Spanish drama in

[8 Of Harvard, 1869–1909. He championed the elective curriculum.]

translation 21 and hygiene 2A (hygiene 2A is compulsory). A semester of that would, at best, produce a healthy cross between Sir Isaac Newton and the Duke of Plaza-Toro. It is no wonder that the mixture sometimes fails to act, and discourages him that gives and him that takes. The opposite extreme is seen in the English 'public' schools, where a schoolboy good at history will be tutored from the age of fifteen till the age of eighteen to win a history scholarship at a good college specializing in history, will spend three or four years reading history for a first class in the final examinations, and then take history at his examination for entrance to the home civil service. (Usually, he will spend most of his time on the same period of history—e.g. medieval history, with special emphasis on the 12th century.) * Both extremes are dangerous. The British extreme is often as narrowing as the other is bewildering: it needs, as an offset, the manifold external interests which only a great university and experienced tutors can give. But it has one merit in itself: it sets a premium on unremitting hard work and the long view. The other extreme broadens the student's mind; but it often broadens it without deepening it.

Thus it is that the American student in his last two years at school does not often know what he is going to be, and still less often knows what he will learn in his university; and in the first two years at the university (if he is not firmly steered by his parents into a profession) seldom knows how he will spend his junior and senior years, and how they will dovetail into his future. From one point of view, this shows a genuine, disinterested love of learning, a magnificent belief in the virtues of the university; but from another it means waste of good effort, waste of priceless time, waste of irreplaceable enthusiasm. The task of the university is to cast such a light on a man's youth as will illuminate him through his life, and yet to keep the light unblurred by the shadows of the temporary and the inessential. This task is always supremely difficult, but its difficulty is here enhanced by the inadequateness of the liaison between schools and universities and the lack of emphasis on the essentials of education. The schools have more than enough to do. They cannot tackle this job. It is for the American universities to look, like the wise man, before and after: to induce the student to surrender most of his freedom of choice for a more stable set of patterns in education. Wherever such compulsory patterns have been introduced he needs little persuasion to accept them; at Columbia he looks back on the arduous humanities course with feelings of pleasure and gratitude,

* An interesting document showing one boy's revolt against this system is Christopher Isherwood's autobiography, *Lions and Shadows*, Hogarth Press, London: 1938.

not unmingled with surprise. He is a good fellow, the American student: he is energetic and ambitious; but he lacks direction, as the young do everywhere. 'For,' says Thomas Burton, 'as he that plays for nothing will not heed his game; no more will voluntary employment so thoroughly affect a student, except he be very intent of himself.' And, in these bad days, few of us are very intent of ourselves.

Graham Hutton

THE CULT OF THE AVERAGE

¶ The scope and purpose of Graham Hutton's excellent book, *Midwest at Noon*, from which 'The Cult of the Average' is taken, are best described in his own words: 'In the middle of the journey of my life and by the accident of war, I came to live in the Middle West. It was the region of America which I had always liked best, where I felt and was made to feel most at home, and where I spent the most absorbing, interesting, and happy years of a not uneventful life. The longer I lived there, the more I became convinced that the Midwest and its people were largely unknown, widely misinterpreted, and greatly misunderstood. I also came to believe that the Midwest today was not what it had been and what American folklore makes it out to be.' He felt this so strongly, he adds, that he had to write a book.

Unlike some of his predecessors among foreign observers of the Midwest, Mr. Hutton knows thoroughly the region he writes about. He went everywhere in it, talked to everybody, and enjoyed himself. 'There has not been one unpleasant experience in my journeyings. . . I have never lost a dime or anything else—not even my British accent!'

TO THE GREAT majority of midwesterners, however and wherever they live, the education of their children is most important. It arouses much private and public discussion in political circles, in the home, and in many voluntary associations. It is the charter for the equality of children, for which so many immigrants came to the region. The teaching of 'the young idea' [1] is not a social institution which 'just growed' with Midwest society and is viewed as part of the order of Nature. It is one of those recent

[1 'To teach the young idea how to shoot' (Thomson, *The Seasons*).]

FROM *Midwest at Noon*, 1946. Reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

man-made institutions which, like much else in the region, is periodically taken out, examined, transformed, and set to work anew. Political changes or voluntary movements see to that, even if the transformations are not as complete as the majority would like them to be.

It is recent; very recent. Public education on any ordered scale in the region is scarcely more than a hundred years old. It was called forth from a busy people mainly by the great efforts of women, New Englanders, ministers, and a few leading citizens. It has had to change vastly and frequently to fit new peoples with new ideas as they populated the region. It has had to assimilate their children and equip them with Americanism. It achieved the widest regional literacy in America before 1914. It has had to keep pace with big changes as the various new forms of transport and the quicker communication of ideas transformed a region of insulated agricultural settlers into one of the greatest industrial regions of the world, if not the greatest. And as they are all still changing, still in the process of 'becoming,' so is Midwest public education. It is as complex and as varied as the life of the people.

As in many countries a long time ago, and in most today, the main problem of Midwest education was that of teaching the 'three R's' to the children of farmers. It was at this stage that many men and women with a little learning, much zeal for the young, and natural teaching ability started rudimentary classes in an attic, a store, a 'church,' or in their own cabins. Lincoln learned eagerly, arduously, and therefore well from such teachers.* But this rudimentary education was unorganized. It was education for the necessarily ignored and ignorant children of a rural, segregated, and hard-working people. When railroads were built and roads were made, waves of immigrants and settlers came both to towns and to country, and then educational institutions multiplied exceedingly. The individual teachers remained, but in little red schoolhouses built for them. These schoolhouses are fresh in the memory of many midwesterners today, and they are still a majority of the schools out in the countryside. They are the monument of the vanishing Old Midwest. But they are still important. The United States Office of Education in 1938 stated that more than half the public-school buildings in America consisted of one room and that most individual teachers were teaching the children through eight grades of study. The problem

* See Kunigunde Duncan and D. F. Nichols, *Mentor Graham, the Man Who Taught Lincoln* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944). This book gives a valuable and fascinating account of the beginnings of education in Indiana and Illinois. See also Lloyd Lewis, *John S. Wright, Prophet of the Prairies* (Chicago: Prairie Farmer Publishing Co., 1941).

reflected by these figures is mainly that of the South, Southwest, and Great Plains regions; but in the Old Midwest today it is apparent as soon as you enter purely agricultural counties and townships.

The majority of midwesterners today view problems of the public education of young people up to the age of eighteen under four main headings. These headings correspond to the four main purposes which education of all kinds must serve. First in order of importance, education must assimilate different children from widely differing economic or family backgrounds to 'the American way.' Whether the school is private or public, in city or town or country, the first aim is to make good American citizens out of widely differing young people. This means that it must iron out disparities, establish an American average to which pupils must conform, and necessarily must also to a substantial degree standardize them. All education does that, everywhere; but in the Midwest there are clear reasons why it must do it to a greater extent. A Swiss, Swedish, Dutch, French, or British child comes to school in those European countries from a family which is already long and closely assimilated to a national or folk pattern of life and thought. That is not so in most of America; and in the Midwest it is less so than in the East and South. Education is therefore from the outset not just, nor even first, a matter of mere learning; not a matter of 'leading forth from' the pupil the capacities he or she may possess. It is more a matter of 'putting in' standards of good Americanism and of general knowledge. But as that is by no means *all* it is in the Midwest, in education we also find extremes, contrasts, paradoxes, problems, and difficulties not found in other regions and lands, or not found to the same extent.

Secondly, education must mold or establish the individual's character and temperament. It must make the pupil self-dependent at the same time as it makes him a 'good mixer,' a member of the community, and a playing member of the all-American team. It must make him adaptable in a country and region of great differences, extremes, and rapid change. It must also make him resourceful in a region of marked individualism, initiative, and enterprise. Clearly, the task facing the teacher is exacting. He, or more frequently she, must reconcile the accent on individual character with the accent on the average, the pattern, and the community.

Thirdly, education must provide a general, average standard of learning as the young person's start in life—he and she are entitled to it on the basis of equality. The adult citizen, which the pupil will become, will find adaptation, understanding of society, and mixing with his fellows much easier if all of them, when young, share in the same broad pattern and elements of

learning. This third aim of education is the most distinctively midwestern. It comes down, in clear and unbroken descent from the earliest days of primitive education in the Old Midwest, tinged with strong feelings of equality and democracy.

Fourthly, and only as far as is compatible with the attainment of these other three aims, education must be selective. It must provide courses in anything for which pupils show a desire or an aptitude. In other words, it must sieve out the pupils who will best profit from a college education, it must spot the able individuals who stand out from the average, and it must give them as much individual tuition or as great an opportunity to become more outstanding as it can afford—but always giving priority to the first three aims.

The midwesterner always distrusted intellectually outstanding people, geniuses of the mind (though not of 'practical affairs'), nonconformists in general, and the abnormal. To this extent he showed, and still shows, a remarkable similarity to the Englishman who dislikes things that 'are not done.' But, unlike most Englishmen, he believed and still believes that all young people, until their majority, have an equal right to a university education and the ability equally to profit from it, even if he knows the results are bound to be unequal. Accordingly, almost as early and as fast as private colleges were founded in the Midwest—mainly by easterners—midwesterners themselves set up state universities. Later, the leading citizens in big cities founded and endowed city colleges which added to the number available to young people. The standards of many of these had to be pitched low, to suit anyone who came to them.

Any student can 'work his or her way' through college, if the student wants to. A greater proportion of public high-school students than in any other land, or than in most other regions of America, want a 'college education' badly enough to work their way through. Those whose parents are able and willing to pay for them, send them 'through college.' It is the sacrifice by modest Midwest parents which is made with the least questioning. The extent of that sacrifice is largely unseen, especially by the children; but it is ungrudgingly made in hundreds of thousands of little homes. Thanks to rich benefactors, alumni, or state funds, the universities charge proportionately lower fees than the universities of Europe; but for parents who send their children through college, it is costly. To keep a young person there until he or she is twenty or twenty-one is bound to be so. And that, again, is why so many young people 'work their way through.'

Yet, to a smaller but still to a large extent, college education is viewed

by the majority of midwesterners in much the same way as education in the public schools. The aims are much the same and certainly rank in the same order. The standards are very 'practical' in the midwesterner's understanding of that word. The student is there to gain accomplishments that will make of him a worthy citizen. He is there to learn social arts and graces, the common life of sports and games, and the vocabulary of adult life. He is there to acquire knowledge, to take it in. He is there to acquire a training which will prove both practical and profitable in getting his living; to acquire 'basic skills.' And a minority are there to nourish genius, secure as much individual tuition as they can, enter the tantalizing portals of the life of the mind, and make their own individual contributions to it. Learning is still the 'basic skills' or 'book-larnin' ' that mark the public grade and high schools, as it marked the old midwesterners' idea of education in general.

In school and college alike there is what seems to a European a strange reverence for books and the printed word. It may not be entirely fanciful to ascribe this to the wide extent of illiteracy in the region until one long lifetime ago; and to the reverence for 'the Word' and the few men who could read and expound it in those days. Yet it is found all through American educational life. Certainly the heavy dependence of the first Midwest colleges upon religion and churches made their presidents and faculties rather dogmatic. It confined teachers within restraints from which they only began to break free in the 1890's and 1900's. Not all of them are free now. And if they are free from religious restraint, they certainly are not free from political and ideological restraints. But, to whatever it is due, 'book-larnin' ' seems to bulk inordinately large in Midwest universities—with notable exceptions.

The notable exceptions are famous throughout the world of learning: to name but a few, the University of Chicago, Northwestern University in Evanston, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, the State University of Iowa at Iowa City, and the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis. The region is equally rich in smaller private or denominational colleges of sound tradition, great learning, and much influence in the humanities: Grinnell * and Cornell in Iowa, Lawrence in Wisconsin, Knox in Illinois, Carleton in Minnesota, Oberlin in Ohio, and many others.

But within varying limits it seems to the stranger that the Midwest, and to a smaller extent the American, high school's and college's emphasis is

* It was to the Reverend J. B. Grinnell that Horace Greeley in 1853 said, 'Go West, young man, go West and grow up with the country.'

heavily upon *indoctrination* rather than on *education* in the strict Latin meaning of those words; on putting in rather than on bringing out; upon instilling the ideas of others rather than on criticizing them or getting the student to form ideas of his own; upon examinations of the student's absorptive capacity rather than of his originality or exposition; upon assimilation rather than on an independent, critical power to reason and to discriminate. These may seem like hard sayings, and this is not a treatise on education. But these observations are those of the leading educators of America who began and still lead a revolt, much of which borrowed its force and its leading exponents from great and exceptional Midwest colleges and schools. What Harper of the University of Chicago disliked and tried, with success, to change, Hutchins of the same university tries, in different ways, to change today. And there are many such men in the private or state universities of the region now dedicated to the task of reducing emphasis on mass-produced learning, on papers and textbooks and examinations, on grading and 'points' and classification systems which treat young minds like sides of beef, counts of yarn, or qualities of tobacco.

In many high schools and colleges the student is graded by credits and marks not on his originality but on knowledge of facts, lectures, and books. Even the examination papers are questionnaires or quizzes by which the student's rank or grade is established. And the teachers are so overworked, giving lectures and grading or marking innumerable papers, that there is little time for individual tuition or seminars. All this results in a standardized pattern of college or high-school education—open to all, the same for all, but hard on teacher and student alike. It is highly significant that the leading universities of the region are famous for their *postgraduate* departments and professors and that only among these can the outstanding graduate, the young man or woman who departs from the average or mass, find the necessary individual tuition, cherishing, and nourishment.

In the main, the best of European high-school and college education aims to *make* the student critical, both of his teacher and of what is being taught. It aims to discover and then develop the original and independent qualities or capacities of the young mind. The only outstanding exceptions were in the universities of the old Germany, in which the professors delivered their lectures, devoted themselves to postgraduate work and research, were a great force in public life, enjoyed high social status, and gave individual tuition to a favored few. American universities were vastly influenced by those of Germany between 1840 and 1900. Much of that influ-

ence, despite the revolt against it which began at the close of last century, still remains—particularly in the Midwest.

Clearly, here are the sources of some of those characteristics which we have already noted of the bulk of adult midwesterners: respect for and devotion to the average, a lack of discrimination, a passion for facts, and less ability to manipulate them. Here, once more, is another instance of a Midwest paradox of extremes: emphasis on individualism but also on a standardized average, the greatest tolerance in the world but equally great emphasis on conformity. What is taught as fact from an approved textbook to large classes of different young midwesterners in high schools, with the aim of making them one and indivisible, often ends either by crystallizing prejudices or by creating terrible problems for those university professors who later on try to develop an original, independent, and critical faculty in those same young minds. What the public schools do, many of the best universities, both state and private, have to try to undo. It was the *esprit de corps* which Emerson [2] found and liked in England a century ago. But American educators visiting England since 1918, and especially today, find more striking, and commend more, the individual originality of young Britishers in high schools and universities. And the visitors are not by any means all easterners.

From the outset, midwesterners firmly believed that all human knowledge could be reduced to the level of popular understanding. The forerunner of the 'digest' of today, and of the textbooks that tell all about everything, was the Midwest man's and woman's 'Companion to Knowledge' of the 1830's to 1860's. It was a thoroughly laudable aim that all knowledge should be 'understanded of the people'; and in a society of settlers and small towns largely inhabited by a homogeneous population, it was almost feasible. It did not, however, become feasible when the population changed and became bewilderingly diverse. The average of Americanism to which the children of alien immigrants had to conform naturally suggested an average level of understanding, an average of potted knowledge which should be each child's birthright. But the average had to be lower in terms of knowledge, wider in terms of social accomplishments, behavior, and 'basic skills.' And, as each child was democratically equal, it followed that the pace of the class should be set within the average pupil's range of ability —often, indeed, within that of the slightly backward pupils, to be on the safe side. The great differences among the children's families and the new-

[2 See his *English Traits*.]

ness of the Midwest naturally resulted in the deliberate 'patterning' of young Americans. The pledge to the flag filled the gap made by the absence of any formal religious instruction or prayers. The teaching of patriotism and what it means to be an American was bound up with the teaching of history from textbooks approved, and even commissioned on well-defined lines, by politicians. The results are not always good for a sound conception of history or of other peoples, or for independent and critical judgment. But they are doubtless good for Americanism. The Midwest has proved that.

The children of alien immigrants, and the immigrants' votes, have altered the content of education to a large extent. It is surprising to a European today to find that most pupils in Midwest high schools and many at college can read, but cannot understand, the great speeches of Calhoun, Webster, Clay, and Douglas. It is doubtful if Midwest schools and colleges today can teach their masterly style and logic; and many midwesterners themselves deplore the passing of the clear simplicity of Lincoln's English, as shown not in his great orations but in his letter to General Hooker.[3] The generation of midwesterners which passed from the scene in the 1920's certainly could comprehend the language of its fathers' day and age. To the pupils in high schools and to many students in college since 1920, that language and the fine logic and reason in those speeches are alien, archaic, and well-nigh incomprehensible. The American, the Americanism, and the American language of today are all very different from those of 1860. They are changing fast; and this is reflected in education.

Whatever schools and colleges may lack in developing an independent critical faculty or originality in their young people, they offset by developing practical and technical skills. The great inventors, industrialists, and businessmen of the region have richly endowed technical institutions, separately or as parts of a university, which are the envy of scientists all over the world. It is in branches of technique that the Midwest boy or girl most easily and naturally achieves self-expression: for in these fields of practical knowledge or skill, formulas or a technical vocabulary are manipulated instead of 'abstract ideas.' The midwesterners' emphasis on the practical, their insistent query, 'Will it work?' and their readiness to try anything once have more than justified themselves in the fields of natural science, medicine, transport, psychology, agriculture, meteorology, and commerce.

[3 Presumably Lincoln's letter of 26 January 1863, appointing General Hooker to the command of the Army of the Potomac.]

It is natural that this emphasis should spill over into social studies. It leads not only many businessmen but also many principals, presidents, and professors to believe that departments dedicated to what are misleadingly termed 'the social sciences' [4] can be, or should be, as practical, precise, and prophetical as those concerned with the natural sciences. It is natural, too, that they cannot be so practical. But it is also imperative that they should be encouraged in every way to undertake fearless and impartial research. Yet there are still great difficulties for historians, political scientists, economists, and sociologists.

These studies of human society are greatly influenced by currents of contemporary political thought. Principals, presidents, and professors have to tread with extreme delicacy along these dangerous paths, for they have the care of students whose parents have strong political convictions, much distrust of what is called 'pure speculation,' and a consuming hatred for what is termed 'advanced thought' or described as 'radicalism.' The situation of these teachers in public high schools, and especially in state universities, is not particularly enviable. It accounts for the colorlessness of much that is taught in the social studies. Neutrality must be preserved. In these subjects teaching goes on under limitations and restraints imposed by intolerance or the fear of it. It is just another of the contrasts in the region. The contrast is heightened by the extreme brilliance of achievements in the more 'practical' fields of study and research. But it has a bearing on the tendency of many great or promising thinkers and teachers to quit the region and its colleges. The brilliance and originality seem fated, in the main, to be nourished and developed in 'practical' studies and skills. The young sense this as quickly as the teachers, and the ship sails forward with a heavy list to one side. The master and his crew do all they can to redress the balance. But it is on the side of the humanities, arts, and social studies that the vessel lacks equipoise.

In all the leading high schools and universities of the region this struggle is going on with characteristic nobility of purpose and vigor. But it would be wrong to say that it is nearly settled, that it is easy, or that the issue is beyond question. And that, too, is not the problem of educators in the Midwest alone. What one can say is that if the outcome is successful there, it will more affect the Midwest way of life, and be more fruitful there, than it will anywhere else in America; and that all Americans will then be astonished at the richness of promise and performance. For the latent talent is boundless.

[4 See Foerster, pp. 146–8.]

'THE YOUNG IDEA'

If you turn away from the current disputes between educators in all countries to look at young people themselves, you are greatly encouraged and comforted. Whatever Midwest education's problems may be, whatever it may lack, its results in making good American citizens are great and undeniable. It is natural that midwesterners should want it to be better than it is. But they need not make the best the enemy of the good. The good is all around them.

Midwest boys and girls, young men and women, are more like those of democratic Sweden and Switzerland than any others in Europe. The East of America may still place more of a premium on sheer intellectual and cultural abilities, it may still be the mirror of fashion and mold of form [5] in these fields, but it is in the Midwest schools that you can best study the educational system as it turns out sturdy, convivial, generous, and human young Americans. Not a little of the gallantry and intrepidity of the very young Midwest boys in the second World War is due to their schools and teachers; and a surprisingly large number of those who returned recognized it and went back to the school to tell the teachers so.

For this, the nonintellectual side of the school curriculum and of school life in general is responsible. Whether in a one-room schoolhouse or in the most up-to-date and beautifully appointed schools in the world—and both are numerous in the region—the accent is as much on the young pupils as potential members of the community as it is on what they can be made to absorb, what mental capacities they possess, or what intellectual faculties they can develop. Who dare say, today, in our vexed age, that this is wrong? Humanity has suffered more from frustrated intellectuals than from low-brows or hearties. The latter are social; the former antisocial.

The pupils are encouraged to run their own social life in their own way and by their own elected nominees. Not all schools, least of all those in the countryside, can afford teachers and facilities to make this social side of school life resemble what it is in the best schools of the region. But in many schools in well-to-do suburban communities, big cities, large towns, and smaller towns, the high-school pupils of both sexes are now social types with a life and lingo of their own. In many high schools I know, I found that the seniors had balloted for the following choices among their number and in each sex: best-looking, most popular, most original, best personality, best dancer, biggest flirt, most bashful, best leader, best athlete, best

[5 See *Hamlet*, III, i, 162.]

dressed, funniest laugh, most industrious, most sophisticated, most naïve, blushing beauty, most conceited, biggest show-off, best mannered, most photogenic, most business-like, best natured, teacher's pet, most sportsmanlike, biggest eater, wittiest, biggest bluffer, laziest, peppiest, and most likely to succeed. The names were all published in the newspaper edited, managed, and run by the pupils themselves. The average age of seniors in these schools would be a little under seventeen and a half; but among juniors, sophomores, and freshmen a corresponding independence, sense of humor, community spirit, and readiness to give and take as members of the community were as well marked. The emphasis of the young everywhere is on good comradeship; but these lists show a remarkably heavy emphasis on the social achievements and a remarkably light one on anything else. They are typical in that.

Coeducation is responsible for much of this. If it interferes with purely intellectual learning, and if it leads to more sex problems for the young in the cities than out in the country, it results in an enormous net gain. In school hours the constant comradeship between the sexes, the differences of ability, and the scholastic competition between them are all to the good. This is most noticeable out in the country, where the smaller numbers of pupils of both sexes, in groups, form a little nation of their own. They have easy access to sports and open-air games, winter and summer. They work and play together virtually year in, year out. In the towns and cities this comradeship in active relaxation is rarer.

The young people have acute problems of their own. They are generally adept at solving them. But there is now a rift between both teachers and parents, on the one hand, and children on the other, which may grow wider. Already it is causing much concern, and in the Midwest it is particularly obvious. For decades, indeed for generations, children in the Midwest have been taught in school, and often in the home, that their region is the most go-ahead in America and, therefore, in the world; that the past is dead; that the future alone is important, for it is made into today.

While all this is natural enough in the Midwest, it is also natural that it should have the widespread effect of making young people identify their parents with a remote past, as if those parents had been pioneers who cleared the ground for their homes from the forest primeval and shot Indians off it. It has made Midwest youth more impatient of advice and of counsel drawn from both teachers' and parents' experience (they are of almost the same generation) than most of the youth of America—and that, by European standards, is saying a lot. It has probably helped to make

them the extraordinarily self-reliant, capable, and resourceful young people they are. But now the social problems of America, nowhere more extreme than in the Midwest, are forcing teachers and parents alike to look around them, to examine their own institutions, the foundations of their beliefs and ideas, and even to look backward to the past.

The young people sense the prevailing confusion of beliefs, the extremes and opposites, the divisions and frictions, but are as impatient as ever of 'old-fashioned ideas.' Teachers and parents are in a quandary, for they are divided among themselves on great social, political, or economic issues. What are they to tell the young? The parents can make their own decisions what version or what gloss they put upon these issues at home when they talk with the young people or before them. But the teachers and the schools are 'on the spot.' If a teacher ventures anything like an opinion on any of these issues, or says anything that could be taken as an opinion, he or she may lose a job. The control of education by the immediate locality and its opinion is far stronger in the Midwest than it is almost anywhere else. It is far stronger than the influence of local opinion on law and the enforcement of it. This results not in giving 'the young idea' a lead toward clarity but in ignoring or soft-pedaling many vital and interesting questions of the day.

It is noteworthy that the young people debate these questions in clubs and discussion groups which they run for themselves; but to get help and guidance from impartial adults is both rare and difficult. Many American parents and teachers were worried in the second World War about boys of nineteen fighting for their country and others, merely because Uncle Sam told them to. American correspondents abroad testified that many young men had only the vaguest ideas of America's foreign policy, her relationships with other countries including those of South America, and of economics, labor relations, or political institutions in general. This is not isolationism, nor is it due to it. It can be found in the armies of all belligerents in varying degrees. It reflects educational problems. It is the outcome of a public education which makes boys mature early and treats them as men in almost all respects, but agrees in the main not to teach them anything on controversial issues—or to teach it in such a neutral way that no judgment or conclusion can be reached. It forms one of the most vexing of postwar problems. It is one on which the veterans who choose to take their college education after the war will have a profound influence. That influence is already apparent.

Many of the parents' problems do not, however, arise from the teaching

curriculum. They arise from the emphasis on social life at school. In no schools is this social life more organized, or better provision for it made, than in many Midwest educational institutions. But it produces problems. The life is that of a mature and adult group with freedoms, codes of behavior, personal relationships, rules of conformity, fashions, and a vocabulary of its own. Parents want their children to mature young, and both parents and teachers do all they can to insure it. The greatest proof of that is the extent of liberty allowed to the young. But that liberty, like all liberty, cannot easily or safely be cut into neat slices and kept in iceboxes, to be brought out at schooltime or for well-defined occasions.

Liberty is the most pervasive of all atmospheres. In many if not most cities and towns of the region the social liberty and self-government of young people at school, which are means to maturity, often become means to revolt; and revolt does not break out at school or college. It breaks out in the home. Social life, when baulked, deteriorates into the rule of gangs among boys and girls. Some of the worst of the juvenile gangs were composed of girls in their teens. More frequently, and less harmfully, it becomes the domination of the group by exclusive cliques, which makes problems for many children and their parents. In the small rural towns the heavy wine of personal and group liberty makes young people even more restless, for parental, conventional, and religious restraints are far greater there. The standardization of all-American relaxations and diversions by the movies, radio, magazines, and comic strips affects the young in towns and country alike. Their chafings against parental control become more acute and frequent. And naturally this all-pervading atmosphere affects the schoolwork of many pupils.

Nevertheless, the pattern of good Americanism which the schools set before their pupils is sound. Like many Midwest characteristics, it is flexible and adaptable. It can take a lot of beating. Like their parents, the young people carry a heavy cargo of common sense. They can see an adult's viewpoint because they are more mature. They are the freest, most natural, most poised young people in all countries of the Western world; and that is true from kindergarten or nursery school through college. No young people anywhere are more attractive. Nowhere else can a grown-up get as much enjoyment from being among the younger generation. That is an enormous tribute to parents, teachers, and young people alike. Alongside this the costs, the exceptions, and the problems seem minor and manageable: which is true of so much in the Midwest.

George Santayana

CLASSIC LIBERTY

[George Santayana was born in Spain (1863) but grew up in the United States. He was educated at Harvard, where he taught philosophy as the colleague of Josiah Royce and William James from 1889 until 1912. He resigned in 1912, after (we are told) receiving a legacy, which freed him from teaching; as Dr. Johnson observed, 'a man who has enough without teaching, will probably not teach.' He has lived in Europe ever since; of late years in Rome.

His *Life of Reason* (1905), *Scepticism and Animal Faith* (1923), *The Realm of Essence* (1928), *The Realm of Matter* (1930), *The Realm of Truth* (1937) are familiar to students of philosophy. Better known to most readers are his *Character and Opinion in the United States* (1920), *Soliloquies in England* (1922), *Obiter Scripta* (1935), and his novel, *The Last Puritan* (1935). Two volumes of an autobiography, *Persons and Places* (1944) and *The Middle Span* (1945), have appeared.

Soliloquies in England and *The Last Puritan* are products of those periods in his life when he was 'attracted into an unfeigned participation in social pleasures and in political hopes.' He believes that they are therefore 'the most approachable of my writings for the general reader; but even here, though some interest may be aroused, I doubt that the unconverted or unconvertible will find much ultimate satisfaction.' Most of the *Soliloquies* were written during the war years of 1914–18.

WHEN ancient peoples defended what they called their liberty, the word stood for a plain and urgent interest of theirs: that their cities should not be destroyed, their territory pillaged, and they themselves sold into slavery. For the Greeks in particular liberty meant even more than this. Perhaps the deepest assumption of classic philosophy is that nature

FROM *Soliloquies in England*, 1922, published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

and the gods on the one hand and man on the other, both have a fixed character; that there is consequently a necessary piety, a true philosophy, a standard happiness, a normal art. The Greeks believed, not without reason, that they had grasped these permanent principles better than other peoples. They had largely dispelled superstition, experimented in government, and turned life into a rational art. Therefore when they defended their liberty what they defended was not merely freedom to live. It was freedom to live well, to live as other nations did not, in the public experimental study of the world and of human nature. This liberty to discover and pursue a natural happiness, this liberty to grow wise and to live in friendship with the gods and with one another, was the liberty vindicated at Thermopylae [1] by martyrdom and at Salamis [2] by victory.

As Greek cities stood for liberty in the world, so philosophers stood for liberty in the Greek cities. In both cases it was the same kind of liberty, not freedom to wander at hazard or to let things slip, but on the contrary freedom to legislate more precisely, at least for oneself, and to discover and codify the means to true happiness. Many of these pioneers in wisdom were audacious radicals and recoiled from no paradox. Some condemned what was most Greek: mythology, athletics, even multiplicity and physical motion. In the heart of those thriving, loquacious, festive little ant-hills, they preached impassibility and abstraction, the unanswerable scepticism of silence. Others practised a musical and priestly refinement of life, filled with metaphysical mysteries, and formed secret societies, not without a tendency to political domination. The cynics railed at the conventions, making themselves as comfortable as possible in the rôle of beggars and mocking parasites. The conservatives themselves were radical, so intelligent were they, and Plato wrote the charter [3] of the most extreme militarism and communism, for the sake of preserving the free state. It was the swan-song of liberty, a prescription to a diseased old man to become young again and try a second life of superhuman virtue. The old man preferred simply to die.

Many laughed then, as we may be tempted to do, at all those absolute physicians of the soul, each with his panacea. Yet beneath their quarrels the wranglers had a common faith. They all believed there was a single solid natural wisdom to be found, that reason could find it, and that man-

[1 The Greeks under Leonidas of Sparta made a heroic defense against the Persians at the narrow pass of Thermopylae, in eastern Greece, in 480 B.C., but were defeated through treachery.]

[2 An island off the southwestern coast of Attica, where in 480 B.C. the Greeks won a great victory over the Persian fleet.]

[3 His *Republic*.]

kind, sobered by reason, could put it in practice. Mankind has continued to run wild and like barbarians to place freedom in their very wildness, till we can hardly conceive the classic assumption of Greek philosophers and cities, that true liberty is bound up with an institution, a corporate scientific discipline, necessary to set free the perfect man, or the god, within us.

Upon the dissolution of paganism the Christian church adopted the classic conception of liberty. Of course, the field in which the higher politics had to operate was now conceived differently, and there was a new experience of the sort of happiness appropriate and possible to man; but the assumption remained unchallenged that Providence, as well as the human soul, had a fixed discoverable scope, and that the business of education, law, and religion was to bring them to operate in harmony. The aim of life, salvation, was involved in the nature of the soul itself, and the means of salvation had been ascertained by a positive science which the church was possessed of, partly revealed and partly experimental. Salvation was simply what, on a broad view, we should see to be health, and religion was nothing but a sort of universal hygiene.

The church, therefore, little as it tolerated heretical liberty, the liberty of moral and intellectual dispersion, felt that it had come into the world to set men free, and constantly demanded liberty for itself, that it might fulfil this mission. It was divinely commissioned to teach, guide, and console all nations and all ages by the self-same means, and to promote at all costs what it conceived to be human perfection. There should be saints and as many saints as possible. The church never admitted, any more than did any sect of ancient philosophers, that its teaching might represent only an eccentric view of the world, or that its guidance and consolations might be suitable only at one stage of human development. To waver in the pursuit of the orthodox ideal could only betray frivolity and want of self-knowledge. The truth of things and the happiness of each man could not lie elsewhere than where the church, summing up all human experience and all divine revelation, had placed it once for all and for everybody. The liberty of the church to fulfil its mission was accordingly hostile to any liberty of dispersion, to any radical consecutive independence, in the life of individuals or of nations.

When it came to full fruition this orthodox freedom was far from gay; it was called sanctity. The freedom of pagan philosophers too had turned out to be rather a stiff and severe pose; but in the Christian dispensation this austerity of true happiness was less to be wondered at, since life on earth was reputed to be abnormal from the beginning, and infected with

hereditary disease. The full beauty and joy of restored liberty could hardly become evident in this life. Nevertheless a certain beauty and joy did radiate visibly from the saints; and while we may well think their renunciations and penances misguided or excessive, it is certain that, like the Spartans and the philosophers, they got something for their pains. Their bodies and souls were transfigured, as none now found upon earth. If we admire without imitating them we shall perhaps have done their philosophy exact justice. Classic liberty was a sort of forced and artificial liberty, a poor perfection reserved for an ascetic aristocracy in whom heroism and refinement were touched with perversity and slowly starved themselves to death.

Since those days we have discovered how much larger the universe is, and we have lost our way in it. Any day it may come over us again that our modern liberty to drift in the dark is the most terrible negation of freedom. Nothing happens to us as we would. We want peace and make war. We need science and obey the will to believe, we love art and flounder among whimsicalities, we believe in general comfort and equality and we strain every nerve to become millionaires. After all, antiquity must have been right in thinking that reasonable self-direction must rest on having a determinate character and knowing what it is, and that only the truth about God and happiness, if we somehow found it, could make us free. But the truth is not to be found by guessing at it, as religious prophets and men of genius have done, and then damning every one who does not agree. Human nature, for all its substantial fixity, is a living thing with many varieties and variations. All diversity of opinion is therefore not founded on ignorance; it may express a legitimate change of habit or interest. The classic and Christian synthesis from which we have broken loose was certainly premature, even if the only issue of our liberal experiments should be to lead us back to some such equilibrium. Let us hope at least that the new morality, when it comes, may be more broadly based than the old on knowledge of the world, not so absolute, not so meticulous, and not chanted so much in the monotone of an abstracted sage.

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams
NATURAL ARISTOCRACY

[Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826; President, 1801–9) and John Adams (1735–1826; President, 1797–1801) had been acquainted since the days of the Continental Congress, to which Jefferson was a delegate from Virginia and Adams from Massachusetts. This acquaintance soon became one of mutual respect and then, more slowly, ripened into friendship. Despite serious estrangements caused by differences in political philosophy and by party conflicts, the friendship grew stronger with the years; for, as Jefferson wrote to Adams in 1812, they had been 'fellow laborers in the same cause, struggling for what is most valuable to man, his right of self-government; laboring always at the same oar, with some wave ever ahead, threatening to overwhelm us, yet passing harmless under our bark we knew not how, we rode through the storm with heart and hand, and made a happy port.' Some years after their retirement from the turmoils of public life, their memories, sympathies, and ideas found expression in letters exchanged between Monticello and Quincy. This correspondence, opened by Adams in 1812, continued until their deaths. The two friends died on the same day, 4 July (appropriately enough) 1826.

Jefferson to Adams
Monticello, October 28, 1813.

. . . I AGREE with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents. Formerly, bodily powers gave place among the aristoi.[1] But since the invention of gunpowder has armed the weak as well as the strong with missile death, bodily strength, like beauty, good humor, politeness and other accomplishments, has become but an auxiliary ground for distinction. There is also an artificial aristocracy, founded on wealth and birth, without either virtue or talents; for with these it would belong to the first class. The natural aristocracy I consider as the

[1 Aristocrats.]

most precious gift of nature, for the instruction, the trusts, and government of society. And indeed, it would have been inconsistent in creation to have formed man for the social state, and not to have provided virtue and wisdom enough to manage the concerns of the society. May we not even say, that that form of government is the best, which provides the most effectually for a pure selection of these natural aristoi into the offices of government? The artificial aristocracy is a mischievous ingredient in government, and provision should be made to prevent its ascendency. On the question, what is the best provision, you and I differ; but we differ as rational friends, using the free exercise of our reason, and mutually indulging its errors. You think it best to put the pseudo-aristoi into a separate chamber of legislation, where they may be hindered from doing mischief by their co-ordinate branches, and where, also, they may be a protection to wealth against the agrarian and plundering enterprises of the majority of the people. I think that to give them power in order to prevent them from doing mischief is arming them for it, and increasing instead of remedying the evil. For if the co-ordinate branches can arrest their action, so may they that of the co-ordinates. Mischief may be done negatively as well as positively. Of this, a cabal in the Senate [2] of the United States has furnished many proofs. Nor do I believe them necessary to protect the wealthy; because enough of these will find their way into every branch of the legislature to protect themselves. From fifteen to twenty legislatures of our own, in action for thirty years past, have proved that no fears of an equalization of property are to be apprehended from them. I think the best remedy is exactly that provided by all our constitutions, to leave to the citizens the free election and separation of the aristoi from the pseudo-aristoi, of the wheat from the chaff. In general they will elect the really good and wise. In some instances, wealth may corrupt, and birth blind them; but not in sufficient degree to endanger the society.

It is probable that our difference of opinion may, in some measure, be produced by a difference of character in those among whom we live. From what I have seen of Massachusetts and Connecticut [3] myself, and still more from what I have heard, and the character given of the former by yourself, who know them so much better, there seems to be in those States a traditionary reverence for certain families, which has rendered the offices of the

[2 It is not clear which cabal Jefferson alludes to. Like most Presidents, he and Adams (cf. p. 200) were vexed by Congressional opposition to their policies.]

[3 New England Federalists, especially Connecticut ones, were extremely hostile to Jefferson throughout his Presidency.]

government nearly hereditary in those families. I presume that from an early period of your history, members of those families happening to possess virtue and talents have honestly exercised them for the good of the people, and by their services have endeared their names to them. In coupling Connecticut with you, I mean it politically only, not morally. For having made the Bible the common law of their land, they seem to have modeled their morality on the story of Jacob and Laban.[4] But although this hereditary succession to office with you may, in some degree, be founded in real family merit, yet in a much higher degree it has proceeded from your strict alliance of Church and State.[5] These families are canonised in the eyes of the people on common principles, 'you tickle me, and I will tickle you.' In Virginia we have nothing of this. Our clergy, before the revolution, having been secured against rivalship by fixed salaries, did not give themselves the trouble of acquiring influence over the people. Of wealth, there were great accumulations in particular families, handed down from generation to generation, under the English law of entails.[6] But the only object of ambition for the wealthy was a seat in the King's Council. All their court was paid to the crown and its creatures; and they Philipised[7] in all collisions between the King and the people. Hence they were unpopular; and that unpopularity continues attached to their names. A Randolph, a Carter, or a Burwell must have great personal superiority over a common competitor to be elected by the people even at this day. At the first session of our legislature after the Declaration of Independence, we passed a law abolishing entails. And this was followed by one abolishing the privilege of primogeniture,[8] and dividing the lands of intestates equally among all their children, or other representatives. These laws, drawn by myself, laid the axe to the root of pseudo-aristocracy. And had another

[4 See Genesis, chs. xxix–xxxi.]

[5 In Massachusetts and Connecticut the Congregational Churches possessed special privileges, as the Anglican Church once had in the Southern states. Massachusetts and Connecticut were many years behind the other states in severing official ties between Church and State.]

[6 This law permitted landed estates (and slaves attached to them) to be settled inalienably; the estate could not, ordinarily, be broken up. Jefferson's bill abolishing entails made landed property easily distributable and negotiable, like any other property. Some of the wealthy landowners strongly opposed Jefferson's successful attempt to deprive them of an ancient privilege.]

[7 Supported the aims and policies of a foreign power rather than those of their own country, as some Athenians did in the days of Philip of Macedon.]

[8 The law of primogeniture gave all the inheritance to the eldest son. Jefferson himself was an eldest son.]

which I prepared been adopted by the legislature, our work would have been complete. It was a bill for the more general diffusion of learning.[9] This proposed to divide every county into wards of five or six miles square, like your townships; to establish in each ward a free school for reading, writing and common arithmetic; to provide for the annual selection of the best subjects [10] from these schools, who might receive, at the public expense, a higher degree of education at a district school; and from these district schools to select a certain number of the most promising subjects, to be completed at an University, where all the most useful sciences should be taught. Worth and genius would thus have been sought out from every condition of life, and completely prepared by education for defeating the competition of wealth and birth for public trusts. My proposition had, for a further object, to impart to these wards those portions of self-government for which they are best qualified, by confiding to them the care of their poor, their roads, police, elections, the nomination of jurors, administration of justice in small cases, elementary exercises of militia; in short to have made them little republics, with a warden at the head of each, for all those concerns which, being under their eye, they would better manage than the larger republics of the county or State. A general call of ward meetings by their wardens on the same day through the State would at any time produce the genuine sense of the people on any required point, and would enable the State to act in mass, as your people have so often done, and with so much effect, by their town meetings. The law for religious freedom,[11] which made a part of this system, having put down the aristocracy of the clergy, and restored to the citizen the freedom of the mind, and those of entails and descents nurturing an equality of condition among them, this on education would have raised the mass of the people to the high ground of moral respectability necessary to their own safety, and to orderly government; and would have completed the great object of qualifying them to select the veritable aristoi, for the trusts of government, to the exclusion of the pseudalists; and the same Theognis [12] who has fur-

[9 This bill did not pass, but public education continued to be one of Jefferson's strongest interests. Under his leadership the University of Virginia was established in 1819. He laid out its grounds, designed its buildings, planned its curriculum, and selected its first faculty.]

[10 The best students.]

[11 The law entirely separated Church and State in Virginia, where all taxpayers had been taxed to support the Anglican Church whether members of that Church or not. Jefferson considered his long struggle for this law one of his greatest services to his state.]

[12 Greek poet, sixth century B.C.]

nished the epigraphs of your two letters, assures us that ["Good men, Cyrnus, have never ruined a state']. Although this law has not yet been acted on but in a small and inefficient degree, it is still considered as before the legislature, with other bills of the revised code, not yet taken up, and I have great hope that some patriotic spirit will, at a favorable moment, call it up, and make it the key-stone of the arch of our government.

With respect to aristocracy, we should further consider, that before the establishment of the American States, nothing was known to history but the man of the old world, crowded within limits either small or overcharged, and steeped in the vices which that situation generates. A government adapted to such men would be one thing; but a very different one, that for the man of these States. Here every one may have land to labor for himself, if he chooses; or, preferring the exercise of any other industry, may exact for it such compensation as not only to afford a comfortable subsistence, but wherewith to provide for a cessation from labor in old age. Every one, by his property, or by his satisfactory situation, is interested in the support of law and order. And such men may safely and advantageously reserve to themselves a wholesome control over their public affairs, and a degree of freedom, which, in the hands of the *canaille* [13] of the cities of Europe, would be instantly perverted to the demolition and destruction of everything public and private. The history of the last twenty-five years of France, and of the last forty years in America, nay of its last two hundred years, proves the truth of both parts of this observation.

But even in Europe a change has sensibly taken place in the mind of man.[14] Science has liberated the ideas of those who read and reflect, and the American example has kindled feelings of right in the people. An insurrection has consequently begun, of science, talents, and courage, against rank and birth, which have fallen into contempt. It has failed in its first effort, because the mobs of the cities, the instrument used for its accomplishment, debased by ignorance, poverty, and vice, could not be restrained to rational action. But the world will recover from the panic of this first catastrophe. Science is progressive, and talents and enterprise on the alert. Resort may be had to the people of the country, a more governable power from their principles and subordination; and rank, and birth, and tinsel-aristocracy will finally shrink into insignificance, even there.

[13] Rabble.]

[14] Referring to the French Revolution and its consequences. As our Minister to France from 1785 to 1789, Jefferson witnessed the outbreak of the Revolution. His account of it can be read in his *Autobiography*.]

This, however, we have no right to meddle with. It suffices for us, if the moral and physical condition of our own citizens qualifies them to select the able and good for the direction of their government, with a recurrence of elections at such short periods as will enable them to displace an unfaithful servant, before the mischief he meditates may be irremediable.

I have stated my opinion on a point on which we differ, not with a view to controversy, for we are both too old to change opinions which are the result of a long life of inquiry and reflection; but on the suggestions of a former letter of yours, that we ought not to die before we have explained ourselves to each other. We acted in perfect harmony, through a long and perilous contest for our liberty and independence. A constitution has been acquired, which, though neither of us thinks perfect, yet both consider as competent to render our fellow citizens the happiest and the securest on whom the sun has ever shone. If we do not think exactly alike as to its imperfections, it matters little to our country, which, after devoting to it long lives of disinterested labor, we have delivered over to our successors in life, who will be able to take care of it and of themselves.

From Adams's Reply
Quincy, November 15, 1813.

We are now explicitly agreed upon one important point, viz., that there is a natural aristocracy among men, the grounds of which are virtue and talents. You very justly indulge a little merriment upon this solemn subject of aristocracy. I often laugh at it too, for there is nothing in this world more ridiculous than the management of it by all the nations of the earth; but while we smile, mankind have reason to say to us, as the frogs said to boys, what is sport to you are wounds and death to us. When I consider the weakness, the folly, the pride, the vanity, the selfishness, the artifice, the low craft and mean cunning, the want of principle, the avarice, the unbounded ambition, the unfeeling cruelty of a majority of those (in all nations) who are allowed an aristocratical influence, and, on the other hand, the stupidity with which the more numerous multitude not only become their dupes, but even love to be taken in by their tricks, I feel a stronger disposition to weep at their destiny, than to laugh at their folly. But though we have agreed in one point, in words, it is not yet certain that we are perfectly agreed in sense. Fashion has introduced an indeterminate use of the word talents. Education, wealth, strength, beauty, stature, birth, marriage, graceful attitudes and motions, gait, air, complexion, physiognomy, are talents, as well as genius, science, and learning. Any one of these

talents that in fact commands or influences two votes in society gives to the man who possesses it the character of an aristocrat, in my sense of the word. Pick up the first hundred men you meet, and make a republic. Every man will have an equal vote; but when deliberations and discussions are opened, it will be found that twenty-five, by their talents, virtues being equal, will be able to carry fifty votes. Every one of these twenty-five is an aristocrat in my sense of the word, whether he obtains his one vote in addition to his own by his birth, fortune, figure, eloquence, science, learning, craft, cunning, or even his character for good fellowship, and a *bon vivant*. . .

Your distinction between natural and artificial aristocracy does not appear to me founded. Birth and wealth are conferred upon some men as imperiously by nature as genius, strength, or beauty. The heir to honors, and riches, and power, has often no more merit in procuring these advantages than he has in obtaining a handsome face or an elegant figure. When aristocracies are established by human laws, and honor, wealth, and power are made hereditary by municipal laws and political institutions, then I acknowledge artificial aristocracy to commence; but this never commences till corruption in elections become dominant and uncontrollable. But this artificial aristocracy can never last. The everlasting envies, jealousies, rivalries, and quarrels among them; their cruel rapacity upon the poor ignorant people, their followers, compel them to set up Caesar, a demagogue, to be a monarch, a master; *pour mettre chacun à sa place*.[15] Here you have the origin of all artificial aristocracy, which is the origin of all monarchies. And both artificial aristocracy and monarchy, and civil, military, political, and hierarchical despotism have all grown out of the natural aristocracy of virtues and talents. We, to be sure, are far remote from this. Many hundred years must roll away before we shall be corrupted. Our pure, virtuous, public-spirited, federative republic will last forever, govern the globe, and introduce the perfection of man; his perfectibility being already proved by Price, Priestley, Condorcet, Rousseau, Diderot, and Godwin.[16] Mischief has been done by the Senate of the United States. I have known and felt more of this mischief than Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, all together. But this has been all caused by the constitutional power of the Senate, in executive business, which ought to be immediately, totally, and essentially abolished. Your distinction between the [aristoi] and [pseudo-

[15 'To put everyone in his place.']

[16 Adams was skeptical, and at times scornful, of the pretensions of the writers he names in this ironical passage. Price, Priestley, and Godwin were English radicals and controversialists; Priestley was a correspondent of Jefferson's. Condorcet, Rousseau, and Diderot were important French writers on moral, political, and philosophical topics.]

aristoi] will not help the matter. I would trust one as well as the other with unlimited power. The law wisely refuses an oath as a witness in his own case, to the saint as well as the sinner. . .

You suppose a difference of opinion between you and me on the subject of aristocracy. I can find none. I dislike and detest hereditary honors, offices, emoluments, established by law. So do you. I am for excluding legal, hereditary distinctions from the United States as long as possible. So are you. I only say that mankind have not yet discovered any remedy against irresistible corruption in elections to offices of great power and profit, but making them hereditary.

James Madison

THE FEDERALIST. NO. X

¶ The Convention of May–September 1787 adopted a Constitution of the United States to replace the Articles of Confederation and 'form a more perfect Union.' But to be in force, the new Constitution had to be ratified by nine of the thirteen states, and ratification was far from assured. In the months after the Convention Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay wrote a series of articles designed to win public support for the Constitution by explaining and defending it. These *Federalist* papers became, and have remained, the classic commentary on the Constitutional foundations of American government.

Of the 85 *Federalist* papers, 79 appeared in New York newspapers. Madison is believed to have written at least 24 of them in addition to Number X (printed in *The New York Packet*, 23 November 1787), which is his best-known contribution to the series.

The Constitution was ratified in 1788.

To the People of the State of New York:

AMONG the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed Union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend of popular governments never finds himself so much alarmed for their character and fate, as when he contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it. The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils, have, in truth, been the mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished; as they continue to be the favorite and fruitful topics from which the adversaries to liberty derive their most specious declamations. The valuable improvements made by the American

constitutions[1] on the popular models, both ancient and modern, cannot certainly be too much admired; but it would be an unwarrantable partiality, to contend that they have as effectually obviated the danger on this side, as was wished and expected. Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. However anxiously we may wish that these complaints had no foundation, the evidence of known facts will not permit us to deny that they are in some degree true. It will be found, indeed, on a candid review of our situation, that some of the distresses under which we labor have been erroneously charged on the operation of our governments; but it will be found, at the same time, that other causes will not alone account for many of our heaviest misfortunes; and, particularly, for that prevailing and increasing distrust of public engagements, and alarm for private rights, which are echoed from one end of the continent to the other.[2] These must be chiefly, if not wholly, effects of the unsteadiness and injustice with which a factious spirit has tainted our public administrations.

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects.

There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease. Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than

[1 The Articles of Confederation (which the Constitution adopted in 1787 was to supersede) seem to be meant, but probably Madison also has in mind the constitutions of the various states.]

[2 This may refer to Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts, in the autumn of 1786, which shocked the country and which was not forgotten by the framers of the Constitution.]

it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.

The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property [3] originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties.

The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts. But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and

[3 Compare Madison's ideas on property with those of Emerson ('Politics'), Jefferson, and Carritt ('The Rights of Man').]

involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.

No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity. With equal, nay with greater reason, a body of men are unfit to be both judges and parties at the same time; yet what are many of the most important acts of legislation, but so many judicial determinations, not indeed concerning the rights of single persons, but concerning the rights of large bodies of citizens? And what are the different classes of legislators but advocates and parties to the causes which they determine? Is a law proposed concerning private debts? It is a question to which the creditors are parties on one side and the debtors on the other. Justice ought to hold the balance between them. Yet the parties are, and must be, themselves the judges; and the most numerous party, or, in other words, the most powerful faction must be expected to prevail. Shall domestic manufactures be encouraged, and in what degree, by restrictions on foreign manufactures? are questions which would be differently decided by the landed and the manufacturing classes, and probably by neither with a sole regard to justice and the public good. The apportionment of taxes on the various descriptions of property is an act which seems to require the most exact impartiality; yet there is, perhaps, no legislative act in which greater opportunity and temptation are given to a predominant party to trample on the rules of justice. Every shilling with which they overburden the inferior number, is a shilling saved to their own pockets.

It is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and render them all subservient to the public good. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm. Nor, in many cases, can such an adjustment be made at all without taking into view indirect and remote considerations, which will rarely prevail over the immediate interest which one party may find in disregarding the rights of another or the good of the whole.

The inference to which we are brought is, that the *causes* of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its *effects*.

If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote. It may clog the administration, it may convulse the society; but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution. When a majority is included in a faction, the form of

popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction, and at the same time to preserve the spirit and the form of popular government, is then the great object to which our inquiries are directed. Let me add that it is the great desideratum by which this form of government can be rescued from the opprobrium under which it has so long labored, and be recommended to the esteem and adoption of mankind.

By what means is this object attainable? Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the opportunity be suffered to coincide, we well know that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. They are not found to be such on the injustice and violence of individuals, and lose their efficacy in proportion to the number combined together, that is, in proportion as their efficacy becomes needful.

From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole; a communication and concert result from the form of government itself; and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths. Theoretic politicians, who have patronized this species of government, have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.

A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking. Let us examine the points in which it varies from pure democracy, and we shall comprehend both the nature of the cure and the efficacy which it must derive from the Union.

The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic

are: first, the delegation of the government, in the latter, to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended.

The effect of the first difference is, on the one hand, to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations. Under such a regulation, it may well happen that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose. On the other hand, the effect may be inverted. Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people. The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of proper guardians of the public weal; and it is clearly decided in favor of the latter by two obvious considerations:

In the first place, it is to be remarked that, however small the republic may be, the representatives must be raised to a certain number, in order to guard against the cabals of a few; [4] and that, however large it may be, they must be limited to a certain number, in order to guard against the confusion of a multitude. Hence, the number of representatives in the two cases not being in proportion to that of the two constituents, and being proportionally greater in the small republic, it follows that, if the proportion of fit characters be not less in the large than in the small republic, the former will present a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice.

In the next place, as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practise with success the vicious arts by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more free, will be more likely to centre in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive and established characters.

It must be confessed that in this, as in most other cases, there is a mean, on both sides of which inconveniences will be found to lie. By enlarging too much the number of electors, you render the representative too little acquainted with all their local circumstances and lesser interests; as by

[4 On the danger of obstruction by strongly organized minorities see also the Jefferson-Adams letters, pp. 194–201.]

reducing it too much, you render him unduly attached to these, and too little fit to comprehend and pursue great and national objects. The federal Constitution forms a happy combination in this respect; the great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State legislatures.

The other point of difference is, the greater number of citizens and extent of territory which may be brought within the compass of republican than of democratic government; and it is this circumstance principally which renders factious combinations less to be dreaded in the former than in the latter. The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression. Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other. Besides other impediments, it may be remarked that, where there is a consciousness of unjust or dishonorable purposes, communication is always checked by distrust in proportion to the number whose concurrence is necessary.

Hence, it clearly appears, that the same advantage which a republic has over a democracy, in controlling the effects of faction, is enjoyed by a large over a small republic,—is enjoyed by the Union over the States composing it. Does the advantage consist in the substitution of representatives whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and to schemes of injustice? It will not be denied that the representation of the Union will be most likely to possess these requisite endowments. Does it consist in the greater security afforded by a greater variety of parties, against the event of any one party being able to outnumber and oppress the rest? In an equal degree does the increased variety of parties comprised within the Union, increase this security. Does it, in fine, consist in the greater obstacles opposed to the concert and accomplishment of the secret wishes of an unjust and interested majority? Here, again, the extent of the Union gives it the most palpable advantage.

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the

other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a political faction in a part of the Confederacy; [5] but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or wicked project, will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire State.

In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character of Federalists. PUBLIUS.

[5 'Confederacy' here and 'Federalists' in the next paragraph do not, of course, have the restricted meanings familiar to students of nineteenth-century American history. 'Confederacy' here means merely the association of states existent when Madison was writing. 'Federalists' is not the name of an organized political party but a term denoting those who wanted the Constitution to be ratified and who supported the kind of federal union advocated by the *Federalist* papers.]

Ralph Waldo Emerson

POLITICS

¶ A good many readers in this generation may find Emerson's 'Politics' quaint if nothing worse. If they approve of his doubts about property, they will nevertheless think that his exaltation of the individual above the State is somewhat remote from the way the world goes now. 'Good men must not obey the laws too well.' 'A party is perpetually corrupted by personality.' 'The less government we have, the better.' 'The appearance of character makes the State unnecessary.' These are not maxims of the modern State, in either its democratic or its totalitarian manifestations. 'If men can be educated, the institutions will share their improvement, and the moral sentiment will write the law of the land,' Emerson insists. His 'Politics' remains an uncompromising affirmation of faith in idealism, in the supreme worth of the individual, and of conviction that in the long run it is individuals who make States good, not States that make individuals good.

'Politics' was first published in the second series of Emerson's *Essays*, 1844.

IN DEALING with the State, we ought to remember that its institutions are not aboriginal, though they existed before we were born: that they are not superior to the citizen: that every one of them was once the act of a single man: every law and usage was a man's expedient to meet a particular case: that they all are imitable, all alterable; we may make as good; we may make better. Society is an illusion to the young citizen. It lies before him in rigid repose, with certain names, men, and institutions, rooted like oak-trees to the centre, round which all arrange themselves the best they can. But the old statesman knows that society is fluid; there are no such roots and centres; but any particle may suddenly become the centre

FROM *Essays*, Second Series, 1844.

of the movement, and compel the system to gyrate round it, as every man of strong will, like Pisistratus,[1] or Cromwell, does for a time, and every man of truth, like Plato, or Paul, does forever. But politics rest on necessary foundations, and cannot be treated with levity. Republics abound in young civilians, who believe that the laws make the city, that grave modifications of the policy and modes of living, and employments of the population, that commerce, education, and religion, may be voted in or out; and that any measure, though it were absurd, may be imposed on a people, if only you can get sufficient voices to make it a law. But the wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand, which perishes in the twisting; that the State must follow, and not lead the character and progress of the citizen; the strongest usurper is quickly got rid of; and they only who build on Ideas, build for eternity; and that the form of government which prevails, is the expression of what cultivation exists in the population which permits it. The law is only a memorandum. We are superstitious, and esteem the statute somewhat: so much life as it has in the character of living men, is its force. The statute stands there to say, yesterday we agreed so and so, but how feel ye this article to-day? Our statute is a currency, which we stamp with our own portrait: it soon becomes unrecognizable, and in process of time will return to the mint. Nature is not democratic, nor limited-monarchical, but despotic, and will not be fooled or abated of any jot of her authority, by the pertest of her sons: and as fast as the public mind is opened to more intelligence, the code is seen to be brute and stammering. It speaks not articulately, and must be made to. Meantime the education of the general mind never stops. The reveries of the true and simple are prophetic. What the tender poetic youth dreams, and prays, and paints to-day, but shuns the ridicule of saying aloud, shall presently be the resolutions of public bodies, then shall be carried as grievance and bill of rights through conflict and war, and then shall be triumphant law and establishment for a hundred years, until it gives place, in turn, to new prayers and pictures. The history of the State sketches in coarse outline the progress of thought, and follows at a distance the delicacy of culture and of aspiration.

The theory of politics, which has possessed the mind of men, and which they have expressed the best they could in their laws and in their revolutions, considers persons and property[2] as the two objects for whose protec-

[1] Ruler of Athens, 560–527 B C.]

[2] See Carritt, 'The Rights of Man,' pp. 252–65; Madison, *Federalist*, No. x, pp. 202–9; Becker, 'The Reality,' pp. 235–51.]

tion government exists. Of persons, all have equal rights, in virtue of being identical in nature. This interest, of course, with its whole power demands a democracy. Whilst the rights of all as persons are equal, in virtue of their access to reason, their rights in property are very unequal. One man owns his clothes, and another owns a county. This accident, depending, primarily, on the skill and virtue of the parties, of which there is every degree, and, secondarily, on patrimony, falls unequally, and its rights, of course, are unequal. Personal rights, universally the same, demand a government framed on the ratio of the census: property demands a government framed on the ratio of owners and of owning. Laban,[3] who has flocks and herds, wishes them looked after by an officer on the frontiers, lest the Midianites shall drive them off, and pays a tax to that end. Jacob has no flocks or herds, and no fear of the Midianites, and pays no tax to the officer. It seemed fit that Laban and Jacob should have equal rights to elect the officer, who is to defend their persons, but that Laban, and not Jacob, should elect the officer who is to guard the sheep and cattle. And, if question arise whether additional officers or watch-towers should be provided, must not Laban and Isaac, and those who must sell part of their herds to buy protection for the rest, judge better of this, and with more right, than Jacob, who, because he is a youth and a traveller, eats their bread and not his own?

In the earliest society the proprietors made their own wealth, and so long as it comes to the owners in the direct way, no other opinion would arise in any equitable community, than that property should make the law for property, and persons the law for persons.

But property passes through donation or inheritance to those who do not create it. Gift, in one case, makes it as really the new owner's, as labor made it the first owner's: in the other case, of patrimony, the law makes an ownership, which will be valid in each man's view according to the estimate which he sets on the public tranquillity.

It was not, however, found easy to embody the readily admitted principle, that property should make law for property, and persons for persons: since persons and property mixed themselves in every transaction. At last it seemed settled, that the rightful distinction was, that the proprietors should have more elective franchise than non-proprietors, on the Spartan principle of 'calling that which is just, equal; not that which is equal, just.'

That principle[4] no longer looks so self-evident as it appeared in former

[3 See Genesis, xxix–xxxi.]

[4 Property qualifications for voting existed in many states until the 1820's.]

times, partly, because doubts have arisen whether too much weight had not been allowed in the laws, to property, and such a structure given to our usages, as allowed the rich to encroach on the poor, and to keep them poor; but mainly, because there is an instinctive sense, however obscure and yet inarticulate, that the whole constitution of property, on its present tenures, is injurious, and its influence on persons deteriorating and degrading; that truly, the only interest for the consideration of the State, is persons: that property will always follow persons; that the highest end of government is the culture of men: and if men can be educated, the institutions will share their improvement, and the moral sentiment will write the law of the land.

If it be not easy to settle the equity of this question, the peril is less when we take note of our natural defences. We are kept by better guards than the vigilance of such magistrates as we commonly elect. Society always consists, in greatest part, of young and foolish persons. The old, who have seen through the hypocrisy of courts and statesmen, die, and leave no wisdom to their sons. They believe their own newspaper, as their fathers did at their age. With such an ignorant and deceivable majority, States would soon run to ruin, but that there are limitations, beyond which the folly and ambition of governors cannot go. Things have their laws, as well as men; and things refuse to be trifled with. Property will be protected. Corn will not grow, unless it is planted and manured; but the farmer will not plant or hoe it, unless the chances are a hundred to one, that he will cut and harvest it. Under any forms, persons and property must and will have their just sway. They exert their power, as steadily as matter its attraction. Cover up a pound of earth never so cunningly, divide and subdivide it; melt it to liquid, convert it to gas; it will always weigh a pound: it will always attract and resist other matter, by the full virtue of one pound weight;—and the attributes of a person, his wit and his moral energy, will exercise, under any law or extinguishing tyranny, their proper force,—if not overtly, then covertly; if not for the law, then against it; if not wholesomely, then poisonously; with right, or by might.

The boundaries of personal influence it is impossible to fix, as persons are organs of moral or supernatural force. Under the dominion of an idea, which possesses the minds of multitudes, as civil freedom, or the religious sentiment, the powers of persons are no longer subjects of calculation. A nation of men unanimously bent on freedom, or conquest, can easily confound the arithmetic of statists, and achieve extravagant actions, out of all proportion to their means; as, the Greeks, the Saracens, the Swiss, the Americans, and the French have done.

In like manner, to every particle of property belongs its own attraction. A cent is the representative of a certain quantity of corn or other commodity. Its value is in the necessities of the animal man. It is so much warmth, so much bread, so much water, so much land. The law may do what it will with the owner of property, its just power will still attach to the cent. The law may in a mad freak say, that all shall have power except the owners of property: they shall have no vote. Nevertheless, by a higher law, the property will, year after year, write every statute that respects property. The non-proprietor will be the scribe of the proprietor. What the owners wish to do, the whole power of property will do, either through the law, or else in defiance of it. Of course, I speak of all the property, not merely of the great estates. When the rich are outvoted, as frequently happens, it is the joint treasury of the poor which exceeds their accumulations. Every man owns something, if it is only a cow, or a wheelbarrow, or his arms, and so has that property to dispose of.

The same necessity which secures the rights of person and property against the malignity or folly of the magistrate, determines the form and methods of governing, which are proper to each nation, and to its habit of thought, and nowise transferable to other states of society. In this country, we are very vain of our political institutions, which are singular in this, that they sprung, within the memory of living men, from the character and condition of the people, which they still express with sufficient fidelity, —and we ostentatiously prefer them to any other in history. They are not better, but only fitter for us. We may be wise in asserting the advantage in modern times of the democratic form, but to other states of society, in which religion consecrated the monarchical, that and not this was expedient. Democracy is better for us, because the religious sentiment of the present time accords better with it. Born democrats, we are nowise qualified to judge of monarchy, which, to our fathers living in the monarchical idea, was also relatively right. But our institutions, though in coincidence with the spirit of the age, have not any exemption from the practical defects which have discredited other forms. Every actual State is corrupt. Good men must not obey the laws too well. What satire on government can equal the severity of censure conveyed in the word *politic*, which now for ages has signified *cunning*, intimating that the State is a trick?

The same benign necessity and the same practical abuse appear in the parties into which each State divides itself, of opponents and defenders of the administration of the government. Parties are also founded on instincts, and have better guides to their own humble aims than the sagacity of their

leaders. They have nothing perverse in their origin, but rudely mark some real and lasting relation. We might as wisely reprove the east wind, or the frost, as a political party, whose members, for the most part, could give no account of their position, but stand for the defence of those interests in which they find themselves. Our quarrel with them begins, when they quit this deep natural ground at the bidding of some leader, and, obeying personal considerations, throw themselves into the maintenance and defence of points, nowise belonging to their system. A party is perpetually corrupted by personality. Whilst we absolve the association from dishonesty, we cannot extend the same charity to their leaders. They reap the rewards of the docility and zeal of the masses which they direct. Ordinarily, our parties are parties of circumstance, and not of principle; as, the planting interest in conflict with the commercial; the party of capitalists, and that of operatives; parties which are identical in their moral character, and which can easily change ground with each other, in the support of many of their measures. Parties of principle, as, religious sects, or the party of free-trade, of universal suffrage, of abolition of slavery, of abolition of capital punishment, degenerate into personalities, or would inspire enthusiasm. The vice of our leading parties in this country (which may be cited as a fair specimen of these societies of opinion) is, that they do not plant themselves on the deep and necessary grounds to which they are respectively entitled, but lash themselves to fury in the carrying of some local and momentary measure, nowise useful to the commonwealth. Of the two great parties,[5] which, at this hour, almost share the nation between them, I should say, that, one has the best cause, and the other contains the best men. The philosopher, the poet, or the religious man, will, of course, wish to cast his vote with the democrat, for free-trade, for wide suffrage, for the abolition of legal cruelties in the penal code, and for facilitating in every manner the access of the young and the poor to the sources of wealth and power. But he can rarely accept the persons whom the so-called popular party propose to him as representatives of these liberalities. They have not at heart the ends which give to the name of democracy what hope and virtue are in it. The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless: it is not loving; it has no ulterior and divine ends; but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness. On the other side, the conservative party, composed of the most moderate, able, and cultivated part of the population, is timid, and merely defensive of property. It vindicates no right, it aspires to no real good, it brands no crime, it proposes no generous

[5 The Democratic and the Whig.]

policy, it does not build, nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools, nor encourage science, nor emancipate the slave, nor befriend the poor, or the Indian, or the immigrant. From neither party, when in power, has the world any benefit to expect in science, art, or humanity, at all commensurate with the resources of the nation.

I do not for these defects despair of our republic. We are not at the mercy of any waves of chance. In the strife of ferocious parties, human nature always finds itself cherished, as the children of the convicts at Botany Bay [6] are found to have as healthy a moral sentiment as other children. Citizens of feudal states are alarmed at our democratic institutions lapsing into anarchy; and the older and more cautious among ourselves are learning from Europeans to look with some terror at our turbulent freedom. It is said that in our license of construing the Constitution, and in the despotism of public opinion, we have no anchor; and one foreign observer thinks he has found the safeguard in the sanctity of Marriage among us; and another thinks he has found it in our Calvinism. Fisher Ames [7] expressed the popular security more wisely, when he compared a monarchy and a republic, saying, 'that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom; whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your feet are always in water.' No forms can have any dangerous importance, whilst we are befriended by the laws of things. It makes no difference how many tons weight of atmosphere presses on our heads, so long as the same pressure resists it within the lungs. Augment the mass a thousand fold, it cannot begin to crush us, as long as reaction is equal to action. The fact of two poles, of two forces, centripetal and centrifugal, is universal, and each force by its own activity develops the other. Wild liberty develops iron conscience. Want of liberty, by strengthening law and decorum, stupefies conscience. 'Lynch-law' prevails only where there is greater hardihood and self-subsistency in the leaders. A mob cannot be a permanency: everybody's interest requires that it should not exist, and only justice satisfies all.

We must trust infinitely to the beneficent necessity which shines through all laws. Human nature expresses itself in them as characteristically as in statues, or songs, or railroads, and an abstract of the codes of nations would be a transcript of the common conscience. Governments have their origin in the moral identity of men. Reason for one is seen to be reason for an-

[6 British penal colony off New South Wales.]

[7 Massachusetts Federalist (1758–1808), prominent in the politics of the Washington administration, 1789–97.]

other, and for every other. There is a middle measure which satisfies all parties, be they never so many, or so resolute for their own. Every man finds a sanction for his simplest claims and deeds in decisions of his own mind, which he calls Truth and Holiness. In these decisions all the citizens find a perfect agreement, and only in these; not in what is good to eat, good to wear, good use of time, or what amount of land, or of public aid, each is entitled to claim. This truth and justice men presently endeavor to make application of, to the measuring of land, the apportionment of service, the protection of life and property. Their first endeavors, no doubt, are very awkward. Yet absolute right is the first governor; or, every government is an impure theocracy. The idea, after which each community is aiming to make and mend its law, is, the will of the wise man. The wise man, it cannot find in nature, and it makes awkward but earnest efforts to secure his government by contrivance; as, by causing the entire people to give their voices on every measure; or, by a double choice to get the representation of the whole; or, by a selection of the best citizens; or, to secure the advantages of efficiency and internal peace, by confiding the government to one, who may himself select his agents. All forms of government symbolize an immortal government, common to all dynasties and independent of numbers, perfect where two men exist, perfect where there is only one man.

Every man's nature is a sufficient advertisement to him of the character of his fellows. My right and my wrong, is their right and their wrong. Whilst I do what is fit for me, and abstain from what is unfit, my neighbor and I shall often agree in our means, and work together for a time to one end. But whenever I find my dominion over myself not sufficient for me, and undertake the direction of him also, I overstep the truth, and come into false relations to him. I may have so much more skill or strength than he, that he cannot express adequately his sense of wrong, but it is a lie, and hurts like a lie both him and me. Love and nature cannot maintain the assumption: it must be executed by a practical lie, namely, by force. This undertaking for another, is the blunder which stands in colossal ugliness in the governments of the world. It is the same thing in numbers, as in a pair, only not quite so intelligible. I can see well enough a great difference between my setting myself down to a self-control, and my going to make somebody else act after my views: but when a quarter of the human race assume to tell me what I must do, I may be too much disturbed by the circumstances to see so clearly the absurdity of their command. Therefore, all public ends look vague and quixotic beside private ones. For, any laws but those which men make for themselves, are laughable. If I put myself in the

place of my child, and we stand in one thought, and see that things are thus or thus, that perception is law for him and me. We are both there, both act. But if, without carrying him into the thought, I look over into his plot, and, guessing how it is with him, ordain this or that, he will never obey me. This is the history of governments,—one man does something which is to bind another. A man who cannot be acquainted with me, taxes me; looking from afar at me, ordains that a part of my labor shall go to this or that whimsical end, not as I, but as he happens to fancy. Behold the consequence. Of all debts, men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, except for these.

Hence, the less government we have, the better,—the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal Government, is, the influence of private character, the growth of the Individual; the appearance of the principal to supersede the proxy; the appearance of the wise man, of whom the existing government is, it must be owned, but a shabby imitation. That which all things tend to educe, which freedom, cultivation, intercourse, revolutions, go to form and deliver, is character; that is the end of nature, to reach unto this coronation of her king. To educate the wise man, the State exists; and with the appearance of the wise man, the State expires. The appearance of character makes the State unnecessary. The wise man is the State. He needs no army, fort, or navy,—he loves men too well; no bribe, or feast, or palace, to draw friends to him; no vantage ground, no favorable circumstance. He needs no library, for he has not done thinking; no church, for he is a prophet; no statute book, for he has the lawgiver; no money, for he is value; no road, for he is at home where he is; no experience, for the life of the creator shoots through him, and looks from his eyes. He has no personal friends, for he who has the spell to draw the prayer and piety of all men unto him, needs not husband and educate a few, to share with him a select and poetic life. His relation to men is angelic; his memory is myrrh to them; his presence, frankincense and flowers.

We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star. In our barbarous society the influence of character is in its infancy. As a political power, as the rightful lord who is to tumble all rulers from their chairs, its presence is hardly yet suspected. Malthus and Ricardo [8] quite omit it; the Annual Register is silent; in the

[[8] Thomas Malthus (1766–1834) and David Ricardo (1772–1823), celebrated English economists.]

Conversations' Lexicon, it is not set down; the President's Message, the Queen's Speech, have not mentioned it; and yet it is never nothing. Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world, alters the world. The gladiators in the lists of power feel, through all their frocks of force and simulation, the presence of worth. I think the very strife of trade and ambition are confession of this divinity; and successes in those fields are the poor amends, the fig-leaf with which the shamed soul attempts to hide its nakedness. I find the like unwilling homage in all quarters. It is because we know how much is due from us, that we are impatient to show some petty talent as a substitute for worth. We are haunted by a conscience of this right to grandeur of character, and are false to it. But each of us has some talent, can do somewhat useful, or graceful, or formidable, or amusing, or lucrative. That we do, as an apology to others and to ourselves, for not reaching the mark of a good and equal life. But it does not satisfy *us*, whilst we thrust it on the notice of our companions. It may throw dust in their eyes, but does not smooth our own brow, or give us the tranquillity of the strong when we walk abroad. We do penance as we go. Our talent is a sort of expiation, and we are constrained to reflect on our splendid moment, with a certain humiliation, as somewhat too fine, and not as one act of many acts, a fair expression of our permanent energy. Most persons of ability meet in society with a kind of tacit appeal. Each seems to say, 'I am not all here.' Senators and presidents have climbed so high with pain enough, not because they think the place specially agreeable, but as an apology for real worth, and to vindicate their manhood in our eyes. This conspicuous chair is their compensation to themselves for being of a poor, cold, hard nature. They must do what they can. Like one class of forest animals, they have nothing but a prehensile tail: climb they must, or crawl. If a man found himself so rich-natured that he could enter into strict relations with the best persons, and make life serene around him by the dignity and sweetness of his behavior, could he afford to circumvent the favor of the caucus and the press, and covet relations so hollow and pompous, as those of a politician? Surely nobody would be a charlatan, who could afford to be sincere.

The tendencies of the times favor the idea of self-government, and leave the individual, for all code, to the rewards and penalties of his own constitution, which work with more energy than we believe, whilst we depend on artificial restraints. The movement in this direction has been very marked in modern history. Much has been blind and discreditable, but the nature of the revolution is not affected by the vices of the revolters; for this

is a purely moral force. It was never adopted by any party in history, neither can be. It separates the individual from all party, and unites him, at the same time, to the race. It promises a recognition of higher rights than those of personal freedom, or the security of property. A man has a right to be employed, to be trusted, to be loved, to be revered. The power of love, as the basis of a State, has never been tried. We must not imagine that all things are lapsing into confusion, if every tender protestant be not compelled to bear his part in certain social conventions: nor doubt that roads can be built, letters carried, and the fruit of labor secured, when the government of force is at an end. Are our methods now so excellent that all competition is hopeless? could not a nation of friends even devise better ways? On the other hand, let not the most conservative and timid fear anything from a premature surrender of the bayonet, and the system of force. For, according to the order of nature, which is quite superior to our will, it stands thus; there will always be a government of force, where men are selfish; and when they are pure enough to abjure the code of force, they will be wise enough to see how these public ends of the post-office, of the highway, of commerce, and the exchange of property, of museums and libraries, of institutions of art and science, can be answered.

We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force. There is not, among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment, and a sufficient belief in the unity of things to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system; or that the private citizen might be reasonable, and a good neighbor, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation. What is strange too, there never was in any man sufficient faith in the power of rectitude, to inspire him with the broad design of renovating the State on the principle of right and love. All those who have pretended this design, have been partial reformers, and have admitted in some manner the supremacy of the bad State. I do not call to mind a single human being who has steadily denied the authority of the laws, on the simple ground of his own moral nature. Such designs, full of genius and full of fate as they are, are not entertained except avowedly as air-pictures. If the individual who exhibits them, dare to think them practicable, he disgusts scholars and churchmen; and men of talent, and women of superior sentiments, cannot hide their contempt. Not the less does nature continue to fill the heart of youth with suggestions of this enthusiasm, and there are now men,—if

Carl Becker

THE REALITY

[Carl Becker (1873–1945) taught history at Dartmouth College, at the University of Kansas, and, from 1917 until his death, at Cornell University. His best-known books are *The Declaration of Independence* (1922), *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers* (1932), *Everyman His Own Historian* (1935), *Modern Democracy* (1941), and *New Liberties for Old* (1942). *Modern Democracy* consists of lectures delivered at the University of Virginia in 1940. The first lecture, 'The Ideal,' sketched the theory of democratic society. The lecture reprinted here was the second one.

'Research, though laborious, is easy; imagination, though delightful, is difficult.' Becker's books have in them both the labors of research and the play of imagination. Among recent historians he was unusual for the ease and clarity of his style.

> Men mistook the pernicious channels in which selfish propensities had been flowing for the propensities themselves, which were sure to find new channels when the old had been destroyed.—*James Bryce.*[1]
>
> Those who own the country ought to govern it.—*John Jay.*[2]

I

In the preceding lecture we were concerned with the ideal form of democracy. It is obvious that the reality does not strictly conform to this ideal. There is nothing remarkable in that. The ideal is always better

[1 British scholar and diplomat (1838–1922). His *The American Commonwealth* was the best book of its time, and one of the best of any time, on America.]

[2 Statesman (1745–1829); first Chief Justice of the United States. He wrote some of the *Federalist* papers (see p. 202).]

From *Modern Democracy*, 1941. Reprinted by permission of the Yale University Press.

than the real—otherwise there would be no need for ideals. We have been told, as if it were a surprising thing, that in Russia the Revolution has been betrayed. But it was bound to be betrayed. It is in the nature of revolutions to be betrayed,[3] since life and history have an inveterate habit of betraying the ideal aspirations of men. In this sense the liberal-democratic revolution [4] was likewise bound to be betrayed—men were sure to be neither so rational nor so well-intentioned as the ideology conceived them to be. But while a little betrayal is a normal thing, too much is something that calls for explanation. The liberal-democratic revolution has been so far betrayed, the ideal so imperfectly portrayed in the course of events, that its characteristic features cannot easily be recognized in any democratic society today. In this lecture I shall attempt to disclose some of the essential reasons for the profound discord between democracy as it was ideally projected and democracy as a going concern.

Stated in general terms the essential reason is that the idea of liberty, as formulated in the eighteenth century, although valid enough for that time, has in one fundamental respect ceased to be applicable to the situation in which we find ourselves. In the eighteenth century the most obvious oppressions from which men suffered derived from governmental restraints on the free activity of the individual. Liberty was therefore naturally conceived in terms of the emancipation of the individual from such restraints. In the economic realm this meant the elimination of governmental restraints on the individual in choosing his occupation, in contracting for the acquisition and disposal of property, and the purchase and sale of personal services. But in our time, as a result of the growing complexities of a technological society, the emancipation of the individual from governmental restraint in his economic activities has created new oppressions, so that for the majority of men liberty can be achieved only by an extension of governmental regulation of competitive business enterprise. It is in the economic realm that the traditional idea of liberty is no longer applicable; in the economic realm, accordingly, that the discord between democracy as an ideal and democracy as a going concern is most flagrant, most disillusioning, and most dangerous.

In order to elaborate this statement it will be well, first of all, to note the chief characteristics of the social situation in the eighteenth century—

[3] See Jefferson on the French Revolution, p. 198.]

[4] That realized politically by the American and French revolutions and, so far as the United States was concerned, expressed doctrinally in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the *Federalist* papers.]

the situation against which the liberal-democratic revolution was directed, and from which the eighteenth-century conception of liberty emerged as an obvious and valid rationalization.

From the twelfth to the seventeenth century the cardinal economic fact in western Europe was the rise of an industrial capitalist class in the towns; the cardinal political fact was the consolidation of royal power over all classes and corporations within definite territorial limits. The chief obstacles encountered by kings in this political process were two: first, the feudal vassals who claimed, and often exercised, virtual independence within their domains; second, the Roman Church, which claimed to be superior to the civil power, was in large part a self-governing institution, and exercised in fact over the king's subjects an authority independent of, and often in conflict with, the authority of the king.

In this three-cornered struggle for power, kings were sometimes supported by the church against the nobles, sometimes by the nobles against the church; but the persistent and effective support against both church and nobility came from the rising industrial class. Merchants and traders always found the turbulence of the nobility bad for business, and were usually willing, however painful it may have been, to supply the king with some of the money he needed to establish orderly government. Thus in the course of centuries, chiefly with the aid of the industrial bourgeois class, kings gradually reduced the nobles to the status of landed proprietors who retained, as the price of submission, the distinctions and prerogatives of a superior social class.

Meantime, the long struggle for the subordination of the church to royal power was virtually completed by the upheaval known as the Protestant Reformation, and it was the growing power and heretical ideas of the industrial classes that made the Reformation successful. Everywhere stronger in the towns than in the country, stronger in industrialized than in nonindustrialized countries, the Protestant Reformation was in effect a revolt of the middle classes against a church which, being controlled by a landed aristocracy, enforced ethical standards and religious practices unsuited to the temper and contrary to the interests of an industrial society. The chief political result of the Reformation was that by breaking the power of Rome it enhanced the power of kings, and by enhancing the power of kings it subordinated the church to the state, and thereby reduced the clergy, like the nobility, to the status of a privileged social class.

Thus in the seventeenth century, as a result of the rise of an industrial capitalist class, the consolidation of royal power, and the survival of nobles

and clergy as privileged classes within the state, there emerged in western Europe a social system that was everywhere much the same. The prevailing form of government was absolute monarchy. In theory the power of the king rested upon the doctrine of divine right, supplemented by the Roman Law precept 'What the Prince wills has the force of law.' In practice the power of the king rested upon the support of nobles, clergy, and the rich bourgeois industrialists and financiers, and functioned for the most part to their advantage by exploiting an underlying population of peasants and workers.

It was what we should call a highly regimented system—a system in which the rights and obligations of the individual, always subject to the arbitrary will of the king, were normally determined by the rights and obligations appertaining to the class in which he was born. Generally speaking, there was for the individual neither freedom of occupation, nor of opinion or religion, nor any recognized method by which he might initiate or modify the law and custom by which his thought and conduct were controlled. The character of the liberal-democratic revolution which occurred from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries was conditioned by this fact. Dispensing with verbal refinements, all revolutions are made in behalf of liberty—freedom from some sort of real or fancied oppression; and in a social situation in which the individual was so obviously restrained and oppressed by law and custom not of his own making, it was inevitable that liberty should be conceived in terms of the emancipation of the individual from social and political control.

The revolution was initiated and directed, not by those who were most oppressed, but by those who were most aware of oppression and most competent to denounce and resist it—that is to say, not by the brutalized and ignorant peasants and workers, but by the educated and well-to-do middle classes. The bourgeoisie derived their power neither from birth nor office, but from money, that abstract and supple measure of the material value of all things. They acquired the education, cultivated the virtues, and developed the mentality appropriate to the occupations that engaged them. Occupied with practical affairs, with defined and determinable relations, with concrete things and their disposal and calculable cash value, they cultivated the virtues of thrift and prudence, dependability and sound judgment, and developed a pragmatic and skeptical temper, averse to the mystical and other-worldly, little disposed to slavish adherence to tradition, easily adaptable to the new and the experimental.

In every country the liberal-democratic revolution developed, with occa-

sional violent upheavals, in the measure that the bourgeoisie acquired power and became class conscious—became aware, that is to say, of their peculiar class interests and virtues; and of the frustration of their interests and virtues by rococo class distinctions, and by arbitrary royal decrees which hampered business enterprise and deprived them of their property for the benefit of an aristocracy which they regarded as less intelligent, less moral, and less socially useful than themselves. The central, dramatic episode in the rise of liberal-democracy was the French Revolution; and it was in connection with this episode that there appeared in western Europe an exceptionally able group of intellectuals who rationalized the social situation by identifying the middle-class interests and virtues with the rights of all men—the right of all men to equality of status and of opportunity, to freedom of occupation and of economic enterprise, to freedom of opinion and of religion, and to freedom from arbitrary political authority.

II

Fortunately for the bourgeoisie and for the revolution, the interests of the middle classes were, in one respect, identical with the interests of the great majority. The liberal-democratic revolution could not have been won if it had been fought on behalf of bourgeois class interests alone. Of all the liberties demanded, freedom of economic enterprise was the one least stressed by the Philosophers [5] and of least importance for the purposes of revolutionary propaganda. The liberty which could be demanded with most assurance and denied with least grace was liberty of person and of opinion—freedom of religion, freedom of speech and the press, freedom of learning and of teaching, freedom from the insane brutalities practiced in the civil and ecclesiastical administration of justice and in the punishment of crimes. In proclaiming the worth and dignity of the individual, in demanding the emancipation of men from the inhumanity of man to man, the bourgeois spokesmen were appealing to interests transcending all class lines. They were appealing to the spirit of Christianity against its practices, and espousing the cause with which all the saints and sages of the world had been identified. In doing so they injected into the liberal-democratic revolution the quality of a religious crusade, and thereby enlisted the widespread support which alone could assure its success.

[5 Name given to a number of eighteenth-century French writers on philosophical and political topics; Diderot, D'Alembert, and Condorcet belong to this group. They were skeptical, anticlerical, and antimonarchical. Through their advocacy of liberty they helped to prepare the way for the French Revolution. See Becker's study, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers.*]

The political and economic interests of the bourgeoisie could not, unfortunately, be thus identified with the interests of all. On the contrary, the interests of the bourgeoisie, both in the political and the economic realm, proved in the long run to be in sharp conflict with the interests of the masses. It was the interest of the bourgeoisie to deny to the masses the political privileges which they demanded for themselves; while the freedom of economic enterprise which enriched bourgeois employers turned out to be, for the proletarian peasants and workers, no more than the old subjection under new forms. As liberal-democracy emerged into the light of day, this conflict of class interests became more obvious and more disastrous; and it is this conflict which in our time has created those profound social discords which so largely nullify the theory and threaten to undermine the stability of democratic institutions.

In the earlier stages of the revolution, when the chief task was to deprive kings and aristocrats of political power and social privilege, this latent conflict between middle- and lower-class interests was not apparent. For the time being, indeed, it did not exist. The tyranny of kings and aristocrats, so effectively denounced by the Philosophers, was real enough, and so long as it existed all the unprivileged, bourgeois and people alike, had a common interest in resisting it. The doctrine that all men had a natural right to govern themselves seemed then but a simple truth, and the bourgeoisie could accept it without bothering too much about its practical application, all the more so since only by accepting it could they enlist the support of the people in destroying absolute monarchy and class privilege. In all the great 'revolutionary days'—the English civil wars in the seventeenth century, the American and the French revolutions at the close of the eighteenth, the South American wars of independence, the revolutions of 1830 and 1848—in all these crucial struggles in which the tyranny of kings and aristocrats was still the central issue, the bourgeoisie and the people are found united in the effort to win political freedom by overthrowing the existing regime. They differed only in the respective parts which they played in the struggle: the function of the bourgeoisie was to take the initiative and supply the ideas; the function of the people was to erect the barricades and supply the necessary force.

It is always easier for diverse groups to unite for the destruction of an existing regime than it is to unite for the construction of a new one. Having united to destroy the tyranny of kings and aristocrats, the bourgeoisie and the people were divided on the question of what political liberty should mean in practice. The doctrine that all men had a natural right to govern

themselves was interpreted by the people to mean that all adult male citizens should share in choosing the magistrates and shaping the laws by which the community was governed. By the bourgeoisie it was interpreted to mean, as John Jay put it, that 'those who own the country ought to govern it.' In this respect the first result of the revolution was everywhere essentially a victory for the bourgeoisie. Kings lost their absolute power, aristocrats lost their special privileges, or most of them; but political liberty —the right to choose the magistrates and enact the laws by which the community was governed—was limited to the people of property;[6] the masses, having served their purpose by erecting the barricades, found themselves still excluded from what Guizot[7] called 'the political country.'

Having thus, with the aid of the people, elbowed kings and aristocrats out of the seats of power, the bourgeoisie promptly united with the aristocrats to control the state. They had a common interest in excluding the people from political privilege, but in the competition for votes and power within the political country their interests were opposed. There accordingly emerged, for the promotion of their respective interests, two political parties which, although known by different names in different countries, we may call conservative and liberal. Conservative parties were composed for the most part of the landed aristocracy, the clergy of the established churches, high-placed bureaucrats, and hangers-on of royal courts. In some countries, more royalist than the king, they at first entertained the vain hope of restoring the ancient regime; but in any case they defended the interests of land against capital, the established church against dissenting religions, and old social distinctions and aristocratic prestige against the leveling influence of democratic customs. Liberal parties were composed of the educated and well-to-do middle classes—businessmen, professional people, middle-class intellectuals, perhaps a few liberalized aristocrats. Occupying a middle position, the liberal parties fought on two fronts: equally opposed to absolutism and democracy, they were defenders of liberty against kings and aristocrats, but defenders of their own newly acquired privilege against the people.

In this situation, there emerged a third political party—variously called republican, progressive liberal, radical—which for convenience we may call democratic. The democratic party represented those who were still excluded from the political country—at first more particularly the industrial workers, who were most oppressed and the first to become class conscious. They

[6 See Carntt, pp. 261–5.]

[7 French statesman and historian (1787–1874).]

were commonly led by middle-class intellectuals, who formulated for them a doctrine and a program. The doctrine was the pure liberal-democratic ideology which middle-class liberals professed in theory but denied in practice—the doctrine that all men had a natural right to govern themselves; and the chief point in the program was accordingly the extension of the suffrage to all adult male citizens, in the confident belief that the workers, once possessed of the right to vote for those who made the laws, could correct by legislation the economic inequalities that oppressed them.

In the course of time, after much fruitless effort and some abortive uprisings, the people were admitted to the political country—in the United States during the period from about 1830 to 1840, in European countries for the most part during the last three decades of the century. To this result both logic and political tactics contributed. In point of logic, it was difficult for middle-class Liberals, who had won political privilege by advocating the right of all men to govern themselves, to refute the argument that the masses as well as the classes should enjoy that right. But it was less the logic of the ideology than of political strategy that determined the outcome. As the fear of kings declined and the revolution was accepted as an accomplished fact, the opposition between upper-class Liberal and Conservative parties declined also. Agreeing upon fundamentals, they were chiefly divided by the competitive struggle for votes; and it seemed obvious that the party which first pleased the masses by giving them the right to vote would stand the best chance of winning their support at the polls. Generally speaking, therefore, at least so far as European countries are concerned, it can hardly be said that the people forced their way into the political country. Quite as often as not they were admitted by Conservative or Liberal party governments, each of which, in the particular instance, hoped to increase its voting strength by enlarging the electorate.

The adoption of universal manhood suffrage was thought at the time to be a signal triumph for democracy. And it did in fact add something to the power of the people, since it compelled upper-class parties to take account of popular opinion in formulating policies and devising measures that would appeal to the mass of the voters. But on the whole, the admission of the people to the political country did very little to increase their power or improve the conditions under which they lived. Political control remained, as before, essentially in the hands of upper-class political parties.

Many reasons may be advanced for the failure of the people to profit by their apparent victory. When they entered the political country they found the upper classes intrenched in all the strategic positions. The forms and

procedure of representative institutions were already established; political parties, representing for the most part the upper classes, were well organized; and the technique for selecting candidates and manipulating elections was such that politics was a profession only men of property and social position could enter with much chance of success. In theory the masses were free to present to the electorate the measures that seemed to them desirable for the public good; in fact the means of propaganda were freely available only to the educated and well-to-do. In theory the poor man could vote for candidates of his own choosing; in fact his choice was limited to candidates who represented the dominant upper-class parties. It is true that in the course of time the people organized working-class socialist parties of their own; but while such parties often obtained from conservative or liberal governments measures designed to protect the interests of the poor, effective political control still remained in the hands of those who could easily afford the expensive luxury of self-government.

These are the superficial reasons for the failure of political equality to safeguard the interests of the people. The more fundamental reason is to be found in the economic structure of the society that emerged from the liberal-democratic revolution. Individual liberty in the political realm proved inadequate because individual liberty in the economic realm failed to bring about even that minimum degree of equality of possessions and of opportunity without which political equality is scarcely more than an empty form. This point, since it is fundamental, calls for some elaboration.

III

The principle of individual freedom in the economic realm, although not much stressed in the propaganda of the great crusading days, was always an integral part of the liberal-democratic ideology. For the needed emancipation of industry from the hampering restraints of monopolistic privilege and petty governmental regulation, it was a sound working principle; but applied without qualifications it could only benefit the industrial bourgeoisie at the expense of the underlying population of peasants and workers. As set forth in the *Wealth of Nations*,[8] and in the more rigorous and apparently more scientific works of the English classical economists, the principle was indeed scarcely more than pure rationalization of the business interests of capitalist employers; but this ominous fact was long concealed because the principle was formulated in terms of the word liberty, the magic of which was sufficient at that time to give a general

[8] An extremely influential treatise on economics by Adam Smith, published in 1776.]

sanction even to the brutalities of cutthroat competition and the systematic degradation of women and children. The present misery of the workers could be more easily contemplated and dismissed because it could be regarded as a necessary but temporary phase in the operation of a divinely ordained law of progress. The average humane middle-class man, whether employer or not, could therefore accept the principle of individual freedom in the economic realm, along with the other great freedoms, since it so happily enabled him to reconcile his selfish with his altruistic impulses by assuring him that he could best serve God and his neighbor by doing as he pleased. 'Private advantage a public benefit'—such was the succinct formula by which the prosperous middle classes justified their amiable expectation that when everyone was free all would presently be equal, when all were equal everyone would presently have enough, when all had enough no one would any longer be unjust or inhumane.

The expectation was surely naïve, in no sort of harmony with the relevant facts of social experience. Even under the most favorable circumstances, a society of uprooted and freely competing individuals must have functioned to the advantage of the few who by good fortune, intelligence, or lack of scruple were able to acquire wealth and employ it to advance their interests through the mechanism of politics: the times would always be ripe for a sufficient number of not-too-good men to come to the aid of the party. But this result was greatly accelerated and intensified by those changes in the economic and material conditions of life which, effected without blare of trumpets and scarcely perceived at the time, are now known as the industrial or technological revolution of modern times.

Technological is the better term. Industrial is wholly inadequate to denote one of the two or three major revolutions in the history of the human race. Man is a tool-using animal, and all civilization is conditioned by the sources of natural power known to him and the mechanical appliances he can invent to make such power available for use. The first great epoch of discovery and invention takes us back before the time of recorded history. All the more obvious sources of natural power—gravitation, fire, wind and water, domesticated animals, the fertility of the soil—and the simple hand tools, weapons, utensils, and appliances for making such power available were known to primitive man. From the time of the invention of writing, some five or six thousand years ago, until comparatively recent times few if any new sources of natural power, except crude explosives and magnetic force, were discovered; and during all that long time the mechanical appli-

ances available, although more numerous and greatly perfected, were essentially of the same order as those employed from time immemorial.

But we are now living in the second great epoch of discovery and invention. Since the seventeenth century, the discovery of steam power, gas, electricity, and radiation have made possible those innumerable tools and appliances, those complicated and powerful machines, and those delicate instruments of precision which elicit our wonder and our admiration. The result has been that the new technology, by giving men unprecedented control over material things, has transformed the relatively simple agricultural communities of the eighteenth century into societies far more complex and impersonal than anything the prophets of liberal-democracy could have imagined—mechanized Leviathans which Thomas Jefferson at least would have regarded as unreal and fantastic and altogether unsuited to the principles of liberty and equality as he understood them.

I need not say that the influence of the technological revolution has not been confined to any particular aspect of social life. On the contrary, it has exerted and still exerts a decisive influence in modifying all the habitual patterns of thought and conduct. But I am here concerned with the influence of the technological revolution in accelerating and intensifying that concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few which the principles of individual freedom in the economic realm would in any case have tended to bring about.

The first and most obvious result of the technological revolution has been to increase the amount of wealth in the form of material things which can be produced in a given time by a given population. For example, in 1913 there was produced in Great Britain seven billion yards of cotton cloth for export alone. In 1750 the total population of Great Britain, working with the mechanical appliances then available, could have produced only a small fraction of that amount. A second result of the technological revolution is that, as machines are perfected and become more automatic, man power plays a relatively less important part in the production of a given amount of wealth in a given time. Fifty years ago, when all type was set by hand, the labor of several men was required to print, fold, and arrange in piles the signatures of a book. Today machines can do it all, and far more rapidly; little man power is required, except that a mechanic, who may pass the time sitting in a chair, must be present in case anything goes wrong with the machine. And finally, a third result of the technological revolution is that, under the system of private property in the means of

production and the price system as a method of distributing wealth, the greater part of the wealth produced, since it is produced by the machines, goes to those who own or control the machines, while those who work the machines receive that part only which can be exacted by selling their services in a market where wages are impersonally adjusted to the necessities of the machine process.

I use the phrase 'own *or* control the machines' for the reason that, as a result of modern technology and business organization, those who own private property in the means of production do not necessarily control it. The ownership of property is now a highly intangible and illusive concept. Mass production calls for enormous industrial plants which are commonly managed by corporations and financed by selling corporation stock to the investing public. If I buy ten shares of General Motors I may be said to own that amount of General Motors property, but I have no control of it. The property is controlled by those who own a majority of the stock, and the majority of the stock is commonly owned by a few persons. Ownership, as far as I am concerned, consists in the possession of a slip of paper which gives me a lively hope that those who control the property will periodically send me a check for a certain sum of money: if they fail to do so there is nothing I can do about it. By the intricate device of the holding company, control may be still further concentrated and still further divorced from ownership: several corporations may be controlled by a few persons who have little or no interest in the operating companies except to manipulate and exploit them for financial gain. Thus it happens that while the ownership of private property in the means of production may be widely distributed, the effective control of that property is likely to be concentrated in the hands of a few.

If the concept of ownership is intangible and illusive, the concept of property is no less so. The value of General Motors property resides, not in the physical plant and the financial assets alone, but essentially in the business as a going concern. To be a prosperous going concern, the corporation must be able to purchase labor and supplies at a cost that will enable it to sell its products throughout the entire community at a profit. For this reason General Motors cannot live or die to itself alone. Its prosperity, and therefore the value of its property, conditions and is conditioned by the prosperity of innumerable individuals and business enterprises—the enterprises, large and small throughout the community and even throughout the world, which sell its cars and supply it with raw material, fuel, and equipment; the individuals who, as laborers or stock-

holders, are associated with General Motors and with the many enterprises that are integrated with it.

The value of private property in the means of production is thus not a private matter. It is both cause and effect in the functioning of a highly integrated and delicately adjusted industrial structure that touches the public interest at every point. That the few who control private property in the means of production should be wealthy men is no great matter. What matters is that their control of the means of production gives them an indeterminate and impersonal power over the lives and fortunes of millions of people unknown to them—power which they are sometimes unwilling but far more often quite unable to use for the public good.

In any society there is bound to be a close connection between economic and political power. In any society those who possess economic power, like other people, are disposed to identify their economic interests with the general good, and to promote their interests through the mechanism of politics and propaganda. But in modern industrial societies, based upon democratic political control and the principle of free economic enterprise, the beneficiaries of private property in the means of production are in a peculiarly advantageous position for molding opinion and shaping legislation. Their advantage arises less from the fact that they can and do spend money freely for those purposes, than from the fact that political procedure and the instruments of propaganda are so integrated with the industrial system that legislation and opinion more or less automatically respond to the pressure of the system of free enterprise from which their economic power is derived.

In democratic societies political power is mediated through political parties organized primarily for the purpose of obtaining control of the government by winning elections. To win elections a political party must of course formulate a program of legislation that will appeal to the voters. But elections are not won on the merits of a program alone. The winning of an election is a practical business enterprise, which calls for a capital investment in the form of a campaign fund, and for an intricate organization of employees—a political machine managed by professional politicians whose business it is to deliver the vote. Contributions to the campaign fund may be made from interested or disinterested motives; but the largest contributions will commonly be made by wealthy men or corporations expecting in return that the party will not, at the very least, be altogether indifferent to the kind of legislation they desire.

The professional politician, whose business it is to deliver the vote, is

concerned primarily with the vote of those whose loyalty to the party is determined less by the merits of the party program than by the disposition of the party to confer tangible benefits upon them. The function of the highest species of politician is to handle the patronage, to distribute appointive offices to those who can best serve the party. The function of the lowest species of politician—the *déclassé*[9] ward heeler—is to do what respectable statesmen know must be done but are prevented by the mores[10] from doing themselves, namely, to see to it that the poor and dispossessed are provided with a minimum of subsistence, and not too much hampered in their private enterprises, even sometimes if they happen to be on the wrong side of the fence, by the majesty of the law. In delivering the vote, the ward heeler is the henchman of the political boss, the political boss has the necessary contacts with the party leaders who hold elective or appointive offices, and the political leaders have the necessary personal and social contacts with the businessmen who contribute so generously to the campaign fund. In every community, large or small, there is this unavowed, undercover integration of economic and political power; and apart from some unanticipated ethical disturbance in the climate of opinion, legislation, always defended by statesmen in terms of the common good, is always insensibly influenced by the pressure of the predominant industrial interest.

In molding opinion, no less than in shaping legislation, those who possess economic power have a great advantage over the general run of citizens. This is not to say that freedom of speech and the press does not exist in democratic societies. One has only to compare nondemocratic with democratic societies to realize that, in a very real and important sense, it does exist. In democratic societies any man may freely express his opinion without first looking furtively over his shoulder to see if a government spy is in the offing; any man may publish a book or a newspaper without first submitting it to an official censor. This is the fundamentally important privilege; and no cataloguing of incidental violations of civil liberties, serious and deplorable as they are, can obscure the fact that through the press and the radio detailed information about events, and the most diverse opinions, are with little let or hindrance daily and hourly presented to the people.

Nevertheless, the average individual, although free to express his ideas, plays a distinctly minor role in the molding of opinion: his role is not to initiate, but passively to receive information and ideas presented to him

[9 Said of one who has lost social standing.]
[10 Customs.]

by others. The propaganda of social or political opinion, to be effective under modern conditions, must be organized; and its promoters will have an indifferent success unless they resort to mass production and distribution of their wares. The chief instruments of propaganda—the press and broadcasting stations—are not readily available to the average individual for conveying his ideas: they can be effectively used only by the government, political parties and party leaders, prominent organizations, wealthy men and business corporations, associations organized for specific purposes, and the writers of books which publishing houses find it worth while to publish.

Even more important is the fact that the instruments of propaganda are themselves business corporations organized and financed for profit, and as such subject to those influences that condition and are conditioned by the system of free economic enterprise. Newspapers are free to print all the news that's fit to print; but they cannot consistently propagate ideas that will alienate the business interests whose paid advertisements enable them to distribute profits to the stockholders. Broadcasting corporations are free from government censorship, or reasonably so, reasonably free to broadcast what they will; but in the last analysis they will not broadcast that which seriously offends the prevailing mores, or the business enterprises which, in this country at least, sponsor and finance their programs of entertainment. In democratic societies free and impartial discussion, from which the truth is supposed to emerge, is permitted and does occur. But the thinking of the average man is largely shaped by a wealth of factual information and the conflicting opinions which the selective process of competitive business enterprise presents to him for consideration: information, the truth of which he cannot verify; ideas, formulated by persons he does not know, and too often inspired by private economic interests that are never avowed.

Such, in broad outline, are the circumstances that may serve to explain the profound discord between democracy as an ideal and as a reality. In terms of the ideal there should have emerged from the liberal-democratic revolution a relatively simple society of free, equal, and prosperous citizens, fraternally coöperating to effect, by rational discussion and mutual concession, the common good. In fact there emerged an extremely complex society in which highly intricate and impersonal economic forces, stronger than good will or deliberate intention or rational direction, brought about an increasing concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the fortunate few, and thereby nullified, for the majority of the people, many of those

essential liberties which provide both the theoretical justification and the necessary conditions for the practical success of democratic institutions.

This discord, long since perceived by the discerning, has in our time become so flagrant that in many countries the ideal has been abandoned as an illusion. In these countries new social philosophies now prevail which maintain that the attempt to apply the principles of individual liberty, not only in the economic but in the political and the intellectual realm, was a fundamental error, and is responsible for the social and international conflicts which now bewilder and distress the world.

To accept this view implies the end of democratic institutions as we know them, and the renunciation of that faith in the worth and dignity of the individual which we have cherished even if we have not always justified it in action. I do not accept this view. I believe that in the long run it will prove mistaken—fatal to any way of life that can rightly be called civilized. But I also believe that if the democratic way of life is to survive we must give to the traditional concept of freedom a more positive content. The traditional concept of individual liberty is essentially negative. The freedom it emphasizes is freedom from constraint, and indeed from a particular kind of constraint, that is to say, governmental constraint. In the economic realm the result of freeing the individual from governmental constraint is that today far too many people are always in danger of losing those positive goods without which freedom from governmental constraint is of no value. What the average man now needs is the opportunity to acquire by his own effort, in an occupation for which he is fitted, the economic security which is essential to decent and independent living. This opportunity has now disappeared for something like a quarter of the working population. In my opinion it can only be restored, if at all, by such governmental regulations of our economy as may be necessary to enable private economic enterprise to function effectively and for the common good.

If then the democratic way of life is to survive we must distinguish the kinds of individual freedom that are essential to it from those that are unessential or disastrous. Broadly speaking, the kinds that are essential are those which the individual enjoys in his intellectual and political activities; the kinds that are unessential are the relatively unrestrained liberties he has hitherto enjoyed in his economic activities. The distinction is comparatively easy to make in theory, but will be extremely difficult to effect in practice. Not the least of the difficulties arises from the fact that in the traditional ideology the freedom of the individual in the political, the

intellectual, and the economic realms are so intimately associated that they seem to stand or fall together. The result is that any proposal to regulate by governmental authority the system of free economic enterprise is sure to be opposed on the ground that if the system of free economic enterprise cannot be maintained the other freedoms of democracy, freedom of thought and political freedom, must in the end be abandoned also. Whether this is true can only be determined by the event. Whatever the event may be, the difficult but essential task which confronts all democratic societies today may be formulated as follows: how in practice to curtail the freedom of the individual in economic enterprise sufficiently to effect that equality of opportunity and of possessions without which democracy is an empty form, and at the same time to preserve that measure of individual freedom in intellectual and political life without which it cannot exist.

E. F. Carritt

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

[Mr. Carritt (1873—), Emeritus Fellow of University College, Oxford, spent many years in the study and teaching of aesthetics and ethics, and is the author of some well-known books on his specialties (*The Theory of Beauty*, 1914, 1923; *What is Beauty*, 1932; *The Theory of Morals*, 1928). He says of *Ethical and Political Thinking*: 'The title I have chosen is intended to indicate that I would claim better qualifications for reporting the way in which intelligent peoples' minds work and progress upon these topics than for establishing any novel conclusions. I would not claim particularly wide reading in the subject, but I have probably had as good opportunities as any man for serious discussion with both novices and experts. For nearly fifty years, most of the time as an Oxford tutor, I have spent some twelve hours weekly each term in discussing moral, political, and aesthetic philosophy with pupils and with colleagues either singly or in very small groups. This gives in round numbers nearly 15,000 hours of opportunity for mass observation of *Ethical and Political Thinking*.'

i. EQUALITY

DEMOCRACY may no doubt be defended on utilitarian grounds since even a tyrannical majority aims at the happiness of the greater number though not necessarily at the greatest total amount, nor necessarily counting every man as one, if that means endeavouring to distribute happiness equally or fairly. I think its more indisputable claim to be the best form of government is as being most likely to defend the rights of the individual.

Life, liberty (including freedom of speech and 'freedom of conscience'), 'property,' and the pursuit of happiness have commonly been enumerated

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as natural rights and so sometimes have the right to vote and the right to work. Against the utilitarian view that our only political duty can be to increase happiness it has been maintained that it is to defend such rights.

As was said before, natural rights have been prejudiced by the attempt to give a list of them as 'inalienable.' * But every right, like its corresponding duty, depends upon the situation; it is natural as being no fiction but something naturally arising out of that situation, and inalienable so long, but only so long, as that situation does not relevantly change. This prejudicial language may be excused by the need for rebutting the suggestion that 'rights are made by recognition.'† What is recognized must already exist. If the absurd phrase means that rights cannot be respected till they are recognized it is a platitude; if it be more significantly interpreted as meaning that every man has a right only to what it is generally recognized to be for the 'common good' that he should have, ‡ this would imply that the majority can do no wrong. But if, as I maintain, we have obligations of justice towards individuals as well as to improve and benefit mankind in general, then those to whom we have these objective obligations must have just claims that they should be fulfilled, and the strongest obligation in any situation will constitute a duty, to which must correspond a right on their part whether recognized or not. Duties and the corresponding rights cannot be willed, nor can they objectively depend upon anybody's opinion about them; subjectively speaking, my duties would depend upon my beliefs about the situation and your rights upon yours; putatively they would depend severally upon our several opinions about what the situation, as each of us supposes it to be, morally demands.

§ 2. The mistake has been to speak of natural rights, which would be absolute, rather than of natural claims, which might conflict so that only the strongest would be a right; and also to call them inalienable, which would seem to make them not depend upon the situation. If every man had a right to life, no criminal might ever be killed either in self-defence or to prevent a massacre; no man might be compelled to risk his life in any cause; every member of a starving group would have a right to the subsistence rations which were not obtainable, and every patient to a full dose of penicillin; it could never be our painful duty to let one man die to save a thousand. And all such difficulties apply yet more clearly to the alleged

* Locke, *Essay on Civil Government*; Paine, *The Rights of Man*; and more emphatically Jefferson, *The Declaration of Independence* (U.S.A.), and the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* (French National Assembly).

† T. H. Green, *Political Obligation*, § 136. Cf. Austin, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, vi.

‡ Green seems to hint at this interpretation.

rights of liberty, of possessions, of improvement, and of the means to happiness. Thought is no doubt always free as it cannot be coerced, though it may be persuaded by argument or irrational propaganda and suppression of facts, and in most situations a man has a claim not to be deceived. Conscience is always free if that means that a man can always do what he thinks he ought in the situation however circumscribed. If it is meant that a man should always be free to perform what he considers religious duties, which might include human sacrifice, the extermination of heretics, or the destruction of unorthodox literature, such a claim is easily overridden. Freedom to affect others as conscience may dictate must always, like all freedoms, be limited by other claims and especially by the claims of others to a like amount of freedom. If one man had complete freedom to do as he chose, he would probably leave little to the rest. Men could only have a right to *equal* freedom, as they could only have a right to equal means of subsistence. Indeed, equality of consideration is the only thing to the whole of which men have a right.

The value of democracy resides then chiefly, as I think, in the fact that it seems the most probable means of securing to every individual equality of consideration, which involves that it would secure him a fair share of all those things to which he has, as a man, natural claims. First would come freedom, the power of doing what he chooses without coercion or intimidation; and since he would certainly choose to have the means of happiness, including possessions, and the power freely to speak his mind, it implies all the so-called natural and inalienable rights of man. Perhaps freedom of speech is the only natural claim which is always a right, for it is difficult to see how one man by talking and writing can prevent others from doing so or from doing anything whatever. If they were compelled to come to his lecture or read his books, that, of course, would be a different story.

§ 3. The most fundamental natural right, then, is to equality; but equality itself must be defined by the situation. It does not imply the same ration for an infant and a heavy worker, nor the same education for a genius and a fool, nor the same amenities for a criminal and a hero. The Greek formula 'equals to equals' * as a description of justice † requires to be qualified as 'equal treatment of those who are equal in relevant respects.' It is just to treat men as equal until some reason, other than preference, such as need, capacity, or desert, has been shown to the contrary.

* ἴσα τοις ἴσοις i.e. *certeris paribus*; or κατ' ἀξίαν (in accordance with desert), Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 1158^{b}30.

† Ibid. 1129^{b}34.

§ 4. There does seem to be some fundamental and constant respect in which men are equal, equally set above the sentient animals, as well as the vegetable and lifeless world; capable of morality, of affection, of degrees and kinds of happiness and misery peculiar to their species; 'how noble in reason, how infinite in faculty,—in apprehension how like a god, the beauty of the world.' * This, I think, was what was meant by the dark saying that we should treat all rational beings as ends, never as means only, and by the unexpected inference that this implied making their ends, among which would always be their happiness, our own.†

§ 5. It is also, I think, fair to commend equality ethically on purely utilitarian grounds, since the pain of approaching the subsistence level is greater than the pleasure of luxury, and it is also likely that irritation at one's own inferior treatment is greater than the pleasant pride of superiority. Against this last point has been instanced the gloating of many poor and humble over the extravagance of the wild rich. But such romantic sentimentality need not be taken very seriously. Most housewives who revel in the fashion-gossip of society papers would more gladly read of a rise in their husband's wages, as girls who vicariously luxuriate in the thwarted passions of high life often accept a good offer of marriage.

Perhaps the strongest evidence that there is a fundamental belief in the obligation to treat men equally or fairly is the almost universal doctrine that all men are equal in the sight of God, who is no respecter of persons, and that the inequality of their states below is a result of or a concession to their wickedness.

ii. LIBERTY ‡

§ 6. Among the things men claim, after equality comes liberty. Equality must come first as the condition of all others because, as has been said, it is only to an equal or fair share of available goods that a man can have a right, and only to as much liberty as does not interfere with the like liberty of others. § Liberty must come next because so far as a man has liberty to do what he likes he will be able to get most of the things he wants, includ-

* Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II, ii.

† Kant, *Grundlegung*, trans. by Abbott, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, ii.

‡ See Maitland, 'Liberty' (*Collected Papers*, i). See also my article in *Law Quarterly*, January 1940.

§ Mill, *Liberty*. Or perhaps we should say that men have a claim to complete liberty nearly always overridden by the superior claims of others to an equal share or by different claims.

ing those to which he has claims. What most men want most is life, which can only be destroyed against their will by violent infraction of their liberty.

§ 7. The words 'liberty' and 'freedom,' which I do not distinguish, are sometimes used with qualifying phrases such as 'freedom from disease,' 'free from rain,' but when used absolutely they always mean social freedom, which I define as 'the power of doing what one would choose unaffected by the action (coercion or intimidation) of other *persons*.' The only exception to this usage is, I think, in what may be called the philosophical or moral sense of freedom of choice,* that is, the capacity to choose undetermined by one's own past history, and with this we have at present no concern.

The words are sometimes, however, used in a narrower and I think improper, that is unusual, sense. Freedom is sometimes identified with what should be called *legal freedom*, that is to say the unimpeded power of doing what the law does not forbid,† as if it were impossible for laws themselves by enforcing slavery to diminish liberty; and in the same sense it has been identified with obedience to the laws of my state.‡ Perhaps by obedience here was meant willing obedience, but willing obedience to anybody, say to my pirate captain, is of course liberty. I do not think it is so common to mistake 'equality before the law,' which may consist in legal serfdom, with equality.

§ 8. But the meaning of the word has also been narrowed in the opposite direction, so that men are called free in proportion as they are not restrained and protected by law from mutual oppression. Different travellers often bring strangely inconsistent reports of the amount of freedom enjoyed in some country with a social system unlike their own; those who look only at legal restriction may call it very unfree, but those who consider its legal prevention of the possibilities for private and economic oppression may call it the home of freedom. Perhaps it is because any wide distribution of freedom depends upon a strong constraint over potentially oppressive classes and individuals that constraint and freedom have been identified. But this

* Moral and social freedom seem to be confused by Croce in his discussion of liberty, to the detriment of the argument. *Discorsi di varia filosofia*, especially xvii, 'Libertà e giustizia.' His reply to this criticism (*Quaderni della Critica*, March 1945) is that man is only free, either morally or politically, when he does his duty. This usage I cannot understand. It removes responsibility for wrong acts. No doubt it derives from Hegel.

† *Libertas est potestas faciendi id quod jure licet.*

‡ Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts*, trans. by Knox, §§ 15, 140 (e), 206. But, slipping back to the usual meaning, he argued that this is always what I really want to do. Cf. Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, 'My Station and its Duties,' and Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, pp. 107, 127.

is like identifying plenty with ration cards, which are only a device for securing an equal approach to it.

§ 9. A third and allied misuse of the word 'liberty' is to confine it to the power of doing what we ought,* the power of doing other things being then dyslogistically[1] called licence. It might be convenient to restrict 'liberty' to the power of doing what we choose so long as that does not impede the like liberty of others, and to call any individual freedom exceeding that 'licence'; but this is not the normal usage. There is already a name 'discipline' for the forcible equalization of liberty.

The prevention of both morally indifferent and criminal acts impairs the liberty of those who wish to do them. It would be monstrous to call me quite free if I were prevented by the police from smoking or even from oversmoking, though I do not claim that I have any obligation to do either. I think in our definition of liberty we ought to abandon all moral terms; otherwise we could not ask *how much* liberty children or weak-minded persons ought to have. It has indeed been asked: 'What crimes have not been committed in the *name* of freedom?' as if this implied a misnomer. But of course, no crime was ever committed when the criminal was unfree, through physical restraint or fear, to commit it, though most crimes diminish general liberty. It is not true that liberty is best beloved by best men, though other people's liberty may be; the old lag[2] abandons hope on entering a life sentence, while a very good man might take a cage for a hermitage. Laws are always meant to restrict somebody's freedom and are good laws when, though not only when, they do this in order to secure a greater freedom for others. They succeed in this object when they are strictly and efficiently executed.

§ 10. By the definition offered the maximum interference with my liberty would be imprisonment in close manacles; a minimum the exclusion from one spot or locked safe which I wished to enter. The most free man would be one solitary on an island, who would certainly find his unchartered freedom tiresome and gladly sacrifice it by coming under captain's orders, for while the unfree must be unhappy, the free may be more so. After him, most freedom is enjoyed by the quite irresponsible despot who, unlike the shipwrecked sailor, very much diminishes the freedom of many other persons. As compared with a close prisoner, a slave always has much freedom in his hours of rest, and even at labour he can probably work left- or right-

* T. H. Green, *Political Obligation.*

[1 Disapprovingly.]

[2 Convict.]

handed as he pleases; even a convict if unchained has a good deal; and, as with most of us, his freedom is less limited by stone walls and iron bars than by fear of them. If laws are disobeyed we may be merely fined, but if we do not pay we shall be haled to prison.

§ 11. I will now try to justify the terms of my definition, which was 'the power of doing what one would choose unaffected by the action (coercion or intimidation) of other persons.'

(1) *Doing.* (*a*) As I have said, our *thinking* cannot be constrained, though it may be influenced by others in rational or irrational ways, such as argument, false propaganda, or suppression of facts and valid arguments. Silent thought is always free. (*b*) Our *feelings* can be painfully influenced by others when they smack us or whistle out of tune or, if we love them, by their indifference or neglect. If I want to read or to sleep, noises forced upon me diminish my freedom. The parent or lover is not free from anxiety, but he is (socially) free.

(2) *What one would choose.* If I am forbidden under penalty to do what I should not choose, for instance to bait bears on Sunday, or am prevented, for instance by fences, from walking over a cliff in the dark, my freedom is not impaired. A penal law against murder only limits the freedom of would-be murderers. It might seem to follow that no law which a man obeys willingly, that is when he could escape detection, makes him less free. We often obey inconvenient laws, by whose repeal we should choose to profit, either from a blind habit of law-abiding * or from the reflection that any known general law, however bad, interferes less with freedom than private war and scramble or arbitrary and unforeseen decisions, and that our disobedience might lead to such anarchy.† A slave or convict who refused emancipation because of habit and inertia must, I think, be called a free fool at least until he repents. The man who resists his desire to trespass on a deer-forest from reflective conscience and not from fear must be called free, and this applies to a hungry man who similarly would not steal when detection is impossible. The degree of detriment to my freedom depends upon the strength of the wish frustrated; a starving man prevented from taking food is less free than a smoker denied tobacco, so that laws safeguarding possessions diminish the freedom of the poor

* See Hume, *Essays*, I. iv, 'Antiquity always begets opinion of right.' When our conservative fear of instability through innovation conflicts with our reforming fear of oppression through obsolescence, Hume thinks anarchy the worse evil but oppression the more likely.

† The best reasoned defence of anarchy is Godwin's *Political Justice*, VII, viii, much modified, however, in VIII. ii.

much more than that of the rich,* though a man may, on other grounds, have a claim to superior possessions which overrides the claim to arithmetical equality.

These considerations will lead us presently to a discussion of the next 'natural right,' that of property.

(3) *Other persons.* I have given reasons for confining 'liberty' and 'freedom,' when the words are not qualified, to the absence of restraint by other persons.† A man prevented from doing what he would otherwise choose by fear of the supernatural may not be free from superstition, but he is socially free.

Any persons may restrict my freedom, a neighbour, a dictator, a majority; and my having voted for the law makes no difference if I should now choose to break it but for fear. Ulysses' sailors impaired his freedom by his own orders when they prevented him from joining the Sirens.[3] I can even limit my own freedom by locking myself in an upper story and throwing out the key, but not by vows or promises without enforceable penalty. I am free to break them.

(4) *Interference.* So far as our action is restricted not by other people's action but by their failure to act, I do not think we should say our freedom is impaired. To block my path seems to limit my freedom; failure to clear or repair it does not. But the distinction is difficult to draw: 'Thou shalt not kill, but need'st not strive Officiously to keep alive.'[4] I suppose that if I fail to remove obstructions erected rightly or wrongfully on land I have inherited, I am rightly or wrongfully diminishing the freedom of those who rightly or wrongfully wish to pass. And if I do not try to remove economic and legal restrictions by which I profit, the same seems to hold good.

(5) *Action.* (*a*) I mean action here to include credible threat of action, which is the most usual diminution of liberty, but not deception or refusal of information. I think to drug a man or (if possible) to hypnotize him against his will would deprive him of freedom, but rhetorical or other emotional propaganda would not, though to forbid his access to contrary propaganda, if he wished to enjoy it, or to force him to listen to me, would.

(*b*) Bribes and promises, unlike threats and punishments, do not impair freedom. The man likes earning the bribe better than not being offered it,

* 'Whenever we depart from equality we rob the poor of more satisfaction than the rich' (Hume, *Enquiry*, iii) and 'Property when united causes more dependence [i.e. less freedom] than when dispersed' (*Essays*, I. vii).

† 7 above.

[3 In bk. xii of the *Odyssey*.]

[4 A. H. Clough, 'The Latest Decalogue.']

whereas the man moved by threats would have preferred to act otherwise could he have done so fearlessly.

§ 12. My definition, thus explained, seems to me the most consonant with the usage of the words 'freedom' and 'liberty.' It makes clear the following two points:

(*a*) There are other good things and other things to which men have claims besides liberty, which may conflict with it, such as those to education and security and hygiene; * Robinson Crusoe may have had a claim as well as a wish to be restored to the restraints of society.

(*b*) One man's liberty is apt to be inimical to his neighbour's and a man has a claim to equal liberty only, or to as much as does not impair the like liberty of others. Almost the only freedom which never does this is freedom of speech and writing when there is no compulsion on hearers or readers.†

It remains to ask how far equal liberty is favoured or endangered by other kinds of equality.

(1) I have argued that 'political equality' or democracy does not guarantee liberty any more than does minority government, but is generally more favourable to it.

(2) 'Equality before the law,' if that means law effectively carried out and legally administered, is implied in the very notion of law, and almost any such system is preferable to anarchy or despotic edict. But it is questionable how far the laws regulating property in some communities make so well for the maximum of liberty as do, say, the laws against murder and assault. This leads to the subject of the next chapter, but a few points about liberty may first be mentioned.

§ 13. Liberty, like equality, can be defended on utilitarian grounds both as a constituent of happiness and as a means to it.‡ The argument would be that our duty is to increase general happiness and improvement and that, since all men have a strong desire to be happy and some desire to be improved, this duty is generally best fulfilled by allowing the greatest amount of equal liberty. I am not sure whether it is more correct to say that every man has a claim to do whatever he would choose free from coercion and intimidation, but a claim which is generally overridden by

* A Sumerian king claims fame as having given his people 'equal justice and canals' (Woolley, *Abraham*). Cf. Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*.

† See § 14, below.

‡ J. S. Mill in *Liberty* mainly pleads for freedom of speech as the surest means to the attainment of useful truth and to progress, but he sometimes passes to the other argument and treats it as something to which men have equal claims for its own sake.

the claims of other people not to be coerced and intimidated by him, or that no man has a claim to more than an equal amount of such freedom. In either case his claim may conflict with other claims and cannot therefore, as such, be 'absolute,' but is 'inalienable.' The strongest of conflicting claims is a right, which is absolute, since there are no conflicting rights, but alienable if the situation alters. To either claim would correspond an obligation and to every right a duty.

§ 14. Freedom of speech is a claim perhaps less often overridden than any other. It is seldom overridden by the like claim of others, since my long-windedness, except in special circumstances of debate, shortens nobody else's, nor even by any claim to general liberty, since my lecture, when attention is not compulsory, prevents nobody from doing what he would choose. The only plausible exceptions appear to be 'careless talk,' 'slander,' and 'incitements to violence.' In general my own view would be that argument (as distinct from incitements) for intolerance should be tolerated as 'monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.' * Yet it seems paradoxical that we ought to allow arguments for persecution but resist persecution itself.

The distinction legally recognized between cool argument and incitement to violence is no doubt often very hard to draw, but seems even more necessary to the moralist than to the lawyer. To argue that since a man extremely diminishes the freedom of many others he ought to be forcibly prevented is to argue, rightly or wrongly, in favour of general liberty. To incite violence against anybody by false accusations, or by emotional stimulus which cannot claim to be 'true,' is certainly wrong and does appear to be an *attempt* to infringe *his* liberty though not that of the dupes.

iii. PROPERTY †

§ 15. It seems otiose to speak of the right to property, for we mean by property those physical things which a man has a right to use. I can hardly think of anything which a man has the right to use in any way he chooses; I may not fire my gun in the high street; I may not use my money for bribery, nor even my hands for assault or larceny. Whether or when we have a right to transfer property will need to be discussed. I do not think the word is usually applied to things not physical, which I might in a sense 'possess' and 'use,' such as skill, information, reputation, affection, good

* Ascribed to Jefferson; I do not know the reference. [It is from Jefferson's First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1801.]

† Cf. my article in *Law Quarterly*, January 1940.

looks. We do not even call a man's life his property. The right to services is not called property, unless we think that a man can have a right to slaves. Whether the name should be applied to benefices, royalties, patents, copyrights, is arguable; if it is the profits or emoluments that are in question, these, I suppose, in the long run are rights to control physical things; if it is anything else, I suppose it must be reputation.

That there is such a thing as property so defined seems unquestioned. So far as a man has a right or a claim to live he has one to food, and 'consumption necessitates appropriation.' * No duty is more incumbent on all who as voters have any voice in legislation than to consider what possessions ought to be secured to men by law so as to approximate their legal to their moral property, to secure them in the possession of those things to which they have a right. For 'no regulation is more constant, more radical and severe than that which is involved in property and the police.' †

§ 16. We have already indicated some of the claims which would have to be weighed in such a consideration: the claim to equality, the claim to liberty, the claim of desert, the claim of need, the claim to have undertakings kept, the claim to happiness, the claim to improvement. Our principal attention here will be due to the first two, equality and liberty, for it has been often contended that regulation with a view to the former is incompatible with the latter.‡ My own opinion is that general (that is to say equal) liberty and an equality of possessions would approximately coincide, though of course they might conflict with other claims.

§ 17. Consider the extreme case of unequal possession, where one man had the monopoly of something necessary to all, say of water-supply upon an island. It would also be an extreme case of unfreedom, for all the other inhabitants might be prevented by actual barriers or by fear of death from satisfying their most pressing want. The owner, with adequate police protection, could either let them die or exact any service in exchange for water; they would in fact be enslaved to him merely by inequality of possessions. No doubt if he were a sane human being he would stand drinks, § but an institution is not justified by being one which nobody can live down to. Just in proportion as the possession of water were equalized the prohibition of water-theft would become less oppressive even though nobody had as

* Locke, *Civil Government*, ii. 25–51.

† L. Dickinson, *Justice and Liberty*.

‡ But cf. Croce, 'Libertà e Giustizia' (*Discorsi di varia filosofia*, xvii), and see footnote to § 18, below.

§ *Non prohibere aqua profluenti.*

much as he wanted; it would be less obstructive of what each desired to do; the only one who had less liberty would be the original monopolist, and his loss of liberty would not be so great as the gain of even any one of his neighbours, since he could hardly have desired to use his superfluity of water, say in cultivating orchids, so passionately as the other desired to moisten his tongue. To be forcibly expropriated from superabundance or even from convenience impairs liberty less than to be forbidden under penalty to appropriate necessaries. Monopoly of any necessary thing such as house-room may remove all liberty.

If, then, we consider the laws and institutions of property merely as they affect liberty, we must conclude that those are most favourable to it which produce equality in proportion to need. Against such equality there may of course be other claims.

§ 18. Those who think that liberty and equality are incompatible * have probably assumed that institutions of their own time and country with regard to property and inheritance are eternally founded in the nature of things and are no limitation to the freedom of those who suffer by them. They only consider liberty of action within that legal framework, and any reframing which would secure a greater equality of liberty and thereby a greater amount to a greater number they condemn as oppressive. Within the sacred system *laissez-faire* [5] is divinely guided to maximum liberty, but if we do not enforce just that system providence will lead us to servitude.

But that inequalities of possession should be unregulated and that the right of bequest [6] should be unlimited was not generally the belief of the ancients and has not always been recognized in modern states. And such regulation has been defended not only as favourable to liberty or to natural rights but on purely utilitarian grounds.†

What, then, are the conflicting claims to possessions which might sometimes override the claims to equality and to liberty? Those which are valid can, I think, all be reduced to desert and to general utility, since allowance for need is only in order to secure real equality. A man who has worked has earned or deserved by that very fact more than the man who has been idle when he had the opportunity to work; he has a claim which cannot be

* E.g. Acton, *Lectures on Liberty*; Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, i. 212–15; Bagehot, *The English Constitution*; Erskine May, *Democracy in Europe*, ii. 333; De Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime*.

[5 Freedom from governmental interference in economic matters.]

[6 See note to Jefferson on the law of entails, p. 196.]

† M. Arnold, 'Equality' (in *Mixed Essays*): 'On the one side inequality harms by pampering, on the other by vulgarising and depressing.'

reduced to the claim for equality and may conflict with and override it.* If, moreover, he can be induced by rewards to satisfy some need of others, they may have a claim either on the ground of equality or on the ground of general beneficence that he should be so rewarded. His own claim, I think, is only to have a bargain kept. The claim put forward to greater possessions or to other advantages on the ground of greater capacity can be reduced, I think, to a claim of others that a man's capacity to increase general happiness or improvement should be realized. The claim to profit by mere displays of talent or by chance discoveries or inventions which are useful but involved no labour, if there are any such, is also reducible to utility.

§ 19. The purely lucky find, as when the schoolbody says 'Bags I, I saw it first,' seems nothing more than a device, like tossing up, to avoid quarrels where nobody has any claim. The law does not always recognize property in the finder of treasure-trove.

The claim founded on a long possession which never had any of the grounds already mentioned seems to have nothing in its favour except that a man suffers more by losing what he is accustomed to than by not acquiring novelties, and against this might be set the consideration that it is now somebody else's turn.

I have never felt sure whether the emphatic justification of possession on the ground of 'prescription' really means that what a man has got into his hands, no matter how, gradually becomes his right by the flux of time; † or whether it is a rather cynical recognition that people are readier to put up with injustice of long standing than with an act of unexpected justice which confiscates old and ill-gotten gains, so that the path of least resistance is to let sleeping wrongs lie.‡ Of course, if what is meant is that legal recognition of possessions gives a man legal right and consequently some moral claim to them, this has been allowed already. If long possession in

* Locke, *Essay on Civil Government*. Whatever a man by his labour makes out of a natural product is his 'where there is as much and as good left for others.' 'As much as any man can make use of to any advantage of life before it spoils so much he may by labour fix a property in; whatever is beyond this is more than his share.'

† 'Prescription is the most solid of all titles not only to property, but, what is to secure that property, to government' (Burke, *Present Discontents*). It is 'part of the Law of Nature' (*French Revolution*; cf. *To R. Burke*). This might seem to justify slavery. Burke applies the same doctrine to religion (*To W. Smith*).

‡ Hume, *Essays*, I. iv, says: 'Antiquity always begets the opinion of right,' but somewhat inconsistently with his general doctrine he condemns this opinion as 'not reason' (II. xvi). Paine remarks that Burke has 'a contemptible opinion of mankind—a herd of beings that must be governed by fraud.'

itself gave a claim, I think it would always be overridden by any of the claims I have admitted. Perhaps the new version of *Beati possidentes*,[7] that what a man now possesses he must in obscure antiquity have deserved, is the homage paid by conservatism to virtue.

§ 20. It remains to ask how far property, or the right to possessions, is transferable or heritable. Men and women not only may but ought to provide for the nurture and education of their children who may survive them, so far as these services are not provided by the state. Children, with whom so long as they are infants there can be no question of desert, have a claim to equal opportunities of life, happiness, improvement, and freedom, which implies a claim to the power of using things, which is a property-claim. If these claims would not be satisfied in any other way there is an obligation on the parents to satisfy them, and, in such circumstances, a legal right of bequest to strangers, which contravenes this obligation, is difficult to defend. On the other hand, if the grounds of any claim to possessions have been rightly enumerated (as claims to equality of liberty and of the means to improvement and happiness, claims in respect of desert, and general claims that generally useful capacities should be developed) it is difficult to see that a child with no special merits or capacities has any claim to inherit from its parents what will raise it above the level of equality. It could, of course, be suggested that the power to make such a bequest to one's children or to other persons is much coveted and is an incentive to industry which is generally useful, and that the general claim to increase happiness may override all claims to equality.

Even if we think that a man has a claim to transfer in his life or after death rights of property which he has himself earned by his labour, this is a claim which might easily be overridden by the claims of other persons to equal liberty and opportunities of happiness or improvement, and to the fruits of their own labours, so long as there is not 'so much and so good left for all' or so long as they can make better use of the property 'to any advantage of life.' * Titles, lucrative posts, and pensions are supposed to be the rewards of merit, but it is never regarded as unjust that no titles should be bequeathed and some not inherited, nor that posts and pensions should terminate with the first holder.

[7 'Blessed are they that have.']

* Locke, *Essay on Civil Government*, v. 27–31. On the 9th of February 1946, the Tuan Muda (heir to the throne) of Sarawak had a letter in *The Times* complaining that the Rajah had no right to cede the sovereignty without his consent (as well as that of the people).

E. L. Woodward

L'INQUIÉTUDE RELIGIEUSE

¶ Although E. L. Woodward is best known as a professional historian, his little essay in reminiscence, *Short Journey*, which he wrote during the war, should make him known to many readers who may not be acquainted with his *Age of Reform* (a history of England during the nineteenth century) and other writings on modern history. *Short Journey* is an excellently written book—unfortunately its excellence has not yet been recognized as widely as it deserves to be—about the intellectual and personal history of a scholar who is as sensitive to the present as he is learned about the past.

Mr. Woodward has spent most of his mature life at Oxford, where he is Professor of Modern History and Fellow of Worcester College. He is at present co-editor of *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–39*.

DURING THE years between the two wars I had work [1] which I enjoyed doing. I had all the leisure which I wanted. I had chances of travel in Europe and outside Europe. In the course of time I outgrew most of the effects of my illness in 1918. I could work for more hours at a stretch, and feel less tired at forty than I had felt at thirty. I never had to bother about money; my income was large enough for me to set aside a sum each year to supplement a pension which, for accidental reasons, would be smaller than I might normally have expected to receive. It would therefore be make-believe to say that I was unhappy, or that the troubles and unsolved mystery of the world weighed like a great stone on me.

Nevertheless there was no day in all this tale of days in which I did not feel, as I had felt in boyhood and early youth, the sense of waiting, an

[1 As an Oxford tutor.]

FROM *Short Journey*, 1942. Reprinted by permission of the Oxford University Press.

awareness that something was happening outside my immediate range of consciousness, and yet not so far beyond me that I could never hope to understand it. I was like a man kept below decks on a ship. I could hear the sound of footsteps above my cabin. I could hear the beat of the ship's engines. I did not know the ship's course. I did not know the purpose of the voyage.

I had always tried to piece together my knowledge. I was interested in 'detail,' but hungry for general conclusions. I could not see things without arranging them into a pattern; nevertheless, the grand design of the world eluded me. I had given up reading metaphysics because it seemed to me that for over two thousand years philosophers had asked more or less the same questions. During this period the questions had been framed more sharply, but I did not expect them to be answered in my lifetime. I had turned to history, hoping against hope that, by observation of what had happened over a long period of time, I might find these answers, or a hint of the form which the answers would take. Although long study of the past had deepened and widened my sympathies, and liberated me from the tyranny of the immediate present, I was no nearer in late middle age than in early youth to solving the problems which bewildered and intrigued me. I knew, or rather, I was sure, that the answers were to be found; that they were almost within my reach.

Hence my life was divided. I enjoyed the details of living. I held fast to the deepest personal relationships, my marriage, the memory of my home. In such personal relationships I came nearest to reality. I wanted to extend this understanding of reality until there was no separation between myself and the universe. I wanted to be immersed in the ocean of time, past, present, and future, and not to look only at discrete moments. Until I had attained this freedom, which could come only by breaking down the barrier raised by my own personality, I knew that I should remain always unquiet, always unsatisfied. I can explain my meaning by using again the phrase which I used about certain most vivid and never forgotten moments in my boyhood: 'These fields and trees—they and I are one and the same thing.' The same thing; yet I can never pass a door which is not ever fully closed, but which shuts me off from the 'otherness' beyond my comprehension.

For a few years after the war, I maintained the practice of the Christian religion. I had given up, for good and all, the idea of taking Orders.[2] I did not realize how far I had traveled from this possibility until, a month

[2 Becoming a priest.]

or two after my election to a fellowship at All Souls, I was offered a college chaplaincy. I still counted myself a Christian. I was never bothered by quibbles about the validity of Anglican orders, and similar details of ecclesiastical tradition. I regarded the sacraments administered in the Church of England as valid. I thought that the detached position and attitude of the Church were historically justified, and also compatible with a belief in the ultimate reunion of Christendom. Nevertheless, when the question was put to me, and put in the most favorable conditions from every other point of view: will you read the liturgy, administer the sacraments, accept the doctrinal philosophy of the Christian Church, there was no convincing reason why I should say 'no,' but I could not possibly have said 'yes.'

I have explained that I could not give any date for this change in my intention. Similarly, I am not able to point to any day or month on which I ceased to call myself a Christian. I did not pass through any special crisis of mind. I was neither depressed nor elated; there was no question of casting off a burden or of recovering a lost liberty. In a sense, I suppose that I am still a member of the Church of England. I attend my college chapel as a matter of formality on set services of commemoration. I find no incongruity in so doing. I regard these services (which are, incidentally, not those enjoined by the founder of the college) as possessing a significance, but a significance outside the range of my powers of interpretation. I feel about them as I felt when in a Moslem country I listened with respect to a circle of devout men reciting the Koran. I do not doubt the rightness of such acts of piety. Only the sea has come in [3] between me and this known and well-explored country of personal religion, cutting me off from intercourse with long familiar things. I repeat that this flood has not risen in the thunder of a tempest, but quietly, almost imperceptibly; I can measure the volume of the tide not by sound or tumult, but merely if I look at the increasing distance between myself and the mainland on which I once walked, and from which I am now cut off.

Nevertheless, although I have never known the conflict which men of deeply religious mind have recorded of themselves, there have been long periods of time during which I have felt this separation from a church militant here on earth with an acuteness not far removed from physical pain. At these times I have also felt that I must put into words what such a separation means for the generation to which I belong, since my own experience has nothing unique about it. Indeed, if there is anything excep-

[3 See Matthew Arnold's poem, 'Dover Beach.']

tional about my own case, the differentiating factor is that the severance was so long delayed.

I cannot envisage a society of human beings without religion, and yet possessing an art, a literature, and a way of life not entirely and fundamentally futile. I cannot believe that for millions of years hence men will endure this sense of unsatisfied awareness which is the fate of my own generation. I have read a good deal of the literature of modern materialism; I find it unconvincing often to the point of silliness. It has not endured for a century without becoming ignoble. I do not expect it to endure at all for more than another century or two.

On the other hand I should be equally false to the conviction of my whole being and to the conclusions reached over many years if I did not also say that, as far as I am concerned, and, as far as most men of my generation are concerned, Christian theology is a hindrance to understanding. It is impossible for anyone brought up as I was brought up, and living in my environment, not to be moved very deeply by the gospels and by the preaching of St. Paul. I cannot read the chapter in St. Luke describing the Nativity without thinking that, if things had happened so, there would be no unsolved secret to elude mankind century after century. I do not know any ceremony on earth more profound, more humble, and more magnificent in hope than the Christian mass. It would be, as I say, impossible for me to think otherwise.

'And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

'And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round them. . .

'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

'And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

'And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.'

There is no record in the world like this record. And yet what is the answer to the question in the liturgy: *Quem vidistis, pastores, dicite, annunciate nobis in terris quis apparuit?* [4]

[4 'Whom saw ye, shepherds? Tell, proclaim to us, who hath appeared on the earth?']

It is not merely because I do not believe in astrology that I reject the narrative of the star in the east which went before the wise men 'till it came and stood over where the young child was.' Within the last few generations, and only within the last few generations, the guidance of many centuries has failed us; the interlocked structure of history and logic upon which Christian doctrine is based and the visible church is founded can no longer satisfy the mind. Renan [5] wrote that in his youth the ordinary man had no intellectual right to doubt the truth of Catholic dogma. In Renan's own lifetime the change had begun. The tide of disruption is now at full flood. No apologetics, no 'modernism,' no 'jettisoning of non-essentials,' can turn this cosmic movement. There is no remedy.

'For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.

'For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be as wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.' *

I know that this conclusion appears negative. I am unable to give it a more positive form. I cannot say what will follow the disappearance of 'historical Christianity.' I do not think that the answer to this question can be given in my lifetime.

I wrote these paragraphs on Christmas Eve. At midnight I listened on my wireless to the mass sung by the monks of Ampleforth Abbey. I knew that I was listening to the purest and most confident invocation of God. I knew that the monks who were singing this mass, the celebrant, the gospeler, the monastic choir had taken vows of renunciation which I would fear to take, and that they had so acted because they believed in a timeless and everlasting sacrifice.

I heard the very words which I had written down a few hours earlier. *Et subito erat cum angelo multitudo militiae caelestis laudentis Deum et dicentis: gloria Deo in excelsis et in terra pax. . .*[6] It is no easy thing to surrender a belief that this company of the Heavenly Host was seen and heard, at a certain time, on the hills outside Bethlehem by certain shepherds. In my lifetime I have been witness of enough destruction, but I can use no other term to describe the loss of the accumulated treasures of Chris-

[5 Eminent French writer on religion (1823–92).]

* Isaiah xxviii. 20–1.

[6 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace . . .']

tian piety. It seems to me a delusion to suggest that, if people cease to believe that God is present in the consecrated Host, they can listen equally well to the words and setting of the mass; that there need be no difference between a Christian and a non-Christian attitude towards the sacrifice on Calvary. There is a whole world of difference, just as there is a world of difference between taking part in a battle and reading a chapter of military history. The destruction is there; the loss is real, and not to be explained away in comfortable terms. I find no explanation; I merely record what must happen. *The Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act.*

I remember also that this act of destruction has been envisaged by others who also saw that for their time there was no remedy. Twelve years ago I read words written in 1692 by one of the greatest of the figures of Port Royal.[7] These words have stayed in my mind, because they have seemed to me to describe the age in which I live.

'Il me semble que je suis né dans une église éclairée de diverses lampes et de divers flambeaux et que Dieu permet que je les voie éteindre les uns après les autres, sans qu'il paraisse qu'on y en substitue de nouveaux. Ainsi il me semble que l'air s'obscurcit de plus en plus, parce que nous ne méritons pas que Dieu répare les vides qu'il fait lui-même dans son Église.'[8]

In 1930, halfway between the two wars, I wrote a short book in order to express what I had continually in mind about the extinction of these great lights in heaven. I also tried to record my own ever-present awareness of the two-fold significance of things. I wrote this book, which I called *The Twelve-Winded Sky*, because I wanted to write it. In a queer sense, I could not help writing it. I published it because I thought that there might be, perhaps, twenty or thirty people who would be glad that I had written it. I did not feel any compunction or scruple about publishing it; as far as a man can judge his skill in his own craft, I thought that the book was what I wanted it to be.

The publication of this book had a curious and absurd sequel. One Sunday morning I met a senior fellow of All Souls on his way back from the university sermon. He told me that he had just heard some book or other

[7 Headquarters of an influential religious movement (Jansenism) in seventeenth-century France.]

[8 'It seems to me that I was born in a Church lighted by various lamps and torches, and that God allows me to see them extinguished one after the other without it appearing that new ones replace them. So it seems to me that the air darkens more and more, because we do not deserve that God fill the void which he himself made in his Church.']

denounced from the pulpit. I discovered that it was my book which had been denounced.

Throughout these years during which I have come—later than most of my contemporaries—to acknowledge the disruption of Christian belief and of ancient modes of piety, I have known that such a change would affect the political and economic order of society. Even the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England would bring with it far-reaching social consequences, especially in country towns and villages. The disappearance of the authority of the Roman See over millions of Catholics throughout the world would have a much greater effect. There would be, among other consequences, a sharpening of civil conflict in every modern state, since it is impossible to overlook the fact that, whatever may come in the future to take the place of the Christian Church in Western civilization, there must be a difficult *interregnum*; a phase of popular materialism and intellectual anarchy.

These dangers are no argument against a clear and deep breach with the past. The longer the destructive revolution is delayed, the more prolonged and difficult will be the *interregnum*. I do not forget the sharp words of the French socialist Jaurès that the French radicals, in their attack on the Catholic Church, had silenced the old song which had brought resignation to human misery; that the disinherited were now awake, and that they would demand their rights with more urgency in this world if they had lost hope of a future world in which the balance would be redressed.

I knew also that the Christian conscience had done much—more, perhaps, in the last few generations than the governing authorities of the Christian Church—to awaken the imagination of the possessing classes to the misery of masses of men and women and children in modern society. I was not foolish enough to judge the conscience of Christians by the bleak record of the Anglican bishops in the House of Lords, or by the alliance between the papal court and the most reactionary governments of nineteenth-century Europe. I knew that there was some risk of a weakening of this new sense of social justice among large numbers of people if the framework of organized Christianity were to dissolve. I knew also that there was now in Europe a political movement which accepted and even welcomed the sharpening of the social conflict, or regarded this conflict as inevitable and looked forward to it not with apprehension but rather with great hope.

What attitude was I to take up towards this political movement? In

matters of religion I was unwilling to accept an intellectual compromise of a 'modernist' kind. Could I accept such a compromise in relation to the political and economic order? Here I come back to those political accidents which I described earlier as among the unfortunate features of English public life after 1919. The liberal party, as a great party, was extinct. Such a fate, as far as the leaders of the party were concerned, was well deserved. As long as these leaders held their positions, there was no hope of a revival of the party. I also saw no practical chance of displacing the leaders. I thought at times of the story of the Anglican bishop who, on hearing complaints about the evil caused to his diocese by the spiritual sloth of some of his leading clergy, answered: 'We must look to that great Christian worker, Death.'

This long view might be right. Some time or other the way might be clear for a revival, under a new name, and with a new program, of the liberal party of the generation before 1914. Meanwhile I, and hundreds like me, had to choose between parties as they were. The choice meant very little. There was not much to distinguish the policy of conservatives in office from that of socialists in office; one man, Ramsay MacDonald,[9] indeed, passed in fact though not altogether in name, from one party to the other without much change in the policy which he asked the electors to allow him to put into effect. Indeed, with a large electorate afraid of far-reaching changes and indifferent to new ideas, but responding in the main to 'left-center' programs, there could not be a very wide gap between the policy of a conservative and that of a labor cabinet.

What were these 'left-center' ideas? Two generations ago William Morris summed up, a little unfairly, what he called the 'middle-class liberal ideal of reformed society.'

"There is to be a large class of industrious people not too much refined (or they could not do the rough work wanted of them) who are to live in comfort (not, however, meaning our middle-class comfort), and receive a kind of education (if they can) and not be overworked; that is, not overworked for a working man; his light day's work would be rather heavy for the refined classes. This class is to be the basis of society, and its existence will leave the consciences of the refined class quite free and at rest. From this refined class will come the directors or captains of labor (in other words the usurers), the directors of people's consciences religious and literary (clergy, philosophers, newspaper-writers) and lastly, if that be thought of at all, the directors of art; these two classes . . . will live together with

[9 British Labor leader; Prime Minister, 1924, 1929–35.]

the greatest goodwill; the upper helping the lower without sense of condescension on one side or humiliation on the other; the lower are to be perfectly content with their position, and there is to be no grain of antagonism between the classes: although (even Utopianism of this kind being unable to shake off the idea of the necessity of competition between individuals) the lower class, blessed and respected as it is, will have moreover the additional blessing of hope held out to it; the hope of each man rising into the upper class, and leaving the chrysalis of labor behind him; nor, if that matters, is the lower class to lack due political or parliamentary power; all men (or nearly all) being equal before the ballot-box, except so far as they may be bought like other things. . . All the world turned bourgeois big and little, peace under the rule of competitive commerce, ease of mind and a good conscience to all and several under the rule of the devil take the hindmost.' *

This summary was not altogether fair in the year in which it was made (1883). It ignored the immense social achievement of the nineteenth century. It ignored the amazing contrast between the condition of the people of England in the early years of the eighteenth and the later years of the nineteenth centuries, and did not face the stubborn fact that a classless society was hardly possible until there had been a much greater rise in 'average' standards of living, a softening of manners, an improvement in material conditions. The age of high capitalism did not create the social evils against which the middle-class reformers of capitalism protested. Dirt and disease were not new; drains and a good water supply were new. The exploitation of children's labor was not new; factory laws were new. Every town, and not merely the great cities, of every European country in the eighteenth century contained a majority—a majority, not a 'residuum' —of human beings unfit for the exercise of political liberty. The age of machinery did not brutalize men; the grinding wheels were, in fact, wheels of liberation.

William Morris's indictment was too harsh and unhistorical, and in some respects ungenerous, as far as his own time was concerned. Nevertheless this indictment applied with greater force to the political parties of my own age. In the years after Waterloo, and even in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the essential postulates of a 'classless society' were lacking. The work of the nineteenth-century reformers had been on so great a scale that, after the last war, it was not by any means certain that an attempt to found this 'classless' society would end in catastrophe and

* W. Morris, *Architecture, Industry, and Wealth: Collected Papers.*

a general lowering of standards. Indeed the mistake of liberals after 1918 was that they seemed to take no account of the changes for which liberalism had been largely responsible, and that they were content with the kind of society William Morris had described. In a strange way, the political and parliamentary leaders of the labor party seemed equally content with this type of society, if the center of gravity could be moved a little further to the left. There was not very much to choose between the type of earthly paradise envisaged by trade union officials and that desired by local chambers of commerce.

This very fact that, in practice, the two political parties were almost interchangeable forced me to ask myself whether the time had not come for a real political and social revolution. I knew enough history to be sceptical about the results of revolutions, but I also knew that there were times when revolution, like war, was a political necessity in the sense that it was an unavoidable choice between greater and lesser evils.

I have already mentioned, and, indeed, the fact is obvious, that I did not have to work out for myself a theory of revolutionary socialism (if I may use a vague term which covers, conveniently, a number of different and mutually incompatible theories). The theory was ready for me to accept One of the largest states [10] in the modern world had attempted to put the theory into effect. Scores, almost hundreds of books, offered me an exposition of the revolutionary theory. A little to my bewilderment, numbers of young poets exulted in this theory, as though it were something new, whereas, to my knowledge, it had existed for a hundred years, and the most disquieting feature about it was that during this hundred years it had remained in essentials unchanged, immutable as the Koran.

I found that I could not accept the revolutionary theory. It is, of course, possible that, in coming to this conclusion, I was biased by a wish not to lose my own comfort and my privileged position in society. I do not think that this consideration weighed overmuch with me, for the simple reason that, whatever I might hope or fear in the matter, I had few grounds for expecting a social revolution to take place in England during my lifetime. If I had wanted to be cynical, I could have adopted the most extreme form of revolutionary anarchism, with the comfortable assurance of personal immunity in the words 'après moi le déluge.' *

[10 Russia.]

* So I have thought until this winter of 1941–2. I am not sure now that, if I survive this war, I may not see revolution in England. It is also certain that, revolution or no revolution, my own personal economic security is gone. The deluge is here.

I found it more difficult to avoid another kind of bias. One expects a revolutionary party to include the social misfits, the failures, the *déracinés* [11] of the existing order; there is also a certain morbid type of mind, resentful of superiority, and finding relief or satisfaction only in the contemplation of large-scale destruction. I am bound to say that the parties of social revolution, at least in western Europe, have included a high percentage of such types. It is indeed one of the counts against modern conditions that they tend to produce *déracinés* in large numbers. Many of these people have 'gone over' to fascism, the opposite pole of revolutionary thought. Fascism as 'socialism for fools' can be ignored in a long count. Revolutionary socialism, in the proper sense of the term, cannot be ignored. Nevertheless, it is not mere fastidiousness on the part of the comfortably-placed to point out that a judgement of the revolutionary cause must be affected by the tones of hate in which this cause is proclaimed.

The revolutionaries of 1789 included morbid types (Marat, for example), but the movement in favor of a 'classless' society, considered in the large, did not take on a bleak and nagging character until the time of Karl Marx. The apologists for Marx as a person speak of his passion for social righteousness; I find it hard to credit him with any passions except hatred, resentment, and a desire for domination. The only people whom he appeared to admire were Prussian aristocrats, and he hated them as much as he hated everyone else. He hated most of his fellow-socialists hardly less than he hated the bourgeoisie. He hated nearly all those who befriended him quite as bitterly as he hated his persecutors.

Marx gave to revolutionary socialism a psychological twist from which it suffers to this day; a meanness and pettiness of outlook which even large-hearted men like Jaurès [12] have been powerless to eradicate. A quarrelsome meanness, which drove a man like William Morris out of practical collaboration with the socialist movement; a perpetual jeering at others; a refusal to attribute to opponents any fine or generous motives. I find this corrosion even in the mild-mannered English socialists. The playboys of the movement, like Bernard Shaw, often mock at sincerity as much as at humbug. Patient and quiet scholars like the Webbs [13] seem at times to approve of that type of ordered society which moved Rousseau to write the words 'on vit tranquille aussi dans les cachots.' [14]

[11] The uprooted (the 'disinherited' of p. 272).]

[12] French socialist (1859–1914).]

[13] Beatrice and Sidney Webb, English writers on socialism and leaders in the socialist movement during the first half of the twentieth century.]

[14] 'One can live at peace in dungeons, too.']

This curdled intellectualism did not encourage me to look forward with pleasure to the fulfillment of the revolutionary program. None the less, the revolutionaries might be right. I could not reject the revolutionary thesis because a few of its supporters were *louche* [15] and tricky characters, others had a touch of morbidity, and nearly all of them lacked good manners in controversy. There were other types than the *embusqués* [16] of the revolutionary army. Since 1936 I have known men who were prepared to die, and not merely to live spitefully or selfishly, for the cause of social justice. Furthermore, however much I might discount many of the details in the picture of the age of high capitalism as drawn by the outcasts and the rebels, I could not deny the main truth of their assertions. I could deny it the less because they seemed to me to exaggerate the material evils of the age. The indictment was really much deeper if one admitted that there had been a general material advance; that the standard of life had risen, and that the hours of painful labor (something entirely different from the pleasure which I called work) had lessened, and there was a greater and more widely diffused sense of ease.

In these years, and especially after 1930, I went back very often to William Morris. Here was a man of generous mind, with none of the petty resentments and petty hates and nagging which I found so tiresome; a man without any sense of failure and inferiority; a man who could make things with his hands, manage a large business, direct and invent technical processes in the decorative arts. This man, who enjoyed every hour of his work (and who had indeed defined all art as an 'expression of joy in work'), had given up his leisure to fight against the vulgarity and ugliness of the times. Want and misery, grim and evil as they were, might be cured, and were, in fact, being cured. What remedy was there for the vulgarity of modern civilization? 'If civilization is to go no further than this it had better not have gone so far . . . it is . . . so much the worse than that which has gone before it, as its pretensions are higher, its slavery subtler, its mastery harder to overthrow, because supported by such a dense mass of commonplace well-being and comfort.' *

Nevertheless, I could not see in any one of the theories of revolutionary socialism a way of escape from the plush-seated, ignoble society in which I lived. These revolutionary theories, in spite of a certain amount of dressing up in new coats, were variations on an eighteenth-century philosophical

[15 Shady.]
[16 Shirkers.]
* W. Morris.

theme. Such of them as were not built on sand rested on a foundation of materialistic determinism. The theory of the 'inevitability' of the class war had arisen as a superstructure upon this foundation. The superstructure itself was a rickety affair; it depended upon an interpretation of history which was both arbitrary and fantastic (though less arbitrary and fantastic to an eighteenth-century thinker than it appears today). The reduction and subordination of all motives to the economic motive can be accepted even as a postulate (it cannot be proved) only if you are willing to believe that men rarely mean what they say, and that in war they have rarely known what they were fighting about, or in peace what was the object of their labors.

The absurdities which exponents of this school of thought allow themselves can be explained by the contradictions upon which the theory is based. The odd thing about the materialist philosophy, regarded merely as a theory, is that it is, of course, incompatible with any belief in social justice or indeed in any kind of justice (except as a sort of shadow play) or in the ethical rightness or wrongness of any kind of human society. There is neither justice nor injustice in the relations between animals; the jackal and the lion act as the jackal and the lion must act. In human society, the bourgeois and the proletarian act as the bourgeois and the proletarian must act. Every living creature after his kind pursues his own interest; every interest is material; all history is reduced to economic history, and this, in turn, is merely a statement of 'natural' fact, giving no grounds for assertions of Messianic hope.

It may be, as Marx thought, that the success of the proletarian revolution is inevitable; an assertion of this inevitability depended, in Marx's time, upon the validity of a number of postulates, or rather of a number of technical economic conclusions and forecasts. The greater part of these conclusions and forecasts have turned out to be wrong. Even if the proletarian revolution is a part of the nature of things, there is no sign of evidence or hope, on the materialist assumptions, that this revolution will begin a golden age. *Homo homini lupus*;[17] the bourgeois turned by force into proletarians will still be men. Thomas Hobbes,[18] with more logic than the revolutionary socialists, accepted this conclusion. He drew from it the corollaries that no revolution was worth while, and that men had better make the best of the botched planet upon which they live by sheltering themselves under the protection of a despotic power. If one such shelter col-

[17 'Man is a wolf to man.']

[18 Seventeenth-century English writer and philosopher. See his *Leviathan*.]

lapsed on their heads, they were wise to seek another. Otherwise they had better not shake the kaleidoscope of change.* I have always thought that Bruce Bairnsfather's picture of Old Bill [19] and the 'better 'ole' is an excellent summary of Hobbes's philosophy.

Such a philosophy of negation is not likely to inspire men to die at the barricades. One need not be surprised that the revolutionary faith as held by the proletariat and not by their self-appointed philosophers is in direct contradiction with a materialistic theory which admits of no 'eminences' in history, no heroic virtues, nothing but the *sacro egoismo* of individuals merged into groups. The 'class-war' as a myth, as a fighting creed, is something entirely different from the class war in the books of revolutionary theory. It is a good fighting creed. As a statement of fact, it is on much the same level as the cry 'Saint George for England' or 'Saint Denis for France.'

In the years after the last war I was 'sick of shadows.' I wanted no more 'myths.' For this reason I had given up the myths of the Christian religion. It was unlikely that I should accept the myth of the class-war if I had rejected the myth of the angelic salutation. I wanted the truth, not myths, and I did not think that anything short of the truth would avail to cure and not merely to change the names of the evil things in the body politic.

In rejecting myths, religious, economic, or political, I do not claim originality of thought for myself. Except in matters purely historical, I was dependent to a very considerable extent upon the intellectual integrity of others. It would be tedious to recount here in detail these arguments analyzing and exposing the philosophical fallacies upon which, for all their variations, the theories of revolutionary socialism were based, just as it would be out of place to retrace the steps by which I was convinced of the untenability first of an orthodox position, and next of a 'modernist' position in religion. In each of these cases, I have tried to read what the best authorities have had to say, but I could judge as a layman and not as an expert. Even if I were an expert, I might well be wrong; as a layman, in

* I, a child of the 1890's, belong to the age of kaleidoscopes. I found one in my grandfather's house, and the pleasure I obtained from it, on the hedonistic calculus, was equal to the pleasure of an aesthete in the windows of Chartres Cathedral. But I may have learned, all too precociously, from this instrument that, in a materialistic universe, 'plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.' ['The more it changes, the more it is the same thing.']

[19 Soldier in a famous cartoon published during World War I; preferring his present situation, dangerous as it was, to others that might prove even more dangerous, he said, 'If you know a better 'ole, go to it.']

spheres outside my own subject, it would be rash to affirm my own convictions as the last word; I can say only that I have reached these convictions.

I would record one other relevant fact which concerns many of my contemporaries as well as myself. I have said that, for my generation, rejection of the received tradition of Christianity was negative, in the sense that it did not lead to immediate action. A new religion can come into being only in the process of time, after the ripening of the fruit of a tree of knowledge which men have but lately planted. On the other hand, rejection both of the existing form of political society and of the revolutionary theories (and their accompanying 'battle-myths') did not mean abstention from political action. On the contrary, the premises upon which right political action could be based were within reach of everyone. I have mentioned earlier the fact that, if they had had the imagination, the boldness, and the mental equipment to take it, the liberal leaders after the last war had ready to hand a new political program which could have been based on the scientific knowledge and technology of the twentieth century. There was nothing esoteric about this knowledge. For years past it has been possible for a layman in economics to point to the fact that we have hardly begun to consider the political implications of the 'economics of plenty.' It has been possible for a layman in the physical and biological sciences to know—to know, not merely to hope—that we have within our reach the means of improving beyond any dream of past thinkers the standards of human life and also the quality of human beings. In order to use these opportunities which already exist, we need a revolution, but it is a revolution in our attitude of mind towards scientific knowledge.*

An English historian has written these words about the mentality of the German National Socialists as shown in their attitude towards their neighbors. 'In the full tide of the age of Abundance and Interdependence they use the language of the long ages of Drudgery, Penury, and Isolation.

* I can well understand the impatience of those scientists who know the social value of their knowledge, and the smallness of the adjustments really necessary for the practical application of this knowledge to the solution of political problems. It is perhaps easier for a historian to be patient; the accumulated practical wisdom of the centuries does not amount to a very large sum, and one cannot expect as rapid or unbroken a rate of progress in statecraft as in other fields of human activity. In spite of appearances to the contrary, the pace has indeed quickened in the last three hundred years; perhaps it has been too fast, and we are now paying the penalty. The heaviness of this penalty—again, taking a historical viewpoint—is not such as to make us despair, or to suspect that our 'progress' cannot be assessed in terms of values and that it is merely another of the 'battle-myths' of human beings.

Power for them still means the power of man over man rather than the power of man over Nature. A neighbor for them is still a potential enemy, spying for an opportunity of loot. Two neighbors constitute two enemies and a possible war on two fronts, which, with a little exaggeration, becomes an "encirclement." Countries endowed with natural resources which their inhabitants are only too anxious to sell in the world market are stores of treasure jealously withheld from a hungry warrior tribe. . . Political Economy, as we have understood it in the West for 150 years, is discarded—or rather, it is treated as an annex to the art of war.' *

The National Socialist Party, and other large sections of the German people, may be taken as pathological examples of political blindness, but few readers of this indictment can escape from an uneasy feeling that, if their own society has been free of the worst pathological symptoms to be found in Germany, at least we have not distinguished ourselves by our foresight and common sense in accepting the gifts which are there for us to take. Bundles and bundles of carrots have been dangled before our silly eyes, and yet we go hungry.[20] We too have been afraid of our own liberty, and too timid to use our own powers.

* Sir A. Zimmern, *The Prospects of Civilization* (Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs, No. 1, p. 30).

[20 See pp. 505–6, 597.]

Arnold J. Toynbee

CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL

¶ In the English-speaking world, at least, Arnold J. Toynbee is undoubtedly the most influential of contemporary historians. This eminence is due mainly to his *A Study of History*, which began to appear in 1933 but did not become widely known outside of Great Britain until the Second World War shocked many common readers into a more serious consideration of the nature of history than they had been accustomed to. Six volumes of *A Study of History* were published between 1933 and 1939, and three more are still (as this note is written) to come. Other historians have surveyed the decline of the Roman Empire and the West; Mr. Toynbee's inquiry includes civilizations dead before Rome was heard of. As both a history and a philosophy of history it is one of the most original and most important books of its time.

After a few years as Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, Oxford, Mr. Toynbee was Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language, Literature, and History at the University of London, 1919 to 1924, and since 1925 has been Director of Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. From 1915 to 1919 and again from 1939 to 1943 he was engaged in war work.

'Civilization on Trial' is from a volume of essays and lectures published in 1948.

I

OUR PRESENT Western outlook on history is an extraordinarily contradictory one. While our historical horizon has been expanding vastly in both the space dimension and the time dimension, our historical vision—what we actually do see, in contrast to what we now could see if we chose—has been contracting rapidly to the narrow field of what a horse

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sees between its blinkers or what a U-boat commander sees through his periscope.

This is certainly extraordinary; yet it is only one of a number of contradictions of this kind that seem to be characteristic of the times in which we are living. There are other examples that probably loom larger in the minds of most of us. For instance, our world has risen to an unprecedented degree of humanitarian feeling. There is now a recognition of the human rights of people of all classes, nations and races; yet at the same time we have sunk to perhaps unheard-of depths of class warfare, nationalism, and racialism. These bad passions find vent in cold-blooded, scientifically planned cruelties; and the two incompatible states of mind and standards of conduct are to be seen to-day, side by side, not merely in the same world, but sometimes in the same country and even in the same soul.

Again, we now have an unprecedented power of production side by side with unprecedented shortages. We have invented machines to work for us, but have less spare labour than ever before for human service—even for such an essential and elementary service as helping mothers to look after their babies. We have persistent alternations of widespread unemployment with famines of man-power. Undoubtedly, the contrast between our expanding historical horizon and our contracting historical vision is something characteristic of our age. Yet, looked at in itself, what an astonishing contradiction it is!

Let us remind ourselves first of the recent expansion of our horizon. In space, our Western field of vision has expanded to take in the whole of mankind over all the habitable and traversable surface of this planet, and the whole stellar universe in which this planet is an infinitesimally small speck of dust. In time, our Western field of vision has expanded to take in all the civilizations that have risen and fallen during these last 6000 years; the previous history of the human race back to its genesis between 600,000 and a million years ago; the history of life on this planet back to perhaps 800 million years ago. What a marvelous widening of our historical horizon! Yet, at the same time, our field of historical vision has been contracting; it has been tending to shrink within the narrow limits in time and space of the particular republic or kingdom of which each of us happens to be a citizen. The oldest surviving Western states—say France or England—have so far had no more than a thousand years of continuous political existence; the largest existing Western state—say Brazil or the United States—embraces only a very small fraction of the total inhabited surface of the Earth.

Before the widening of our horizon began—before our Western seamen circumnavigated the globe, and before our Western cosmogonists and geologists pushed out the bounds of our universe in both time and space—our pre-nationalist mediaeval ancestors had a broader and juster historical vision than we have to-day. For them, history did not mean the history of one's own parochial community; it meant the history of Israel, Greece, and Rome. And even if they were mistaken in believing that the world was created in 4004 B.C., it is at any rate better to look as far back as 4004 B.C. than to look back no farther than the Declaration of Independence or the voyages of the *Mayflower* or Columbus or Hengist and Horsa.[1] (As a matter of fact, 4004 B.C. happens, though our ancestors did not know this, to be a quite important date: it approximately marks the first appearance of representatives of the species of human society called civilizations.)

Again, for our ancestors, Rome and Jerusalem meant much more than their own home towns. When our Anglo-Saxon ancestors were converted to Roman Christianity at the end of the sixth century of the Christian era, they learned Latin, studied the treasures of sacred and profane literature to which a knowledge of the Latin language gives access, and went on pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem—and this in an age when the difficulties and dangers of travelling were such as to make modern war-time travelling seem child's play. Our ancestors seem to have been big-minded, and this is a great intellectual virtue as well as a great moral one, for national histories are unintelligible within their own time limits and space limits.

II

In the time dimension, you cannot understand the history of England if you begin only at the coming of the English to Britain, any better than you can understand the history of the United States if you begin only at the coming of the English to North America. In the space dimension, likewise, you cannot understand the history of a country if you cut its outlines out of the map of the world and rule out of consideration anything that has originated outside that particular country's frontiers.

What are the epoch-making events in the national histories of the United States and the United Kingdom? Working back from the present towards the past, I should say they were the two world wars, the Industrial Revolution, the Reformation, the Western voyages of discovery, the Renaissance, the conversion to Christianity. Now I defy anyone to tell the history

[1 Hengist and Horsa were leaders of the Jutish invasion of England, *c.* A.D. 449.]

of either the United States or the United Kingdom without making these events the cardinal ones, or to explain these events as local American or local English affairs. To explain these major events in the history of any Western country, the smallest unit that one can take into account is the whole of Western Christendom. By Western Christendom I mean the Roman Catholic and Protestant world—the adherents of the Patriarchate of Rome who have maintained their allegiance to the Papacy, together with the former adherents who have repudiated it.

But the history of Western Christendom, too, is unintelligible within its own time limits and space limits. While Western Christendom is a much better unit than the United States or the United Kingdom or France for a historian to operate with, it too turns out, on inspection, to be inadequate. In the time dimension, it goes back only to the close of the Dark Ages following the collapse of the western part of the Roman Empire; that is, it goes back less than 1300 years, and 1300 years is less than a quarter of the 6000 years during which the species of society represented by Western Christendom has been in existence. Western Christendom is a civilization belonging to the third of the three generations of civilizations that there have been so far.

In the space dimension, the narrowness of the limits of Western Christendom is still more striking. If you look at the physical map of the world as a whole, you will see that the small part of it which is dry land consists of a single continent—Asia—which has a number of peninsulas and offlying islands. Now, what are the farthest limits to which Western Christendom has managed to expand? You will find them at Alaska and Chile on the west and at Finland and Dalmatia on the east. What lies between those four points is Western Christendom's domain at its widest. And what does that domain amount to? Just the tip of Asia's European peninsula, together with a couple of large islands. (By these two large islands, I mean, of course, North and South America.) Even if you add in the outlying and precarious footholds of the Western world in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, its total habitable present area amounts to only a very minor part of the total habitable area of the surface of the planet. And you cannot understand the history of Western Christendom within its own geographical limits.

Western Christendom is a product of Christianity, but Christianity did not arise in the Western world; it arose outside the bounds of Western Christendom, in a district that lies today within the domain of a different civilization: Islam. We Western Christians did once try to capture from

the Muslims the cradle of our religion in Palestine. If the Crusades had succeeded, Western Christendom would have slightly broadened its footing on the all-important Asiatic mainland. But the Crusades ended in failure.

Western Christendom is merely one of five civilizations that survive in the world to-day; and these are merely five out of about nineteen that one can identify as having come into existence since the first appearance of representatives of this species of society about 6000 years ago.

III

To take the four other surviving civilizations first: if the firmness of a civilization's foothold on the continent—by which I mean the solid landmass of Asia—may be taken as giving a rough indication of that civilization's relative expectation of life, then the other four surviving civilizations are 'better lives'—in the jargon of the life insurance business—than our own Western Christendom.

Our sister civilization, Orthodox Christendom, straddles the continent from the Baltic to the Pacific and from the Mediterranean to the Arctic Ocean: it occupies the northern half of Asia and the eastern half of Asia's European peninsula. Russia overlooks the back doors of all the other civilizations; from White Russia and North-Eastern Siberia she overlooks the Polish and Alaskan back doors of our own Western world; from the Caucasus and Central Asia she overlooks the back doors of the Islamic and Hindu worlds; from Central and Eastern Siberia she overlooks the back door of the Far Eastern world.

Our half-sister civilization, Islam, also has a firm footing on the continent. The domain of Islam stretches from the heart of the Asiatic continent in North-Western China all the way to the west coast of Asia's African peninsula. At Dakar, the Islamic world commands the continental approaches to the straits that divide Asia's African peninsula from the island of South America. Islam also has a firm footing in Asia's Indian peninsula.

As for the Hindu society and the Far Eastern society, it needs no demonstration to show that the 400 million Hindus and the 400 or 500 million Chinese have a firm foothold on the continent.

But we must not exaggerate the importance of any of these surviving civilizations just because, at this moment, they happen to be survivors. If, instead of thinking in terms of 'expectation of life,' we think in terms of achievement, a rough indication of relative achievement may be found in

the giving of birth to individual souls that have conferred lasting blessings on the human race.

Now who are the individuals who are the greatest benefactors of the living generation of mankind? I should say: Confucius and Lao-tse;[2] the Buddha; the Prophets of Israel and Judah; Zoroaster, Jesus, and Muhammad; and Socrates. And not one of these lasting benefactors of mankind happens to be a child of any of the five living civilizations. Confucius and Lao-tse were children of a now extinct Far Eastern civilization of an earlier generation; the Buddha was the child of a now extinct Indian civilization of an earlier generation. Hosea, Zoroaster, Jesus, and Muhammad were children of a now extinct Syrian civilization. Socrates was the child of a now extinct Greek civilization.

Within the last 400 years, all the five surviving civilizations have been brought into contact with each other as a result of the enterprise of two of them: the expansion of Western Christendom from the tip of Asia's European peninsula over the ocean, and the expansion of Orthodox Christendom overland across the whole breadth of the Asiatic continent.

The expansion of Western Christendom displays two special features: being oceanic, it is the only expansion of a civilization to date that has been literally world-wide in the sense of extending over the whole habitable portion of the Earth's surface; and, owing to the 'conquest of space and time' by modern mechanical means, the spread of the network of Western material civilization has brought the different parts of the world into far closer physical contact than ever before. But, even in these points, the expansion of the Western civilization differs in degree only, and not in kind, from the contemporary overland expansion of Russian Orthodox Christendom, and from similar expansions of other civilizations at earlier dates.

There are earlier expansions that have made important contributions towards the present unification of mankind—with its corollary, the unification of our vision of human history. The now extinct Syrian civilization was propagated to the Atlantic coasts of Asia's European and African peninsulas westward by the Phoenicians, to the tip of Asia's Indian peninsula south-eastwards by the Himyarites[3] and Nestorians,[4] and to the Pacific

[2] Founder (sixth century B.C.) of Taoism, one of the main religions (along with Buddhism and Confucianism) of China.]

[3] A group of ancient South Arabian tribes.]

[4] Fifth-century Christians who were deemed heretical because of their views on the nature of Christ. They flourished until the fourteenth century; there are still Nestorian Christians in the East.]

north-eastwards by the Manichaeans [5] and Nestorians. It expanded in two directions overseas and in a third direction overland. Any visitor to Peking will have seen a striking monument of the Syrian civilization's overland cultural conquests. In the trilingual inscriptions of the Manchu Dynasty of China at Peking, the Manchu and Mongol texts are inscribed in the Syriac form of our alphabet, not in Chinese characters.

Other examples of the expansion of now extinct civilizations are the propagation of the Greek civilization overseas westwards to Marseilles by the Greeks themselves, overland northwards to the Rhine and Danube by the Romans, and overland eastwards to the interiors of India and China by the Macedonians; and the expansion of the Sumerian civilization in all directions overland from its cradle in 'Iraq.

IV

As a result of these successive expansions of particular civilizations, the whole habitable world has now been unified into a single great society. The movement through which this process has been finally consummated is the modern expansion of Western Christendom. But we have to bear in mind, first, that this expansion of Western Christendom has merely completed the unification of the world and has not been the agency that has produced more than the last stage of the process; and, second, that, though the unification of the world has been finally achieved within a Western framework, the present Western ascendancy in the world is certain not to last.

In a unified world, the eighteen non-Western civilizations—four of them living, fourteen of them extinct—will assuredly reassert their influence. And as, in the course of generations and centuries, a unified world gradually works its way toward an equilibrium between its diverse component cultures, the Western component will gradually be relegated to the modest place which is all that it can expect to retain in virtue of its intrinsic worth by comparison with those other cultures—surviving and extinct—which the Western society, through its modern expansion, has brought into association with itself and with one another.

History, seen in this perspective, makes, I feel, the following call upon historians of our generation and of the generations that will come after ours. If we are to perform the full service that we have the power to perform for our fellow human beings—the important service of helping them

[5 The Manichaean religion, a mixture of Christianity and Zoroastrianism, was widespread in both East and West in the fourth and fifth centuries of this era.]

to find their bearings in a unified world—we must make the necessary effort of imagination and effort of will to break our way out of the prison walls of the local and short-lived histories of our own countries and our own cultures, and we must accustom ourselves to taking a synoptic view of history as a whole.

Our first task is to perceive, and to present to other people, the history of all the known civilizations, surviving and extinct, as a unity. There are, I believe, two ways in which this can be done.

One way is to study the encounters between civilizations, of which I have mentioned four outstanding examples. These encounters between civilizations are historically illuminating, not only because they bring a number of civilizations into a single focus of vision, but also because, out of encounters between civilizations, the higher religions have been born—the worship, perhaps originally Sumerian, of the Great Mother and her Son who suffers and dies and rises again; Judaism and Zoroastrianism, which sprang from an encounter between the Syrian and Babylonian civilizations; Christianity and Islam, which sprang from an encounter between the Syrian and Greek civilizations; the Mahayana form of Buddhism and Hinduism, which sprang from an encounter between the Indian and Greek civilizations. The future of mankind in this world—if mankind is going to have a future in this world—lies, I believe, with these higher religions that have appeared within the last 4000 years (and all but the first within the last 3000 years), and not with the civilizations whose encounters have provided opportunities for the higher religions to come to birth.

A second way of studying the history of all the known civilizations as a unity is to make a comparative study of their individual histories, looking at them as so many representatives of one particular species of the genus Human Society. If we map out the principal phases in the histories of civilizations—their births, growths, breakdowns, and declines—we can compare their experiences phase by phase; and by this method of study we shall perhaps be able to sort out their common experiences, which are specific, from their unique experiences, which are individual. In this way we may be able to work out a morphology of the species of society called civilizations.

If, by the use of these two methods of study, we can arrive at a unified vision of history, we shall probably find that we need to make very far-going adjustments of the perspective in which the histories of divers civilizations and peoples appear when looked at through our peculiar present-day Western spectacles.

In setting out to adjust our perspective, we shall be wise, I suggest, to proceed simultaneously on two alternative assumptions. One of these alternatives is that the future of mankind may not, after all, be going to be catastrophic and that, even if the Second World War prove not to have been the last, we shall survive the rest of this batch of world wars as we survived the first two bouts, and shall eventually win our way out into calmer waters. The other possibility is that these first two world wars may be merely overtures to some supreme catastrophe that we are going to bring on ourselves.

This second, more unpleasant, alternative has been made a very practical possibility by mankind's unfortunately having discovered how to tap atomic energy before we have succeeded in abolishing the institution of war. Those contradictions and paradoxes in the life of the world in our time, which I took as my starting point, also look like symptoms of serious social and spiritual sickness, and their existence—which is one of the portentous features in the landscape of contemporary history—is another indication that we ought to take the more unpleasant of our alternatives as a serious possibility, and not just as a bad joke.

On either alternative, I suggest that we historians ought to concentrate our own attention—and direct the attention of our listeners and readers—upon the histories of those civilizations and peoples which, in the light of their past performances, seem likely, in a unified world, to come to the front in the long run in one or other of the alternative futures that may be lying in wait for mankind.

V

If the future of mankind in a unified world is going to be on the whole a happy one, then I would prophesy that there is a future in the Old World for the Chinese, and in the island of North America for the *Canadiens*. Whatever the future of mankind in North America, I feel pretty confident that these French-speaking Canadians, at any rate, will be there at the end of the story.

On the assumption that the future of mankind is to be very catastrophic, I should have prophesied, even as lately as a few years ago, that whatever future we might be going to have would lie with the Tibetans and the Eskimos, because each of these peoples occupied, till quite lately, an unusually sheltered position. 'Sheltered' means, of course, sheltered from the dangers arising from human folly and wickedness, not sheltered from the rigors of the physical environment. Mankind has been master of its physical

environment, sufficiently for practical purposes, since the middle palaeolithic age; since that time, man's only dangers—but these have been deadly dangers—have come from man himself. But the homes of the Tibetans and the Eskimos are sheltered no longer, because we are on the point of managing to fly over the North Pole and over the Himalayas, and both Northern Canada and Tibet would (I think) be likely to be theatres of a future Russo-American war.

If mankind is going to run amok with atom bombs, I personally should look to the Negrito Pygmies of Central Africa to salvage some fraction of the present heritage of mankind. (Their eastern cousins in the Philippines and in the Malay Peninsula would probably perish with the rest of us, as they both live in what have now come to be dangerously exposed positions.)

The African Negritos are said by our anthropologists to have an unexpectedly pure and lofty conception of the nature of God and of God's relation to man. They might be able to give mankind a fresh start; and, though we should then have lost the achievements of the last 6000 to 10,000 years, what are 10,000 years compared to the 600,000 or a million years for which the human race has already been in existence?

The extreme possibility of catastrophe is that we might succeed in exterminating the whole human race, African Negritos and all.

On the evidence of the past history of life on this planet, even that is not entirely unlikely. After all, the reign of man on the Earth, if we are right in thinking that man established his present ascendancy in the middle palaeolithic age, is so far only about 100,000 years old, and what is that compared to the 500 million or 800 million years during which life has been in existence on the surface of this planet? In the past, other forms of life have enjoyed reigns which have lasted for almost inconceivably longer periods—and which yet at last have come to an end. There was a reign of the giant armored reptiles which may have lasted about 80 million years; say from about the year 130 million to the year 50 million before the present day. But the reptiles' reign came to an end. Long before that—perhaps 300 million years ago—there was a reign of giant armoured fishes—creatures that had already accomplished the tremendous achievement of growing a movable lower jaw. But the reign of the fishes came to an end.

The winged insects are believed to have come into existence about 250 million years ago. Perhaps the higher winger insects—the social insects that have anticipated mankind in creating an institutional life—are still waiting for their reign on Earth to come. If the ants and bees were one day to acquire even that glimmer of intellectual understanding that man

has possessed in his day, and if they were then to make their own shot at seeing history in perspective, they might see the advent of the mammals, and the brief reign of the human mammal, as almost irrelevant episodes, 'full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.' [6]

The challenge to us, in our generation, is to see to it that this interpretation of history shall not become the true one.

[6 *Macbeth*, v, v, 27–8.]

Benjamin Franklin

REMARKS
CONCERNING THE SAVAGES OF NORTH AMERICA

Franklin's skill in political and social satire is attested by the many short pieces, most of them journalistic, that he wrote in the odd moments of his long and extraordinarily busy life. 'An Edict of the King of Prussia,' 'Rules by Which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One,' 'A Dialogue Between Britain, France, Spain, Holland, Saxony, and America,' and the one reprinted here are among the most familiar.

He was long interested in Indian affairs, a subject of no small importance to a Pennsylvanian in the eighteenth century, and he had a firsthand knowledge of the Indians themselves. In 1753 he was one of three commissioners appointed by the Governor to go to Carlisle, then a frontier post, to make a treaty with the chiefs of the Six Nations. The account of this episode in his *Autobiography* (not wholly accurate) relates that the Indians behaved well until the treaty was concluded because they were denied rum while official business was attended to. Then they all got drunk on rum furnished by the whites, and caused a great tumult. On the following day they apologized for their conduct. 'This backwoods mission of 1753 was the beginning of Franklin's career in diplomacy' (Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*, ch. vii).

Europeans of the eighteenth century idealized the 'noble savage,' whereas there is an American saying that 'The best Indian is a dead Indian.' Franklin knew both good and bad ones, but was consistently sympathetic with Indians and, like William Penn, thought they and the white men could live in mutual peace and justice. It was the whites who all too often broke the treaties and who took advantage of the red men's fatal weakness for alcohol. In 'Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America' (1784 or earlier) Franklin amusingly contrasts the manners of the two races, with a permissible exaggeration and an ironic sobriety that recall *Gulliver's Travels*. The description of the white men going to church to hear 'good things' is worthy of Swift at his best.

REPRINTED FROM *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. A. H. Smyth, 1907, by permission of Mr. Howard C. Myers, Jr.

SAVAGES we call them, because their Manners differ from ours, which we think the Perfection of Civility; they think the same of theirs.

Perhaps, if we could examine the Manners of different Nations with Impartiality, we should find no People so rude, as to be without any Rules of Politeness; nor any so polite, as not to have some Remains of Rudeness.

The Indian Men, when young, are Hunters and Warriors; when old, Counsellors; for all their Government is by Counsel of the Sages; there is no Force, there are no Prisons, no Officers to compel Obedience, or inflict Punishment. Hence they generally study Oratory, the best Speaker having the most Influence. The Indian Women till the Ground, dress the Food, nurse and bring up the Children, and preserve and hand down to Posterity the Memory of public Transactions. These Employments of Men and Women are accounted natural and honourable. Having few artificial Wants, they have abundance of Leisure for Improvement by Conversation. Our laborious Manner of Life, compared with theirs, they esteem slavish and base; and the Learning, on which we value ourselves, they regard as frivolous and useless. An Instance of this occurred at the Treaty of Lancaster,[1] in Pennsylvania, *anno* 1744, between the Government of Virginia and the Six Nations. After the principal Business was settled, the Commissioners from Virginia acquainted the Indians by a Speech, that there was at Williamsburg a College,[2] with a Fund for Educating Indian youth; and that, if the Six Nations would send down half a dozen of their young Lads to that College, the Government would take care that they should be well provided for, and instructed in all the Learning of the White People. It is one of the Indian Rules of Politeness not to answer a public Proposition the same day that it is made; they think it would be treating it as a light matter, and that they show it Respect by taking time to consider it, as of a Matter important. They therefore deferr'd their Answer till the Day following; when their Speaker began, by expressing their deep Sense of the kindness of the Virginia Government, in making them that Offer; 'for we know,' says he, 'that you highly esteem the kind of Learning taught in those

[1 In a letter written 4 July 1744, Franklin describes it in slightly different terms as a treaty 'between the governments of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania on one side, and the United Five Nations of Indians on the other.']

[2 The College of William and Mary.]

Colleges, and that the Maintenance of our young Men, while with you, would be very expensive to you. We are convinc'd, therefore, that you mean to do us Good by your Proposal; and we thank you heartily. But you, who are wise, must know that different Nations have different Conceptions of things; and you will therefore not take it amiss, if our Ideas of this kind of Education happen not to be the same with yours. We have had some Experience of it; Several of our young People were formerly brought up at the Colleges of the Northern Provinces; they were instructed in all your Sciences; but, when they came back to us, they were bad Runners, ignorant of every means of living in the Woods, unable to bear either Cold or Hunger, knew neither how to build a Cabin, take a Deer, or kill an Enemy, spoke our Language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for Hunters, Warriors, nor Counsellors; they were totally good for nothing. We are however not the less oblig'd by your kind Offer, tho' we decline accepting it; and, to show our grateful Sense of it, if the Gentlemen of Virginia will send us a Dozen of their Sons, we will take great Care of their Education, instruct them in all we know, and make *Men* of them.'

Having frequent Occasions to hold public Councils, they have acquired great Order and Decency in conducting them. The old Men sit in the foremost Ranks, the Warriors in the next, and the Women and Children in the hindmost. The Business of the Women is to take exact Notice of what passes, imprint it in their Memories (for they have no Writing), and communicate it to their Children. They are the Records of the Council, and they preserve Traditions of the Stipulations in Treaties 100 Years back; which, when we compare with our Writings, we always find exact. He that would speak, rises. The rest observe a profound Silence. When he has finish'd and sits down, they leave him 5 or 6 Minutes to recollect, that, if he has omitted any thing he intended to say, or has any thing to add, he may rise again and deliver it. To interrupt another, even in common Conversation, is reckon'd highly indecent. How different this is from the conduct of a polite British House of Commons, where scarce a day passes without some Confusion, that makes the Speaker hoarse in calling *to Order*; and how different from the Mode of Conversation in many polite Companies of Europe, where, if you do not deliver your Sentence with great Rapidity, you are cut off in the middle of it by the Impatient Loquacity of those you converse with, and never suffer'd to finish it!

The Politeness of these Savages in Conversation is indeed carried to Excess, since it does not permit them to contradict or deny the Truth of what is asserted in their Presence. By this means they indeed avoid Dis-

putes; but then it becomes difficult to know their Minds, or what Impression you make upon them. The Missionaries who have attempted to convert them to Christianity, all complain of this as one of the great Difficulties of their Mission. The Indians hear with Patience the Truths of the Gospel explain'd to them, and give their usual Tokens of Assent and Approbation; you would think they were convinc'd. No such matter. It is mere Civility.

A Swedish Minister, having assembled the chiefs of the Susquehanah Indians, made a Sermon to them, acquainting them with the principal historical Facts on which our Religion is founded; such as the Fall of our first Parents by eating an Apple, the coming of Christ to repair the Mischief, his Miracles and Suffering, &c. When he had finished, an Indian Orator stood up to thank him. 'What you have told us,' says he, 'is all very good. It is indeed bad to eat Apples. It is better to make them all into Cyder. We are much oblig'd by your kindness in coming so far, to tell us these Things which you have heard from your Mothers. In return, I will tell you some of those we have heard from ours. In the Beginning, our Fathers had only the Flesh of Animals to subsist on; and if their Hunting was unsuccessful, they were starving. Two of our young Hunters, having kill'd a Deer, made a Fire in the Woods to broil some Part of it. When they were about to satisfy their Hunger, they beheld a beautiful young Woman descend from the Clouds, and seat herself on that Hill, which you see yonder among the blue Mountains. They said to each other, it is a Spirit that has smelt our broiling Venison, and wishes to eat of it; let us offer some to her. They presented her with the Tongue; she was pleas'd with the Taste of it, and said, "Your kindness shall be rewarded; come to this Place after thirteen Moons, and you shall find something that will be of great Benefit in nourishing you and your Children to the latest Generations." They did so, and, to their Surprise, found Plants they had never seen before; but which, from that ancient time, have been constantly cultivated among us, to our great Advantage. Where her right Hand had touched the Ground, they found Maize; where her left hand had touch'd it, they found Kidney-Beans; and where her Backside had sat on it, they found Tobacco.' The good Missionary, disgusted with this idle Tale, said, 'What I delivered to you were sacred Truths; but what you tell me is mere Fable, Fiction, and Falshood.' The Indian, offended, reply'd, 'My brother, it seems your Friends have not done you Justice in your Education; they have not well instructed you in the Rules of common Civility. You saw that we, who understand and practise those Rules, believ'd all your stories; why do you refuse to believe ours?'

When any of them come into our Towns, our People are apt to crowd round them, gaze upon them, and incommode them, where they desire to be private; this they esteem great Rudeness, and the Effect of the Want of Instruction in the Rules of Civility and good Manners. 'We have,' say they, 'as much Curiosity as you, and when you come into our Towns, we wish for Opportunities of looking at you; but for this purpose we hide ourselves behind Bushes, where you are to pass, and never intrude ourselves into your Company.'

Their Manner of entring one another's village has likewise its Rules. It is reckon'd uncivil in travelling Strangers to enter a Village abruptly, without giving Notice of their Approach. Therefore, as soon as they arrive within hearing, they stop and hollow, remaining there till invited to enter. Two old Men usually come out to them, and lead them in. There is in every Village a vacant Dwelling, called *the Strangers' House*. Here they are plac'd, while the old Men go round from Hut to Hut, acquainting the Inhabitants, that Strangers are arriv'd, who are probably hungry and weary; and every one sends them what he can spare of Victuals, and Skins to repose on. When the Strangers are refresh'd, Pipes and Tobacco are brought; and then, but not before, Conversation begins, with Enquiries who they are, whither bound, what News, &c.; and it usually ends with offers of Service, if the Strangers have occasion of Guides, or any Necessaries for continuing their Journey; and nothing is exacted for the Entertainment.

The same Hospitality, esteem'd among them as a principal Virtue, is practis'd by Private Persons; of which Conrad Weiser,[3] our Interpreter, gave me the following Instance. He had been naturaliz'd among the Six Nations, and spoke well the Mohock Language. In going thro' the Indian Country, to carry a Message from our Governor to the Council at Onondaga,[4] he call'd at the Habitation of Canassatego, an old Acquaintance, who embrac'd him, spread Furs for him to sit on, plac'd before him some boil'd Beans and Venison, and mix'd some Rum and Water for his Drink. When he was well refresh'd, and had lit his Pipe, Canassatego began to converse with him; ask'd how he had far'd the many Years since they had seen each other; whence he then came; what occasion'd the Journey, &c. Conrad answered all his Questions; and when the Discourse began to flag, the Indian, to continue it, said, 'Conrad, you have lived long among the

[3 He was the chief interpreter between the Indians and the Pennsylvania government.]

[4 In New York, near the present Syracuse.]

white People, and know something of their Customs; I have been sometimes at Albany, and have observed, that once in Seven Days they shut up their Shops, and assemble all in the great House; tell me what it is for? What do they do there?' 'They meet there,' says Conrad, 'to hear and learn *good Things*.' 'I do not doubt,' says the Indian, 'that they tell you so; they have told me the same; but I doubt the Truth of what they say, and I will tell you my Reasons. I went lately to Albany to sell my Skins and buy Blankets, Knives, Powder, Rum, &c. You know I us'd generally to deal with Hans Hanson; but I was a little inclin'd this time to try some other Merchant. However, I call'd first upon Hans, and asked him what he would give for Beaver. He said he could not give any more than four Shillings a Pound; "but," says he, "I cannot talk on Business now; this is the Day when we meet together to learn *Good Things*, and I am going to the Meeting." So I thought to myself, "Since we cannot do any Business to-day, I may as well go to the meeting too," and I went with him. There stood up a Man in Black, and began to talk to the People very angrily. I did not understand what he said; but, perceiving that he look'd much at me and at Hanson, I imagin'd he was angry at seeing me there; so I went out, sat down near the House, struck Fire, and lit my Pipe, waiting till the Meeting should break up. I thought too, that the Man had mention'd something of Beaver, and I suspected it might be the Subject of their Meeting. So, when they came out, I accosted my Merchant. "Well, Hans," says I, "I hope you have agreed to give more than four Shillings a Pound." "No," says he, "I cannot give so much; I cannot give more than three shillings and sixpence." I then spoke to several other Dealers, but they all sung the same song,—Three and sixpence,—Three and sixpence. This made it clear to me, that my Suspicion was right; and, that whatever they pretended of meeting to learn *good Things*, the real purpose was to consult how to cheat Indians in the Price of Beaver. Consider but a little, Conrad, and you must be of my Opinion. If they met so often to learn *good Things*, they would certainly have learnt some before this time. But they are still ignorant. You know our Practice. If a white Man, in travelling thro' our Country, enters one of our Cabins, we all treat him as I treat you; we dry him if he is wet, we warm him if he is cold, we give him Meat and Drink, that he may allay his Thirst and Hunger; and we spread soft Furs for him to rest and sleep on; we demand nothing in return. But, if I go into a white Man's House at Albany, and ask for Victuals and Drink, they say, "Where is your Money?" and if I have none, they say, "Get out, you Indian Dog." You see they have not yet learned those little *Good Things*, that we need no Meetings to be in-

structed in, because our Mothers taught them to us when we were Children; and therefore it is impossible their Meetings should be, as they say, for any such purpose, or have any such Effect; they are only to contrive *the Cheating of Indians in the Price of Beaver.*'

NOTE.—It is remarkable that in all Ages and Countries Hospitality has been allow'd as the Virtue of those whom the civiliz'd were pleas'd to call Barbarians. The Greeks celebrated the Scythians for it The Saracens possess'd it eminently, and it is to this day the reigning Virtue of the wild Arabs. St. Paul,[5] too, in the Relation of his Voyage and Shipwreck on the Island of Melita says the Barbarous People shewed us no little kindness; for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present Rain, and because of the Cold.—F.

[[5] See Acts, xxviii, 1–2.]

Samuel Eliot Morison
and *Henry Steele Commager*

THE UNITED STATES IN 1790*

¶ *The Growth of the American Republic*, from which these pages are taken, is without question the most popular, as it is probably the best, short history of the United States. When first published in 1930 it was a one-volume work but has been expanded in successive editions until it is now more than twice its original length.

Samuel Eliot Morison (1887—), Professor of American History in Harvard University, wrote his first history of the United States while teaching at Oxford (*The Oxford History of the United States*, 1927). He is author of *The Maritime History of Massachusetts* (1921), *The Puritan Pronaos* (1936), and *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* (1942), a life of Columbus, which received a Pulitzer Prize. As historian of the United States Navy in World War II, he has written several volumes of the *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, and more are to follow. But some will regard as his most important work his *Tercentennial History of Harvard University*, which won international honors. In conception and scope it is unrivaled as a history of a university.

Henry Steele Commager (1902—) is, like Mr. Morison, a prolific and popular writer on American history. His books include *Theodore Parker* (1936), *Majority Rule and Minority Rights* (1943), and *The American Mind* (1950); he has collaborated in and edited many other publications. He is Professor of History in Columbia University.

1. GENERALITIES

ONLY twenty-five years since the Stamp Act; only fourteen years since the Thirteen Colonies declared 'to a candid world' that they were 'and of right ought to be, free and independent States.' It is already

* We have taken the year 1790, rather than 1789, as the central point of this description, because it was the year of the first federal census, which supplies the first statistics, incomplete to be sure and not very accurate, for the United States.

FROM *The Growth of the American Republic*, revised and enlarged edition, 1950. Copyright 1930, 1937, 1942, 1950, by Oxford University Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

time to take stock, and see what sort of country it was when the Federal Constitution was newly established, and Washington had been President for less than a year.

Much had been said in the debates over the Constitution about the enhanced prestige that it would give to the United States. Official Europe was not impressed. Not that they perceived danger in American republicanism. With Washington's army disbanded, and the navy dismantled, the United States was hardly a feather in the balance of power. Merchants and traders, however, were not so indifferent to the new nation, if it could be called a nation. As a source of raw materials for Europe, the United States was not yet in a class with the West Indies; but for a country of such vast empty spaces, it was an important market. Even with the Mississippi as its western boundary, the United States was equal in area to the British Isles, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy. Less than half this territory had yet come under the effective jurisdiction of the United States or of any state; and the population of four millions, including seven hundred thousand Negro slaves, was dispersed over an expanse of coastal plain and upland slightly more extensive than France. But if the trans-Appalachian country were ever settled, it would surely break off from the Thirteen States. So at least believed the few Europeans who gave the matter a thought.

Whatever the future might promise the United States in wealth and power seemed to be denied by political vagaries. America was attempting simultaneously three political experiments, which the accumulated wisdom of Europe deemed likely to fail: independence, republicanism, and federal union. While the British and the Spanish empires touched the states on three sides, their independence could hardly be maintained without more of that European aid by which it had been won; and an independence so maintained would be only nominal. Republicanism promised instability; and federalism, dissolution. Since the Renaissance, the uniform tendency in Europe had been towards centralized monarchy; federal republics had maintained themselves only in small areas, such as the Netherlands and Switzerland. Most European observers believed that the history of the American Union would be short and stormy.

It was still too early to aver that the Americans had conquered the forest. Volney[1] wrote that during his journey in 1796 through the length and breadth of the United States, he scarcely travelled for more than three miles together on open and cleared land. 'Compared with France, the entire

[1 French scholar (1757–1820). He spent three years, 1795–8, in the United States and in 1803 published a narrative of his experiences.]

country is one vast wood.' Only in southern New England, and the eastern portion of the Middle States, did the cultivated area exceed the woodland; and the clearings became less frequent as one approached the Appalachians.

The larger part of the American people then lived under isolated conditions, but in a land of such plenty that exertion had no attraction for the unambitious. The ocean and its shores yielded plenty of fish; the tidal rivers teemed with salmon, sturgeon, herring, and shad in due season, and the upland streams with trout; every kind of game was plentiful, from quail and raccoon to wild turkey and deer; and at times the flights of wild pigeon darkened the air. Cattle and swine throve on the woodland herbage and mast; Indian corn ripened quickly in the hot summer nights; even sugar could be obtained from the maple, or honey from wild bees. The American of the interior, glutted with nature's bounty and remote from a market, had no immediate incentive to produce much beyond his own actual needs; yet the knowledge that easier life could be had often pressed him westward to more fertile lands, or to a higher scale of living. Hence the note of personal independence that was, and in the main still is, dominant in American life. 'The means of subsistence being so easy in the country,' wrote an English observer in 1796, 'and their dependence on each other consequently so trifling, that spirit of servility to those above them so prevalent in European manners, is wholly unknown to them; and they pass their lives without any regard to the smiles or the frowns of men in power.'

However independent of those above him the average American might be, he was dependent on those about him for help in harvest, in raising his house-frame, and in illness. In a new country you turn to your neighbors for many offices and functions that, in a riper community, are performed by government or by specialists. Hence the dual nature of the American: individualism and herd instinct, indifference and kindliness. Isolation in American foreign policy is an authentic outcome of community isolation, as are the recent American relief organizations of primitive interdependence.

In 1790 there were only six cities (Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Charleston, Baltimore, and Salem) in the United States with a population of eight thousand or over; and their combined numbers included only three per cent of the total population.* Their aspect was not unlike that of provincial towns in Great Britain, for a native American architectural style had not yet been invented. Brick houses in the Georgian style, often detached and surrounded with gardens and shrubbery; inns with capacious

* The proportion of urban to rural population did not pass ten per cent until after 1840.

yards and stables; shops and stores with overhanging signs; places of worship with graceful spires after Sir Christopher Wren; market houses or city halls of the same style, often placed in the middle of a broad street or square, with arcades to serve as stalls or merchants' exchange; somewhat ramshackle unpainted wooden houses where the poorer people lived, but hardly one without a bit of garden or yard. Wealth was not a conspicuous feature of the United States in 1790. Almost a century had to elapse before a European could find here anything impressive in the way of shops, mansions, architecture, or high living. Nor was there anything to match the poverty of a European city; and even the slave population of the Carolina rice-fields was less wretched than the contemporary Irish peasant.[2]

Except for iron, the vast mineral resources of the country were practically untouched, and iron smelting remained primitive, owing to the abundance of wood, long after the British had made technical improvements. Agriculture was the main occupation of nine-tenths of the people. Except along the Hudson, practically every farmer was a freeholder. Except among the Pennsylvania Germans and the more enlightened country gentry of the South, the methods of agriculture were incredibly wasteful and primitive, with little sign of the improved culture and implements that were then transforming rural England. Wheat bread was largely an upper-class luxury. Indian corn was the principal food crop, with rye a poor second. Brown 'rye and Injun' bread, corn-pone or hoe-cake, and hasty-pudding or hominy, with salt pork or codfish, washed down by rum, cider, or whisky, according to locality, formed the farmer's staple diet from Maine to Georgia. As early as 1780 the Marquis de Chastellux noted the prevalence of hot biscuits, the bountiful breakfasts of the South, and 'the American custom of drinking coffee with meat, vegetables, or other food.' Frontier conditions still prevailed over the larger part of the 'Old West' which had been settled within the last fifty years. The houses were commonly log cabins of one or two rooms and a cock-loft; the fields were full of stumps, and acres of dead trees strangled by girdling were a depressing sight to travellers.

Bad roads were one of the penalties that Americans paid for their dispersed settlement and aversion from taxation. In 1790 the difficulties of communication were so great that a detour of several hundred miles by river and ocean was often preferable to an overland journey of fifty miles. It was almost as difficult to assemble the first Congress of the United States as to convene church councils in the Middle Ages. There was a main post-road from Wiscasset in Maine to Savannah in Georgia, over which passen-

[2 See Swift's A *Modest Proposal* (pp. 329–37).]

gers and mails were transported by light open stage-wagons, in approximately so many days as the railway now requires hours. It took twenty-nine days for the news of the Declaration of Independence to reach Charleston from Philadelphia. Bridges were few, even over the rivers and streams that were unfordable; the wooden pile structure across the Charles at Boston was considered an immense feat of engineering. Washington managed to visit almost every state in the Union in his own coach without serious mishap; but he had to choose a season when the roads were passable, and to undergo discomforts and even dangers. Most of the roads were merely wide tracks through the forest, full of rocks and stumps and enormous holes. Many that are marked on the early maps were mere bridle-paths or Indian trails, that would admit no wheeled vehicle. Northern farmers reserved their heavy hauling for winter, when snow made even the worst trace practicable for sledges; whilst upland Southerners got their tobacco to tidewater by pivoting a pair of shafts to a hogshead, and rolling it down on the bilge. Inns were to be found at frequent intervals along the main roads; but they commonly fulfilled the function of neighborhood pot-house better than resting-place for the weary wayfarer. The food was cheap and plentiful, but meals could be had only at stated hours—as in the largest American hotels within recent memory. A traveller was fortunate to secure a bed to himself, or to arrive on the first evening after the sheets were changed. Lieutenant Anburey, late of Burgoyne's army, regretted that he could not safely horsewhip the landlord who overcharged him. He might have fought the landlord, however, with bare fists, and been thought a better man for it.

Now that America has become famous for its sanitation, and for hotels with as many thousand baths as bedrooms, it is worth noting that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries America impressed European tourists as an uncommonly dirty country. From persons at that time accustomed to London or Paris, this meant a good deal. Even in the larger towns streets were seldom paved and never cleaned, offal was deposited in the docks, and, without wire screens, houses were defenseless against the swarms of flies and other winged pests that summer brought. As no one had yet heard of disease germs, there were intermittent outbreaks of typhoid and yellow fever in the seaports as far north as New Hampshire; and the frontiersmen were racked every summer by malarial fevers and agues,[3] transmitted by mosquitoes. Flower gardens were rare; and the pioneer, regarding trees as enemies, neither spared them nor planted them for purposes of shade. Country farmhouses in the older-settled region were almost

[3] See Brogan (pp. 322–3).]

invariably of wood, usually unpainted, resembling dingy boxes surrounded by unseemly household litter. Stoutly and honestly built as they were, the colonial houses that have survived long enough to acquire white paint, green blinds, lawns, shrubs, and century-old shade trees, are seen to have both distinction and beauty. In the eighteenth century, however, no one found much to admire in America in the works of man; and few Americans had the taste or leisure to appreciate the rugged grandeur of their mountains and forests, and their majestic rivers, swift rapids, and mighty waterfalls.

The United States of 1790 was not a nation, by any modern standard. Materials of a nation were present, but cohesive force was wanting. An English origin for the bulk of the people made a certain cultural homogeneity; the Maine fisherman could understand the Georgian planter much more readily than a Kentishman could understand a Yorkshireman, or an Alsatian a Breton. Political institutions, though decentralized, were fairly constant in form through the length and breadth of the land. But there was no tradition of union behind the War of Independence, and it was difficult to discover a common interest upon which union could be built. Most citizens of the United States in 1790, if asked their country or nation, would not have answered American, but Carolinian, Virginian, Pennsylvanian, Jerseyman, New Yorker, or New Englander. A political nexus had been found, but unless a national tradition were soon established, the United States would develop a particularism similar to the states of Germany and Italy. Already the problem was becoming complicated by the formation of settlements on the western waters, beyond the Appalachians. In the meantime, it would require the highest statesmanship to keep the thirteen commonwealths together, so widely did they differ in origin, tradition, religion, and economic interests. The Federal Constitution made it possible; but few observers in 1790 thought it probable.

2. NEW ENGLAND

In New England, climate, soil, and religion had produced in a century and a half a strongly individualized type, the Yankee, perhaps the most persistent ingredient of the American mixture.

The Yankee was the American Scot; and New England was an eighteenth-century Scotland without the lairds. A severe climate, a grudging soil that had to be cleared of boulders as well as trees, and a stern puritan faith, dictated the four gospels of education, thrift, ingenuity, and righteousness. By necessity rather than choice, the New Englanders had ac-

quired an aptitude for maritime enterprise and trading. They hailed with joy the new and wider opportunities for seafaring opened by freedom from the Acts of Trade. The seamen of Salem had already ventured to the East Indies with much success when Boston, in 1790, celebrated the return of her ship *Columbia*, laden with tea, silk, and porcelain, from a voyage around the world. On her next voyage the *Columbia* sailed up a great river that Vancouver had passed by, gave it her name, and to its banks her flag.

The five New England States were divided, politically, into townships, about thirty square miles on an average, containing from a hundred to several thousand people. Each was a unit for purposes of local government, conducting its own affairs by town meeting and selectmen, supporting common schools by local taxes, and electing annually to the state legislature a representative, whose votes and doings were keenly scrutinized by his constituents. The nucleus of every township was the meeting-house, part town hall, part place of worship, bordering on the village green. Outlying farms, by 1790, in most places outnumbered those with a village house-plot; and the common fields had been divided in severalty, and enclosed by uncemented stone walls. There was plenty of wood to supply the large open fireplaces. Families were large, but estates were seldom divided below a hundred acres; a Yankee farmer hoped to make a scholar or minister out of one son, to provide for a second with a tract of wilderness, and let the rest earn their living by working for hire, going to sea, or learning a trade. Until 1830 or thereabouts the American merchant marine was manned largely by New England lads who were seeking the wherewithal to purchase land and set up housekeeping.

Puritanism had become less grim than in the seventeenth, less petty than in the nineteenth century. 'Holy days' were still proscribed, and the puritan Sabbath was still observed; but there was plenty of frisking at rural barn-raisings and corn-huskings; and much drinking on public occasions such as ship-launchings, ordinations, college commencements, and Thanksgiving Day—the puritan substitute for Christmas, which in course of time became an additional day of merry-making. On the whole, living was plain in New England; and the ample, generous tone of new countries was little in evidence. Even in the family of President Adams, we are told, the children were urged to a double portion of hasty-pudding, in order to spare the meat that was to follow. Idleness was the cardinal sin. If a Yankee had nothing else to do, he whittled barrel-bungs from a pine stick, or carved a model of his latest ship; and he usually had much else to do. New England house-

wives spun, wove, and tailored their woolen garments, and made cloth for sale. Small fulling mills and paper mills were established at the numerous waterfalls, and distilleries in the seaports turned West India molasses into that grateful if dangerous beverage, New England rum. Wooden ware was made by snow-bound farmers for export to the West Indies, nails were cut and headed from wrought iron rods at fireside forges, and in some parts there was a domestic industry of shoemaking. Connecticut, in particular, had attained a nice balance between farming, seafaring, and handicraft, which made the people of that state renowned for steady habits and mechanical ingenuity. Before the century was out, Eli Whitney of New Haven devised the cotton gin and interchangeable parts for firearms: inventions which, for weal or woe, have deeply affected the human race. New England was ripe for an abrupt transition from handicraft to the factory system; but the success of her seafarers, and the facility of emigration, postponed industrial revolution for another generation. The intellectual flowering was all in the future.

For a good inside view of New England by an outsider, we are indebted to the South American patriot Francisco de Miranda, who travelled through that region in the summer of 1784. An intelligent member of an old Spanish family, brought up in Carácas and familiar with Spain, Miranda found much in New England that was kindly, pleasant, and in good taste. At New Haven he is taken over Yale College by President Stiles, converses with a classically educated miller who had been a cavalry captain in the late war, and views the famous Blue Laws in the town archives. Proceeding to Wethersfield, he attends Sabbath meeting, and admires the manner in which the psalms and responses are sung by the congregation, trained by a music master. At Windsor, the men are ill-dressed and the women ill-favored, but he enjoys a lively literary conversation with John Trumbull, as well as with the innkeeper. This worthy is discovered reading Rollin's *Ancient History*, and discusses with Miranda the comparative merits of the ancients and the moderns, stoutly maintaining Ben Franklin to be a better man than Aristides.[4] Thence to Middletown, and a boat excursion on the river with General Parsons and other good fellows, drinking copiously of punch 'in pure republican style,' which was probably not so different from the present style. Newport he thought justly called the paradise of New England, containing, besides hospitable natives, a large company of ladies and gentlemen from Charleston, S. C., who were already using the place as a summer resort. The leading lights of Providence, on

[4 'The Just'; Athenian statesman and general, fifth century B.C.]

the other hand, were provincial and vulgar, Commodore Esek Hopkins even insisting that there was no such place as the City of Mexico.

Miranda entered Boston armed with letters of introduction to the 'best people,' whose ladies he found vain, luxurious, and too much given to the use of cosmetics. Boston society was so fast, in that year of post-war extravagance, that he predicted bankruptcy within twenty years. Samuel Adams, however, was still faithful to republican simplicity. After carefully inspecting Harvard College, Miranda reports it better suited to turn out Protestant clergymen than intelligent and liberal citizens. He visits the studio of the self-taught painter, Edward Savage, and predicts that with a European education his talent will take him far. (Savage never visited Europe, but his portrait of Washington is the best likeness we have of that great man.) From Boston, Miranda takes the eastward road to Portsmouth, N. H., and is much impressed by the thrift and prosperity of the North Shore of Massachusetts. 'Liberty inspires such intelligence and industry in these towns . . . that the people out of their slender resources maintain their large families, pay heavy taxes, and live with comfort and taste, a thousand times happier than the proprietors of the rich mines and fertile lands of Mexico, Peru, Buenos Aires, Carácas, and the whole Spanish-American continent.'

The New Englanders were very well satisfied with themselves in 1790, and had reason to be; for they had struck root in a region where nature was not lavish, and produced a homogeneous, cohesive, and happy society. Disorderly as colonists when royal governors attempted to thwart their will, the Yankees quickly passed through the cruder phases of democracy. For another generation the leadership of their clergy, well-to-do merchants, and conservative lawyers would not be successfully challenged. Outside New England, where they were familiar as traders and pedlars, the Yankees were regarded much as Scotchmen then were by the English: often envied, sometimes respected, but generally disliked.

3. THE MIDDLE STATES

New York State was heterogeneous in 1790, and was never destined to attain homogeneity. The Dutch 'Knickerbocker' families shared a social ascendancy with the descendants of English and Huguenot merchants. There were many villages where Dutch was still spoken, and Albany was still thoroughly Dutch, ruled by mynheers who lived in substantial brick houses with stepped gables. But the Netherlandish element comprised only one-sixth of the three hundred thousand inhabitants of New York State. For the rest, there were Germans in the Mohawk valley and Ulster

county; a few families of Sephardic [5] Jews at New York City; an appreciable element of Scotch and Irishmen, and a strong majority of English, among whom the Yankee element was fast increasing.

New York was only the fifth state in population in 1790; a fourfold increase in thirty years made it first in 1820. It was the settlement of the interior that made the difference. In 1790 the inhabited area of New York followed the Hudson river from New York City to Albany, whence one branch of settlement continued up the Mohawk towards Lake Erie, and a thin line of clearings pushed up by Lake George and Lake Champlain, which Burgoyne had found a wilderness. There were also a few islands of settlement such as Cooperstown, where James Fenimore Cooper was cradled in the midst of the former hunting grounds of the Six Nations. Socially, New York was still the most aristocratic of the states, in spite of the extensive confiscation and subdividing of loyalists' estates; for most of the patroons managed to retain their vast properties. One out of every seven New York families held slaves in 1790, and nine more years elapsed before gradual emancipation began. The qualifications for voting and for office were high. For a generation the story of New York politics was to be, in the main, a struggle for the prestige and profit of office between the great whig families, struggles waged by the means familiar to English politics of the time. These landlords were wont to improve their fortunes through alliances with mercantile families, with lawyer-statesmen like Hamilton and Rufus King, and by speculation in Western land.

New York City owed its prosperity, and its thirty-three thousand inhabitants, to a unique position at the mouth of the Hudson river, the greatest tidal inlet between the St. Lawrence and the Plata. It was the natural gateway to the Iroquois country, which was settled between 1790 and 1820; and in 1825 the Erie Canal, following the lowest watershed between the Atlantic States and the Lakes, made New York City the principal gateway to the West, and the financial center of the Union. The merchants did not need to be so venturesome as those of New England and Baltimore, and they spent more on good living than on churches and schools. They too had a family college—Columbia (late King's); but while Boston was forming learned institutions, and Philadelphia supporting a literary journal and a Philosophical Society, New York was founding the Columbian Order, better known as Tammany Hall. Yet it was in the midst of this wealthy, gay, and somewhat cynical society that Alexander Hamilton reached manhood, and Washington Irving was born.

[5 Spanish and Portuguese.]

New Jersey, a farming state of less than two hundred thousand people, has been compared with a barrel tapped at both ends by New York and Philadelphia. Travellers along the road between these two cities admired the Jersey apple orchards, the well-cultivated farms, and, at the pleasant village of Princeton, the College of New Jersey whose Nassau Hall, 180 feet long and four stories high, was reputed to be the largest building in the Thirteen States. At the falls of the Passaic river, near Newark, an incorporated company had just founded Paterson, the first factory village in America. South of this main road was a region of pine barrens and malarial marshes.

Pennsylvania, the second largest state in the Union, with a population of 435,000, had acquired a certain uniformity in diversity. Her racial heterogeneity, democratic polity, and social structure, ranging from wealthy and sophisticated merchants to the wildest frontiersmen, made Pennsylvania a microcosm of the America to be. Philadelphia, with its evenly spaced and numbered streets crossing at right angles, had been the principal port of immigration for a century previous to 1825; and the boat-shaped Conestoga wagons of the Pennsylvania Dutch needed but slight improvement to become the 'prairie schooner' of westward advance.

Pennsylvania was still in the throes of democratic experiments. Her radical state constitution, with a unicameral legislature and a plural executive, had become notoriously factious and incompetent. In 1790 a new constitution with a bicameral legislature was adopted, but manhood suffrage was retained; and this laid a firm foundation for subsequent democratization of Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia, admirably situated at the junction of the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers, and with a population of forty-five thousand in 1790, was easily the first city in the United States for commerce, architecture, and culture. During the next ten years it was the seat of the Federal Government and of a more brilliant republican court than the city of Washington was to show for a century to come. Owing largely to Quaker influence, Philadelphia was well provided with penal and charitable institutions, amateur scientists and budding literati. It was 'by Delaware's green banks' that Tom Moore in 1804 found Dennie and Ingersoll and Brockden Brown,[6] but for whom

[[6] Joseph Dennie (1768–1812), 'the American Addison,' published two volumes of essays. Jared Ingersoll (1782–1862) wrote fiction, history, and poetry; his novel, *Inchiquin* (1810) received some European attention. Brockden Brown (1771–1810), the most important of these three early American writers, is remembered for his novels, *Wieland* (1798), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799), *Ormond* (1799), and *Edgar Huntly* (1799).]

Columbia's days were done,
Rank without ripeness, quickened without sun.

These 'sacred few' were producing pallid imitations of the *Spectator*, dreary tragedies of medieval Europe, novels of mystery and horror. Hugh Brackenridge of Pittsburgh alone expressed the rich color and wilderness flavor of youthful Pennsylvania.

A few miles from Philadelphia one reached the garden spot of eighteenth-century America, a belt of rich limestone soil that crossed the Susquehanna river, and extended into Maryland and the Valley of Virginia. The fortunate inhabitants of this region were reaping huge profits in 1790 by reason of the European crop failures of 1789; and were to prosper still more through the wars that flowed from the French Revolution. 'The whole country is well cultivated,' wrote a Dutch financier who passed through this region in 1794, 'and what forests the farmers keep are stocked with trees of the right kind—chestnut, locust, walnut, maple, white oak. It is a succession of hills, not too high, and the aspect of the country is very beautiful.' Lancaster, with four thousand inhabitants, was the largest inland town in the United States. Here and in the limestone belt, the bulk of the farmers and townspeople were German. They were by far the best husbandmen in America, using a proper rotation, with clover and root crops. Their houses were commonly of stone, and heated by stoves; their fences of stout posts and rails; but what most impressed strangers were the great barns, with huge gable-end doors, through which a loaded wagon could drive onto a wide threshing-floor, flanked by spacious hay-lofts, cattle and sheep pens, and horse stables. The Germans were divided into a number of sects, some of which, like the Amish Mennonites, have retained their quaint costumes and puritanism into the twentieth century. They supported six weekly newspapers in their own language, and were as keen household manufacturers as the Yankees; but Chastellux found them lacking in public spirit, compared with the English-speaking Americans, 'content . . . with being only the spectators of their own wealth,' and with the standards of a German peasant.

Lancaster was the parting point for two streams of westward emigration. One wagon road took a southwesterly direction, crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry, and entered the Shenandoah valley of Virginia, between the Blue Ridge and the Unakas. The Pittsburgh wagon road struck out northwesterly, crossed the Susquehanna by ford or ferry at Harrisburg (the future capital of Pennsylvania), and followed the beautiful wooded valley

of the Juniata to its headwaters. This region was inhabited mainly by Ulstermen, although in the easternmost section they were rapidly being bought out by the more thrifty and land-hungry Germans. North of it, and west of the upper Susquehanna, Pennsylvania was still a mountainous virgin forest. After a long, painful pull up the rocky, rutty wagon road, to an elevation of some 2,500 feet, you attained the Alleghany front, an escarpment from which, by a rolling, densely wooded plateau, you descended westward to where the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers come together to form the Ohio. At this point you reached Pittsburgh, a thriving village in the midst of virgin coal and iron deposits, the most important of three inner gateways to the far West. Already fleets of covered wagons were bringing in settlers destined for Kentucky, and goods to be distributed down the mighty valley of the Ohio and Mississippi.

4. THE SOUTH

Twenty-five miles south of Philadelphia the post-road crossed the Mason and Dixon line,* an internal boundary that bulks large in American history. Originally drawn to divide Pennsylvania from Delaware and Maryland, in 1790 it was already recognized as the boundary between the farming, or commercial, and the plantation states. From 1804 to 1865 it divided the free and the slave states; and even yet it is the boundary of sentiment between North and South.

Delaware, formerly an autonomous portion of the Penn proprietary, was the least populous state of the Union; and apart from the flour-milling regions about Wilmington, a farming community, steadfastly conservative in politics. Maryland, with 320,000 souls, one-third of them slaves, was the northernmost state where slavery was an essential part of the economic system. The old English Catholic families still retained some of the better plantations on both shores of Chesapeake Bay; the Irish Carrolls of Carrollton provided a 'signer,' a United States Senator, and the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States. Maryland produced the best wheat flour in America, and a variety of tobacco chiefly appreciated by the French. The lowland planters were famous for hospitality, and for the various and

* The Mason and Dixon line is the parallel latitude of 39° 43′ 26.3″ between the southwestern corner of Pennsylvania and the arc of a circle of twelve miles' radius drawn from Newcastle (Delaware) as a center; and along that arc to the Delaware river. It was run in 1763–1767 by two English surveyors named Mason and Dixon, in consequence of Lord Hardwicke's decision, in 1750, of a long-standing controversy between the propnetors of Maryland and Pennsylvania. But there have been interstate controversies about parts of it even in the present century.

delicious methods devised by their black cooks for preparing the oysters, soft-shell crabs, terrapin, shad, canvasback ducks, and other delicacies afforded by Chesapeake Bay. Annapolis, the pleasant and hospitable state capital, had just been made the seat of St. John's College. Later, the town was to be saved from decay by the United States Naval Academy.

Baltimore, a mere village before the War of Independence, was approaching Boston in population. A deep harbor on Chesapeake Bay, water-driven flour mills, and proximity to wheat-growing regions made it the metropolis for an important section of Pennsylvania, in preference to Philadelphia. Baltimore was already famous for belles, one of whom married Napoleon Bonaparte's brother Jerome, and for swift schooners, the Baltimore clippers that made excellent privateers and successful pirates. The Maryland Piedmont was much like the limestone belt of Pennsylvania: a rich rolling grain country tilled by English and German farmers, with the aid of a few slaves. This region, in combination with Baltimore, neutralized the Tidewater aristocracy, and gradually drew Maryland into the social and economic orbit of the Northern states.

From Baltimore a road that long remained the despair of travellers traversed Maryland to Georgetown, just below the Great Falls of the Potomac. Here, at the head of navigation, the City of Washington was being planned. Crossing the river, one entered the Old Dominion, with a population of 748,000, of which forty per cent were slaves.*

Virginia is today but a fragment of the imperial domain that was granted to the Virginia Company in 1606; and less than half the size of the state in 1790. Kentucky was lopped off as a separate state of the Union in 1792, and West Virginia in 1863. But even without Kentucky, Virginia was the most populous, proud, and wealthy American commonwealth.

The Tidewater or coastal plain of Virginia, east of the fall line which passes through Washington, Richmond, and Petersburg, consists of a series of long narrow peninsulas separated by the navigable estuaries of the Potomac, Rappahannock, York, and James rivers. There were no towns excepting Portsmouth and Norfolk, and scarcely even a village. County seats were merely a court house, church, and tavern at some convenient cross-roads. Tobacco warehouse-receipts, and bills of exchange on your London merchant, who did your shopping in the metropolis, served as currency. 'Even now,' wrote John Randolph in 1813, 'the old folks talk of "going home to England."' But by 1790 the Tidewater had seen its best days. The state capital had been transferred to Richmond, at the falls of

* Not including the 74,000 in Kentucky (17 per cent slaves).

the James; only William and Mary College kept Williamsburg alive. Norfolk, not yet recovered from the fire of 1776, was a poor-looking seaport of less than thirty-five hundred people. The forest was reconquering exhausted tobacco fields, the wiser planters were laying down their lands to wheat and grass, and the wisest were emigrating to Kentucky. One of the best plantations of the Virginia Tidewater, Davies Randolph's 'Presqu'ile' at Bermuda Hundred on the James, was described by the Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, in 1795. It contained 750 acres, of which 400 were wood and marsh, and 350 were cultivated by eight Negroes, two horses, and four oxen. This area was divided into forty-acre fields by the usual Virginia or worm fence, made of split rails, notched near the ends, and intersected in a zigzag pattern in order to dispense with posts. 'No sort of fencing is more expensive or wasteful of timber,' wrote Washington; but those improving farmers who attempted hedges were thwarted by the enterprise of American hogs and cattle. Mr. Randolph used manure on but one of his fields. His system of rotation was corn, oats, wheat, rye, fallow: an improvement over the customary one of corn, wheat, and pasturage, which John Taylor called a scheme of tillage founded in contempt of the earth and terminating in its murder. With a modest average yield of ten to twelve bushels per acre, Presqu'ile brought its owner from $1,800 to $3,500 annually; and he valued the plantation at $20,000. The proportion of labor to acreage was so small that the condition of the land compared 'very indifferently with the most ordinary husbandry of Europe.' Apart from the mansion houses, the appearance of Virginia plantations, with their ill-cultivated fields, straggling fences, and dilapidated Negroes' cabins, was slovenly in the extreme. A traveller going south from Pennsylvania looked in vain for tidy agriculture until he reached the rice plantations of South Carolina.

By 1790 the Virginia Piedmont between the fall line and the Blue Ridge, for the most part a fruitful, rolling country, had become the seat of all that was healthy and vigorous in the plantation system; and Richmond, as the principal outlet of the James river valley, was flourishing. Most of the great Virginia statesmen of the revolutionary and early republican eras were either born in this region or grew to manhood in its wilder margins. The 'First Families of Virginia,' a rural aristocracy of native origin, reproduced the high sense of honor and public spirit of the English aristocracy, as well as the amenities of English country life. They frequently combined planting with the practice of law, but left trade to their inferiors, commerce to the agents of British mercantile firms, and navigation to the Yankees. Pre-

pared by private tutors or at schools kept by Scotch clergymen for Princeton or William and Mary, trained to administration by managing their large estates, and to politics by representing their counties in the Virginia Assembly, the planters stepped naturally and gracefully into the leadership of the nation. It was no accident that Jefferson of Virginia drafted the Declaration of Independence, that Washington of Virginia led the army and became the first President, that Madison of Virginia fathered the Federal Constitution, that Marshall of Virginia became the greatest American jurist, and that he and Taylor of Virginia [7] led the two opposing schools of American political thought.

If the proper object of society be to produce and maintain an aristocracy, Virginia had achieved it. If it be to maintain a high general level of comfort and intelligence, she had not. Below the 'first families,' but continually pushing into their level by marriage, was a class of lesser planters, to which Patrick Henry belonged: a class generous and hospitable, but uneducated, provincial, and rude. Below them was an unstable and uneasy class of yeomen, outnumbering the planters in the Piedmont. Descended largely from indentured servants and deported convicts, these peasants, as the gentry called them, were illiterate, ferocious, and quarrelsome. Self-contained plantations, with slave artisans and mechanics, left small demand for skilled white labor, and made small farms unprofitable. Hence the Virginia yeoman had but the alternative of migrating westward, or of becoming 'poor white trash' despised even by the slaves. It was already doubtful in 1790 that any community could endure half slave and half free; [8] presently it would be doubtful if the nation could thus endure.

In the lowlands the slaves outnumbered the whites; in the Piedmont they comprised about one-third of the total population. They supported the economic system, and contributed much to the quality of Virginia leadership. Jefferson's oft-quoted passage, that 'the whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions,' can only have applied to new and inexperienced members of the planter class; for the successful management of Negroes required tact, patience, forbearance, an even temper, and a sense of humor. Few denied that slavery was a moral evil and a menace to the country. Almost every educated Virginian hoped to make real the opening words of his Bill of Rights 'that all men are by nature free and independent.' But a state whose population was forty per cent black naturally quailed before such a social

[7 John Taylor of Caroline (1753–1824).]
[8 See p. 504.]

revolution. Jefferson counted on the young abolitionists that Chancellor Wythe was making in William and Mary College. But in a few years' time the cotton gin gave chattel slavery a new lease of life; and, shortly after Jefferson died, a young professor of William and Mary began to preach the doctrine that Negro slavery was justified by history and ordained by God.

As one rode westward across the Virginia Piedmont, with the crest-line of the Blue Ridge looming in the distance, the forest became more dense, the large plantations less numerous, the farms of independent yeomen more frequent, and the cultivation of tobacco gave place to corn and grazing. Between the Blue Ridge and the higher folds of the Appalachians lies the Shenandoah valley peopled as we have seen by Scotch and Germans, and feeling itself a province apart from lowland and Piedmont until 1861. It was here, in Rockingham county, that Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the President, lived until 1784; and at Staunton in Augusta county, Woodrow Wilson was born in 1856. Still less did the trans-Appalachian part of Virginia, a densely wooded plateau sloping to the upper Ohio, resemble the Virginia of the planters. In 1790 it was a frontier more primitive even than Kentucky. In 1861 it refused to follow the Old Dominion out of the Union, and became the State of West Virginia.

South from Petersburg in Virginia, through a level, sandy country of pine forest, a two days' journey took you to Halifax, one of several petty seaports of North Carolina. This 'tar-heel state' possessed a very different character from her neighbors on either side. Her population was the result of two distinct streams of secondary and fairly recent colonization: Virginia yeomen who settled in the coastal plain; those who followed the Shenandoah valley into the Piedmont and the Great Smoky mountains. Along the Roanoke river there was an overflow of plantations from Virginia; but the greater part of the coastal plain, a hundred miles or more wide, consisted of pine barrens with soil too sandy for wheat or tobacco, and extensive marshes like the Dismal Swamp. The river mouths were landlocked against vessels drawing above ten feet by the barrier beaches that enclosed Pamlico and Albemarle Sounds. This region, therefore, was sparsely settled, and its chief exports were naval stores: tar, turpentine, and pine timber. President Washington, travelling through it in 1791, found it 'the most barren country he ever beheld,' without 'a single house of an elegant appearance.'

The Piedmont of North Carolina was a thriving region of upland farms, supporting a large population of Germans, Ulstermen, English, and Highland Scotch. There was little communication between coast and Piedmont

through the pine barrens, and less sympathy. Petersburg, Va., and Charleston, S. C., were nearer or more convenient markets for the upland farmers than the petty ports of their own state. Local particularism was so strong that the legislature abandoned Governor Tryon's 'palace' at Newbern, and became peripatetic. Only by creating a new state capital, at Raleigh on the falls of the Neuse river, could it manage to settle down.

The plantation system never obtained a strong foothold in North Carolina; the state remained a farming democracy, aided by rather than based upon chattel slavery. Among its white population of three hundred thousand in 1790, less than one-third owned slaves; and the proportion was even smaller in 1860.* For such a community a democratic policy was natural and inevitable; but without the leaven of popular education, a landlocked region was not apt to make much progress. Honest mediocrity was typical of North Carolina statesmanship from the eighteenth century to the twentieth, when the industrial revolution brought wealth, material progress, enthusiasm for learning, and accomplishment in the arts.

There was no such dearth of great figures, as we have seen, in South Carolina. The coastal plain of that state has a sub-tropical climate. In Charleston, its only city, the ravages of war were quickly repaired and the gay old life was resumed; in 1790, with a population of sixteen thousand, it was the fourth city in America, and metropolis of the lower South.† The Rev. Jedidiah Morse in his *American Geography* (1789) wrote, 'In no part of America are the social blessings enjoyed more rationally and liberally than in Charleston. Unaffected hospitality, affability, ease in manners and address, and a disposition to make their guests welcome, easy and pleased with themselves, are characteristics of the respectable people of Charleston.' One can well imagine that stiff New England Calvinist succumbing to the graceful attentions of a Charleston family, while he sipped their Madeira wine on a spacious verandah overlooking a tropical garden.

The South Carolina planters went to their country houses in November, when the first frosts removed the danger of fever; and took their families back to Charleston for the gay season from January to March. Early spring, a most anxious period in rice culture, was passed in the plantation man-

* With a total population of 400,000 in 1790 (one-quarter slave), North Carolina was the fourth state in the Union, just ahead of New York. But North Carolina's interior had already been settled, and New York's had not. New York reached the million mark in 1810; North Carolina only in 1870; in 1920 North Carolina had three million to New York's twelve and a half; and its largest city fell short of a hundred thousand.

† In 1940 Charleston had only 71,275 inhabitants, but more distinction and flavor than any one of the hundred American cities that exceeded it in size.

sion—shaded by a classic portico, and surrounded by groves of live oaks, hung with Spanish moss. The hot months would be spent at a summer house in the pine hills, or at Newport. Popular education was little attended to, but the College of Charleston was established in 1785, and the more opulent families continued to send their sons to Old England or New England for higher education.

Rice, the economic basis of the lower country, required intensive cultivation, along such parts of the tidal rivers as permitted artificial flooding with fresh water. These regions were so unhealthy for white people that black labor, immune from malaria, was a necessity; and in no part of the United States were slaves so numerous. Out of sixteen hundred heads of families in the rural part of the Charleston district, in 1790, thirteen hundred held slaves to the number of forty-three thousand. South Carolina not only blocked abolition of the African slave trade in the Federal Constitution, but reopened traffic by state law in 1803.

Indigo culture had been abandoned with the loss of the Parliamentary bounty; but the South Carolina planters, in 1790, were experimenting with the long staple sea-island cotton; and the next year Robert Owen spun into yarn the first two bags of it that were sent to England. The short staple upland cotton, which could be grown inland, was so difficult to separate from its seed as to be unmarketable until after the cotton gin was invented in 1793. One effect of this momentous discovery was to extend the plantation system into the Piedmont, the more populous section. In 1790 the upland people had just won their first victory by transferring the state capital up-country, to Columbia; but the Piedmont was still underrepresented in the legislature, and poor men were denied office by high property qualifications. John C. Calhoun, who was destined to weld the South and divide the Union, was a boy of eight in the upper country, in 1790.

Across the Savannah river from South Carolina lay Georgia, which retained few traces of General Oglethorpe's pious experiment. The objects of his benevolence, poor debtors and Scotch highlanders, wedged between hostile Indians on one side and a plantation colony on the other, had led a miserable existence. As soon as the prohibition of rum, slaves, and large holdings was removed, Georgia developed, as had South Carolina, a slave-holding rice coast, a belt of infertile pine barrens, and a rolling, wooded Piedmont of hunters and frontier farmers, who racially belonged to the usual Southern mixed upland stock. These Georgia 'crackers' were vigorous and lawless, hard drinkers and rough fighters. Desperately eager to despoil

the Creek Indians of their fertile cornfields across the Oconee river, the up-country Georgians gave constant trouble to the Federal Government.

5. 'AMERICA THE HOPE OF THE WORLD'

Such, in their broader outlines, were the Thirteen States, and the people thereof, seven years after the war. They were singularly fortunate and happy. Of such a people, so circumstanced, the friends of liberty in Europe had high expectations. The French statesman Turgot wrote in his famous letter of 1778 to Dr. Price: [9]

> This people is the hope of the human race. It may become the model. It ought to show the world by facts, that men can be free and yet peaceful, and may dispense with the chains in which tyrants and knaves of every colour have presumed to bind them, under pretext of the public good. The Americans should be an example of political, religious, commercial and industrial liberty. The asylum they offer to the oppressed of every nation, the avenue of escape they open, will compel governments to be just and enlightened; and the rest of the world in due time will see through the empty illusions in which policy is conceived. But to obtain these ends for us, America must secure them to herself; and must not become, as so many of your ministerial writers have predicted, a mass of divided powers, contending for territory and trade, cementing the slavery of peoples by their own blood.

Dr. Price printed Turgot's letter in 1785, together with some hundred pages of his own advice to the young republic. Slavery must be abolished. America must adopt a system of education that will 'teach *how* to think, rather than *what* to think, or to lead into the best way of searching for truth, rather than to instruct in truth itself.' The American States should foster an equal distribution of property; and to this end they must renounce foreign trade, as well as foreign alliances.

> The Atlantic must be crossed before they can be attacked. . . Thus singularly happy, why should they seek connexions with Europe, and expose themselves to the danger of being involved in its quarrels?—What have they to do with its politics?—Is there anything very important to them which they can draw from thence—except *infection*?—indeed, I tremble when I think of that rage for trade which is likely to prevail among them.

Here is the policy of isolation, laid down in terms that America found too Spartan; and something more than a suggestion of the political system

[9 Clergyman, philosopher, and political controversialist (1723–91). He supported the American and French revolutions.]

later known as Jeffersonian democracy. But there was one dominant force in United States history that few foresaw in 1785: the expansive force. With such a prize as the West at their back doors, the people of the United States would have been more than human had they been content with a 'state of nature' between the Atlantic and the Appalachians. For a century to come, the subduing of the temperate regions of North America to the purposes of civilized life was to be the main business of the United States. In 1790 the boundaries of the republic included eight hundred thousand, in 1860 three million square miles. In 1790 the population was four million; in 1950 one hundred and forty-nine million. This folk movement, comparable only with the barbaric invasions of Europe, gives the history of the United States a different quality from that of modern Europe; different even from that of Canada and Australia, by reason of the absence of exterior control. The advancing frontier, with growing industrialism, set the rhythm of American society, colored its politics, and rendered more difficult the problem of union. Yet, as Turgot warned us, only union could secure the gain and fulfil the promise of the American Revolution.

Thomas Bland Hollis, another English radical who looked to the rising star in the West, wrote to the President of Harvard College in 1788: 'Our papers mention that there is an intention of having the Olympic games revived in America. All her friends wish it and say she is capable of it: having acted upon Greek principles you should have Greek exercises.' Her friends saw no reason why literature and the arts should not spring into new life in a new world, fostered by liberty. One of them, ten years later, recorded with his disappointment the popular excuse: 'We are but a young people—let us grow.' How often has that excuse been repeated, and how constantly has it been true! Grow they did; but not as Rome, neither as Greece. Their astounding expansion was a continuous adventure in pioneering, a constant renewal of the nation's youth through fresh contact with a receding frontier. The American of today, with all his wealth, pride, and power, is still unmistakably young and inexperienced in the ways of the world that he is now called upon to set right for the second time in one generation.

The frontier has vanished with the wild Indian, and America's youth is waning fast. Some thought, during the great depression, that it had altogether gone, and that a premature old age was settling over American society. They were wrong. It is the story of a youthful people that you are to read; of a people constantly in movement, expanding and upheaving, blithely accepting new forces that were to strain their body politic, seeking

to assimilate them to the democratic principle and to recover equilibrium between liberty and order, or security. And, as we write, America, with all the confidence and idealism of youth, is organizing her resources as never before to restore the peace, the productivity and the freedom of the Western World. Possibly that effort will destroy her youthfulness forever. We believe not; that, on the contrary, the faith and energy of the United States are still, in an even deeper sense than in 1778, 'the hope of the human race.'

D. W. Brogan

AMERICAN CLIMATE

¶[Mr. Brogan's description of what passes for climate in America is a typical chapter from his *The American Character* (1944), a shrewd and entertaining account of the United States by an observer who knows the land and its people better than most Americans do. The author (1900—) is now Professor of Political Science at the University of Cambridge. Besides this and other books on the United States (including *Government of the People*, a study of the American political system, 1933, and *U. S. A.*, 1941), he has written *The English People* (1943), *The Development of Modern France, 1870–1939* (1940), and *The Free State* (1945).

IT WAS NOT surprising that the Americans, at the end of their long march from ocean to ocean, should have too hastily assumed that they 'had America licked.' But it was an error, all the same. The continent remained not so much hostile as capricious; the gorgeous West, pouring out wealth with lavish hand, often had more than a hand inside the glove. The settlers in the South and in the Mississippi Valley had had to deal with diseases that, to northern Europeans, were very hard to manage. There was yellow fever, coming in from the West Indies; there was pellagra; there was hookworm; there was malaria. Some of these diseases became manageable as modern medical technology developed; Gorgas and Manson and Pasteur and Ross [1] not only made the Panama Canal a possibility—they

[1 W. C. Gorgas (1854–1920) did much to free Cuba and, later, Panama from yellow fever. He was chief sanitary officer of the Panama Canal Commission. Sir Patrick Manson (1844–1922), 'the father of tropical medicine,' was the first to suggest that malaria is carried by mosquitoes. Louis Pasteur (1822–95) was the founder of modern bacteriology. Sir Ronald Ross (1857–1932) specialized in the study of tropical diseases, notably malaria.]

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also made an easier and safer life possible in the continental United States. Pellagra is curable mainly through a rise in economic standards, and—so far as that has come about—pellagra has been cured; although in the poverty-stricken and decaying regions of the South it is still a menace to white and black poor alike—and a disease that makes life disagreeable in Umbria has even less to make it tolerable in the derelict regions of Georgia. Malaria needs fighting by cleanliness, and this, too, involves economic factors, for it is far harder for the poor to be clean than for the rich. Hookworm is highly debilitating, but you are much less likely to get it if you wear shoes—and shoes cost money; there is nothing romantic about being a barefoot boy in the hookworm belt. Improved water supply, improved medical services, even the rudiments of organized sanitation were necessary to turn the depressed and despised 'mudsills' of the South—once denounced for their quite sensible habit of eating 'dirt' (i.e., earth) as a remedy for the deficiencies caused by hookworm—into healthy and energetic citizens. The work of the Rockefeller Foundation and of the state and federal governments did more for this southern problem than cubic miles of southern oratory—although some excellent oratory was devoted to getting the South to accept northern aid. . .

But the South was especially handicapped, climatically, historically, racially, economically. The problem of making the Middle West habitable was much easier; it required wealth and energy and scientific knowledge, which the region acquired in abundance. It also required a high degree of political efficiency, which was not so abundant. The Chicago drainage canal, though a reasonably adequate solution for Chicago, was less attractive to her downstream neighbors. But other breakdowns only prove that human institutions are human; a local collapse of sanitary efficiency is no more to be wondered at in Chicago than in Croydon.

Even the most favored regions had their drawbacks. The first settlers who moved into the Pacific slope were richly rewarded. Oregon, reasonably warm, well wooded, well watered, was more like Devon than like Illinois. And California, to the pioneers coming over the High Sierra or round the Horn, was a new Canaan. Indeed, as the first Americans began to visit the California coast, the great empty land with its scattered Mexican ranches was more like the world of Abraham than like the new machine world that already existed on the other side of the Atlantic. California cried out for more energetic settlers, and a swarm of Moses appeared to seize the land where, in its last spasm of imperial energy, Spain had created the little missions of San Francisco, Santa Barbara, San Luis Rey, San Luis Obispo, San

Diego, and—destined to a highly paradoxical destiny—the village called after 'Our Lady, Queen of the Angels.' California had many attractions, but one struck home in the Great Valley: it had no malaria; 'the shakes' were unknown. But, as the unkind Frenchman said of New Zealand, 'There are no snakes, but a great many Scotchmen,' and even California had its drawbacks. It had no weather, only the most perfect climate in the world, where season followed season in perfect regularity, with hardly an exceptional day. It seemed to be too good to be true. It was. The most regular feature of San Francisco weather was the summer fog, and in even more favored Southern California (as a saboteur from Florida put it in *The New Yorker*), 'there is no rain, but the heavy dew sometimes washes away the railroad bridges.' All around Los Angeles, the justification for this hit below the belt can be seen; empty river beds lined with concrete, provided with admirable bridges, recalling the Manzanares at Madrid. But the old joke to the effect that the Madrileños [2] ought to sell the bridges and buy a river is pointless in the California outpost of New Spain, for when the rains do come, they come down with a speed and exuberance that are worthy of the Golden State; seven inches in two days makes very necessary indeed the bridges and parapets that control the *arroyos* [3] turned torrents. Nor are floods the only trouble in California. The State has no equivalent of those terrible lightning storms of the Middle West, but it does have earthquakes. Significantly, it is still a little tactless to refer (in San Francisco) to 'the earthquake of 1906'—you should say 'the Fire,' because that result of the natural catastrophe is less painful to recall. Fire is a manageable enemy of man and an old one, but when the foundations of the earth move, the most optimistic Californian is reminded of the untamable nature of the American land.

And at the other side of the continent, the rival paradise of Florida has had its bad shocks: in sudden frosts that kill the citrus crops; in devastating tornadoes that wreck the Miami waterfront as thoroughly as a second-class air raid could, or sweep the sea over such bold works of man as the road across the Atlantic to Key West.

In the other parts of America, the savage possibilities of the climate are never forgotten. All Ohio remembers the great flood year of 1913, whose impact on Columbus Mr. Thurber [4] has made familiar to English readers. From that disaster came an elaborate and expensive system of flood

[2 Citizens of Madrid.]
[3 Rivulets.]
[4 See his 'The Day the Dam Broke' in *My Life and Hard Times*.]

control in Columbus, in Dayton, in all southwestern Ohio. But other river towns in other states have had their own and much more recent disasters. The Wabash does not, alas for the citizens of Indiana, always stay within its banks; and when we get to the Mississippi, we are faced with the greatest engineering problem in the western world. Only the great rivers of China have so bad a record. The floods starting when the ice and snow melt, fifteen hundred miles away from the subtropical delta, present a problem every year. And the news that is flashed down the river has the urgency of an air-raid alert, for ten feet of extra water at Paducah may mean disaster if something is not done *at once* at Vicksburg. So men and boys, white and black, are called out to pile cotton bales and sandbags on the threatened levees; women and children get ready to flee from the rising wall of water being funneled down the river. And somewhere the sides of the funnel give way and tens of thousands are made homeless, hundreds are drowned, and an economic catastrophe that would ruin a minor European state has to be coped with.

Even in the long-settled East, the water is still restive. The Connecticut River, normally as placid as the Thames at Teddington, sometimes goes on the rampage, reminding the inhabitants of cities like Hartford that life and property are still insecure. Great storms drive the sea over the summer cottages of Block Island. And there was an historical appropriateness in the comment Nature provided for the end of the tercentenary celebration at Harvard, for on the last day the great 'storm wind of the equinox' that had been rushing up the coast from Florida struck Cambridge (Massachusetts) with a force unknown to Cambridge (England). It showed that for the sons of the Puritans the God of their Fathers was still an angry God of storm and rain like Him who had smitten the army of Sisera [5] and had later toughened the New Englanders.

Even when there are no catastrophes, there are constant climatic problems. The mere range of temperature is a problem. How do you plan your life in a place like Bismarck, North Dakota, where the July temperatures have ranged between 32° F. and 108°, and the January temperatures between 45° below zero and 60° above? What do you do, even in normally kindly New Orleans, where the January temperatures have ranged between 15° and 82° and the July temperatures between 35° and 102°? In Wyoming at the source of the Colorado River, there is frost in every month of the year; over many states there is never any frost at all for decades at a time. *But* no part of the United States—not Texas, not Florida,

[5 See Judges, iv, v.]

not California—is free from frost that will, when by a freak it does come, kill lemons and oranges and avocados and break the hearts or strain the consciences of local boosters.

It seems likely that not until this century did the Americans really adjust themselves to the climate—as far as it is humanly possible to do do. Those who were of British origin were especially handicapped, coming as they did from an island where no one had been really comfortable in winter between the departure of the Romans and the coming of the more exigent type of American tourist. It is worth noting that one of the most important inventions of that most representative of Americans, Franklin, was an efficient stove (another was the lightning conductor). But to make houses even reasonably airtight was a problem; the log cabin, whether or not it was of Finnish origin, was a solution better than any that English practice would suggest. The continuous series of farm buildings—house, stables, barn, all in line so that the farmer could pass from the kitchen to the horses and on to the cattle without going into the bitter air—was another necessary adjustment; moreover, it provided a fine range of buildings that could be turned into rumpus rooms, garages, etc., when city folk took over the New Hampshire countryside. With primitive central heating, the last lap was entered on. It is possibly no accident, again, that the most modern thermostatic systems of central heating owe their essential equipment to a firm in Minneapolis where the winter cold can kill ten times as often as it can on the milder Atlantic. An Iowa farm, painted in midwinter by Grant Wood, with its red barn and dominating silo is highly functional: devoted to the job of keeping men and stock alive and food and feed usable through the long siege of winter. No American farm-bred boy or girl is likely to think that he or she has America licked.

Nor, indeed, is the town boy, who, as he grows up, will have at least one memory of a great and killing cold spell, even if it does not become so legendary as the great New York freezes of 1837 and 1888. Gardeners will long remember the late winter of 1933–34 which killed so many plants and shrubs on Long Island; and all regions of America, except the South and the Pacific Coast, have their own stories of death by cold, of stalled buggies or sleighs or even cars, of the dangers of bad chains or defective car-heaters, of a winter climate that always bears watching.

And summer demands it even more. For the early settlers were even less acclimated (as Americans put it) to heat than to cold. For one thing, as Professor S. E. Morison has pointed out, they wore far too many and too thick clothes. Even the Andalusians of Columbus' crews wore too many gar-

ments for a Caribbean summer. North Europeans did worse. There were economic obstacles, of course; until cotton textiles became cheap and abundant around 1800, linen was expensive and woolens uncomfortable. But there was more in it than that. Long after adequate textiles were abundant and cheap, fashion—not merely style but moral fashion—kept too many clothes on the American man and still more on the American woman. Men might wear 'dusters' like Lincoln, or 'seersuckers' like the prosperous middle class of the eighties. If they were prepared to be conspicuous, they might wear white linen suits like Mark Twain. But they still wore too much and, for dress occasions, they had to wear 'Prince Alberts' (i.e., frock coats), tall hats, broadcloth, and starched collars and shirts. Theodore Roosevelt was regarded as pretty eccentric and reckless of the conventions, yet his typical costume was very formal and very uncomfortable indeed, compared with that of his niece's husband, the President of the United States today. It was still thought worthy of note when William Jennings Bryan took his coat off at Dayton, Tennessee, and defended Genesis in his shirt-sleeves [6]—and that was not quite twenty years ago. And the uniform of the American army that went to France in 1917–18 included a stiff cloth collar that made the British officer's uniform the envy of his semi-strangled comrades in arms.

As for the women, to look at fashion magazines of 1900, to read in *Middletown* of the clothes worn in Indiana in the summer a generation ago, even to recall the fuss made about the length of bathing-suit skirts and other problems of sartorial morals twenty years ago, is to be struck with astonishment as were the Greeks who learned from Herodotus that among the Lydians it was thought shameful even for men to be seen naked. No one, least of all a woman, need be overclothed in an American summer today. Indeed, unless she is clever with the needle or can afford custom-made clothes, any American woman who resolved to wear at least half as much as her mother used to would be baffled in any department store however big. The South Sea Islanders, put into 'Mother Hubbards' by American missionaries and in consequence suffering discomfort, or even death, have been thoroughly avenged.

It is not only the American house that has at last been adapted to the American climate. American food has, too. Although Americans have always, by European standards, been abundantly fed, they have not until recently been well fed. One early difficulty of adjustment was that of diet; the average pioneer wanted the roast beef of old England or its equivalent,

[6 At the famous 'Monkey Trial' in 1925.]

and was not to be put off with such new-fangled dishes as turkeys, tomatoes, corn, etc. He did adjust himself fairly quickly, but only in the sense of adding American items to European, not of balancing his diet or making it suit the climate and the work he had to do.

Of course some classes and some regions have been badly fed for economic reasons. 'Hog and hominy,' the diet of the Confederate army, was bad, but any other diet would have been a novelty to Southern poor whites. Negroes were and often are badly fed from any point of view. But travelers and critical Americans alike long lamented the monotony of American food, the good food ruined in that enemy to the pursuit of happiness, the frying-pan; the saleratus [7] bread which was debited with the American sallow complexion and the melancholy view of life characteristic of many Americans in middle age. Until modern storage methods came in, the severity of both winter and summer made variety in diet difficult. Ice, indeed, was an early American passion; in water, in coffee, in juleps and other alcoholic concoctions. But it was ice cut and stored in a New England winter and shipped to South Carolina—and India—in a highly speculative voyage. For if most of your cargo arrived safe, your fortune was made, while if your ship was becalmed, all you had was extra water ballast of no market value. One of the minor hardships of the Southern gentry in the War between the States was the shortage of ice, no laughing matter in the mint-julep country of tidewater Virginia.

With the coming of artificial ice, the worst was over and ice in summer became almost as necessary as coal in winter. European pioneers made refrigerator cars possible, to the profit of the meat-packers of Chicago and the fruit-growers of California and Florida. But American men still ate too much meat, ate it too often, and did not balance it with sufficient fruit and vegetables. It is only in modern times, very modern times, that the American diet has become varied, light, and suitable for the climate. The electric refrigerator is becoming a necessity; deep freezing promises new culinary resources, and air conditioning promises a new climate—indoors, at any rate. There is no visible prospect of any method of obviating the Turkish-bath sensation that hits the person who goes out from an air-conditioned train or store or movie house on a very hot day. It is still too early to relax. America has always managed to keep her children on their toes; she still manages to do so. But the day is not in sight on which science and business together will be able to guarantee the climate and natural resources of California to the whole Union—or even to California.

[7 Baking soda.]

Jonathan Swift

A MODEST PROPOSAL

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE IN IRELAND FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR PARENTS OR COUNTRY, AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLIC. 1729.

¶ One of the minor ironies of Swift's life was his popularity with the Irish, despite his reluctance to be an Irishman. He had served the Irish Church well as a negotiator for concessions from the English government, but after his pamphleteering for the Tories between 1710 and 1714 he hoped to be rewarded by an ecclesiastical appointment in England. This hope failed (according to tradition, because Queen Anne had been offended by *A Tale of a Tub*, 1704); the best he could get was the deanery of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. To Dublin he went (1714), but he was a disappointed man. He visited London in 1726 and 1727, but after that never again left Ireland.

The 'saeva indignatio' of his genius, plus political circumstances, made Swift on several occasions the champion of Irish protest against economic exploitation by England. In 1720 he advised the Irish in a pamphlet, *The Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*, to boycott English goods and buy those of Irish manufacture instead. By his *Drapier's Letters* of 1724 he forced the English government to drop a scheme of allowing one William Wood to mint copper coins for Irish use. Swift convinced his readers that the money would be ruinous to Ireland.

Some of his most striking and most somber descriptions of human depravity, those of the Yahoos in the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels*, must have been suggested, in part, by the miserable condition of the Irish peasantry. But for indignation at man's callous inhumanity to man nothing in literature surpasses *A Modest Proposal*. The masterly and terrible irony of this tract accomplishes what anger alone could never do. It shocks, and it was meant to shock, as few writings have done.

It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town,[1] or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin-doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants; who, as they grow up, either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the Pretender[2] in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.[3]

I think it is agreed by all parties, that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is, in the present deplorable state of the kingdom, a very great additional grievance; and, therefore, whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound, useful members of the commonwealth, would deserve so well of the public, as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars; it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age, who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of our projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child, just dropped from its dam, may be supported by her milk for a solar year, with little other nourishment; at most, not above the value of two shillings, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner, as, instead of being a charge upon their parents, or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for

[1 Dublin. When Swift wrote this tract, Ireland had had three years of famine.]

[2 The Old Pretender, James Stuart, son of James II (who was deposed by the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688) and claimant of the throne of Great Britain. He and his followers were constantly plotting to invade England.]

[3 As laborers on the West Indian plantations.]

the rest of their lives, they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the feeding and partly to the clothing,[4] of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas, too frequent among us! sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt [5] more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract thirty thousand couple, who are able to maintain their own children, (although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present distresses of the kingdom;) but this being granted, there will remain a hundred and seventy thousand breeders. I again subtract fifty thousand, for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remain a hundred and twenty thousand children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, How this number shall be reared and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs, is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses (I mean in the country,) nor cultivate land: they can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing, till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts; [6] although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time they can, however, be properly looked upon only as probationers; as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I have reckoned, upon a medium, that a child just born will weigh twelve pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, will increase to twenty-eight pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infants' flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentifully

[4 When Gulliver lived among the Houyhnhnms, he repaired his shoes with 'the skins of Yahoos dried in the sun.']

[5 Suspect.]

[6 Bright, talented.]

in March, and a little before and after: for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician, that fish being a prolific diet, there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine months after Lent, than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of Popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom; and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of Papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he has only some particular friend, or his own family, to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among his tenants; the mother will have eight shillings net profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer-boots for fine gentlemen.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no saleable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half-a-crown at most, on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now, therefore, humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American [7] of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child, well nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration, that of the hundred and twenty thousand children already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one-fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black-cattle, or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve

[7 Some of the Indians were supposed by Europeans to be cannibals.]

four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom; always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and, seasoned with a little pepper or salt, will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

As to our city of Dublin, shambles [8] may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers, we may be assured, will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, then dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased, in discoursing on this matter, to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said, that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age, nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every country being now ready to starve for want of work and service; and these to be disposed of by their parents, if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But, with due deference to so excellent a friend, and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me, from frequent experience, that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our schoolboys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think, with humble submission, be a loss to the public, because they soon would become breeders themselves: and besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice, (although indeed very unjustly,) as a little bordering upon cruelty; which, I confess, has always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar,[9] a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London above twenty years ago; and in conversation told my friend, that in his country, when any young person

[8 Slaughterhouses.]

[9 One George Psalmanazar posed as a native of Formosa and published a spurious *Description* of that island.]

happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that in his time the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the emperor, was sold to his imperial majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbet, at four hundred crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that, if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who, without one single groat to their fortunes, cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at playhouse and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed; and I have been desired to employ my thoughts, what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known, that they are every day dying, and rotting, by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the young labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition: they cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree, that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of Papists, with whom we are yearly over-run, being the principal breeders of the nation, as well as our most dangerous enemies; and who stay at home on purpose to deliver the kingdom to the Pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good Protestants,[10] who have chosen rather to leave their country than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an Episcopal curate.

Secondly, The poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress, and help to pay their landlord's rent; their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

[[10] This refers to Irish Dissenters, i.e. Protestants who did not belong to the Church of Ireland (the counterpart in that country of the Church of England, which, of course, was an established, official institution) but who were nevertheless taxed to support it.]

Thirdly, Whereas the maintenance of a hundred thousand children, from two years old and upward, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, beside the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom, who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves,[11] the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, The constant breeders, beside the gain of eight shillings sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

Fifthly, This food would likewise bring great custom [12] to taverns; where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection, and, consequently, have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating: and a skilful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, This would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards, or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the public, to their annual profit or expense. We should see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, their sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barrelled beef; the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our table; which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which, roasted whole, will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor's feast, or any other public entertainment. But this, and many others, I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that one thousand families in this city would be constant customers for infants' flesh, beside others who might have it at merry-

[11 See introductory note.]
[12 Trade, patronage.]

meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses; and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.

I can think of no one objection, that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged, that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and it was indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland, and for no other that ever was, is, or I think ever can be, upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: of using neither clothes, nor household furniture, except what is our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: of learning to love our country, in the want of which we differ even from LAPLANDERS, and the inhabitants of TOPINAMBOO:[18] of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy toward their tenants: lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shopkeepers; who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he has at least some glimpse of hope, that there will be ever some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But, as to myself, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal; which, as it is wholly new, so it has something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging ENGLAND. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence to admit a long continuance in salt, although per-

[18] In Brazil.]

haps I could name a country, which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion as to reject any offer proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author, or authors, will be pleased maturely to consider two points. First, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for a hundred thousand useless mouths and backs. And, secondly, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose whole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt two millions of pounds sterling, adding those who are beggars by profession, to the bulk of farmers, cottagers, and labourers, with the wives and children who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold as to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old, in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes, as they have since gone through, by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like, or greater miseries, upon their breed for ever.

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavouring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past child-bearing.

Lord Chesterfield
LETTERS TO HIS SON

¶ Chesterfield's reputation is lower than it deserves to be. Because his name became synonymous with correct and elegant taste, it has been vulgarized by attachment to cigarettes, overcoats, and other commodities, suggesting that he was a fop. Because he was the object of a celebrated letter by Dr. Johnson, it has been assumed by careless readers of Boswell that he was a prig. Because his tastes differed from Victorian ones, he has been considered completely immoral and hypocritical.

The reader of the letters will gain a somewhat different impression of Chesterfield. He was an efficient diplomat, a thoughtful friend—everybody knows his dying words, 'Give Dayrolles a chair' —an agreeable companion, and an uncomplaining victim of bad health. To understand him we should judge his letters by the standards not of Renaissance courtesy books, Victorian delineations of the gentleman, or the precepts of St. Paul, but of their own age. They express the aristocratic sentiment of that age, with its emphasis on polish, manners, form. Their ideal is Ciceronian decorum, restraint: 'Pray read frequently,' he writes to his son, 'nay, get by heart, if you can, that incomparable chapter in Cicero's Offices, upon the τὸ πρέπον, or the *Decorum*. It contains whatever is necessary for the dignity of manners.' 'Sacrifice to the Graces,' he is forever admonishing. Virtue is the companion of the Graces. 'Merit and good-breeding will make their way everywhere . . . politeness and good-breeding are absolutely necessary to adorn any, or all other good qualities or talents. Without them, no knowledge, no perfection whatever, is seen in its best light. The scholar, without good-breeding, is a pedant; the philosopher, a cynic; the soldier, a brute; and every man disagreeable.' Granted that these worldly, urbane standards are not the highest; but they are within their limits decent, in Chesterfield's sense of the word, and civilized.

FROM *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*, World's Classics Edition, Oxford University Press, 1929.

LONDON, MARCH 27, O.S.[1] 1747

Dear Boy,

PLEASURE is the rock which most young people split upon: they launch out with crowded sails in quest of it, but without a compass to direct their course, or reason sufficient to steer the vessel; for want of which, pain and shame, instead of pleasure, are the returns of their voyage. Do not think that I mean to snarl at pleasure, like a Stoic,[2] or to preach against it, like a parson; no, I mean to point it out, and recommend it to you, like an Epicurean: I wish you a great deal; and my only view is to hinder you from mistaking it.

The character which most young men first aim at is, that of a man of pleasure; but they generally take it upon trust; and instead of consulting their own taste and inclinations, they blindly adopt whatever those with whom they chiefly converse, are pleased to call by the name of pleasure; and a *man of pleasure*, in the vulgar acceptation of that phrase, means only a beastly drunkard, an abandoned whore-master, and a profligate swearer and curser. As it may be of use to you, I am not unwilling, though at the same time ashamed, to own, that the vices of my youth proceeded much more from my silly resolution of being what I heard called a man of pleasure, than from my own inclinations. I always naturally hated drinking; and yet I have often drunk, with disgust at the time, attended by great sickness the next day, only because I then considered drinking as a necessary qualification for a fine gentleman, and a man of pleasure.

The same as to gaming. I did not want[3] money, and consequently had no occasion to play for it; but I thought play another necessary ingredient in the composition of a man of pleasure, and accordingly I plunged into it without desire, at first; sacrificed a thousand real pleasures to it; and made myself solidly uneasy by it, for thirty the best years of my life.

[1 For 'Old Style,' that is, according to the Julian calendar. The Gregorian calendar, which corrected an error in the Julian, was adopted in Great Britain in 1752; hence many eighteenth-century writers added 'O.S.' or 'N.S.' to dates. Chesterfield himself introduced in the House of Lords the bill for changing the calendar.]

[2 The ancient Stoic philosophers preached fortitude and austerity. The Epicureans thought, or were popularly (and somewhat erroneously) accused of thinking, that pleasure is the chief good.]

[3 Lack, need.]

I was even absurd enough, for a little while, to swear, by way of adorning and completing the shining character which I affected; but this folly I soon laid aside, upon finding both the guilt and the indecency of it.

Thus seduced by fashion, and blindly adopting nominal pleasures, I lost real ones; and my fortune impaired, and my constitution shattered, are, I must confess, the just punishment of my errors.

Take warning then by them; choose your pleasures for yourself, and do not let them be imposed upon you. Follow nature and not fashion: weigh the present enjoyment of your pleasures against the necessary consequences of them, and then let your own common sense determine your choice.

Were I to begin the world again, with the experience which I now have of it, I would lead a life of real, not of imaginary pleasure. I would enjoy the pleasures of the table, and of wine; but stop short of the pains inseparably annexed to an excess in either. I would not, at twenty years, be a preaching missionary of abstemiousness and sobriety; and I should let other people do as they would, without formally and sententiously rebuking them for it: but I would be most firmly resolved not to destroy my own faculties and constitution; in complaisance to those who have no regard to their own. I would play to give me pleasure, but not to give me pain; that is, I would play for trifles, in mixed companies, to amuse myself, and conform to custom; but I would take care not to venture for sums which, if I won, I should not be the better for; but, if I lost, should be under a difficulty to pay; and when paid, would oblige me to retrench in several other articles. Not to mention the quarrels which deep play commonly occasions.

I would pass some of my time in reading, and the rest in the company of people of sense and learning, and chiefly those above me; and I would frequent the mixed companies of men and women of fashion, which, though often frivolous, yet they unbend and refresh the mind, not uselessly, because they certainly polish and soften the manners.

These would be my pleasures and amusements, if I were to live the last thirty years over again: they are rational ones; and moreover, I will tell you, they are really the fashionable ones: for the others are not, in truth, the pleasures of what I call people of fashion, but of those who only call themselves so. Does good company care to have a man reeling drunk among them? or to see another tearing his hair, and blaspheming, for having lost at play, more than he is able to pay? or a whore-master with half a nose, and crippled by coarse and infamous debauchery? No; those who practise, and much more those who brag of them, make no part of

good company; and are most unwillingly, if ever, admitted into it. A real man of fashion and pleasures observes decency: at least neither borrows nor affects vices; and if he unfortunately has any, he gratifies them with choice, delicacy, and secrecy.

I have not mentioned the pleasures of the mind (which are the solid and permanent ones), because they do not come under the head of what people commonly call pleasures; which they seem to confine to the senses. The pleasure of virtue, of charity, and of learning, is true and lasting pleasure; with which I hope you will be well and long acquainted. Adieu!

LONDON, OCTOBER 9, O.S. 1747

DEAR BOY:

People of your age have, commonly, an unguarded frankness about them; which makes them the easy prey and bubbles of the artful and the experienced: they look upon every knave or fool, who tells them that he is their friend, to be really so; and pay that profession of simulated friendship with an indiscreet and unbounded confidence, always to their loss, often to their ruin. Beware, therefore, now that you are coming into the world, of these proffered friendships. Receive them with great civility, but with great incredulity too; and pay them with compliments, but not with confidence. Do not let your vanity and self-love make you suppose that people become your friends at first sight, or even upon a short acquaintance. Real friendship is a slow grower; and never thrives, unless ingrafted upon a stock of known and reciprocal merit. There is another kind of nominal friendship among young people, which is warm for the time, but, by good luck, of short duration. This friendship is hastily produced, by their being accidentally thrown together, and pursuing the same course of riot and debauchery. A fine friendship, truly; and well cemented by drunkenness and lewdness. It should rather be called a conspiracy against morals and good manners, and be punished as such by the civil magistrate. However, they have the impudence and folly to call this confederacy a friendship. They lend one another money, for bad purposes; they engage in quarrels, offensive and defensive, for their accomplices; they tell one another all they know, and often more too, when, of a sudden, some accident disperses them, and they think no more of each other, unless it be to betray and laugh at their imprudent confidence. Remember to make a great difference between companions and friends; for a very complaisant and agreeable companion may, and often does, prove a very improper and a very dangerous friend. People will, in a great degree, and not without reason, form their opinion of you,

upon that which they have of your friends; and there is a Spanish proverb, which says very justly, *Tell me whom you live with, and I will tell you who you are.* One may fairly suppose, that a man, who makes a knave or a fool his friend, has something very bad to do or to conceal. But, at the same time that you carefully decline the friendship of knaves and fools, if it can be called friendship, there is no occasion to make either of them your enemies, wantonly, and unprovoked; for they are numerous bodies: and I would rather choose a secure neutrality, than alliance, or war, with either of them. You may be a declared enemy to their vices and follies, without being marked out by them as a personal one. Their enmity is the next dangerous thing to their friendship. Have a real reserve with almost everybody; and have a seeming reserve with almost nobody; for it is very disagreeable to seem reserved, and very dangerous not to be so. Few people find the true medium; many are ridiculously mysterious and reserved upon trifles; and many imprudently communicative of all they know.

The next thing to the choice of your friends, is the choice of your company. Endeavor, as much as you can, to keep company with people above you: there you rise, as much as you sink with people below you; for (as I have mentioned before) you are whatever the company you keep is. Do not mistake, when I say company above you, and think that I mean with regard to their birth: that is the least consideration; but I mean with regard to their merit, and the light in which the world considers them.

There are two sorts of good company; one, which is called the *beau monde*,[4] and consists of those people who have the lead in courts, and in the gay part of life; the other consists of those who are distinguished by some peculiar merit, or who excel in some particular and valuable art or science. For my own part, I used to think myself in company as much above me, when I was with Mr. Addison and Mr. Pope, as if I had been with all the Princes in Europe. What I mean by low company, which should by all means be avoided, is the company of those, who, absolutely insignificant and contemptible in themselves, think they are honoured by being in your company, and who flatter every vice and every folly you have, in order to engage you to converse with them. The pride of being the first of the company is but too common; but it is very silly, and very prejudicial. Nothing in the world lets down a character more than that wrong turn.

You may possibly ask me, whether a man has it always in his power to get into the best company? and how? I say, Yes, he has, by deserving it;

[4 Polite society.]

provided he is but in circumstances which enable him to appear upon the footing of a gentleman. Merit and good-breeding will make their way everywhere. Knowledge will introduce him, and good-breeding will endear him to the best companies; for, as I have often told you, politeness and good-breeding are absolutely necessary to adorn any, or all other good qualities or talents. Without them, no knowledge, no perfection whatever, is seen in its best light. The scholar, without good-breeding, is a pedant; the philosopher, a cynic; the soldier, a brute; and every man disagreeable.

I long to hear, from my several correspondents at Leipsig, of your arrival there, and what impression you make on them at first; for I have Arguses,[5] with an hundred eyes each, who will watch you narrowly, and relate to me faithfully. My accounts will certainly be true; it depends upon you, entirely, of what kind they shall be. Adieu.

LONDON, OCTOBER 16, O.S. 1747

DEAR BOY,

The art of pleasing is a very necessary one to possess; but a very difficult one to acquire. It can hardly be reduced to rules; and your own good sense and observation will teach you more of it than I can. Do as you would be done by, is the surest method that I know of pleasing. Observe carefully what pleases you in others, and probably the same things in you will please others. If you are pleased with the complaisance and attention of others to your humours, your tastes, or your weaknesses, depend upon it the same complaisance and attention, on your part to theirs, will equally please them. Take the tone of the company that you are in, and do not pretend to give it; be serious, gay, or even trifling, as you find the present humour of the company; this is an attention due from every individual to the majority. Do not tell stories in company; there is nothing more tedious and disagreeable; if by chance you know a very short story, and exceedingly applicable to the present subject of conversation, tell it in as few words as possible; and even then, throw out that you do not love to tell stories, but that the shortness of it tempted you. Of all things, banish the egotism out of your conversation, and never think of entertaining people with your own personal concerns or private affairs; though they are interesting to you they are tedious and impertinent to everybody else; besides that, one cannot keep one's own private affairs too secret. Whatever you think your own excellencies may be, do not affectedly display them in company; nor labour, as many people do, to give that turn to the conversation, which may supply you with an oppor-

[5 Argus was the hundred-eyed guardian of Io, whom Zeus had changed into a heifer.]

tunity of exhibiting them. If they are real, they will infallibly be discovered, without your pointing them out yourself, and with much more advantage. Never maintain an argument with heat and clamour, though you think or know yourself to be in the right; but give your opinion modestly and coolly, which is the only way to convince; and, if that does not do, try to change the conversation, by saying, with good-humour, 'We shall hardly convince one another; nor is it necessary that we should, so let us talk of something else.'

Remember that there is a local propriety to be observed in all companies; and that what is extremely proper in one company, may be, and often is, highly improper in another.

The jokes, the *bons mots*,[6] the little adventures, which may do very well in one company, will seem flat and tedious when related in another. The particular character, the habits, the cant of one company, may give credit to a word, or a gesture, which would have none at all if divested of those accidental circumstances. Here people very commonly err; and fond of something that has entertained them in one company, and in certain circumstances, repeat it with emphasis in another, where it is either insipid, or, it may be, offensive, by being ill-timed or misplaced. Nay, they often do it with this silly preamble: 'I will tell you an excellent thing'; or, 'the best thing in the world.' This raises expectations, which, when absolutely disappointed, make the relator of this excellent thing look, very deservedly, like a fool.

If you would particularly gain the affection and friendship of particular people, whether men or women, endeavour to find out their predominant excellency, if they have one, and their prevailing weakness, which everybody has; and do justice to the one, and something more than justice to the other. Men have various objects in which they may excel, or at least would be thought to excel; and, though they love to hear justice done to them, where they know that they excel, yet they are most and best flattered upon those points where they wish to excel, and yet are doubtful whether they do or not. As, for example: Cardinal Richelieu,[7] who was undoubtedly the ablest statesman of his time, or perhaps of any other, had the idle vanity of being thought the best poet too: he envied the great Corneille[8] his reputation, and ordered a criticism to be written upon the *Cid*. Those, therefore, who flattered skilfully, said little to him of his abili-

[6] Epigrams, witticisms.]
[7] He controlled the government of Louis XIII, 1624–42.]
[8] One of the greatest of French dramatists (1606–84).]

ties in state affairs, or at least but *en passant*,[9] and as it might naturally occur. But the incense which they gave him, the smoke of which they knew would turn his head in their favour, was as a *bel esprit* [10] and a poet. Why? Because he was sure of one excellency, and distrustful as to the other. You will easily discover every man's prevailing vanity, by observing his favourite topic of conversation; for every man talks most of what he has most a mind to be thought to excel in. Touch him but there, and you touch him to the quick. The late Sir Robert Walpole [11] (who was certainly an able man) was little open to flattery upon that head; for he was in no doubt himself about it; but his prevailing weakness was, to be thought to have a polite and happy turn to gallantry;—of which he had undoubtedly less than any man living: it was his favourite and frequent subject of conversation; which proved, to those who had any penetration, that it was his prevailing weakness. And they applied to it with success.

Women have, in general, but one object, which is their beauty; upon which, scarce any flattery is too gross for them to swallow. Nature has hardly formed a woman ugly enough to be insensible to flattery upon her person; if her face is so shocking, that she must in some degree be conscious of it, her figure and air, she trusts, make ample amends for it. If her figure is deformed, her face, she thinks, counterbalances it. If they are both bad, she comforts herself that she has graces; a certain manner; a *je ne sçais quoi*,[12] still more engaging than beauty. This truth is evident, from the studied and elaborate dress of the ugliest women in the world. An undoubted, uncontested, conscious beauty is, of all women, the least sensible of flattery upon that head; she knows that it is her due, and is therefore obliged to nobody for giving it her. She must be flattered upon her understanding; which, though she may possibly not doubt of herself, yet she suspects that men may distrust.

Do not mistake me, and think that I mean to recommend to you abject and criminal flattery: no; flatter nobody's vices or crimes: on the contrary, abhor and discourage them. But there is no living in the world without a complaisant indulgence for people's weaknesses, and innocent, though ridiculous vanities. If a man has a mind to be thought wiser, and a woman handsomer, than they really are, their error is a comfortable one to themselves, and an innocent one with regard to other people; and I would rather

[9 Incidentally.]
[10 Person of wit, grace, and intelligence.]
[11 Prime Minister, 1715–17, 1721–42.]
[12 I know not what.]

make them my friends, by indulging them in it, than my enemies, by endeavouring (and that to no purpose) to undeceive them.

There are little attentions likewise, which are infinitely engaging, and which sensibly affect that degree of pride and self-love, which is inseparable from human nature; as they are unquestionable proofs of the regard and consideration which we have for the persons to whom we pay them. As, for example, to observe the little habits, the likings, the antipathies, and the tastes of those whom we would gain; and then take care to provide them with the one, and to secure them from the other; giving them, genteelly, to understand, that you had observed they liked such a dish, or such a room; for which reason you had prepared it: or, on the contrary, that having observed they had an aversion to such a dish, a dislike to such a person, etc., you had taken care to avoid presenting them. Such attention to such trifles flatters self-love much more than greater things, as it makes people think themselves almost the only objects of your thoughts and care.

These are some of the *arcana* [18] necessary for your initiation in the great society of the world. I wish I had known them better at your age; I have paid the price of three and fifty years for them, and shall not grudge it, if you reap the advantage. Adieu.

BATH, FEBRUARY 22, O.S. 1748

DEAR BOY,

Every excellency, and every virtue, has its kindred vice or weakness; and if carried beyond certain bounds, sinks into the one or the other. Generosity often runs into profusion, œconomy into avarice, courage into rashness, caution into timidity, and so on;—insomuch that, I believe, there is more judgment required, for the proper conduct of our virtues, than for avoiding their opposite vices. Vice in its true light, is so deformed, that it shocks us at first sight, and would hardly ever seduce us, if it did not, at first, wear the mask of some virtue. But virtue is, in itself, so beautiful, that it charms us at first sight; engages us more and more upon farther acquaintance; and as with other beauties, we think excess impossible; it is here that judgment is necessary, to moderate and direct the effects of an excellent cause. I shall apply this reasoning, at present, not to any particular virtue, but to an excellency, which, for want of judgment, is often the cause of ridiculous and blameable effects; I mean, great learning; which, if not accompanied with sound judgment, frequently carries us into error, pride, and pedantry. As, I hope, you will possess that excellency in its utmost extent, and yet

[18 Secrets.]

without its too common failings, the hints, which my experience can suggest, may probably not be useless to you.

Some learned men, proud of their knowledge, only speak to decide, and give judgment without appeal; the consequence of which is, that mankind, provoked by the insult, and injured by the oppression, revolt; and in order to shake off the tyranny, even call the lawful authority in question. The more you know, the modester you should be: and (by-the-bye) that modesty is the surest way of gratifying your vanity. Even where you are sure, seem rather doubtful; represent, but do not pronounce, and if you would convince others, seem open to conviction yourself.

Others, to show their learning, or often from the prejudices of a school education, where they hear nothing else, are always talking of the ancients,[14] as something more than men, and of the moderns, as something less. They are never without a classic or two in their pockets; they stick to the old good sense; they read none of the modern trash; and will show you, plainly, that no improvement has been made, in any one art or science, these last seventeen hundred years. I would by no means have you disown your acquaintance with the ancients: but still less would I have you brag of an exclusive intimacy with them. Speak of the moderns without contempt, and of the ancients without idolatry; judge them all by their merits, but not by their ages; and if you happen to have an Elzevir classic[15] in your pocket, neither show it nor mention it.

Some great scholars, most absurdly, draw all their maxims, both for public and private life, from what they call parallel cases in the ancient authors; without considering that in the first place, there never were, since the creation of the world, two cases exactly parallel; and in the next place, that there never was a case stated, or even known, by any historian, with every one of its circumstances; which, however, ought to be known, in order to be reasoned from. Reason upon the case itself, and the several circumstances that attend it, and act accordingly; but not from the authority of ancient poets, or historians. Take into your consideration, if you please, cases seemingly analogous; but take them as helps only, not as guides. We are really so prejudiced by our education, that, as the ancients deified their heroes, we deify their mad-men; of which, with all due regard

[14] During the last part of the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth centuries there was a famous controversy in the literary world over the comparative merits of ancients and moderns. Swift's *Battle of the Books* was inspired by it.]

[15] A series of small, cheap editions of classics, somewhat like the modern Everyman's Library or Oxford World's Classics series.]

for antiquity, I take Leonidas and Curtius [16] to have been two distinguished ones. And yet a solid pedant would, in a speech in parliament, relative to a tax of twopence in the pound upon some commodity or other, quote those two heroes as examples of what we ought to do and suffer for our country. I have known these absurdities carried so far by people of injudicious learning, that I should not be surprised, if some of them were to propose, while we are at war with the Gauls, that a number of geese should be kept in the Tower, upon account of the infinite advantage which Rome received *in a parallel case*, from a certain number of geese in the Capitol.[17] This way of reasoning, and this way of speaking, will always form a poor politician, and a puerile declaimer.

There is another species of learned men who, though less dogmatical and supercilious, are not less impertinent. These are the communicative and shining pedants, who adorn their conversation, even with women, by happy quotations of Greek and Latin; and who have contracted such a familiarity with the Greek and Roman authors, that they call them by certain names or epithets denoting intimacy. As *old* Homer; that *sly rogue* Horace; *Maro*, instead of Virgil; and *Naso*, instead of Ovid. These are often imitated by coxcombs, who have no learning at all; but who have got some names and some scraps of ancient authors by heart, which they improperly and impertinently retail in all companies, in hopes of passing for scholars. If, therefore, you would avoid the accusation of pedantry on one hand, or the suspicion of ignorance on the other, abstain from learned ostentation. Speak the language of the company you are in; speak it purely, and unlarded with any other. Never seem wiser, nor more learned, than the people you are with. Wear your learning, like your watch, in a private pocket: and do not merely pull it out and strike it; merely to show that you have one. If you are asked what o'clock it is, tell it; but do not proclaim it hourly and unasked, like the watchman.

Upon the whole, remember that learning (I mean Greek and Roman learning) is a most useful and necessary ornament, which it is shameful not to be master of; but, at the same time, most carefully avoid those errors and abuses which I have mentioned, and which too often attend it. Re-

[16] Leonidas of Sparta defended Thermopylae against the Persian host in 480 B.C. A Roman legend told how, when the soothsayers proclaimed that a great crack in the Forum could be closed only by the sacrifice of Rome's greatest treasure, Curtius rode into the chasm. See Stevenson, p. 399.]

[17] The cackling of geese awakened Manlius Capitolinus when the Gauls began an attack on the Capitol (390 B.C.). He saved the Capitol, and ever afterward sacred geese were kept at public expense.]

member, too, that great modern knowledge is still more necessary than ancient; and that you had better know perfectly the present, than the old state of Europe; though I would have you well acquainted with both.

I have this moment received your letter of the 17th, N.S. Though, I confess, there is no great variety in your present manner of life, yet materials can never be wanting for a letter; you see, you hear, or you read something new every day; a short account of which, with your own reflections thereupon, will make out a letter very well. But since you desire a subject, pray send me an account of the Lutheran establishment in Germany; their religious tenets, their church government, the maintenance, authority, and titles of their clergy. . .

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 5, O.S. 1748

. . . As women are a considerable, or at least a pretty numerous part of company; and as their suffrages go a great way towards establishing a man's character in the fashionable part of the world (which is of great importance to the fortune and figure he proposes to make in it), it is necessary to please them. I will therefore, upon this subject, let you into certain *Arcana*, that will be very useful for you to know, but which you must, with the utmost care, conceal; and never seem to know. Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid, reasoning good-sense, I never knew in my life one that had it, or who reasoned or acted consequentially for four and twenty hours together. Some little passion or humour always breaks in upon their best resolutions. Their beauty neglected or controverted their age increased, or their supposed understandings depreciated, instantly kindles their little passions, and overturns any system of consequential conduct, that in their most reasonable moments they might have been capable of forming. A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humours and flatters them, as he does with a sprightly, forward child; but he neither consults them about, nor trusts them with serious matters; though he often makes them believe that he does both; which is the thing in the world that they are proud of; for they love mightily to be dabbling in business (which, by the way, they always spoil); and being justly distrustful, that men in general look upon them in a trifling light, they almost adore that man who talks more seriously to them, and who seems to consult and trust them; I say, who seems; for weak men really do, but wise ones only seem to do it. No flattery is either too high or too low for them. They will greedily swallow

the highest, and gratefully accept of the lowest; and you may safely flatter any woman, from her understanding down to the exquisite taste of her fan. Women who are either indisputably beautiful, or indisputably ugly, are best flattered upon the score of their understandings; but those who are in a state of mediocrity, are best flattered upon their beauty, or at least their graces; for every woman, who is not absolutely ugly, thinks herself handsome; but not hearing often that she is so, is the more grateful, and the more obliged to the few who tell her so; whereas a decided and conscious beauty looks upon every tribute paid to her beauty only as her due; but wants to shine, and to be considered on the side of her understanding; and a woman who is ugly enough to know that she is so, knows that she has nothing left for it but her understanding, which is consequently (and probably in more senses than one) her weak side. But these are secrets, which you must keep inviolably, if you would not, like Orpheus,[18] be torn to pieces by the whole sex: on the contrary, a man who thinks of living in the great world, must be gallant, polite and attentive to please the women. They have, from the weakness of men, more or less influence in all courts; they absolutely stamp every man's character in the *beau monde*, and make it either current, or cry it down, and stop it in payments. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to manage, please and flatter them: and never to discover the least mark of contempt, which is what they never forgive; but in this they are not singular, for it is the same with men; who will much sooner forgive an injustice than an insult. Every man is not ambitious, or covetous, or passionate; but every man has pride enough in his composition to feel and resent the least slight and contempt. Remember, therefore, most carefully to conceal your contempt, however just, wherever you would not make an implacable enemy. Men are much more unwilling to have their weaknesses and their imperfections known, than their crimes; and, if you hint to a man that you think him silly, ignorant, or even ill bred or awkward, he will hate you more and longer, than if you tell him plainly, that you think him a rogue. Never yield to that temptation, which to most young men is very strong, of exposing other people's weaknesses and infirmities, for the sake either of diverting the company, or showing your own superiority. You may get the laugh on your side by it for the present; but you will make enemies by it for ever; and even those who laugh with you then will, upon reflection fear, and consequently hate you: besides that it is ill natured, and a good heart desires rather to conceal than expose other people's weaknesses or misfortunes. If you have wit, use it to please, and

[18 He was torn to pieces by Thracian women.]

not to hurt: you may shine, like the sun in the temperate zones, without scorching. Here it is wished for: under the Line [19] it is dreaded.

These are some of the hints which my long experience in the great world enables me to give you; and which, if you attend to them, may prove useful to you, in your journey through it. I wish it may be a prosperous one; at least, I am sure that it must be your own fault if it is not.

Make my compliments to Mr. Harte,[20] who, I am very sorry to hear, is not well. I hope by this time he is recovered.

Adieu!

[19 The Equator.]
[20 His son's tutor and traveling companion.]

Virginia Woolf

LORD CHESTERFIELD'S LETTERS TO HIS SON

¶ The subtle penetration into the minds and lives of the characters she creates in her novels likewise distinguishes Virginia Woolf's biographical and critical essays. These are perhaps less widely known than *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *The Waves*, *Between the Acts*, and the other novels. Most of them are brief, some hardly more than miniatures; but they are all sharply focused and illuminating. Like expert miniatures, they frequently disclose the soul of the subject better than a full-length portrait could.

Mrs. Woolf's essays were collected in *The Common Reader* (1925), *The Second Common Reader* (1932), and three posthumous volumes, *The Death of the Moth* (1942), *The Moment* (1948), and *The Captain's Death Bed* (1950).

WHEN Lord Mahon edited the letters of Lord Chesterfield he thought it necessary to warn the intending reader that they are 'by no means fitted for early or indiscriminate perusal.' Only 'those people whose understandings are fixed and whose principles are matured' can, so his Lordship said, read them with impunity. But that was in 1845. And 1845 looks a little distant now. It seems to us now the age of enormous houses without any bathrooms. Men smoke in the kitchen after the cook has gone to bed. Albums lie upon drawing-room tables. The curtains are very thick and the women are very pure. But the eighteenth century also has undergone a change. To us in 1930 it looks less strange, less remote than those early Victorian years. Its civilisation seems more rational and more complete than the civilisation of Lord Mahon and his contempo-

FROM *The Second Common Reader*, by Virginia Woolf. Copyright 1932 by Harcourt, Brace, and Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace, and Company, Inc., and of The Hogarth Press, Ltd.

raries. Then at any rate a small group of highly educated people lived up to their ideals. If the world was smaller it was also more compact; it knew its own mind; it had its own standards. Its poetry is affected by the same security. When we read the *Rape of the Lock* we seem to find ourselves in an age so settled and so circumscribed that masterpieces were possible. Then, we say to ourselves, a poet could address himself whole-heartedly to his task and keep his mind upon it, so that the little boxes on a lady's dressing-table are fixed among the solid possessions of our imaginations. A game at cards or a summer's boating party upon the Thames has power to suggest the same beauty and the same sense of things vanishing that we receive from poems aimed directly at our deepest emotions. And just as the poet could spend all his powers upon a pair of scissors and a lock of hair, so too, secure in his world and its values, the aristocrat could lay down precise laws for the education of his son. In that world also there was a certainty, a security that we are now without. What with one thing and another times have changed. We can now read Lord Chesterfield's letters without blushing, or, if we do blush, we blush in the twentieth century at passages that caused Lord Mahon no discomfort whatever.

When the letters begin, Philip Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield's natural son by a Dutch governess, was a little boy of seven. And if we are to make any complaint against the father's moral teaching, it is that the standard is too high for such tender years. 'Let us return to oratory, or the art of speaking well; which should never be entirely out of our thoughts,' he writes to the boy of seven. 'A man can make no figure without it in Parliament, or the Church, or in the law,' he continues, as if the little boy were already considering his career. It seems, indeed, that the father's fault, if fault it be, is one common to distinguished men who have not themselves succeeded as they should have done and are determined to give their children —and Philip was an only child—the chances that they have lacked. Indeed, as the letters go on one may suppose that Lord Chesterfield wrote as much to amuse himself by turning over the stores of his experience, his reading, his knowledge of the world, as to instruct his son. The letters show an eagerness, an animation which prove that to write to Philip was not a task, but a delight. Tired, perhaps, with the duties of office and disillusioned with its disappointments, he takes up his pen and, in the relief of free communication at last, forgets that his correspondent is, after all, only a schoolboy who cannot understand half the things that his father says to him. But, even so, there is nothing to repel us in Lord Chesterfield's preliminary sketch of the unknown world. He is all on the side of moderation,

toleration, ratiocination. Never abuse whole bodies of people, he counsels; frequent all churches, laugh at none; inform yourself about all things. Devote your mornings to study, your evenings to good society. Dress as the best people dress, behave as they behave, never be eccentric, egotistical, or absent-minded. Observe the laws of proportion, and live every moment to the full.

So, step by step, he builds up the figure of the perfect man—the man that Philip may become, he is persuaded, if he will only—and here Lord Chesterfield lets fall the words which are to colour his teaching through and through—cultivate the Graces. These ladies are, at first, kept discreetly in the background. It is well that the boy should be indulged in fine sentiments about women and poets to begin with. Lord Chesterfield adjures him to respect them both. 'For my own part, I used to think myself in company as much above me when I was with Mr. Addison and Mr. Pope, as if I had been with all the Princes in Europe,' he writes. But as time goes on the Virtues are more and more taken for granted. They can be left to take care of themselves. But the Graces assume tremendous proportions. The Graces dominate the life of man in this world. Their service cannot for an instant be neglected. And the service is certainly exacting. For consider what it implies, this art of pleasing. To begin with, one must know how to come into a room and then how to go out again. As human arms and legs are notoriously perverse, this by itself is a matter needing considerable dexterity. Then one must be dressed so that one's clothes seem perfectly fashionable without being new or striking; one's teeth must be perfect; one's wig beyond reproach; one's finger-nails cut in the segment of a circle; one must be able to carve, able to dance, and, what is almost as great an art, able to sit gracefully in a chair. These things are the alphabet of the art of pleasing. We now come to speech. It is necessary to speak at least three languages to perfection. But before we open our lips we must take a further precaution—we must be on our guard never to laugh. Lord Chesterfield himself never laughed. He always smiled. When at length the young man is pronounced capable of speech he must avoid all proverbs and vulgar expressions; he must enunciate clearly and use perfect grammar; he must not argue; he must not tell stories; he must not talk about himself. Then, at last, the young man may begin to practise the finest of the arts of pleasing—the art of flattery. For every man and every woman has some prevailing vanity. Watch, wait, pry, seek out their weakness 'and you will then know what to bait your hook with to catch them.' For that is the secret of success in the world.

It is at this point, such is the idiosyncrasy of our age, that we begin to feel uneasy. Lord Chesterfield's views upon success are far more questionable than his views upon love. For what is to be the prize of this endless effort and self-abnegation? What do we gain when we have learnt to come into rooms and to go out again; to pry into people's secrets; to hold our tongues and to flatter, to forsake the society of low-born people which corrupts and the society of clever people which perverts? What is the prize which is to reward us? It is simply that we shall rise in the world. Press for a further definition, and it amounts perhaps to this: one will be popular with the best people. But if we are so exacting as to demand who the best people are we become involved in a labyrinth from which there is no returning. Nothing exists in itself. What is good society? It is the society that the best people believe to be good. What is wit? It is what the best people think to be witty. All value depends upon somebody else's opinion. For it is the essence of this philosophy that things have no independent existence, but live only in the eyes of other people. It is a looking-glass world, this, to which we climb so slowly; and its prizes are all reflections. That may account for our baffled feeling as we shuffle, and shuffle vainly, among these urbane pages for something hard to lay our hands upon. Hardness is the last thing we shall find. But, granted the deficiency, how much that is ignored by sterner moralists is here seized upon, and who shall deny, at least while Lord Chesterfield's enchantment is upon him, that these imponderable qualities have their value and these shining Graces have their radiance? Consider for a moment what the Graces have done for their devoted servant, the Earl.

Here is a disillusioned politician, who is prematurely aged, who has lost his office, who is losing his teeth, who, worst fate of all, is growing deafer day by day. Yet he never allows a groan to escape him. He is never dull; he is never boring; he is never slovenly. His mind is as well groomed as his body. Never for a second does he 'welter in an easy-chair.' Private though these letters are, and apparently spontaneous, they play with such ease in and about the single subject which absorbs them that it never becomes tedious or, what is still more remarkable, never becomes ridiculous. It may be that the art of pleasing has some connection with the art of writing. To be polite, considerate, controlled, to sink one's egotism, to conceal rather than to obtrude one's personality may profit the writer even as they profit the man of fashion.

Certainly there is much to be said in favour of the training, however we define it, which helped Lord Chesterfield to write his Characters. The little

papers have the precision and formality of some old-fashioned minuet. Yet the symmetry is so natural to the artist that he can break it where he likes; it never becomes pinched and formal, as it would in the hands of an imitator. He can be sly; he can be witty; he can be sententious, but never for an instant does he lose his sense of time, and when the tune is over he calls a halt. 'Some succeeded, and others burst' he says of George the First's mistresses: the King liked them fat. Again, 'He was fixed in the house of lords, that hospital of incurables.' He smiles: he does not laugh. Here the eighteenth century, of course, came to his help. Lord Chesterfield, though he was polite to everything, even to the stars and Bishop Berkeley's [1] philosophy, firmly refused, as became a son of his age, to dally with infinity or to suppose that things are not quite as solid as they seem. The world was good enough and the world was big enough as it was. This prosaic temper, while it keeps him within the bounds of impeccable common sense, limits his outlook. No single phrase of his reverberates or penetrates as so many of La Bruyère's [2] do. But he would have been the first to deprecate any comparison with that great writer; besides, to write as La Bruyère wrote, one must perhaps believe in something, and then how difficult to observe the Graces! One might perhaps laugh; one might perhaps cry. Both are equally deplorable.

But while we amuse ourselves with this brilliant nobleman and his views on life we are aware, and the letters owe much of their fascination to this consciousness, of a dumb yet substantial figure on the farther side of the page. Philip Stanhope is always there. It is true that he says nothing, but we feel his presence in Dresden, in Berlin, in Paris, opening the letters and poring over them and looking dolefully at the thick packets which have been accumulating year after year since he was a child of seven. He had grown into a rather serious, rather stout, rather short young man. He had a taste for foreign politics. A little serious reading was rather to his liking. And by every post the letters came—urbane, polished, brilliant, imploring and commanding him to learn to dance, to learn to carve, to consider the management of his legs, and to seduce a lady of fashion. He did his best. He worked very hard in the school of the Graces, but their service was too exacting. He sat down half-way up the steep stairs which lead to the glittering hall with all the mirrors. He could not do it. He failed in the House of Commons; he subsided into some small post in Ratisbon; he died

[1 Irish philosopher (1685–1753). See the selection by Joad, pp. 505–11.]

[2 French author (1645–96) of *Caractères*, concise delineations of different human types.]

untimely. He left it to his widow to break the news which he had lacked the heart or the courage to tell his father—that he had been married all these years to a lady of low birth, who had borne him children.

The Earl took the blow like a gentleman. His letter to his daughter-in-law is a model of urbanity. He began the education of his grandsons. But he seems to have become a little indifferent to what happened to himself after that. He did not care greatly if he lived or died. But still to the very end he cared for the Graces. His last words were a tribute of respect to those goddesses. Some one [3] came into the room when he was dying; he roused himself: 'Give Dayrolles a chair,' he said, and said no more.

[3 Dayrolles was Chesterfield's godson, his secretary when Chesterfield was British Ambassador at The Hague, and his close friend.]

James Boswell

JOHNSON, CHESTERFIELD, AND THE *DICTIONARY*

¶ Boswell's *Life of Johnson* has for a long time been adjudged the greatest biography in the English language. Boswell affirmed of his hero that 'he will be seen in this work more completely than any man who has ever yet lived.' Until a generation ago Johnson was, quite properly and quite naturally, the main subject of interest to students of Boswell's book. This is no longer true. Much of the interest and study has shifted to Boswell himself. Thanks to the astonishing number of Boswell's journals and papers discovered in recent years, we now know more about Boswell than about Johnson; in fact, more about Boswell than about any other writer in history. It is he, not Dr. Johnson, who, when these documents are published, will be seen 'more completely than any man who has ever yet lived.' As a man of letters Boswell has been frequently reappraised in recent years. These reappraisals are incomplete, but it seems agreed that his stature as biographer and literary artist will, in the future, be higher than ever.

LORD CHESTERFIELD,[1] to whom Johnson had paid the high compliment of addressing to his Lordship the Plan of his Dictionary, had behaved to him in such a manner as to excite his contempt and indignation. The world has been for many years amused with a story confidently told, and as confidently repeated with additional circumstances, that a sudden disgust was taken by Johnson upon occasion of his having been one day kept long in waiting in his Lordship's antechamber, for which the reason assigned was. that he had company with him; and that at last, when the door opened, out walked Colley Cibber; [2] and that Johnson was so

[1 See pp. 338–57.]

[2 Playwright and poet (1671–1757); Poet Laureate from 1730. Pope ridiculed him in the *Dunciad*.]

FROM Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1791.

violently provoked when he found for whom he had been so long excluded, that he went away in a passion, and never would return. I remember having mentioned this story to George Lord Lyttelton, who told me, he was very intimate with Lord Chesterfield; and holding it as a well-known truth, defended Lord Chesterfield by saying, that 'Cibber, who had been introduced familiarly by the backstairs, had probably not been there above ten minutes.' It may seem strange even to entertain a doubt concerning a story so long and so widely current, and thus implicitly adopted, if not sanctioned, by the authority which I have mentioned; but Johnson himself assured me, that there was not the least foundation for it. He told me, that there never was any particular incident which produced a quarrel between Lord Chesterfield and him; but that his Lordship's continued neglect was the reason why he resolved to have no connection with him. When the Dictionary was upon the eve of publication, Lord Chesterfield, who, it is said, had flattered himself with expectations that Johnson would dedicate the work to him, attempted, in a courtly manner, to soothe and insinuate himself with the Sage, conscious, as it should seem, of the cold indifference with which he had treated its learned authour; and further attempted to conciliate him, by writing two papers in 'The World,' in recommendation of the work; and it must be confessed, that they contain some studied compliments, so finely turned, that if there had been no previous offence, it is probable that Johnson would have been highly delighted. Praise, in general, was pleasing to him; but by praise from a man of rank and elegant accomplishments, he was peculiarly gratified.

His Lordship says, 'I think the publick in general, and the republick of letters in particular, are greatly obliged to Mr. Johnson, for having undertaken, and executed so great and desirable a work. Perfection is not to be expected from man; but if we are to judge by the various works of Johnson already published, we have good reason to believe, that he will bring this as near to perfection as any man could do. The Plan of it, which he published some years ago, seems to me to be a proof of it. Nothing can be more rationally imagined, or more accurately and elegantly expressed. I therefore recommend the previous perusal of it to all those who intend to buy the Dictionary, and who, I suppose, are all those who can afford it.'

'It must be owned, that our language is, at present, in a state of anarchy, and hitherto, perhaps, it may not have been the worse for it. During our free and open trade, many words and expressions have been imported, adopted, and naturalized from other languages, which have greatly enriched

our own. Let it still preserve what real strength and beauty it may have borrowed from others; but let it not, like the Tarpeian maid,[3] be overwhelmed and crushed by unnecessary ornaments. The time for discrimination seems to be now come. Toleration, adoption, and naturalization have run their lengths. Good order and authority are now necessary. But where shall we find them, and at the same time, the obedience due to them? We must have recourse to the old Roman expedient in times of confusion, and chuse a dictator. Upon this principle, I give my vote for Mr. Johnson to fill that great and arduous post. And I hereby declare, that I make a total surrender of all my rights and privileges in the English language, as a free-born British subject, to the said Mr. Johnson, during the term of his dictatorship. Nay more, I will not only obey him like an old Roman, as my dictator, but, like a modern Roman, I will implicitly believe in him as my Pope, and hold him to be infallible while in the chair, but no longer. More than this he cannot well require; for, I presume, that obedience can never be expected, where there is neither terrour to enforce, nor interest to invite it.'

'But a Grammar, a Dictionary, and a History of our Language, through its several stages, were still wanting at home, and importunately called for from abroad. Mr. Johnson's labours will now, I dare say, very fully supply that want, and greatly contribute to the farther spreading of our language in other countries. Learners were discouraged, by finding no standard to resort to; and, consequently, thought it incapable of any. They will now be undeceived and encouraged.'

This courtly device failed of its effect. Johnson, who thought that 'all was false and hollow,'[4] despised the honeyed words, and was even indignant that Lord Chesterfield should, for a moment, imagine, that he could be the dupe of such an artifice. His expression to me concerning Lord Chesterfield, upon this occasion, was, 'Sir, after making great professions, he had, for many years, taken no notice of me; but when my Dictionary was coming out, he fell a scribbling in "The World" about it. Upon which, I wrote him a letter expressed in civil terms, but such as might shew him that I did not mind what he said or wrote, and that I had done with him.'

This is that celebrated letter of which so much has been said, and about

[3 Tarpeia treacherously opened the gates of Rome to the Sabines in return for their promise to give her what they had on their left arms, i.e. their bracelets. When the Sabine king entered the city, he threw his shield as well as his bracelet on her. His followers did the same, and she was killed by the weight of the shields.]

[4 Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II, 112.]

which curiosity has been so long excited, without being gratified. I for many years solicited Johnson to favour me with a copy of it, that so excellent a composition might not be lost to posterity. He delayed from time to time to give it me; * till at last in 1781, when we were on a visit at Mr. Dilly's, at Southill in Bedfordshire, he was pleased to dictate it to me from memory. He afterwards found among his papers a copy of it, which he had dictated to Mr. Baretti, with its title and corrections, in his own handwriting. This he gave to Mr. Langton; adding that if it were to come into print, he wished it to be from that copy. By Mr. Langton's kindness, I am enabled to enrich my work with a perfect transcript of what the world has so eagerly desired to see.

'TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

'MY LORD, FEBRUARY 7, 1755.

'I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

'When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;*—[5] that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

'Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been

* Dr. Johnson appeared to have had a remarkable delicacy with respect to the circulation of this letter; for Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury, informs me that having many years ago pressed him to be allowed to read it to the second Lord Hardwicke, who was very desirous to hear it (promising at the same time, that no copy of it should be taken), Johnson seemed much pleased that it had attracted the attention of a nobleman of such a respectable character; but after pausing some time, declined to comply with the request, saying, with a smile, 'No, Sir; I have hurt the dog too much already'; or words to that purpose.

[5 'The conqueror of the conqueror of the earth.']

pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance,* one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

'The shepherd in Virgil [6] grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

'Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; * till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the Publick should consider me as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

'Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

'My Lord,
'Your Lordship's most humble
'Most obedient servant,
'SAM. JOHNSON.' †

* The following note is subjoined by Mr. Langton. 'Dr. Johnson, when he gave me this copy of his letter, desired that I would annex to it his information to me, that whereas it is said in the letter that "no assistance has been received," he did once receive from Lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds, but as that was so inconsiderable a sum, he thought the mention of it could not properly find a place in a letter of the kind that this was.'

[6 *Eclogues*, VIII, 43–5]

* In this passage Dr. Johnson evidently alludes to the loss of his wife. We find the same tender recollection recurring to his mind upon innumerable occasions; and, perhaps no man ever more forcibly felt the truth of the sentiment so elegantly expressed by my friend Mr. Malone, in his Prologue to Mr. Jephson's tragedy of JULIA:

'Vain—wealth, and fame, and fortune's fostering care,
'If no fond breast the splendid blessings share;
'And, each day's bustling pageantry once past,
'There, only there, our bliss is found at last.'

† Upon comparing this copy with that which Dr. Johnson dictated to me from recollection, the variations are found to be so slight, that this must be added to the many other proofs which he gave of the wonderful extent and accuracy of his memory. To gratify the curious in composition, I have deposited both the copies in the British Museum.

There is a curious minute circumstance which struck me, in comparing the various editions of Johnson's Imitations of Juvenal. In the tenth Satire one of the couplets upon the vanity of wishes even for literary distinction stood thus:

'Yet think what ills the scholar's life assail,
'Toil, envy, want, the *garret*, and the jail.'

But after experiencing the uneasiness which Lord Chesterfield's fallacious patronage made him feel, he dismissed the word *garret* from the sad group, and in all the subsequent editions the line stands,

'Toil, envy, want, the *Patron*, and the jail.'

That Lord Chesterfield must have been mortified by the lofty contempt, and polite, yet keen, satire with which Johnson exhibited him to himself in this letter, it is impossible to doubt. He, however, with that glossy duplicity which was his constant study, affected to be quite unconcerned. Dr. Adams mentioned to Mr. Robert Dodsley [7] that he was sorry Johnson had written his letter to Lord Chesterfield. Dodsley, with the true feelings of trade, said 'he was very sorry too; for that he had a property in the Dictionary, to which his Lordship's patronage might have been of consequence.' He then told Dr. Adams, that Lord Chesterfield had shewn him the letter. 'I should have imagined (replied Dr. Adams) that Lord Chesterfield would have concealed it.' 'Poh! (said Dodsley) do you think a letter from Johnson could hurt Lord Chesterfield? Not at all, Sir. It lay upon his table, where any body might see it. He read it to me; said, "this man has great powers," pointed out the severest passages, and observed how well they were expressed.' This air of indifference, which imposed upon the worthy Dodsley, was certainly nothing but a specimen of that dissimulation which Lord Chesterfield inculcated as one of the most essential lessons for the conduct of life. His Lordship endeavoured to justify himself to Dodsley from the charges brought against him by Johnson; but we may judge of the flimsiness of his defence, from his having excused his neglect of Johnson, by saying, that 'he had heard he had changed his lodgings, and did not know where he lived'; as if there could have been the smallest difficulty to inform himself of that circumstance, by enquiring in the literary circle with which his Lordship was well acquainted, and was, indeed, himself, one of its ornaments.

Dr. Adams expostulated with Johnson, and suggested, that his not being

[7 A prominent bookseller.]

admitted when he called on him, was probably not to be imputed to Lord Chesterfield; for his Lordship had declared to Dodsley, that 'he would have turned off the best servant he ever had, if he had known that he denied him to a man who would have been always more than welcome'; and in confirmation of this, he insisted on Lord Chesterfield's general affability and easiness of access, especially to literary men. 'Sir, (said Johnson) that is not Lord Chesterfield; he is the proudest man this day existing.' 'No, (said Dr. Adams) there is one person, at least, as proud; I think, by your own account you are the prouder man of the two.' 'But mine (replied Johnson instantly) was *defensive* pride.' This, as Dr. Adams well observed, was one of those happy turns for which he was so remarkably ready.

Johnson having now explicitly avowed his opinion of Lord Chesterfield, did not refrain from expressing himself concerning that nobleman with pointed freedom: 'This man (said he) I thought had been a Lord among wits; but, I find, he is only a wit among Lords!' And when his Letters to his natural son were published, he observed, that 'they teach the morals of a whore, and the manners of a dancing-master.' *

The Dictionary, with a Grammar and History of the English Language, being now at length published, in two volumes folio, the world contemplated with wonder so stupendous a work achieved by one man, while other countries had thought such undertakings fit only for whole academies. Vast as his powers were, I cannot but think that his imagination deceived him, when he supposed that by constant application he might

* That collection of letters cannot be vindicated from the serious charge, of encouraging, in some passages, one of the vices most destructive to the good order and comfort of society, which his Lordship represents as mere fashionable gallantry; and, in others, of inculcating the base practice of dissimulation, and recommending, with disproportionate anxiety, a perpetual attention to external elegance of manners. But it must, at the same time, be allowed, that they contain many good precepts of conduct, and much genuine information upon life and manners, very happily expressed; and that there was considerable merit in paying so much attention to the improvement of one who was dependent upon his Lordship's protection; it has, probably, been exceeded in no instance by the most exemplary parent; and though I can by no means approve of confounding the distinction between lawful and illicit offspring, which is, in effect, insulting the civil establishment of our country, to look no higher; I cannot help thinking it laudable to be kindly attentive to those, of whose existence we have, in any way, been the cause. Mr. Stanhope's character has been unjustly represented as diametrically opposite to what Lord Chesterfield wished him to be. He has been called dull, gross, and aukward: but I knew him at Dresden, when he was Envoy to that court; and though he could not boast of the *graces*, he was, in truth, a sensible, civil, well-behaved man.

have performed the task in three years. Let the Preface be attentively perused, in which is given, in a clear, strong, and glowing style, a comprehensive, yet particular view of what he had done; and it will be evident, that the time he employed upon it was comparatively short. I am unwilling to swell my book with long quotations from what is in every body's hands, and I believe there are few prose compositions in the English language that are read with more delight, or are more impressed upon the memory, than that preliminary discourse. One of its excellencies has always struck me with peculiar admiration; I mean the perspicuity with which he has expressed abstract scientifick notions. As an instance of this, I shall quote the following sentence: 'When the radical idea branches out into parallel ramifications, how can a consecutive series be formed of senses in their own nature collateral?' We have here an example of what has been often said, and I believe with justice, that there is for every thought a certain nice adaptation of words which none other could equal, and which, when a man has been so fortunate as to hit, he has attained, in that particular case, the perfection of language.

The extensive reading which was absolutely necessary for the accumulation of authorities, and which alone may account for Johnson's retentive mind being enriched with a very large and various store of knowledge and imagery, must have occupied several years. The Preface furnishes an eminent instance of a double talent, of which Johnson was fully conscious. Sir Joshua Reynolds [8] heard him say, 'There are two things which I am confident I can do very well: one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner: the other is a conclusion, shewing from various causes why the execution has not been equal to what the authour promised to himself and to the publick.'

How should puny scribblers be abashed and disappointed, when they find him displaying a perfect theory of lexicographical excellence, yet at the same time candidly and modestly allowing that he 'had not satisfied his own expectations.' Here was a fair occasion for the exercise of Johnson's modesty, when he was called upon to compare his own arduous performance, not with those of other individuals, (in which case his inflexible regard to truth would have been violated had he affected diffidence,) but with speculative perfection; as he, who can outstrip all his competitors in the race, may yet be sensible of his deficiency when he runs against time.

[8 The famous painter. He was a close friend of Dr. Johnson.]

Well might he say, that 'the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned'; for he told me, that the only aid which he received was a paper containing twenty etymologies, sent to him by a person then unknown, who he was afterwards informed was Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester. The etymologies, though they exhibit learning and judgement, are not, I think, entitled to the first praise amongst the various parts of this immense work. The definitions have always appeared to me such astonishing proofs of acuteness of intellect and precision of language, as indicate a genius of the highest rank. This it is which marks the superior excellence of Johnson's Dictionary over others equally or even more voluminous, and must have made it a work of much greater mental labour than mere Lexicons, or *Word-Books*, as the Dutch call them. They, who will make the experiment of trying how they can define a few words of whatever nature, will soon be satisfied of the unquestionable justice of this observation, which I can assure my readers is founded upon much study, and upon communication with more minds than my own.

A few of his definitions must be admitted to be erroneous. Thus, *Windward* and *Leeward*, though directly of opposite meaning, are defined identically the same way; as to which inconsiderable specks it is enough to observe, that his Preface announces that he was aware there might be many such in so immense a work; nor was he at all disconcerted when an instance was pointed out to him. A lady once asked him how he came to define *Pastern* the *knee* of a horse: instead of making an elaborate defence, as she expected, he at once answered, 'Ignorance, Madam, pure ignorance.' His definition of *Network* [9] has been often quoted with sportive malignity, as obscuring a thing in itself very plain. But to these frivolous censures no other answer is necessary than that with which we are furnished by his own Preface. 'To explain, requires the use of terms less abstruse than that which is to be explained, and such terms cannot always be found. For as nothing can be proved but by supposing something intuitively known, and evident without proof, so nothing can be defined but by the use of words too plain to admit of definition. Sometimes easier words are changed into harder; as *burial*, into *sepulture* or *interment*; *dry*, into *desiccative*; *dryness*, into *siccity*, or *aridity*; *fit*, into *paroxism*; for, the *easiest* word, whatever it be, can never be translated into one more easy.'

His introducing his own opinions, and even prejudices, under general definitions of words, while at the same time the original meaning of the

[9 'Network. Anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections.']

words is not explained, as his *Tory, Whig, Pension, Oats, Excise,** and a few more, cannot be fully defended, and must be placed to the account of capricious and humourous indulgence. Talking to me upon this subject when we were at Ashbourne in 1777, he mentioned a still stronger instance of the predominance of his private feelings in the composition of this work, than any now to be found in it. 'You know, Sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the *Renegado*, after telling that it meant "one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter," I added, *Sometimes we say a* GOWER. Thus it went to the press: but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out.'

Let it, however, be remembered, that this indulgence does not display itself only in sarcasm towards others, but sometimes in playful allusion to the notions commonly entertained of his own laborious task. Thus: '*Grub-street*, the name of a street in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, *dictionaries*, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *Grub-street*.'—'*Lexicographer*, a writer of dictionaries, a *harmless drudge*.'

At the time when he was concluding his very eloquent Preface, Johnson's mind appears to have been in such a state of depression, that we cannot contemplate without wonder the vigourous and splendid thoughts which so highly distinguish that performance. 'I (says he) may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which if I could obtain in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave; and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise.' That

* He thus defines Excise: 'A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom Excise is paid.' The Commissioners of Excise being offended by this severe reflection, consulted Mr. Murray, then Attorney-General, to know whether redress could be legally obtained. I wished to have procured for my readers a copy of the opinion which he gave, and which may now be justly considered as history: but the mysterious secresy of office it seems would not permit it. I am, however, informed by very good authority, that its import was, that the passage might be considered as actionable; but that it would be more prudent in the board not to prosecute. Johnson never made the smallest alteration in this passage. We find he still retained his early prejudice against Excise; for in 'The Idler, No. 65,' there is the following very extraordinary paragraph: 'The authenticity of *Clarendon's* history, though printed with the sanction of one of the first Universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been happily discovered, would, with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into question, by the two lowest of all human beings, a Scribbler for a party, and a Commissioner of Excise.' The persons to whom he alludes were Mr. John Oldmixon, and George Ducket, Esq.

this indifference was rather a temporary than an habitual feeling, appears, I think, from his letters to Mr. Warton; and however he may have been affected for the moment, certain it is that the honours which his great work procured him, both at home and abroad, were very grateful to him. His friend the Earl of Corke and Orrery, being at Florence, presented it to the *Academia della Crusca*. That Academy sent Johnson their *Vocabulario*, and the French Academy sent him their *Dictionnaire*, which Mr. Langton had the pleasure to convey to him.

It must undoubtedly seem strange, that the conclusion of his Preface should be expressed in terms so desponding, when it is considered that the authour was then only in his forty-sixth year. But we must ascribe its gloom to that miserable dejection of spirits to which he was constitutionally subject, and which was aggravated by the death of his wife two years before. I have heard it ingeniously observed by a lady of rank and elegance, that 'his melancholy was then at its meridian.' It pleased God to grant him almost thirty years of life after this time; and once when he was in a placid frame of mind, he was obliged to own to me that he had enjoyed happier days, and had many more friends, since that gloomy hour, than before.

It is a sad saying, that 'most of those whom he wished to please had sunk into the grave'; and his case at forty-five was singularly unhappy, unless the circle of his friends was very narrow. I have often thought, that as longevity is generally desired, and I believe, generally expected, it would be wise to be continually adding to the number of our friends, that the loss of some may be supplied by others. Friendship, 'the wine of life,' should, like a well-stocked cellar, be thus continually renewed; and it is consolatory to think, that although we can seldom add what will equal the generous *first-growths* of our youth, yet friendship becomes insensibly old in much less time than is commonly imagined, and not many years are required to make it very mellow and pleasant. *Warmth* will, no doubt, make a considerable difference. Men of affectionate temper and bright fancy will coalesce a great deal sooner than those who are cold and dull.

The proposition which I have now endeavoured to illustrate was, at a subsequent period of his life, the opinion of Johnson himself. He said to Sir Joshua Reynolds, 'If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself left alone. A man, Sir, should keep his friendship *in constant repair*.'

The celebrated Mr. Wilkes, whose notions and habits of life were very opposite to his, but who was ever eminent for literature and vivacity, sallied forth with a little *Jeu d'Esprit* upon the following passage in his Grammar

of the English Tongue, prefixed to the Dictionary: 'H seldom, perhaps never, begins any but the first syllable.' In an essay printed in 'the Public Advertiser,' this lively writer enumerated many instances in opposition to this remark; for example, 'The authour of this observation must be a man of a quick *appre-hension*, and of a most *compre-hensive* genius.' The position is undoubtedly expressed with too much latitude.

This light sally, we may suppose, made no great impression on our Lexicographer; for we find that he did not alter the passage till many years afterwards.*

He had the pleasure of being treated in a very different manner by his old pupil Mr. Garrick, in the following complimentary Epigram:

'*On* JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

'TALK of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
'That one English soldier will beat ten of France;
'Would we alter the boast from the sword to the pen,
'Our odds are still greater, still greater our men;
'In the deep mines of science though Frenchmen may toil,
'Can their strength be compar'd to Locke, Newton, and Boyle?
'Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their pow'rs,
'Their verse-men and prose-men, then match them with ours!
'First Shakspeare and Milton, like Gods in the fight,
'Have put their whole drama and epick to flight;
'In satires, epistles, and odes, would they cope,
'Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope;
'And Johnson, well-arm'd like a hero of yore,
'Has beat forty French, † and will beat forty more!'

* In the third edition, published in 1773, he left out the words *perhaps never*, and added the following paragraph:

'It sometimes begins middle or final syllables in words compounded, as *block-head*, or derived from the Latin, as *comprehended*.'

† The number of the French Academy employed in settling their language.

David Hume

OF QUALITIES IMMEDIATELY AGREEABLE TO OTHERS*

¶ Hume is famous in the history of philosophy for the perplexing questions he asked in his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) and *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748) about the nature of knowledge, and for his skeptical answers to those questions. He liked to think of himself as a man of letters rather than as a 'philosopher,' however, and he was as much concerned about the success of his *History of Great Britain* (1754–61) and his *Essays* as about the treatises on knowledge.

His *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* was, in his own judgment, 'of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the best.' He finds morality to be based on experience and utility; a custom is good because it is useful. And if it is useful, it receives our approbation. Hence 'Whatever is valuable in any kind so naturally classifies itself under the division of *useful* or *agreeable*, the *utile* or the *dulce*, that it is not easy to imagine why we should ever seek further, or consider the question as a matter of nice research or enquiry.' In the chapter on qualities agreeable to others, Hume's outlook is characteristic of much of the ethics and criticism of his age. Decorum is the ideal; in life, as in art, 'disproportions hurt the eye.' He himself was an example of agreeableness: 'a man,' as he says, 'of mild disposition, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions.'

* It is the nature and, indeed, the definition of virtue, that it is *a quality of the mind agreeable to or approved of by every one who considers or contemplates it.* But some qualities produce pleasure, because they are useful to society, or useful or agreeable to the person himself; others produce it more immediately, which is the case with the class of virtues here considered.

FROM *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 1751.

As THE mutual shocks, in *society*, and the oppositions of interest and self-love have constrained mankind to establish the laws of *justice*, in order to preserve the advantages of mutual assistance and protection: in like manner, the eternal contrarieties, in *company*, of men's pride and self-conceit, have introduced the rules of Good Manners or Politeness, in order to facilitate the intercourse of minds, and an undisturbed commerce and conversation. Among well-bred people, a mutual deference is affected; contempt of others disguised; authority concealed; attention given to each in his turn; and an easy stream of conversation maintained, without vehemence, without interruption, without eagerness for victory, and without any airs of superiority. These attentions and regards are immediately *agreeable* to others, abstracted from any consideration of utility or beneficial tendencies: they conciliate affection, promote esteem, and extremely enhance the merit of the person who regulates his behaviour by them.

Many of the forms of breeding are arbitrary and casual; but the thing expressed by them is still the same. A Spaniard goes out of his own house before his guest, to signify that he leaves him master of all. In other countries, the landlord walks out last, as a common mark of deference and regard.

But, in order to render a man perfect *good company*, he must have Wit and Ingenuity as well as good manners. What wit is, it may not be easy to define; but it is easy surely to determine that it is a quality immediately *agreeable* to others, and communicating, on its first appearance, a lively joy and satisfaction to every one who has any comprehension of it. The most profound metaphysics, indeed, might be employed in explaining the various kinds and species of wit; and many classes of it, which are now received on the sole testimony of taste and sentiment, might, perhaps, be resolved into more general principles. But this is sufficient for our present purpose, that it does affect taste and sentiment, and bestowing an immediate enjoyment, is a sure source of approbation and affection.

In countries where men pass most of their time in conversation, and visits, and assemblies, these *companionable* qualities, so to speak, are of high estimation, and form a chief part of personal merit. In countries where men live a more domestic life, and either are employed in business,

or amuse themselves in a narrower circle of acquaintance, the more solid qualities are chiefly regarded. Thus, I have often observed that among the French [1] the first questions with regard to a stranger are, *Is he polite? Has he wit?* In our own country, the chief praise bestowed is always that of a *good-natured, sensible fellow.*

In conversation, the lively spirit of dialogue is *agreeable,* even to those who desire not to have any share in the discourse: hence the teller of long stories, or the pompous declaimer, is very little approved of. But most men desire likewise their turn in the conversation, and regard, with a very evil eye, that *loquacity* which deprives them of a right they are naturally so jealous of.

There is a sort of harmless *liars,* frequently to be met with in company, who deal much in the marvellous. Their usual intention is to please and entertain; but as men are most delighted with what they conceive to be truth, these people mistake extremely the means of pleasing, and incur universal blame. Some indulgence, however, to lying or fiction is given in *humorous* stories; because it is there really agreeable and entertaining, and truth is not of any importance.

Eloquence, genius of all kinds, even good sense, and sound reasoning, when it rises to an eminent degree, and is employed upon subjects of any considerable dignity and nice discernment; all these endowments seem immediately agreeable, and have a merit distinct from their usefulness. Rarity, likewise, which so much enhances the price of every thing, must set an additional value on these noble talents of the human mind.

Modesty may be understood in different senses, even abstracted from chastity, which has been already treated of. It sometimes means that tenderness and nicety of honour, that apprehension of blame, that dread of intrusion or injury towards others, that Pudor, which is the proper guardian of every kind of virtue, and a sure preservative against vice and corruption. But its most usual meaning is when it is opposed to *impudence* and *arrogance,* and expresses a diffidence of our own judgement, and a due attention and regard for others. In young men chiefly, this quality is a sure sign of good sense; and is also the certain means of augmenting that endowment, by preserving their ears open to instruction, and making them still grasp after new attainments. But it has a further charm to every spectator; by flattering every man's vanity, and presenting the appearance of a docile pupil, who receives, with proper attention and respect, every word they utter.

[1] Hume lived in France from 1734 to 1737 and from 1763 to 1765.]

Men have, in general, a much greater propensity to overvalue than undervalue themselves; notwithstanding the opinion of Aristotle.* This makes us more jealous of the excess on the former side, and causes us to regard, with a peculiar indulgence, all tendency to modesty and self-diffidence; as esteeming the danger less of falling into any vicious extreme of that nature. It is thus in countries where men's bodies are apt to exceed in corpulency, personal beauty is placed in a much greater degree of slenderness, than in countries where that is the most usual defect. Being so often struck with instances of one species of deformity, men think they can never keep at too great a distance from it, and wish always to have a leaning to the opposite side. In like manner, were the door opened to self-praise, and were Montaigne's[3] maxim observed, that one should say as frankly, *I have sense, I have learning, I have courage, beauty, or wit,* as it is sure we often think so; were this the case, I say, every one is sensible that such a flood of impertinence would break in upon us, as would render society wholly intolerable. For this reason custom has established it as a rule, in common societies, that men should not indulge themselves in self-praise, or even speak much of themselves; and it is only among intimate friends or people of very manly behaviour, that one is allowed to do himself justice. Nobody finds fault with Maurice,[4] Prince of Orange, for his reply to one who asked him, whom he esteemed the first general of the age, *The Marquis of Spinola,* said he, *is the second.* Though it is observable, that the self-praise implied is here better implied, than if it had been directly expressed, without any cover or disguise.

He must be a very superficial thinker, who imagines that all instances of mutual deference are to be understood in earnest, and that a man would be more esteemable for being ignorant of his own merits and accomplishments. A small bias towards modesty, even in the internal sentiment, is favourably regarded, especially in young people; and a strong bias is required in the outward behaviour; but this excludes not a noble pride and spirit, which may openly display itself in its full extent, when one lies under calumny or oppression of any kind. The generous contumacy of Socrates, as Cicero calls it, has been highly celebrated in all ages; and when joined to the usual modesty of his behaviour, forms a shining character. Iphicrates, the Athenian, being accused of betraying the interests of his coun-

* Ethic. ad Nicomachum.[2]

[2 It is not clear which passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Hume alludes to. Compare IV, vii; IX, iv; IX, viii, 1–8.]

[3 Miguel de Montaigne (1533–92), famous for his *Essais*.]

[4 Maurice of Nassau (1567–1625).]

try, asked his accuser, *Would you*, says he, *have, on a like occasion, been guilty of that crime? By no means*, replied the other. *And can you then imagine*, cried the hero, *that* Iphicrates *would be guilty?* * In short, a generous spirit and self-value, well founded, decently disguised, and courageously supported under distress and calumny, is a great excellency, and seems to derive its merit from the noble elevation of its sentiment, or its immediate agreeableness to its possessor. In ordinary characters, we approve of a bias towards modesty, which is a quality immediately agreeable to others: the vicious excess of the former virtue, namely, insolence or haughtiness, is immediately disagreeable to others; the excess of the latter is so to the possessor. Thus are the boundaries of these duties adjusted.

A desire of fame, reputation, or a character with others, is so far from being blameable, that it seems inseparable from virtue, genius, capacity, and a generous or noble disposition. An attention even to trivial matters, in order to please, is also expected and demanded by society; and no one is surprised, if he find a man in company to observe a greater elegance of dress and more pleasant flow of conversation, than when he passes his time at home, and with his own family. Wherein, then, consists Vanity, which is so justly regarded as a fault or imperfection. It seems to consist chiefly in such an intemperate display of our advantages, honours, and accomplishments; in such an importunate and open demand of praise and admiration, as is offensive to others, and encroaches too far on *their* secret vanity and ambition. It is besides a sure symptom of the want of true dignity and elevation of mind, which is so great an ornament in any character. For why that impatient desire of applause; as if you were not justly entitled to it, and might not reasonably expect that it would for ever attend you? Why so anxious to inform us of the great company which you have kept; the obliging things which were said to you; the honours, the distinctions which you met with; as if these were not things of course, and what we could readily, of ourselves, have imagined, without being told of them?

Decency, or a proper regard to age, sex, character, and station in the world, may be ranked among the qualities which are immediately agreeable to others, and which, by that means, acquire praise and approbation. An effeminate behaviour in a man, a rough manner in a woman; these are ugly because unsuitable to each character, and different from the qualities which we expect in the sexes. It is as if a tragedy abounded in comic beauties, or

* Quinctil. lib. v. cap. 12.[5]

[5 Quintilian, whose *Institutio Oratoria* is the best exposition of the ideals and practice of Roman education.]

a comedy in tragic. The disproportions hurt the eye, and convey a disagreeable sentiment to the spectators, the source of blame and disapprobation. This is that *indecorum*, which is explained so much at large by Cicero in his Offices.[6]

Among the other virtues, we may also give Cleanliness a place; since it naturally renders us agreeable to others, and is no inconsiderable source of love and affection. No one will deny, that a negligence in this particular is a fault; and as faults are nothing but smaller vices, and this fault can have no other origin than the uneasy sensation which it excites in others; we may, in this instance, seemingly so trivial, clearly discover the origin of moral distinctions, about which the learned have involved themselves in such mazes of perplexity and error.

But besides all the *agreeable* qualities, the origin of whose beauty we can, in some degree, explain and account for, there still remains something mysterious and inexplicable, which conveys an immediate satisfaction to the spectator, but how, or why, or for what reason, he cannot pretend to determine. There is a manner, a grace, an ease, a genteelness, and I-know-not-what, which some men possess above others, which is very different from external beauty and comeliness, and which, however, catches our affection almost as suddenly and powerfully. And though this *manner* be chiefly talked of in the passion between the sexes, where the concealed magic is easily explained, yet surely much of it prevails in all our estimation of characters, and forms no inconsiderable part of personal merit. This class of accomplishments, therefore, must be trusted entirely to the blind, but sure testimony of taste and sentiment; and must be considered as a part of ethics, left by nature to baffle all the pride of philosophy, and make her sensible of her narrow boundaries and slender acquisitions.

We approve of another, because of his wit, politeness, modesty, decency, or any agreeable quality which he possesses; although he be not of our acquaintance, nor has ever given us any entertainment, by means of these accomplishments. The idea, which we form of their effect on his acquaintance, has an agreeable influence on our imagination, and gives us the sentiment of approbation. This principle enters into all the judgements which we form concerning manners and characters.

[6 Cicero's *De Officiis*, a treatise on moral duties, addressed to his son. One of the most influential books ever written.]

Charles Lamb

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

¶ The *Essays of Elia* (Elia was the name of one of Lamb's fellow-clerks) were begun in 1820 and first appeared in *The London Magazine*. They were collected and republished in two series, 1823 and 1833.

Because of its informal and conversational style and its freedom from restrictions of subject, the familiar essay was a form perfectly suited to Lamb's temperament, to his insatiable curiosity about the oddities of human beings and customs and places: 'the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets.' Yet not all the essays deal with his beloved London. Like Montaigne, he treats of any topic that happens to interest him. His essays and his letters delight us because he himself delights us.

Sera tamen respexit
Libertas. *Virgil.*[1]
A Clerk I was in London gay.—*O'Keefe.*

IF PERADVENTURE, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six-and-thirty years since I took my seat at the desk [2] in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-

[1 'Yet freedom at length regarded (me).' *Eclogues*, I, 28.]

[2 Lamb was a clerk at the South Sea House from 1789 to 1792, and at the East India House from 1792 to 1825. See note to p. 407.]

FROM *Last Essays of Elia*, 1833.

time, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at the counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a weekday saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No bookstalls deliciously to idle over—no busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant-maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays, I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all

the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the fifth of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner—the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life—when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock), I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought, now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when to my utter astonishment B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life, (how my heart panted!) and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me

to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.

Esto perpetua! [3]

For the first day or two I felt stunned—overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastile,[4] suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have all his Time to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my possessions; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away; but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candlelight Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in bygone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me. I am like the man

> —that's born and has his years come to him,
> In some green desert.

'Years!' you will say; 'what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us he is past fifty.'

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man

[3 'Be thou eternal!']

[4 A prison in Paris, destroyed by the mob on 14 July 1789, now the chief national anniversary in France.]

can properly call his own—that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's Time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My next ten years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:—

> —'T was but just now he went away;
> I have not since had time to shed a tear;
> And yet the distance does the same appear
> As if he had been a thousand years from me.
> Time takes no measure in Eternity.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l take me, if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six-and-thirty years, that soothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then, after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——, officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and

thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington[5] of old, stately house of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one-half the year supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my 'works!' There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas[6] left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian,[7] from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural for me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at 11 o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a bookstall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane, which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six-and-thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles.[8] It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my

[5] Sir Thomas Gresham was an important financier in Elizabethan times. Sir Richard Whittington was Lord Mayor of London in 1397–8, 1406–7, and 1419–20.]

[6] St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), the greatest of medieval philosophers and theologians.]

[7] One of the stricter orders of monks.]

[8] Ancient sculptures from the Parthenon, collected by the Earl of Elgin and placed in the British Museum in 1816.]

appetite, spirits, etc. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed that Ethiop white? What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday, as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week-day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle [9] which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure [10] to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton-mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.[11]

I am no longer * * * * * *, clerk to the Firm of, etc. I am Retired Leisure.[12] I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* [13] air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper, it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.*[14] I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

[9 Slice.]

[10 A celebrated passage at the opening of the second book of Lucretius' poem *De Rerum Natura* tells of the agreeable feeling one has when, safe himself, he watches the struggles of others. He pities them but rejoices that he is out of danger.]

[11 *Hamlet*, II, ii, 527.]

[12 See Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 49–50.]

[13 Dignified.]

[14 The task is performed.]

Henry David Thoreau

WHERE I LIVED, AND WHAT I LIVED FOR

Thoreau's narrative of his building a cabin by Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts, and of his natural and spiritual life there is an indisputable classic, familiar today to many who never heard of his other writings and who perhaps never read even a page by his famous neighbor Emerson. *Walden* is unique; there is nothing to compare it with; it had no model, no predecessor. It is as genuine as Thoreau himself, as American as Concord.

Thoreau lived at Walden Pond for little more than two years, from July 1845 to September 1847. His was not a hermit's existence there by any means, nor was it intended to be one; he had callers now and then, and he frequently went to the village. When his 'experiment' satisfied him, he returned to Concord to live. 'I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one.'

Most of *Walden* was written in 1846 or thereabouts, but parts of it were made not only from the journal Thoreau kept while he lived beside the pond but from his earlier journals as well. It was published in 1854.

AT A CERTAIN season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it,—took every thing but a deed of it,—took his word for his deed, for I dearly

FROM *Walden*, 1854.

love to talk,—cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes*, a seat?—better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard, woodlot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.[1]

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms,—the refusal was all I wanted,—but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife—every man has such a wife—changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,—

> 'I am monarch of all I *survey*,
> My right there is none to dispute.' [2]

[1] Compare Luke, xii, 15.]
[2] Cowper, *Verses Supposed to be Written by Alexander Selkirk.*]

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were: its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put such an interval between me and the last occupant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements. To enjoy these advantages I was ready to carry it on; like Atlas, to take the world on my shoulders,—I never heard what compensation he received for that,—and do all those things which had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it; for I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted if I could only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as I have said.

All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale (I have always cultivated a garden) was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

Old Cato,[3] whose 'De Re Rusticâ' is my 'Cultivator,' says, and the only translation I have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage, 'When you think of getting a farm, turn it thus in your mind, not to buy greedily; nor spare your pains to look at it, and do not think it enough to go round it

[3 Cato the Elder, the Censor (234–149 B.C.); see Plutarch's life of him.]

once. The oftener you go there the more it will please you, if it is good.' I think I shall not buy greedily, but go round and round it as long as I live, and be buried in it first, that it may please me the more at last.

The present was my next experiment of this kind, which I purpose to describe more at length, for convenience, putting the experience of two years into one. As I have said, I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.[4]

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence day, or the fourth of July, 1845, my house[5] was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited the year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus[6] is but the outside of the earth every where.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go out doors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa[7] says, 'An

[4] This sentence appeared on the title page of the early editions of *Walden*.]
[5] See the first chapter of *Walden*, which describes the building of the house.]
[6] In classical mythology, the abode of the gods.]
[7] Supplement to the Hindu epic poem *Mahabharata*.]

abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning.' Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood-thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field-sparrow, the whippoorwill, and many others.

I was seated [8] by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the north-west, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I

[8 See p. 384.]

could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land.*

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub-oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose, stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. 'There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,'—said Damodara,[9] when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted;—

> 'There was a shepherd that did live,
> And held his thoughts as high
> As were the mounts whereon his flocks
> Did hourly feed him by.'

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal sim-

[9 Vishnu, the Preserver god in Hindu mythology.]

plicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of king Tchingthang to this effect: 'Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again.' I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly-acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas [10] say, 'All intelligences awake with the morning.' Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon,[11] are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of

[10 Ancient Hindu scriptures.]

[11 A gigantic statue near Thebes, in Egypt, supposedly that of the hero Memnon, was said to utter musical sounds in the morning.]

their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to 'glorify God and enjoy him forever.' [12]

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; [13] it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail.

[12] From the Westminster (Presbyterian) Catechism.]

[13] According to an ancient fable the pygmies and cranes fought annually.]

An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy,[14] made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers,[15] and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them*, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and

[14] When this was written, Germany was not yet a united nation but a collection of 'petty states.']

[15] Railroad ties.]

make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work*, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, 'What's the news?' as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. 'Pray tell me any thing new that has happened to a man any where on this globe,'—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life—I wrote this some years ago—that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest.[16] And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the

[16] At that time the postage might be paid by either the sender or the receiver of a letter.]

Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter,—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure,—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth or twelve years beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions,—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers, —and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! 'Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!' The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week,—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one,—with this one other draggletail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice,—'Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?'

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected

only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence,—that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit every where, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that 'there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul,' continues the Hindoo philosopher, 'from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*.' [17] I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the 'Mill-dam' go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

[17] Knows itself to be of the divine, eternal essence.]

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry, —determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses.[18] If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through church and state, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui*,[19] below freshet and frost and fire, a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer,[20] but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than

[18] Ulysses had himself tied to the mast of his ship in order to resist the allurements of the Sirens.]

[19] Basis.]

[20] Instrument for measuring the height of the Nile.]

is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore-paws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

Robert Louis Stevenson

ÆS TRIPLEX[1]

¶ Robert Louis Stevenson's essays are less read now than they used to be, possibly because their style seems too polished, too finished, to please the taste of readers accustomed to other modes of writing. That his prose is sometimes overmannered is true, but by and large it is wonderfully clear, graceful, and easy. His ideas are as timely as ever. A reader coming to 'Aes Triplex' for the first time will be struck by many of Stevenson's observations; for example, "This world itself, travelling blindly and swiftly in overcrowded space, among a million other worlds travelling blindly and swiftly in contrary directions, may very well come by a knock that would set it into explosion like a penny squib.' What better counsel for us nowadays than this: 'As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognise our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact'?

'Aes Triplex' first appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1878, and was included in the volume of essays entitled *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

THE changes wrought by death are in themselves so sharp and final, and so terrible and melancholy in their consequences, that the thing stands alone in man's experience, and has no parallel upon earth. It outdoes all other accidents because it is the last of them. Sometimes it leaps suddenly upon its victims, like a Thug; sometimes it lays a regular siege and creeps upon their citadel during a score of years. And when the business is done, there is sore havoc made in other people's lives, and a pin knocked out by which many subsidiary friendships hung together.

[1 'Aes triplex' ('triple brass,' 'threefold armor') is synonymous with courage. The phrase is from Horace, *Odes*, I, iii, 9.]

FROM *The Cornhill Magazine*, 1878.

There are empty chairs, solitary walks and single beds at night. Again, in taking away our friends, death does not take them away utterly, but leaves behind a mocking, tragical, and soon intolerable residue, which must be hurriedly concealed. Hence a whole chapter of sights and customs striking to the mind, from the pyramids of Egypt to the gibbets and dule trees [2] of mediæval Europe. The poorest persons have a bit of pageant going towards the tomb; memorial stones are set up over the least memorable; and, in order to preserve some show of respect for what remains of our old loves and friendships, we must accompany it with much grimly ludicrous ceremonial, and the hired undertaker parades before the door. All this, and much more of the same sort, accompanied by the eloquence of poets, has gone a great way to put humanity in error; nay, in many philosophies the error has been embodied and laid down with every circumstance of logic; although in real life the bustle and swiftness, in leaving people little time to think, have not left them time enough to go dangerously wrong in practice.

As a matter of fact, although few things are spoken of with more fearful whisperings than this prospect of death, few have less influence on conduct under healthy circumstances. We have all heard of cities in South America built upon the side of fiery mountains, and how, even in this tremendous neighborhood, the inhabitants are not a jot more impressed by the solemnity of mortal conditions than if they were delving gardens in the greenest corner of England. There are serenades and suppers and much gallantry among the myrtles overhead; and meanwhile the foundation shudders underfoot, the bowels of the mountain growl, and at any moment living ruin may leap sky high into the moonlight, and tumble man and his merry-making in the dust. In the eyes of very young people, and very dull old ones, there is something indescribably reckless and desperate in such a picture. It seems not credible that respectable married people, with umbrellas, should find appetite for a bit of supper within quite a long distance of a fiery mountain; ordinary life begins to smell of high-handed debauch when it is carried on so close to a catastrophe; and even cheese and salad, it seems, could hardly be relished in such circumstances without something like a defiance of the Creator. It should be a place for nobody but hermits dwelling in prayer and maceration, or mere born-devils drowning care in a perpetual carouse. And yet, when one comes to think upon it calmly, the situation of these South American citizens forms only a very pale figure for the state of ordinary mankind. This world itself, travelling

[2] Mourning trees, i.e. hanging trees, gibbets.]

blindly and swiftly in overcrowded space, among a million other worlds travelling blindly and swiftly in contrary directions, may very well come by a knock that would set it into explosion like a penny squib. And what, pathologically looked at, is the human body with all its organs, but a mere bagful of petards? [3] The least of these is as dangerous to the whole economy as the ship's powder-magazine to the ship; and with every breath we breathe, and every meal we eat, we are putting one or more of them in peril. If we clung as devotedly as some philosophers pretend we do to the abstract idea of life, or were half as frightened as they make out we are for the subversive accident that ends it all, the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one would follow them into battle—the blue-peter [4] might fly at the truck,[5] but who would climb into a sea-going ship? Think (if these philosophers were right) with what a preparation of spirit we should affront the daily peril of the dinner-table: a deadlier spot than any battle-field in history; where the far greater proportion of our ancestors have miserably left their bones! What woman would ever be lured into marriage, so much more dangerous than the wildest sea? And what would it be to grow old? For, after a certain distance, every step we take in life we find the ice growing thinner below our feet, and all around us and behind us we see our contemporaries going through. By the time a man gets well into the seventies, his continued existence is a mere miracle; and when he lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day. Do the old men mind it, as a matter of fact? Why, no. They were never merrier; they have their grog at night, and tell the raciest stories; they hear of the death of people about their own age, or even younger, not as if it was a grisly warning, but with a simple childlike pleasure at having outlived some one else; and when a draught might puff them out like a guttering candle, or a bit of a stumble shatter them like so much glass, their old hearts keep sound and unaffrighted, and they go on, bubbling with laughter, through years of man's age compared to which the valley at Balaklava [6] was as safe and peaceful as a village cricket-green on Sunday. It may fairly be questioned (if we look to the peril only) whether it was a much more daring feat for Curtius [7] to plunge into the gulf, than

[3 Firecrackers.]

[4 A blue and white signal flag used on ships.]

[5 Top of flagstaff or masthead.]

[6 Where, in the Crimean War, the 'six hundred' made their famous charge.]

[7 When a chasm suddenly opened in the Roman Forum, the soothsayers announced that it would not close until Rome's chief strength was sacrificed. Curtius, armed and on horseback, leaped into the chasm: Rome's strength was in her men and arms.]

for any old gentleman of ninety to doff his clothes and clamber into bed.

Indeed, it is a memorable subject for consideration, with what unconcern and gaiety mankind pricks on along the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole way is one wilderness of snares, and the end of it, for those who fear the last pinch, is irrevocable ruin. And yet we go spinning through it all, like a party for the Derby. Perhaps the reader remembers one of the humourous devices of the deified Caligula: [8] how he encouraged a vast concourse of holiday makers on to his bridge over Baiæ bay; and when they were in the height of their enjoyment, turned loose the Prætorian guards among the company, and had them tossed into the sea. This is no bad miniature of the dealings of nature with the transitory race of man. Only, what a chequered picnic we have of it, even while it lasts! and into what great waters, not to be crossed by any swimmer, God's pale Prætorian throws us over in the end! We live the time that a match flickers; we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not, in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger-beer, and trouble our heads so little about the devouring earthquake? The love of Life and the fear of Death are two famous phrases that grow harder to understand the more we think about them. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of tying it; and yet, unless it be some martinet of a professional mariner or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures ties it. A strange instance of man's unconcern and brazen boldness in the face of death!

We confound ourselves with metaphysical phrases, which we import into daily talk with noble inappropriateness. We have no idea of what death is, apart from its circumstances and some of its consequences to others; and although we have some experience of living, there is not a man on earth who has flown so high into abstraction as to have any practical guess at the meaning of the word *life*. All literature, from Job and Omar Khayyam to Thomas Carlyle or Walt Whitman, is but an attempt to look upon the human state with such largeness of view as shall enable us to rise from the consideration of living to the Definition of Life. And our sages give us about the best satisfaction in their power when they say that it is a vapour, or a show, or made out of the same stuff with dreams. Philosophy, in its more rigid sense, has been at the same work for ages; and

[8 Roman Emperor, A.D. 37–41.]

after a myriad bald heads have wagged over the problem, and piles of words have been heaped one upon another into dry and cloudy volumes without end, philosophy has the honour of laying before us, with modest pride, her contribution towards the subject: that life is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. Truly a fine result! A man may very well love beef, or hunting, or a woman; but surely, surely, not a Permanent Possibility of Sensation! He may be afraid of a precipice, or a dentist, or a large enemy with a club, or even an undertaker's man; but not certainly of abstract death. We may trick with the word life in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking; we may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth, but one fact remains true throughout—that we do not love life, in the sense that we are greatly preoccupied about its conservation; that we do not, properly speaking, love life at all, but living. Into the views of the least careful there will enter some degree of providence; no man's eyes are fixed entirely on the passing hour; but although we have some anticipation of good health, good weather, wine, active employment, love, and self-approval, the sum of these anticipations does not amount to anything like a general view of life's possibilities and issues; nor are those who cherish them most vividly, at all the most scrupulous of their personal safety. To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of human experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions, and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter: tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent; and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as if it were a world too far away. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question. When a man's heart warms to his viands, he forgets a great deal of sophistry, and soars into a rosy zone of contemplation. Death may be knocking at the door, like the Commander's statue; [9] we have something else in hand, thank God, and let him knock. Passing bells are ringing all the world over; all the world over, and every hour, some one is parting company with all his aches and ecstasies; for us also the trap is laid. But we are so fond of life that we have no

[9 In act II, scene iv of Mozart's opera, *Don Giovanni*.]

leisure to entertain the terror of death. 'Tis a honeymoon with us all through, and none of the longest. Small blame to us if we give our whole hearts to this glowing bride of ours, to the appetites, to honour, to the hungry curiosity of the mind, to the pleasure of the eyes in nature, and the pride of our own nimble bodies.

We all of us appreciate the sensations; but as for caring about the Permanence of the Possibility, a man's head is generally very bald, and his senses very dull, before he comes to that. Whether we regard life as a lane leading to a dead wall—a mere bag's end, as the French say—or whether we think of it as a vestibule or gymnasium, where we wait our turn and prepare our faculties for some more noble destiny; whether we thunder in a pulpit, or pule in little atheistic poetry-books, about its vanity and brevity; whether we look justly for years of health and vigour, or are about to mount into a bath-chair,[10] as a step towards the hearse; in each and all of these views and situations there is but one conclusion possible: that a man should stop his ears against paralysing terror, and run the race that is set before him [11] with a single mind. No one surely could have recoiled with more heartache and terror from the thought of death than our delightful lexicographer; [12] and yet we know how little it affected his conduct, how wisely and boldly he walked, and in what a fresh and lively vein he spoke of life. Already an old man, he ventured on his Highland tour; and his heart, bound with triple brass, did not recoil before twenty-seven individual cups of tea. As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognise our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact. A frank and somewhat headlong carriage, not looking too anxiously before, not dallying in maudlin regret over the past, stamps the man who is well armoured for this world.

And not only well armoured for himself, but a good friend and a good citizen to boot. We do not go to cowards for tender dealing; there is nothing so cruel as panic; the man who has least fear for his own carcase, has most time to consider others. That eminent chemist who took his walks abroad in tin shoes, and subsisted wholly upon tepid milk, had all his work cut out for him in considerate dealings with his own digestion. So soon as prudence has begun to grow up in the brain, like a dismal fungus, it finds its first expression in a paralysis of generous acts. The victim begins to

[10 Invalid's wheel chair.]
[11 Hebrews, xii, 1.]
[12 Dr. Johnson (see pp. 358–69).]

shrink spiritually; he develops a fancy for parlours with a regulated temperature, and takes his morality on the principle of tin shoes and tepid milk. The care of one important body or soul becomes so engrossing, that all the noises of the outer world begin to come thin and faint into the parlour with the regulated temperature; and the tin shoes go equably forward over blood and rain. To be overwise is to ossify; and the scruple-monger ends by standing stockstill. Now the man who has his heart on his sleeve,[13] and a good whirling weathercock of a brain, who reckons his life as a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded, makes a very different acquaintance of the world, keeps all his pulses going true and fast, and gathers impetus as he runs, until, if he be running towards anything better than wildfire, he may shoot up and become a constellation in the end. Lord look after his health, Lord have a care of his soul, says he; and he has at the key of the position, and swashes through peril and incongruity towards his aim. Death is on all sides of him with pointed batteries, as he is on all sides of all of us; the nastiest chances pop out against him; mim-mouthed friends and relations hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path: and what cares he for all this? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous in his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring, deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal. 'A peerage or Westminster Abbey!' cried Nelson [14] in his bright, boyish, heroic manner. These are great incentives; not for any of these, but for the plain satisfaction of living, of being about their business in some sort or other, do the brave, serviceable men of every nation tread down the nettle danger,[15] and pass flyingly over all the stumbling-blocks of prudence. Think of the heroism of Johnson, think of that superb indifference to mortal limitation that set him upon his dictionary, and carried him through triumphantly until the end! Who, if he were wisely considerate of things at large, would ever embark upon any work much more considerable than a halfpenny post card? Who would project a serial novel, after Thackeray and Dickens had each fallen in mid-course? Who would find heart enough to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?

And, after all, what sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is! To forego all the issues of living in a parlour with a regulated temperature—as if that

[13] *Othello*, I, i, 64.]

[14] He is said to have uttered some such words just before a naval battle. They are usually quoted as 'Westminster Abbey or victory!']

[15] *I Henry IV*, II, iii, 11–12.]

were not to die a hundred times over, and for ten years at a stretch! As if it were not to die in one's own lifetime, and without even the sad immunities of death! As if it were not to die, and yet be the patient spectators of our own pitiable change! The Permanent Possibility is preserved, but the sensations carefully held at arm's length, as if one kept a photographic plate in a dark chamber. It is better to lose health like a spendthrift than to waste it like a miser. It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sick-room. By all means begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. It is not only in finished undertakings that we ought to honour useful labour. A spirit goes out of the man who means execution, which outlives the most untimely ending. All who have meant good work with their whole hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind. And even if death catch people, like an open pitfall, and in mid-career, laying out vast projects, and planning monstrous foundations, flushed with hope, and their mouths full of boastful language, they should be at once tripped up and silenced: is there not something brave and spirited in such a termination? And does not life go down with a better grace, foaming in full body over a precipice, than miserably straggling to an end in sandy deltas? When the Greeks made their fine saying that those whom the gods love die young, I cannot help believing they had this sort of death also in their eye. For surely, at whatever age it overtake the man, this is to die young. Death has not been suffered to take so much as an illusion from his heart. In the hot-fit of life, a-tiptoe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory,[16] this happy-starr'd, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.

[[16] Wordsworth, *Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.*]

John Stuart Mill

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY EDUCATION

¶ In the England of his day, declared Mill in *On Liberty*, 'It still remains unrecognized, that to bring a child into existence without a fair prospect of being able, not only to provide food for its body, but instruction and training for its mind, is a moral crime, both against the unfortunate offspring and against society.' There was never the slightest danger of his own mental training being neglected in his youth, for his father, the Benthamite James Mill, subjected him to an incredibly rigorous program of study almost from the younger Mill's birth. It was a regimen that would horrify a modern educational psychologist, and it would have crushed anyone but a monster of infantile precocity like John Stuart Mill. He not only survived it but came to feel gratitude for it. Thanks to it he started mature life 'with an advantage of a quarter of a century over my contemporaries.' He learned from it that 'A pupil from whom nothing is ever demanded which he cannot do, never does all he can.' Above all, he learned to think for himself, 'almost from the first,' and to try to find out things for himself. As he came to realize later, however, it hindered his emotional development; there was no mark of love in it, for his father was 'ashamed of the signs of feeling.' Yet we have Mill's own testimony that his childhood was not blighted. 'As regards my own education, I hesitate to pronounce whether I was more a loser or gainer by his severity. It was not such as to prevent me from having a happy childhood.' This is hard to believe, but believe it we must, for Mill would not have known how to tell anything but the truth. Still, his idea of what makes a 'happy childhood' was rather different from Huckleberry Finn's.

FROM *Autobiography*, 1873.

It seems proper that I should prefix to the following biographical sketch, some mention of the reasons which have made me think it desirable that I should leave behind me such a memorial of so uneventful a life as mine. I do not for a moment imagine that any part of what I have to relate, can be interesting to the public as a narrative, or as being connected with myself. But I have thought that in an age in which education, and its improvement, are the subject of more, if not of profounder study than at any former period of English history, it may be useful that there should be some record of an education which was unusual and remarkable, and which, whatever else it may have done, has proved how much more than is commonly supposed may be taught, and well taught, in those early years which, in the common modes of what is called instruction, are little better than wasted. It has also seemed to me that in an age of transition in opinions, there may be somewhat both of interest and of benefit in noting the successive phases of any mind which was always pressing forward, equally ready to learn and to unlearn either from its own thoughts or from those of others. But a motive which weighs more with me than either of these, is a desire to make acknowledgment of the debts which my intellectual and moral development owes to other persons; some of them of recognised eminence, others less known than they deserve to be, and the one to whom most of all is due, one whom the world had no opportunity of knowing. The reader whom these things do not interest, has only himself to blame if he reads farther, and I do not desire any other indulgence from him than that of bearing in mind, that for him these pages were not written.

I was born in London, on the 20th of May, 1806, and was the eldest son of James Mill, the author of the History of British India. My father, the son of a petty tradesman and (I believe) small farmer, at Northwater Bridge, in the county of Angus, was, when a boy, recommended by his abilities to the notice of Sir John Stuart, of Fettercairn, one of the Barons of the Exchequer in Scotland, and was, in consequence, sent to the University of Edinburgh, at the expense of a fund established by Lady Jane Stuart (the wife of Sir John Stuart) and some other ladies for educating young men for the Scottish Church. He there went through the usual course of study, and was licensed as a Preacher, but never followed the pro-

fession; having satisfied himself that he could not believe the doctrines of that or any other Church. For a few years he was a private tutor in various families in Scotland, among others that of the Marquis of Tweeddale, but ended by taking up his residence in London, and devoting himself to authorship. Nor had he any other means of support until 1819, when he obtained an appointment in the India House.[1]

In this period of my father's life there are two things which it is impossible not to be struck with: one of them unfortunately a very common circumstance, the other a most uncommon one. The first is, that in his position, with no resource but the precarious one of writing in periodicals, he married and had a large family; conduct than which nothing could be more opposed, both as a matter of good sense and of duty, to the opinions which, at least at a later period of life, he strenuously upheld. The other circumstance, is the extraordinary energy which was required to lead the life he led, with the disadvantages under which he laboured from the first, and with those which he brought upon himself by his marriage. It would have been no small thing, had he done no more than to support himself and his family during so many years by writing, without ever being in debt, or in any pecuniary difficulty; holding, as he did, opinions, both in politics and in religion, which were more odious to all persons of influence, and to the common run of prosperous Englishmen in that generation than either before or since; and being not only a man whom nothing would have induced to write against his convictions, but one who invariably threw into everything he wrote, as much of his convictions as he thought the circumstances would in any way permit: being, it must also be said, one who never did anything negligently; never undertook any task, literary or other, on which he did not conscientiously bestow all the labour necessary for performing it adequately. But he, with these burdens on him, planned, commenced, and completed, the History of India; and this in the course of about ten years, a shorter time than has been occupied (even by writers who had no other employment) in the production of almost any other historical work of equal bulk, and of anything approaching to the same amount of reading and research. And to this is to be added, that during the whole period, a considerable part of almost every day was employed in the instruction of his children: in the case of one of whom, myself, he exerted an amount of labour, care, and perseverance rarely, if ever, em-

[1 Headquarters of the East India Company, a trading company that until 1858 had political as well as commercial rule in parts of India. Charles Lamb was also a clerk in the India House.]

ployed for a similar purpose, in endeavouring to give, according to his own conception, the highest order of intellectual education.

A man who, in his own practice, so vigorously acted up to the principle of losing no time, was likely to adhere to the same rule in the instruction of his pupil. I have no remembrance of the time when I began to learn Greek, I have been told that it was when I was three years old. My earliest recollection on the subject is that of committing to memory what my father termed vocables, being lists of common Greek words, with their signification in English, which he wrote out for me on cards. Of grammar, until some years later, I learnt no more than the inflexions of the nouns and verbs, but, after a course of vocables, proceeded at once to translation; and I faintly remember going through Æsop's Fables, the first Greek book which I read. The Anabasis,[2] which I remember better, was the second. I learnt no Latin until my eighth year. At that time I had read, under my father's tuition, a number of Greek prose authors, among whom I remember the whole of Herodotus,[3] and of Xenophon's Cyropædia and Memorials of Socrates; some of the lives of the philosophers by Diogenes Laertius; part of Lucian, and Isocrates ad Demonicum and Ad Nicoclem. I also read, in 1813, the first six dialogues (in the common arrangement) of Plato, from the Euthyphron to the Theætetus[4] inclusive: which last dialogue, I venture to think, would have been better omitted, as it was totally impossible I should understand it. But my father, in all his teaching, demanded of me not only the utmost that I could do, but much that I could by no possibility have done. What he was himself willing to undergo for the sake of my instruction, may be judged from the fact, that I went through the whole process of preparing my Greek lessons in the same room and at the same table at which he was writing: and as in those days Greek and English lexicons were not, and I could make no more use of a Greek and Latin lexicon than could be made without having yet begun to learn Latin, I was forced to have recourse to him for the meaning of every word which I did not know. This incessant interruption, he, one of the most impatient of men, submitted to, and wrote under that interruption several volumes of his History and all else that he had to write during those years.

The only thing besides Greek, that I learnt as a lesson in this part of my childhood, was arithmetic: this also my father taught me: it was the task of

[2 Xenophon's history of the expedition of Cyrus of Persia against his brother, Artaxerxes II, in 401 B.C.; a standard book for those commencing the study of Greek.]

[3 Greek historian, fifth century B.C.]

[4 A dialogue on the nature of knowledge.]

the evenings, and I well remember its disagreeableness. But the lessons were only a part of the daily instruction I received. Much of it consisted in the books I read by myself, and my father's discourses to me, chiefly during our walks. From 1810 to the end of 1813 we were living in Newington Green, then an almost rustic neighbourhood. My father's health required considerable and constant exercise, and he walked habitually before breakfast, generally in the green lanes towards Hornsey. In these walks I always accompanied him, and with my earliest recollections of green fields and wild flowers, is mingled that of the account I gave him daily of what I had read the day before. To the best of my remembrance, this was a voluntary rather than a prescribed exercise. I made notes on slips of paper while reading, and from these in the morning walks, I told the story to him; for the books were chiefly histories, of which I read in this manner a great number: Robertson's histories,[5] Hume,[6] Gibbon; [7] but my greatest delight, then and for long afterwards, was Watson's Philip the Second and Third. The heroic defence of the Knights of Malta against the Turks, and of the revolted Provinces of the Netherlands against Spain, excited in me an intense and lasting interest. Next to Watson, my favourite historical reading was Hooke's History of Rome. Of Greece I had seen at that time no regular history, except school abridgments and the last two or three volumes of a translation of Rollin's Ancient History, beginning with Philip of Macedon. But I read with great delight Langhorne's translation of Plutarch. In English history, beyond the time at which Hume leaves off, I remember reading Burnet's History of his Own Time, though I cared little for anything in it except the wars and battles; and the historical part of the 'Annual Register,' from the beginning to about 1788, where the volumes my father borrowed for me from Mr. Bentham [8] left off. I felt a lively interest in Frederic of Prussia during his difficulties, and in Paoli, the Corsican patriot; but when I came to the American war, I took my part, like a child as I was (until set right by my father) on the wrong side, because it was called the English side. In these frequent talks about the books I read, he used, as opportunity offered, to give me explanations and ideas respecting civilization, government, morality, mental cultivation, which he required me afterwards to restate to him in my own words. He

[5 Of Scotland (1759), of Charles V (1769), and of America (1777, 1796).]

[6 *History of Great Britain* (1754–61).]

[7 *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–88).]

[8 The celebrated founder of utilitarianism, a philosophy based on the principle that 'it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong.' J. S. Mill's father was closely associated with Bentham.]

also made me read, and give him a verbal account of, many books which would not have interested me sufficiently to induce me to read them of myself: among others, Millar's Historical View of the English Government, a book of great merit for its time, and which he highly valued; Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, McCrie's Life of John Knox, and even Sewell and Rutty's Histories of the Quakers. He was fond of putting into my hands books which exhibited men of energy and resource in unusual circumstances, struggling against difficulties and overcoming them: of such works I remember Beaver's African Memoranda, and Collins's Account of the First Settlement of New South Wales. Two books which I never wearied of reading were Anson's Voyages, so delightful to most young persons, and a collection (Hawkesworth's, I believe) of Voyages round the World, in four volumes, beginning with Drake and ending with Cook and Bougainville. Of children's books, any more than of playthings, I had scarcely any, except an occasional gift from a relation or acquaintance: among those I had, Robinson Crusoe was pre-eminent, and continued to delight me through all my boyhood. It was no part, however, of my father's system to exclude books of amusement, though he allowed them very sparingly. Of such books he possessed at that time next to none, but he borrowed several for me; those which I remember are the Arabian Nights, Cazotte's Arabian Tales, Don Quixote, Miss Edgeworth's Popular Tales, and a book of some reputation in its day, Brooke's Fool of Quality.

In my eighth year I commenced learning Latin, in conjunction with a younger sister, to whom I taught it as I went on, and who afterwards repeated the lessons to my father: and from this time, other sisters and brothers being successively added as pupils, a considerable part of my day's work consisted of this preparatory teaching. It was a part which I greatly disliked; the more so, as I was held responsible for the lessons of my pupils, in almost as full a sense as for my own: I, however, derived from this discipline the great advantage, of learning more thoroughly and retaining more lastingly the things which I was set to teach: perhaps, too, the practice it afforded in explaining difficulties to others, may even at that age have been useful. In other respects, the experience of my boyhood is not favourable to the plan of teaching children by means of one another. The teaching, I am sure, is very inefficient as teaching, and I well know that the relation between teacher and taught is not a good moral discipline to either. I went in this manner through the Latin grammar, and a considerable part of Cornelius Nepos and Cæsar's Commentaries, but afterwards

added to the superintendence of these lessons, much longer ones of my own.

In the same year in which I began Latin, I made my first commencement in the Greek poets with the Iliad. After I had made some progress in this, my father put Pope's translation into my hands. It was the first English verse I had cared to read, and it became one of the books in which for many years I most delighted: I think I must have read it from twenty to thirty times through. I should not have thought it worth while to mention a taste apparently so natural to boyhood, if I had not, as I think, observed that the keen enjoyment of this brilliant specimen of narrative and versification is not so universal with boys, as I should have expected both *à priori* [9] and from my individual experience. Soon after this time I commenced Euclid, and somewhat later, Algebra, still under my father's tuition.

From my eighth to my twelfth year, the Latin books which I remember reading were, the Bucolics of Virgil, and the first six books of the Æneid; all Horace, except the Epodes; the Fables of Phædrus; the first five books of Livy (to which from my love of the subject I voluntarily added, in my hours of leisure, the remainder of the first decade); all Sallust; a considerable part of Ovid's Metamorphoses; some plays of Terence; two or three books of Lucretius; several of the Orations of Cicero, and of his writings on oratory; also his letters to Atticus, my father taking the trouble to translate to me from the French the historical explanations in Mingault's notes. In Greek I read the Iliad and Odyssey through; one or two plays of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, though by these I profited little; all Thucydides; the Hellenics of Xenophon; a great part of Demosthenes, Æschines, and Lysias; Theocritus; Anacreon; part of the Anthology; a little of Dionysius; several books of Polybius; and lastly Aristotle's Rhetoric, which, as the first expressly scientific treatise on any moral or psychological subject which I have read, and containing many of the best observations of the ancients on human nature and life, my father made me study with peculiar care, and throw the matter of it into synoptic tables. During the same years I learnt elementary geometry and algebra thoroughly, the differential calculus, and other portions of the higher mathematics far from thoroughly: for my father, not having kept up this part of his early acquired knowledge, could not spare time to qualify himself for removing my difficulties, and left me to deal with them, with little other aid than that of books: while I was continually incurring his displeasure by my inability to

[9] Deductively, self-evidently.]

solve difficult problems for which he did not see that I had not the necessary previous knowledge.

As to my private reading, I can only speak of what I remember. History continued to be my strongest predilection, and most of all ancient history. Mitford's Greece I read continually; my father had put me on my guard against the Tory prejudices of this writer, and his perversions of facts for the whitewashing of despots, and blackening of popular institutions. These points he discoursed on, exemplifying them from the Greek orators and historians, with such effect that in reading Mitford my sympathies were always on the contrary side to those of the author, and I could, to some extent, have argued the point against him: yet this did not diminish the ever new pleasure with which I read the book. Roman history, both in my old favourite, Hooke, and in Ferguson, continued to delight me. A book which, in spite of what is called the dryness of its style, I took great pleasure in, was the Ancient Universal History, through the incessant reading of which, I had my head full of historical details concerning the obscurest ancient people, while about modern history, except detached passages, such as the Dutch War of Independence, I knew and cared comparatively little. A voluntary exercise, to which throughout my boyhood I was much addicted, was what I called writing histories. I successively composed a Roman History, picked out of Hooke; an Abridgment of the Ancient Universal History; a History of Holland, from my favourite Watson and from an anonymous compilation; and in my eleventh and twelfth year I occupied myself with writing what I flattered myself was something serious. This was no less than a History of the Roman Government, compiled (with the assistance of Hooke) from Livy and Dionysius: of which I wrote as much as would have made an octavo volume, extending to the epoch of the Licinian Laws. It was, in fact, an account of the struggles between the patricians and plebeians, which now engrossed all the interest in my mind which I had previously felt in the mere wars and conquests of the Romans. I discussed all the constitutional points as they arose: though quite ignorant of Niebuhr's researches, I, by such lights as my father had given me, vindicated the Agrarian Laws on the evidence of Livy, and upheld, to the best of my ability, the Roman Democratic party. A few years later, in my contempt of my childish efforts, I destroyed all these papers, not then anticipating that I could ever feel any curiosity about my first attempts at writing and reasoning. My father encouraged me in this useful amusement, though, as I think judiciously, he never asked to see what I wrote; so that I did not

feel that in writing it I was accountable to any one, nor had the chilling sensation of being under a critical eye.

But though these exercises in history were never a compulsory lesson, there was another kind of composition which was so, namely, writing verses, and it was one of the most disagreeable of my tasks. Greek and Latin verses I did not write, nor learnt the prosody of those languages. My father, thinking this not worth the time it required, contented himself with making me read aloud to him, and correcting false quantities. I never composed at all in Greek, even in prose, and but little in Latin. Not that my father could be indifferent to the value of this practice, in giving a thorough knowledge of these languages, but because there really was not time for it. The verses I was required to write were English. When I first read Pope's Homer, I ambitiously attempted to compose something of the same kind, and achieved as much as one book of a continuation of the Iliad. There, probably, the spontaneous promptings of my poetical ambition would have stopped; but the exercise, begun from choice, was continued by command. Conformably to my father's usual practice of explaining to me, as far as possible, the reasons for what he required me to do, he gave me, for this, as I well remember, two reasons highly characteristic of him: one was, that some things could be expressed better and more forcibly in verse than in prose: this, he said, was a real advantage. The other was, that people in general attached more value to verse than it deserved, and the power of writing it, was, on this account, worth acquiring. He generally left me to choose my own subjects, which, as far as I remember, were mostly addresses to some mythological personage or allegorical abstraction; but he made me translate into English verse many of Horace's shorter poems: I also remember his giving me Thomson's 'Winter' to read, and afterwards making me attempt (without book) to write something myself on the same subject. The verses I wrote were, of course, the merest rubbish, nor did I ever attain any facility of versification, but the practice may have been useful in making it easier for me, at a later period, to acquire readiness of expression.* I had read, up to this time, very little English poetry. Shakspeare my father had put into my hands, chiefly for the sake of the historical plays, from which, however, I went on to the others. My father never was

* In a subsequent stage of boyhood, when these exercises had ceased to be compulsory, like most youthful writers I wrote tragedies; under the inspiration not so much of Shakspeare as of Joanna Baillie, whose 'Constantine Paleologus' in particular appeared to me one of the most glorious of human compositions. I still think it one of the best dramas of the last two centuries.

a great admirer of Shakspeare, the English idolatry of whom he used to attack with some severity. He cared little for any English poetry except Milton (for whom he had the highest admiration), Goldsmith, Burns, and Gray's Bard, which he preferred to his Elegy: perhaps I may add Cowper and Beattie. He had some value for Spenser, and I remember his reading to me (unlike his usual practice of making me read to him), the first book of the Fairie Queene; but I took little pleasure in it. The poetry of the present century he saw scarcely any merit in, and I hardly became acquainted with any of it till I was grown up to manhood, except the metrical romances of Walter Scott, which I read at his recommendation and was intensely delighted with; as I always was with animated narrative. Dryden's Poems were among my father's books, and many of these he made me read, but I never cared for any of them except Alexander's Feast, which, as well as many of the songs in Walter Scott, I used to sing internally, to a music of my own: to some of the latter, indeed, I went so far as to compose airs, which I still remember. Cowper's short poems I read with some pleasure, but never got far into the longer ones; and nothing in the two volumes interested me like the prose account of his three hares. In my thirteenth year I met with Campbell's poems, among which Lochiel, Hohenlinden, The Exile of Erin, and some others, gave me sensations I had never before experienced from poetry. Here, too, I made nothing of the longer poems, except the striking opening of Gertrude of Wyoming, which long kept its place in my feelings as the perfection of pathos.

During this part of my childhood, one of my greatest amusements was experimental science; in the theoretical, however, not the practical sense of the word; not trying experiments—a kind of discipline which I have often regretted not having had—nor even seeing, but merely reading about them. I never remember being so wrapt up in any book, as I was in Joyce's Scientific Dialogues; and I was rather recalcitrant to my father's criticisms of the bad reasoning respecting the first principles of physics, which abounds in the early part of that work. I devoured treatises on Chemistry, especially that of my father's early friend and schoolfellow, Dr. Thomson, for years before I attended a lecture or saw an experiment.

From about the age of twelve, I entered into another and more advanced stage in my course of instruction; in which the main object was no longer the aids and appliances of thought, but the thoughts themselves. This commenced with Logic, in which I began at once with the Organon,[10] and read it to the Analytics inclusive, but profited little by the Posterior Ana-

[10] Aristotle's treatises on logic.]

lytics, which belong to a branch of speculation I was not yet ripe for. Contemporaneously with the Organon, my father made me read the whole or parts of several of the Latin treatises on the scholastic logic; giving each day to him, in our walks, a minute account of what I had read, and answering his numerous and searching questions. After this, I went in a similar manner, through the 'Computatio sive Logica' of Hobbes, a work of a much higher order of thought than the books of the school logicians, and which he estimated very highly; in my own opinion beyond its merits, great as these are. It was his invariable practice, whatever studies he exacted from me, to make me as far as possible understand and feel the utility of them: and this he deemed peculiarly fitting in the case of the syllogistic logic, the usefulness of which had been impugned by so many writers of authority. I well remember how, and in what particular walk, in the neighbourhood of Bagshot Heath (where we were on a visit to his old friend Mr. Wallace, then one of the Mathematical Professors at Sandhurst) he first attempted by questions to make me think on the subject, and frame some conception of what constituted the utility of the syllogistic logic, and when I had failed in this, to make me understand it by explanations. The explanations did not make the matter at all clear to me at the time; but they were not therefore useless; they remained as a nucleus for my observations and reflections to crystallize upon; the import of his general remarks being interpreted to me, by the particular instances which came under my notice afterwards. My own consciousness and experience ultimately led me to appreciate quite as highly as he did, the value of an early practical familiarity with the school logic. I know of nothing, in my education, to which I think myself more indebted for whatever capacity of thinking I have attained. The first intellectual operation in which I arrived at any proficiency, was dissecting a bad argument, and finding in what part the fallacy lay: and though whatever capacity of this sort I attained, was due to the fact that it was an intellectual exercise in which I was most perseveringly drilled by my father, yet it is also true that the school logic, and the mental habits acquired in studying it, were among the principal instruments of this drilling. I am persuaded that nothing, in modern education, tends so much, when properly used, to form exact thinkers, who attach a precise meaning to words and propositions, and are not imposed on by vague, loose, or ambiguous terms. The boasted influence of mathematical studies is nothing to it; for in mathematical processes, none of the real difficulties of correct ratiocination occur. It is also a study peculiarly adapted to an early stage in the education of philosophical students, since it does

not presuppose the slow process of acquiring, by experience and reflection, valuable thoughts of their own. They may become capable of disentangling the intricacies of confused and self-contradictory thought, before their own thinking faculties are much advanced; a power which, for want of some such discipline, many otherwise able men altogether lack; and when they have to answer opponents, only endeavour, by such arguments as they can command, to support the opposite conclusion, scarcely even attempting to confute the reasonings of their antagonists; and, therefore, at the utmost, leaving the question, as far as it depends on argument, a balanced one.

During this time, the Latin and Greek books which I continued to read with my father were chiefly such as were worth studying, not for the language merely, but also for the thoughts. This included much of the orators, and especially Demosthenes, some of whose principal orations I read several times over, and wrote out, by way of exercise, a full analysis of them. My father's comments on these orations when I read them to him were very instructive to me. He not only drew my attention to the insight they afforded into Athenian institutions, and the principles of legislation and government which they often illustrated, but pointed out the skill and art of the orator—how everything important to his purpose was said at the exact moment when he had brought the minds of his audience into the state most fitted to receive it; how he made steal into their minds, gradually and by insinuation, thoughts which, if expressed in a more direct manner would have roused their opposition. Most of these reflections were beyond my capacity of full comprehension at the time; but they left seed behind, which germinated in due season. At this time I also read the whole of Tacitus, Juvenal, and Quintilian. The latter, owing to his obscure style and to the scholastic details of which many parts of his treatise are made up, is little read, and seldom sufficiently appreciated. His book is a kind of encyclopædia of the thoughts of the ancients on the whole field of education and culture; and I have retained through life many valuable ideas which I can distinctly trace to my reading of him, even at that early age. It was at this period that I read, for the first time, some of the most important dialogues of Plato, in particular the Gorgias, the Protagoras, and the Republic. There is no author to whom my father thought himself more indebted for his own mental culture, than Plato, or whom he more frequently recommended to young students. I can bear similar testimony in regard to myself. The Socratic method, of which the Platonic dialogues are the chief example, is unsurpassed as a discipline for correcting the

errors, and clearing up the confusions incident to the *intellectus sibi permissus*,[11] the understanding which has made up all its bundles of associations under the guidance of popular phraseology. The close, searching *elenchus*[12] by which the man of vague generalities is constrained either to express his meaning to himself in definite terms, or to confess that he does not know what he is talking about; the perpetual testing of all general statements by particular instances; the siege in form which is laid to the meaning of large abstract terms, by fixing upon some still larger class-name which includes that and more, and dividing down to the thing sought—marking out its limits and definition by a series of accurately drawn distinctions between it and each of the cognate objects which are successively parted off from it—all this, as an education for precise thinking, is inestimable, and all this, even at that age, took such hold of me that it became part of my own mind. I have felt ever since that the title of Platonist belongs by far better right to those who have been nourished in, and have endeavoured to practise Plato's mode of investigation, than to those who are distinguished only by the adoption of certain dogmatical conclusions, drawn mostly from the least intelligible of his works, and which the character of his mind and writings makes it uncertain whether he himself regarded as anything more than poetic fancies, or philosophic conjectures.

In going through Plato and Demosthenes, since I could now read these authors, as far as the language was concerned, with perfect ease, I was not required to construe them sentence by sentence, but to read them aloud to my father, answering questions when asked: but the particular attention which he paid to elocution (in which his own excellence was remarkable) made this reading aloud to him a most painful task. Of all things which he required me to do, there was none which I did so constantly ill, or in which he so perpetually lost his temper with me. He had thought much on the principles of the art of reading, especially the most neglected part of it, the inflections of the voice, or *modulation* as writers on elocution call it (in contrast with *articulation* on the one side, and *expression* on the other), and had reduced it to rules, grounded on the logical analysis of a sentence. These rules he strongly impressed upon me, and took me severely to task for every violation of them: but I even then remarked (though I did not venture to make the remark to him) that though he reproached me when I read a sentence ill, and *told* me how I ought to have read it, he never, by reading it himself, *showed* me how it ought to be read. A defect running

[11 'The understanding left to itself,' i.e. undisciplined.]
[12 Questioning, refutation.]

through his otherwise admirable modes of instruction, as it did through all his modes of thought, was that of trusting too much to the intelligibleness of the abstract, when not embodied in the concrete. It was at a much later period of my youth, when practising elocution by myself, or with companions of my own age, that I for the first time understood the object of his rules, and saw the psychological grounds of them. At that time I and others followed out the subject into its ramifications and could have composed a very useful treatise, grounded on my father's principles. He himself left those principles and rules unwritten. I regret that when my mind was full of the subject, from systematic practice, I did not put them, and our improvements of them, into a formal shape.

A book which contributed largely to my education, in the best sense of the term, was my father's History of India. It was published in the beginning of 1818. During the year previous, while it was passing through the press, I used to read the proof sheets to him; or rather, I read the manuscript to him while he corrected the proofs. The number of new ideas which I received from this remarkable book, and the impulse and stimulus as well as guidance given to my thoughts by its criticisms and disquisitions on society and civilization in the Hindoo part, on institutions and the acts of governments in the English part, made my early familiarity with it eminently useful to my subsequent progress. And though I can perceive deficiencies in it now as compared with a perfect standard, I still think it, if not the most, one of the most instructive histories ever written, and one of the books from which most benefit may be derived by a mind in the course of making up its opinions.

The Preface, among the most characteristic of my father's writings, as well as the richest in materials of thought, gives a picture which may be entirely depended on, of the sentiments and expectations with which he wrote the History. Saturated as the book is with the opinions and modes of judgment of a democratic radicalism then regarded as extreme; and treating with a severity, at that time most unusual, the English Constitution, the English law, and all parties and classes who possessed any considerable influence in the country; he may have expected reputation, but certainly not advancement in life, from its publication; nor could he have supposed that it would raise up anything but enemies for him in powerful quarters: least of all could he have expected favour from the East India Company, to whose commercial privileges he was unqualifiedly hostile, and on the acts of whose government he had made so many severe comments: though, in various parts of his book, he bore a testimony in their

favour, which he felt to be their just due, namely, that no Government had on the whole given so much proof, to the extent of its lights, of good intention towards its subjects; and that if the acts of any other Government had the light of publicity as completely let in upon them, they would, in all probability, still less bear scrutiny.

On learning, however, in the spring of 1819, about a year after the publication of the History, that the East India Directors desired to strengthen the part of their home establishment which was employed in carrying on the correspondence with India, my father declared himself a candidate for that employment, and, to the credit of the Directors, successfully. He was appointed one of the Assistants of the Examiner of India Correspondence; officers whose duty it was to prepare drafts of despatches to India, for consideration by the Directors, in the principal departments of administration. In this office, and in that of Examiner, which he subsequently attained, the influence which his talents, his reputation, and his decision of character gave him, with superiors who really desired the good government of India, enabled him to a great extent to throw into his drafts of despatches, and to carry through the ordeal of the Court of Directors and Board of Control, without having their force much weakened, his real opinions on Indian subjects. In his History he had set forth, for the first time, many of the true principles of Indian administration: [13] and his despatches, following his History, did more than had ever been done before to promote the improvement of India, and teach Indian officials to understand their business. If a selection of them were published, they would, I am convinced, place his character as a practical statesman fully on a level with his eminence as a speculative writer.

This new employment of his time caused no relaxation in his attention to my education. It was in this same year, 1819, that he took me through a complete course of political economy. His loved and intimate friend, Ricardo,[14] had shortly before published the book which formed so great an epoch in political economy; a book which never would have been published or written, but for the entreaty and strong encouragement of my father; for Ricardo, the most modest of men, though firmly convinced of the truth of his doctrines, deemed himself so little capable of doing them justice in exposition and expression, that he shrank from the idea of publicity. The same friendly encouragement induced Ricardo, a year or two later, to become a member of the House of Commons; where, during the

[13 But he himself never visited India.]

[14 English economist (1772–1823).]

few remaining years of his life, unhappily cut short in the full vigour of his intellect, he rendered so much service to his and my father's opinions both on political economy and on other subjects.

Though Ricardo's great work was already in print, no didactic treatise embodying its doctrines, in a manner fit for learners, had yet appeared. My father, therefore, commenced instructing me in the science by a sort of lectures, which he delivered to me in our walks. He expounded each day a portion of the subject, and I gave him next day a written account of it, which he made me rewrite over and over again until it was clear, precise, and tolerably complete. In this manner I went through the whole extent of the science; and the written outline of it which resulted from my daily *compte rendu*, served him afterwards as notes from which to write his Elements of Political Economy. After this I read Ricardo, giving an account daily of what I read, and discussing, in the best manner I could, the collateral points which offered themselves in our progress.

On Money, as the most intricate part of the subject, he made me read in the same manner Ricardo's admirable pamphlets, written during what was called the Bullion controversy; to these succeeded Adam Smith; [15] and in this reading it was one of my father's main objects to make me apply to Smith's more superficial view of political economy, the superior lights of Ricardo, and detect what was fallacious in Smith's arguments, or erroneous in any of his conclusions. Such a mode of instruction was excellently calculated to form a thinker; but it required to be worked by a thinker, as close and vigorous as my father. The path was a thorny one, even to him, and I am sure it was so to me, notwithstanding the strong interest I took in the subject. He was often, and much beyond reason, provoked by my failures in cases where success could not have been expected; but in the main his method was right, and it succeeded. I do not believe that any scientific teaching ever was more thorough, or better fitted for training the faculties, than the mode in which logic and political economy were taught to me by my father. Striving, even in an exaggerated degree, to call forth the activity of my faculties, by making me find out everything for myself, he gave his explanations not before, but after, I had felt the full force of the difficulties; and not only gave me an accurate knowledge of these two great subjects, as far as they were then understood, but made me a thinker on both. I thought for myself almost from the first, and occasionally thought differently from him, though for a long time only on minor points, and making his opinion the ultimate standard. At a later period I even occasionally

[15 Economist; see Becker, p. 243.]

convinced him, and altered his opinion on some points of detail: which I state to his honour, not my own. It at once exemplifies his perfect candour, and the real worth of his method of teaching.

At this point concluded what can properly be called my lessons: when I was about fourteen I left England for more than a year; and after my return, though my studies went on under my father's general direction, he was no longer my schoolmaster. I shall therefore pause here, and turn back to matters of a more general nature connected with the part of my life and education included in the preceding reminiscences.

In the course of instruction which I have partially retraced, the point most superficially apparent is the great effort to give, during the years of childhood an amount of knowledge in what are considered the higher branches of education, which is seldom acquired (if acquired at all) until the age of manhood. The result of the experiment shows the ease with which this may be done, and places in a strong light the wretched waste of so many precious years as are spent in acquiring the modicum of Latin and Greek commonly taught to schoolboys; a waste which has led so many educational reformers to entertain the ill-judged proposal of discarding these languages altogether from general education. If I had been by nature extremely quick of apprehension, or had possessed a very accurate and retentive memory, or were of a remarkably active and energetic character, the trial would not be conclusive; but in all these natural gifts I am rather below than above par; what I could do, could assuredly be done by any boy or girl of average capacity and healthy physical constitution: and if I have accomplished anything, I owe it, among other fortunate circumstances, to the fact that through the early training bestowed on me by my father, I started, I may fairly say, with an advantage of a quarter of a century over my contemporaries.

There was one cardinal point in this training, of which I have already given some indication, and which, more than anything else, was the cause of whatever good it effected. Most boys or youths who have had much knowledge drilled into them, have their mental capacities not strengthened, by overlaid by it. They are crammed with mere facts, and with the opinions or phrases of other people, and these are accepted as a substitute for the power to form opinions of their own: and thus the sons of eminent fathers, who have spared no pains in their education, so often grow up mere parroters of what they have learnt, incapable of using their minds except in the furrows traced for them. Mine, however, was not an education of cram. My father never permitted anything which I learnt to degenerate

into a mere exercise of memory. He strove to make the understanding not only go along with every step of the teaching, but, if possible, precede it. Anything which could be found out by thinking I never was told, until I had exhausted my efforts to find it out for myself. As far as I can trust my remembrance, I acquitted myself very lamely in this department; my recollection of such matters is almost wholly of failures, hardly ever of success. It is true the failures were often in things in which success in so early a stage of my progress, was almost impossible. I remember at some time in my thirteenth year, on my happening to use the word idea, he asked me what an idea was; and expressed some displeasure at my ineffectual efforts to define the word: I recollect also his indignation at my using the common expression that something was true in theory but required correction in practice; and how, after making me vainly strive to define the word theory, he explained its meaning, and showed the fallacy of the vulgar form of speech which I had used; leaving me fully persuaded that in being unable to give a correct definition of Theory, and in speaking of it as something which might be at variance with practice, I had shown unparalleled ignorance. In this he seems, and perhaps was, very unreasonable; but I think, only in being angry at my failure. A pupil from whom nothing is ever demanded which he cannot do, never does all he can.

One of the evils most liable to attend on any sort of early proficiency, and which often fatally blights its promise, my father most anxiously guarded against. This was self-conceit. He kept me, with extreme vigilance, out of the way of hearing myself praised, or of being led to make self-flattering comparisons between myself and others. From his own intercourse with me I could derive none but a very humble opinion of myself; and the standard of comparison he always held up to me, was not what other people did, but what a man could and ought to do. He completely succeeded in preserving me from the sort of influences he so much dreaded. I was not at all aware that my attainments were anything unusual at my age. If I accidentally had my attention drawn to the fact that some other boy knew less than myself—which happened less often than might be imagined—I concluded, not that I knew much, but that he, for some reason or other, knew little, or that his knowledge was of a different kind from mine. My state of mind was not humility, but neither was it arrogance. I never thought of saying to myself, I am, or I can do, so and so. I neither estimated myself highly nor lowly: I did not estimate myself at all. If I thought anything about myself, it was that I was rather backward in my studies,

since I always found myself so, in comparison with what my father expected from me. I assert this with confidence, though it was not the impression of various persons who saw me in my childhood. They, as I have since found, thought me greatly and disagreeably self-conceited; probably because I was disputatious, and did not scruple to give direct contradictions to things which I heard said. I suppose I acquired this bad habit from having been encouraged in an unusual degree to talk on matters beyond my age, and with grown persons, while I never had inculcated on me the usual respect for them. My father did not correct this ill-breeding and impertinence, probably from not being aware of it, for I was always too much in awe of him to be otherwise than extremely subdued and quiet in his presence. Yet with all this I had no notion of any superiority in myself; and well was it for me that I had not. I remember the very place in Hyde Park where, in my fourteenth year, on the eve of leaving my father's house for a long absence, he told me that I should find, as I got acquainted with new people, that I had been taught many things which youths of my age did not commonly know; and that many persons would be disposed to talk to me of this, and to compliment me upon it. What other things he said on this topic I remember very imperfectly; but he wound up by saying, that whatever I knew more than others, could not be ascribed to any merit in me, but to the very unusual advantage which had fallen to my lot, of having a father who was able to teach me, and willing to give the necessary trouble and time; that it was no matter of praise to me, if I knew more than those who had not had a similar advantage, but the deepest disgrace to me if I did not. I have a distinct remembrance, that the suggestion thus for the first time made to me, that I knew more than other youths who were considered well educated, was to me a piece of information, to which, as to all other things which my father told me, I gave implicit credence, but which did not at all impress me as a personal matter. I felt no disposition to glorify myself upon the circumstance that there were other persons who did not know what I knew; nor had I ever flattered myself that my acquirements, whatever they might be, were any merit of mine: but, now when my attention was called to the subject, I felt that what my father had said respecting my peculiar advantages was exactly the truth and common sense of the matter, and it fixed my opinion and feeling from that time forward.

It is evident that this, among many other of the purposes of my father's scheme of education, could not have been accomplished if he had not care-

fully kept me from having any great amount of intercourse with other boys. He was earnestly bent upon my escaping not only the corrupting influence which boys exercise over other boys, but the contagion of vulgar modes of thought and feeling; and for this he was willing that I should pay the price of inferiority in the accomplishments which schoolboys in all countries chiefly cultivate. The deficiencies in my education were principally in the things which boys learn from being turned out to shift for themselves, and from being brought together in large numbers. From temperance and much walking, I grew up healthy and hardy, though not muscular; but I could do no feats of skill or physical strength, and knew none of the ordinary bodily exercises. It was not that play, or time for it, was refused me. Though no holidays were allowed, lest the habit of work should be broken, and a taste for idleness acquired, I had ample leisure in every day to amuse myself; but as I had no boy companions, and the animal need of physical activity was satisfied by walking, my amusements, which were mostly solitary, were in general, of a quiet, if not a bookish turn, and gave little stimulus to any other kind even of mental activity than that which was already called forth by my studies: I consequently remained long, and in a less degree have always remained, inexpert in anything requiring manual dexterity; my mind, as well as my hands, did its work very lamely when it was applied, or ought to have been applied, to the practical details which, as they are the chief interest of life to the majority of men, are also the things in which whatever mental capacity they have, chiefly shows itself: I was constantly meriting reproof by inattention, inobservance, and general slackness of mind in matters of daily life. My father was the extreme opposite in these particulars: his senses and mental faculties were always on the alert; he carried decision and energy of character in his whole manner and into every action of life: and this, as much as his talents, contributed to the strong impression which he always made upon those with whom he came into personal contact. But the children of energetic parents, frequently grow up unenergetic, because they lean on their parents, and the parents are energetic for them. The education which my father gave me, was in itself much more fitted for training me to *know* than to *do*. Not that he was unaware of my deficiencies; both as a boy and as a youth I was incessantly smarting under his severe admonitions on the subject. There was anything but insensibility or tolerance on his part towards such shortcomings: but, while he saved me from the demoralizing effects of school life, he made no effort to provide me with any sufficient

substitute for its practicalizing influences. Whatever qualities he himself, probably, had acquired without difficulty or special training, he seems to have supposed that I ought to acquire as easily. He had not, I think, bestowed the same amount of thought and attention on this, as on most other branches of education; and here, as well in some other points of my tuition, he seems to have expected effects without causes.

Mark Twain (S. L. Clemens)

LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI

¶ As a narrative of youth and river life, Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* is second to the immortal *Huckleberry Finn*, but it is a very good second. The first part of the book (chs. iv–xx), describing the author's years on the river as a steamboat pilot, was originally published in *The Atlantic Monthly*; the second part, which is a record of a revisit to the river many years after his career as a pilot had ended, was written seven years after the first. The book appeared in 1883. All of it is typical Mark Twain and therefore good, but the earlier chapters, with their vivid pictures of the cub pilot, of the superlative Mr. Bixby, and of the mighty river itself, are easily the favorite ones. They contain some of the best pages Mark Twain ever wrote.

THE BOYS' AMBITION

When I was a boy, there was but one permanent ambition among my comrades in our village * on the west bank of the Mississippi River. That was, to be a steamboatman. We had transient ambitions of other sorts, but they were only transient. When a circus came and went, it left us all burning to become clowns; the first negro minstrel show that came to our section left us all suffering to try that kind of life; now and then we had a hope that if we lived and were good, God would permit us to be pirates. These ambitions faded out, each in its turn; but the ambition to be a steamboatman always remained.

Once a day a cheap, gaudy packet arrived upward from St. Louis, and another downward from Keokuk. Before these events had transpired, the day was glorious with expectancy; after they had transpired, the day was a dead and empty thing. Not only the boys, but the whole village, felt this.

* Hannibal, Missouri.

FROM *Life on the Mississippi*, 1875, 1883.

After all these years I can picture that old time to myself now, just as it was then: the white town drowsing in the sunshine of a summer's morning; the streets empty, or pretty nearly so; one or two clerks sitting in front of the Water Street stores, with their splint-bottomed chairs tilted back against the wall, chins on breasts, hats slouched over their faces, asleep—with shingle-shavings enough around to show what broke them down; a sow and a litter of pigs loafing along the sidewalk, doing a good business in water-melon rinds and seeds; two or three lonely little freight piles scattered about the 'levee'; a pile of 'skids' on the slope of the stone-paved wharf, and the fragrant town drunkard asleep in the shadow of them; two or three wood flats at the head of the wharf, but nobody to listen to the peaceful lapping of the wavelets against them; the great Mississippi, the majestic, the magnificent Mississippi, rolling its mile-wide tide along, shining in the sun; the dense forest away on the other side; the 'point' above the town, and the 'point' below, bounding the river-glimpse and turning it into a sort of sea, and withal a very still and brilliant and lonely one. Presently a film of dark smoke appears above one of those remote points; instantly a negro drayman, famous for his quick eye and prodigious voice, lifts up the cry, 'S-t-e-a-m-boat a-comin'!' and the scene changes! The town drunkard stirs, the clerks wake up, a furious clatter of drays follows, every house and store pours out a human contribution, and all in a twinkling the dead town is alive and moving. Drays, carts, men, boys, all go hurrying from many quarters to a common centre, the wharf. Assembled there, the people fasten their eyes upon the coming boat as upon a wonder they are seeing for the first time. And the boat *is* rather a handsome sight, too. She is long and sharp and trim and pretty; she has two tall, fancy-topped chimneys, with a gilded device of some kind swung between them; a fanciful pilot-house, all glass and 'gingerbread,' perched on top of the 'texas' deck [1] behind them; the paddle-boxes are gorgeous with a picture or with gilded rays above the boat's name; the boiler deck, the hurricane deck, and the texas deck are fenced and ornamented with clean white railings; there is a flag gallantly flying from the jack-staff; the furnace doors are open and the fires glaring bravely; the upper decks are black with passengers; the captain stands by the big bell, calm, imposing, the envy of all; great volumes of the blackest smoke are rolling and tumbling out of the chimneys—a husbanded grandeur created with a bit of pitch pine just before arriving at a town; the crew are grouped on the forecastle; the broad stage is run far out over the port

[1 Where both pilot house and officers' cabins were. The texas was on the hurricane, or upper, deck.]

bow, and an envied deck-hand stands picturesquely on the end of it with a coil of rope in his hand; the pent steam is screaming through the gauge-cocks; the captain lifts his hand, a bell rings, the wheels stop; then they turn back, churning the water to foam, and the steamer is at rest. Then such a scramble as there is to get aboard, and to get ashore, and to take in freight and to discharge freight, all at one and the same time; and such a yelling and cursing as the mates facilitate it all with! Ten minutes later the steamer is under way again, with no flag on the jack-staff and no black smoke issuing from the chimneys. After ten more minutes the town is dead again, and the town drunkard asleep by the skids once more.

My father was a justice of the peace, and I supposed he possessed the power of life and death over all men and could hang anybody that offended him. This was distinction enough for me as a general thing; but the desire to be a steamboatman kept intruding, nevertheless. I first wanted to be a cabin-boy, so that I could come out with a white apron on and shake a table-cloth over the side, where all my old comrades could see me; later I thought I would rather be the deck-hand who stood on the end of the stage-plank with the coil of rope in his hand, because he was particularly conspicuous. But these were only day-dreams—they were too heavenly to be contemplated as real possibilities. By and by one of our boys went away. He was not heard of for a long time. At last he turned up as apprentice engineer or 'striker' on a steamboat. This thing shook the bottom out of all my Sunday-school teachings. That boy had been notoriously worldly, and I just the reverse; yet he was exalted to this eminence, and I left in obscurity and misery. There was nothing generous about this fellow in his greatness. He would always manage to have a rusty bolt to scrub while his boat tarried at our town, and he would sit on the inside guard and scrub it, where we could all see him and envy him and loathe him. And whenever his boat was laid up he would come home and swell around the town in his blackest and greasiest clothes, so that nobody could help remembering that he was a steamboatman; and he used all sorts of steamboat technicalities in his talk, as if he were so used to them that he forgot common people could not understand them. He would speak of the 'labboard' side of a horse in an easy, natural way that would make one wish he was dead. And he was always talking about 'St. Looy' like an old citizen; he would refer casually to occasions when he 'was coming down Fourth Street,' or when he was 'passing by the Planter's House,' or when there was a fire and he took a turn on the brakes of 'the old Big Missouri,' and then he would go on and lie about how many towns the size of ours were burned down

there that day. Two or three of the boys had long been persons of consideration among us because they had been to St. Louis once and had a vague general knowledge of its wonders, but the day of their glory was over now. They lapsed into a humble silence, and learned to disappear when the ruthless 'cub'-engineer approached. This fellow had money, too, and hair oil. Also an ignorant silver watch and a showy brass watch chain. He wore a leather belt and used no suspenders. If ever a youth was cordially admired and hated by his comrades, this one was. No girl could withstand his charms. He 'cut out' every boy in the village. When his boat blew up at last, it diffused a tranquil contentment among us such as we had not known for months. But when he came home the next week, alive, renowned, and appeared in church all battered up and bandaged, a shining hero, stared at and wondered over by everybody, it seemed to us that the partiality of Providence for an undeserving reptile had reached a point where it was open to criticism.

This creature's career could produce but one result, and it speedily followed. Boy after boy managed to get on the river. The minister's son became an engineer. The doctor's and the postmaster's sons became 'mud clerks'; the wholesale liquor dealer's son became a bar-keeper on a boat; four sons of the chief merchant, and two sons of the county judge, became pilots. Pilot was the grandest position of all. The pilot, even in those days of trivial wages, had a princely salary—from a hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty dollars a month, and no board to pay. Two months of his wages would pay a preacher's salary for a year. Now some of us were left disconsolate. We could not get on the river—at least our parents would not let us.

So by and by I ran away. I said I never would come home again till I was a pilot and could come in glory. But somehow I could not manage it. I went meekly aboard a few of the boats that lay packed together like sardines at the long St. Louis wharf, and very humbly inquired for the pilots, but got only a cold shoulder and short words from mates and clerks. I had to make the best of this sort of treatment for the time being, but I had comforting day-dreams of a future when I should be a great and honored pilot, with plenty of money, and could kill some of these mates and clerks and pay for them.

A CUB-PILOT'S EXPERIENCE

WHAT with lying on the rocks four days at Louisville, and some other delays, the poor old Paul Jones fooled away about two weeks in making the voyage from Cincinnati to New Orleans. This gave me a chance to

get acquainted with one of the pilots, and he taught me how to steer the boat, and thus made the fascination of river life more potent than ever for me.

It also gave me a chance to get acquainted with a youth who had taken deck passage—more's the pity; for he easily borrowed six dollars of me on a promise to return to the boat and pay it back to me the day after we should arrive. But he probably died or forgot, for he never came. It was doubtless the former, since he had said his parents were wealthy, and he only traveled deck passage because it was cooler.*

I soon discovered two things. One was that a vessel would not be likely to sail for the mouth of the Amazon [2] under ten or twelve years; and the other was that the nine or ten dollars still left in my pocket would not suffice for so imposing an exploration as I had planned, even if I could afford to wait for a ship. Therefore it followed that I must contrive a new career. The Paul Jones was now bound for St. Louis. I planned a siege against my pilot, and at the end of three hard days he surrendered. He agreed to teach me the Mississippi River from New Orleans to St. Louis for five hundred dollars, payable out of the first wages I should receive after graduating. I entered upon the small enterprise of 'learning' twelve or thirteen hundred miles of the great Mississippi River with the easy confidence of my time of life. If I had really known what I was about to require of my faculties, I should not have had the courage to begin. I supposed that all a pilot had to do was to keep his boat in the river, and I did not consider that that could be much of a trick, since it was so wide.

The boat backed out from New Orleans at four in the afternoon, and it was 'our watch' until eight. Mr. Bixby, my chief, 'straightened her up,' plowed her along past the sterns of the other boats that lay at the Levee, and then said, 'Here, take her; shave those steamships as close as you'd peel an apple.' I took the wheel, and my heart went down into my boots; for it seemed to me that we were about to scrape the side off every ship in the line, we were so close. I held my breath and began to claw the boat away from the danger; and I had my own opinion of the pilot who had known no better than to get us into such peril, but I was too wise to express it. In half a minute I had a wide margin of safety intervening between the Paul Jones and the ships; and within ten seconds more I was set aside in disgrace, and Mr. Bixby was going into danger again and flaying me alive

* 'Deck' passage—*i.e.*, steerage passage.

[2 In an earlier chapter Mark Twain, then in Cincinnati, decided rather casually to explore the Amazon, and took passage to New Orleans on the *Paul Jones*.]

with abuse of my cowardice. I was stung, but I was obliged to admire the easy confidence with which my chief loafed from side to side of his wheel, and trimmed the ships so closely that disaster seemed ceaselessly imminent. When he had cooled a little he told me that the easy water was close ashore and the current outside, and therefore we must hug the bank, up-stream, to get the benefit of the former, and stay well out, down-stream, to take advantage of the latter. In my own mind I resolved to be a down-stream pilot and leave the up-streaming to people dead to prudence.

Now and then Mr. Bixby called my attention to certain things. Said he, 'This is Six-Mile Point.' I assented. It was pleasant enough information, but I could not see the bearing of it. I was not conscious that it was a matter of any interest to me. Another time he said, 'This is Nine-Mile Point.' Later he said, 'This is Twelve-Mile Point.' They were all about level with the water's edge; they all looked about alike to me; they were monotonously unpicturesque. I hoped Mr. Bixby would change the subject. But no; he would crowd up around a point, hugging the shore with affection, and then say: 'The slack water ends here, abreast this bunch of China-trees; now we cross over.' So he crossed over. He gave me the wheel once or twice, but I had no luck. I either came near chipping off the edge of a sugar plantation, or else I yawed too far from shore, and so I dropped back into disgrace again and got abused.

The watch was ended at last, and we took supper and went to bed. At midnight the glare of a lantern shone in my eyes, and the night watchman said:—

'Come! turn out!'

And then he left. I could not understand this extraordinary procedure; so I presently gave up trying to, and dozed off to sleep. Pretty soon the watchman was back again, and this time he was gruff. I was annoyed. I said:—

'What do you want to come bothering around here in the middle of the night for? Now as like as not I'll not get to sleep again to-night."

The watchman said:—

'Well, if this an't good, I'm blest.'

The 'off-watch' was just turning in, and I heard some brutal laughter from them, and such remarks as 'Hello, watchman! an't the new cub turned out yet? He's delicate, likely. Give him some sugar in a rag and send for the chambermaid to sing rock-a-by-baby to him.'

About this time Mr. Bixby appeared on the scene. Something like a minute later I was climbing the pilot-house steps with some of my clothes

on and the rest in my arms. Mr. Bixby was close behind, commenting. Here was something fresh—this thing of getting up in the middle of the night to go to work. It was a detail in piloting that had never occurred to me at all. I knew that boats ran all night, but somehow I had never happened to reflect that somebody had to get up out of a warm bed to run them. I began to fear that piloting was not quite so romantic as I had imagined it was; there was something very real and work-like about this new phase of it.

It was a rather dingy night, although a fair number of stars were out. The big mate was at the wheel, and he had the old tub pointed at a star and was holding her straight up the middle of the river. The shores on either hand were not much more than a mile apart, but they seemed wonderfully far away and ever so vague and indistinct. The mate said:—

'We've got to land at Jones's plantation, sir.'

The vengeful spirit in me exulted. I said to myself, I wish you joy of your job, Mr. Bixby; you'll have a good time finding Mr. Jones's plantation such a night as this; and I hope you never *will* find it as long as you live.'

Mr. Bixby said to the mate:—

'Upper end of the plantation, or the lower?'

'Upper.'

'I can't do it. The stumps there are out of water at this stage. It's no great distance to the lower, and you'll have to get along with that.'

'All right, sir. If Jones don't like it he'll have to lump it, I reckon.'

And then the mate left. My exultation began to cool and my wonder to come up. Here was a man who not only proposed to find this plantation on such a night, but to find either end of it you preferred. I dreadfully wanted to ask a question, but I was carrying about as many short answers as my cargo-room would admit of, so I held my peace. All I desired to ask Mr. Bixby was the simple question whether he was ass enough to really imagine he was going to find that plantation on a night when all plantations were exactly alike and all the same color. But I held in. I used to have fine inspirations of prudence in those days.

Mr. Bixby made for the shore and soon was scraping it, just the same as if it had been daylight. And not only that, but singing—

'Father in heaven the day is declining,' etc.

It seemed to me that I had put my life in the keeping of a peculiarly reckless outcast. Presently he turned on me and said:—

'What's the name of the first point above New Orleans?'

I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know.

'Don't *know*?'

This manner jolted me. I was down at the foot again, in a moment. But I had to say just what I had said before.

'Well, you're a smart one,' said Mr. Bixby. 'What's the name of the *next* point?'

Once more I didn't know.

'Well this beats anything. Tell me the name of *any* point or place I told you.'

I studied a while and decided that I couldn't.

'Look-a-here! What do you start out from, above Twelve-Mile Point, to cross over?'

'I—I—don't know.'

'You—you—don't know?' mimicking my drawling manner of speech. 'What *do* you know?'

'I—I—nothing, for certain.'

'By the great Cæsar's ghost I believe you! You're the stupidest dunderhead I ever saw or ever heard of, so help me Moses! The idea of *you* being a pilot—*you!* Why, you don't know enough to pilot a cow down a lane.'

Oh, but his wrath was up! He was a nervous man, and he shuffled from one side of his wheel to the other as if the floor was hot. He would boil a while to himself, and then overflow and scald me again.

'Look-a-here! What do you suppose I told you the names of those points for?'

I tremblingly considered a moment, and then the devil of temptation provoked me to say:—

'Well—to—to—be entertaining, I thought.'

This was a red rag to the bull. He raged and stormed so (he was crossing the river at the time) that I judge it made him blind, because he ran over the steering-oar of a trading-scow. Of course the traders sent up a volley of red-hot profanity. Never was a man so grateful as Mr. Bixby was: because he was brim full, and here were subjects who would *talk back*. He threw open a window, thrust his head out, and such an irruption followed as I never had heard before. The fainter and farther away the scowmen's curses drifted, the higher Mr. Bixby lifted his voice and the weightier his adjectives grew. When he closed the window he was empty. You could have drawn a seine through his system and not caught curses

enough to disturb your mother with. Presently he said to me in the gentlest way:—

'My boy, you must get a little memorandum-book, and every time I tell you a thing, put it down right away. There's only one way to be a pilot, and that is to get this entire river by heart. You have to know it just like A B C.'

That was a dismal revelation to me; for my memory was never loaded with anything but blank cartridges. However, I did not feel discouraged long. I judged that it was best to make some allowances, for doubtless Mr. Bixby was 'stretching.' Presently he pulled a rope and struck a few strokes on the big bell. The stars were all gone, now, and the night was as black as ink. I could hear the wheels churn along the bank, but I was not entirely certain that I could see the shore. The voice of the invisible watchman called up from the hurricane deck:—

'What's this, sir?'

'Jones's plantation.'

I said to myself, I wish I might venture to offer a small bet that it isn't. But I did not chirp. I only waited to see. Mr. Bixby handled the engine bells, and in due time the boat's nose came to the land, a torch glowed from the forecastle, a man skipped ashore, a darky's voice on the bank said, 'Gimme de carpet-bag, Mars' Jones,' and the next moment we were standing up the river again, all serene. I reflected deeply a while and then said,—but not aloud,—Well, the finding of that plantation was the luckiest accident that ever happened; but it couldn't happen again in a hundred years. And I fully believed it *was* an accident, too.

By the time we had gone seven or eight hundred miles up the river, I had learned to be a tolerably plucky up-stream steersman, in daylight, and before we reached St. Louis I had made a trifle of progress in night-work, but only a trifle. I had a note-book that fairly bristled with the names of towns, 'points,' bars, islands, bends, reaches, etc.; but the information was to be found only in the note-book—none of it was in my head. It made my heart ache to think I had only got half of the river set down; for as our watch was four hours off and four hours on, day and night, there was a long four-hour gap in my book for every time I had slept since the voyage began.

My chief was presently hired to go on a big New Orleans boat, and I packed my satchel and went with him. She was a grand affair. When I stood in her pilot-house I was so far above the water that I seemed perched on a mountain; and her decks stretched so far away, fore and aft, below me, that I wondered how I could ever have considered the little Paul Jones a large craft. There were other differences, too. The Paul Jones's pilot-

house was a cheap, dingy, battered rattle-trap, cramped for room: but here was a sumptuous glass temple; room enough to have a dance in; showy red and gold window-curtains; an imposing sofa; leather cushions and a back to the high bench where visiting pilots sit, to spin yarns and 'look at the river'; bright, fanciful 'cuspadores' instead of a broad wooden box filled with sawdust; nice new oil-cloth on the floor; a hospitable big stove for winter; a wheel as high as my head, costly with inlaid work; a wire tiller-rope; bright brass knobs for the bells; and a tidy, white-aproned, black 'texas-tender,' to bring up tarts and ices and coffee during mid-watch, day and night. Now this was 'something like'; and so I began to take heart once more to believe that piloting was a romantic sort of occupation after all. The moment we were under way I began to prowl about the great steamer and fill myself with joy. She was as clean and as dainty as a drawing-room; when I looked down her long, gilded saloon, it was like gazing through a splendid tunnel; she had an oil-picture, by some gifted sign-painter, on every state-room door; she glittered with no end of prism-fringed chandeliers; the clerk's office was elegant, the bar was marvelous, and the bar-keeper had been barbered and upholstered at incredible cost. The boiler deck (*i.e.*, the second story of the boat, so to speak) was as spacious as a church, it seemed to me; so with the forecastle; and there was no pitiful handful of deck-hands, firemen, and roust-abouts down there, but a whole battalion of men. The fires were fiercely glaring from a long row of furnaces, and over them were eight huge boilers! This was unutterable pomp. The mighty engines—but enough of this. I had never felt so fine before. And when I found that the regiment of natty servants respectfully 'sir'd' me, my satisfaction was complete.

A PILOT'S NEEDS

. . . First of all, there is one faculty which a pilot must incessantly cultivate until he has brought it to absolute perfection. Nothing short of perfection will do. That faculty is memory. He cannot stop with merely thinking a thing is so and so; he must *know* it; for this is eminently one of the 'exact' sciences. With what scorn a pilot was looked upon, in the old times, if he ever ventured to deal in that feeble phrase 'I think,' instead of the vigorous one 'I know!' One cannot easily realize what a tremendous thing it is to know every trivial detail of twelve hundred miles of river and know it with absolute exactness. If you will take the longest street in New York, and travel up and down it, conning its features patiently until you know every house and window and door and lamp-post and big

and little sign by heart, and know them so accurately that you can instantly name the one you are abreast of when you are set down at random in that street in the middle of an inky black night, you will then have a tolerable notion of the amount and the exactness of a pilot's knowledge who carries the Mississippi River in his head. And then if you will go on until you know every street crossing, the character, size, and position of the crossing-stones, and the varying depth of mud in each of those numberless places, you will have some idea of what the pilot must know in order to keep a Mississippi steamer out of trouble. Next, if you will take half of the signs in that long street, and *change their places* once a month, and still manage to know their positions accurately on dark nights, and keep up with these repeated changes without making any mistakes, you will understand what is required of a pilot's peerless memory by the fickle Mississippi.

I think a pilot's memory is about the most wonderful thing in the world. To know the Old and New Testaments by heart, and be able to recite them glibly, forward or backward, or begin at random anywhere in the book and recite both ways and never trip or make a mistake, is no extravagant mass of knowledge, and no marvelous facility, compared to a pilot's massed knowledge of the Mississippi and his marvelous facility in the handling of it. I make this comparison deliberately, and I believe I am not expanding the truth when I do it. Many will think my figure too strong, but pilots will not.

And how easily and comfortably the pilot's memory does its work; how placidly effortless is its way! how *unconsciously* it lays up its vast stores, hour by hour, day by day, and never loses or mislays a single valuable package of them all! Take an instance. Let a leadsman cry, 'Half twain! half twain! half twain! half twain! half twain!' until it becomes as monotonous as the ticking of a clock; let conversation be going on all the time, and the pilot be doing his share of the talking, and no longer listening to the leadsman; and in the midst of this endless string of half twains let a single 'quarter twain!' be interjected, without emphasis, and then the half twain cry go on again, just as before: two or three weeks later that pilot can describe with precision the boat's position in the river when that quarter twain was uttered, and give you such a lot of head-marks, stern-marks, and side-marks to guide you, that you ought to be able to take the boat there and put her in that same spot again yourself! The cry of quarter twain did not really take his mind from his talk, but his trained faculties instantly photographed the bearings, noted the change of depth, and laid up the important details for future reference without requiring any assistance from

him in the matter. If you were walking and talking with a friend, and another friend at your side kept up a monotonous repetition of the vowel sound A, for a couple of blocks, and then in the midst interjected an R, thus, A, A, A, A, A, R, A, A, A, etc., and gave the R no emphasis, you would not be able to state, two or three weeks afterward, that the R had been put in, nor be able to tell what objects you were passing at the moment it was done. But you could if your memory had been patiently and laboriously trained to do that sort of thing mechanically.

Give a man a tolerably fair memory to start with, and piloting will develop it into a very colossus of capability. But *only in the matters it is daily drilled in.* A time would come when the man's faculties could not help noticing landmarks and soundings, and his memory could not help holding on to them with the grip of a vice; but if you asked that same man at noon what he had had for breakfast, it would be ten chances to one that he could not tell you. Astonishing things can be done with the human memory if you will devote it faithfully to one particular line of business.

At the time that wages soared so high on the Missouri River, my chief, Mr. Bixby, went up there and learned more than a thousand miles of that stream with an ease and rapidity that were astonishing. When he had seen each division *once* in the daytime and *once* at night, his education was so nearly complete that he took out a 'daylight' license; a few trips later he took out a full license, and went to piloting day and night—and he ranked A 1, too.

Mr. Bixby placed me as steersman for a while under a pilot whose feats of memory were a constant marvel to me. However, his memory was born in him, I think, not built. For instance, somebody would mention a name. Instantly Mr. Brown would break in:—

'Oh, I knew *him*. Sallow-faced, red-headed fellow, with a little scar on the side of his throat like a splinter under the flesh. He was only in the Southern trade six months. That was thirteen years ago. I made a trip with him. There was five feet in the upper river then; the Henry Blake grounded at the foot of Tower Island, drawing four and a half; the George Elliott unshipped her rudder on the wreck of the Sunflower'—

'Why, the Sunflower didn't sink until'—

'*I* know when she sunk; it was three years before that, on the 2d of December; Asa Hardy was captain of her, and his brother John was first clerk; and it was his first trip in her, too; Tom Jones told me these things a week afterward in New Orleans; he was first mate of the Sunflower. Captain Hardy stuck a nail in his foot the 6th of July of the next year, and died

of the lockjaw on the 15th. His brother John died two years after,—3d of March,—erysipelas. I never saw either of the Hardys,—they were Alleghany River men,—but people who knew them told me all these things. And they said Captain Hardy wore yarn socks winter and summer just the same, and his first wife's name was Jane Shook,—she was from New England,—and his second one died in a lunatic asylum. It was in the blood. She was from Lexington, Kentucky. Name was Horton before she was married.'

And so on, by the hour, the man's tongue would go. He could *not* forget anything. It was simply impossible. The most trivial details remained as distinct and luminous in his head, after they had lain there for years, as the most memorable events. His was not simply a pilot's memory; its grasp was universal. If he were talking about a trifling letter he had received seven years before, he was pretty sure to deliver you the entire screed from memory. And then, without observing that he was departing from the true line of his talk, he was more than likely to hurl in a long-drawn parenthetical biography of the writer of that letter; and you were lucky indeed if he did not take up that writer's relatives, one by one, and give you their biographies, too.

Such a memory as that is a great misfortune. To it, all occurrences are of the same size. Its possessor cannot distinguish an interesting circumstance from an uninteresting one. As a talker, he is bound to clog his narrative with tiresome details and make himself an insufferable bore. Moreover, he cannot stick to his subject. He picks up every little grain of memory he discerns in his way, and so is led aside. Mr. Brown would start out with the honest intention of telling you a vastly funny anecdote about a dog. He would be 'so full of laugh' that he could hardly begin; then his memory would start with the dog's breed and personal appearance; drift into a history of his owner; of his owner's family, with descriptions of weddings and burials that had occurred in it, together with recitals of congratulatory verses and obituary poetry provoked by the same; then this memory would recollect that one of these events occurred during the celebrated 'hard winter' of such and such a year, and a minute description of that winter would follow, along with the names of people who were frozen to death, and statistics showing the high figures which pork and hay went up to. Pork and hay would suggest corn and fodder; corn and fodder would suggest cows and horses; the latter would suggest the circus and certain celebrated bare-back riders; the transition from the circus to the menagerie was easy and natural; from the elephant to equatorial Africa was but a step; then of course the heathen savages would suggest re-

ligion; and at the end of three or four hours' tedious jaw, the watch would change and Brown would go out of the pilot-house muttering extracts from sermons he had heard years before about the efficacy of prayer as a means of grace. And the original first mention would be all you had learned about that dog, after all this waiting and hungering.

A pilot must have a memory; but there are two higher qualities which he must also have. He must have good and quick judgment and decision, and a cool, calm courage that no peril can shake. Give a man the merest trifle of pluck to start with, and by the time he has become a pilot he cannot be unmanned by any danger a steamboat can get into; but one cannot quite say the same for judgment. Judgment is a matter of brains, and a man must *start* with a good stock of that article or he will never succeed as a pilot.

The growth of courage in the pilot-house is steady all the time, but it does not reach a high and satisfactory condition until some time after the young pilot has been 'standing his own watch,' alone and under the staggering weight of all the responsibilities connected with the position. When an apprentice has become pretty thoroughly acquainted with the river, he goes clattering along so fearlessly with his steamboat, night or day, that he presently begins to imagine that it is *his* courage that animates him; but the first time the pilot steps out and leaves him to his own devices he finds out it was the other man's. He discovers that the article has been left out of his own cargo altogether. The whole river is bristling with exigencies in a moment; he is not prepared for them; he does not know how to meet them; all his knowledge forsakes him; and within fifteen minutes he is as white as a sheet and scared almost to death. Therefore pilots wisely train these cubs by various strategic tricks to look danger in the face a little more calmly. A favorite way of theirs is to play a friendly swindle upon the candidate.

Mr. Bixby served me in this fashion once, and for years afterward I used to blush even in my sleep when I thought of it. I had become a good steersman; so good, indeed, that I had all the work to do on our watch, night and day; Mr. Bixby seldom made a suggestion to me; all he ever did was to take the wheel on particularly bad nights or in particularly bad crossings, land the boat when she needed to be landed, play gentleman of leisure nine tenths of the watch, and collect the wages. The lower river was about bank-full, and if anybody had questioned my ability to run any crossing between Cairo and New Orleans without help or instruction, I should have felt irreparably hurt. The idea of being afraid of any crossing

in the lot, in the *day-time*, was a thing too preposterous for contemplation. Well, one matchless summer's day I was bowling down the bend above island 66, brim full of self-conceit and carrying my nose as high as a giraffe's, when Mr. Bixby said,—

'I am going below a while. I suppose you know the next crossing?'

This was almost an affront. It was about the plainest and simplest crossing in the whole river. One couldn't come to any harm, whether he ran it right or not; and as for depth, there never had been any bottom there. I knew all this, perfectly well.

'Know how to *run* it? Why, I can run it with my eyes shut.'

'How much water is there in it?'

'Well, that is an odd question. I couldn't get bottom there with a church steeple."

'You think so, do you?'

The very tone of the question shook my confidence. That was what Mr. Bixby was expecting. He left, without saying anything more. I began to imagine all sorts of things. Mr. Bixby, unknown to me, of course, sent somebody down to the forecastle with some mysterious instructions to the leadsman, another messenger was sent to whisper among the officers, and then Mr. Bixby went into hiding behind a smoke-stack where he could observe results. Presently the captain stepped out on the hurricane deck; next the chief mate appeared; then a clerk. Every moment or two a straggler was added to my audience; and before I got to the head of the island I had fifteen or twenty people assembled down there under my nose. I began to wonder what the trouble was. As I started across, the captain glanced aloft at me and said, with a sham uneasiness in his voice,—

'Where is Mr. Bixby?'

'Gone below, sir.'

But that did the business for me. My imagination began to construct dangers out of nothing, and they multiplied faster than I could keep the run of them. All at once I imagined I saw shoal water ahead! The wave of coward agony that surged through me then came near dislocating every joint in me. All my confidence in that crossing vanished. I seized the bell-rope; dropped it, ashamed; seized it again; dropped it once more; clutched it tremblingly once again, and pulled it so feebly that I could hardly hear the stroke myself. Captain and mate sang out instantly, and both together,—

'Starboard lead there! and quick about it!'

This was another shock. I began to climb the wheel like a squirrel; but I

would hardly get the boat started to port before I would see new dangers on that side, and away I would spin to the other; only to find perils accumulating to starboard, and be crazy to get to port again. Then came the leadsman's sepulchral cry:—

'D-e-e-p four!'

Deep four in a bottomless crossing! The terror of it took my breath away.

'M-a-r-k three! M-a-r-k three! Quarter less three! Half twain!'

This was frightful! I seized the bell-ropes and stopped the engines.

'Quarter twain! Quarter twain! *Mark* twain!'

I was helpless. I did not know what in the world to do. I was quaking from head to foot, and I could have hung my hat on my eyes, they stuck out so far.

'Quarter *less* twain! Nine and a *half*!'

We were *drawing* nine! My hands were in a nerveless flutter. I could not ring a bell intelligibly with them. I flew to the speaking-tube and shouted to the engineer,—

'Oh, Ben, if you love me, *back* her! Quick, Ben! Oh, back the immortal *soul* out of her!'

I heard the door close gently. I looked around, and there stood Mr. Bixby, smiling a bland, sweet smile. Then the audience on the hurricane deck sent up a shout of humiliating laughter. I saw it all, now, and I felt meaner than the meanest man in human history. I laid in the lead, set the boat in her marks, came ahead on the engines, and said,—

'It was a fine trick to play on an orphan, *wasn't* it? I suppose I'll never hear the last of how I was ass enough to heave the lead at the head of 66.'

'Well, no, you won't, maybe. In fact I hope you won't; for I want you to learn something by that experience. Didn't you *know* there was no bottom in that crossing?'

'Yes, sir, I did.'

'Very well, then. You shouldn't have allowed me or anybody else to shake your confidence in that knowledge. Try to remember that. And another thing: when you get into a dangerous place, don't turn coward. That isn't going to help matters any.'

It was a good enough lesson, but pretty hardly learned. Yet about the hardest part of it was that for months I so often had to hear a phrase which I had conceived a particular distaste for. It was, 'Oh, Ben, if you love me, back her!'

Anthony Trollope

THE BISHOP'S HOUSEHOLD

¶ In recent years Trollope's reputation has risen higher, by comparison with what it was at the time of his death, than that of any other nineteenth-century English novelist. He said he laid claim to 'whatever merit should be accorded to me for persevering diligence in my profession.' Trollope enthusiasts credit him with a great deal more than mere 'persevering diligence.' They find him a charming teller of stories, a writer without the affectations or tendentiousness of a Dickens or a Thackeray. The contrast between our own troubled times and the quiet, tight, secure little world of his novels is in itself an important reason for his present popularity.

Of all his novels the best liked are the Barsetshire ones (*The Warden, Barchester Towers, Dr. Thorne, Framley Parsonage,* and *The Last Chronicle of Barset*), and of all his characters the Grantlys, the Proudies, and the insufferable Mr. Slope are surely among the best. 'In the writing of *Barchester Towers,*' Trollope observed in his *Autobiography,* 'I took great delight. The bishop and Mrs. Proudie were very real to me, as were also the troubles of the archdeacon and the loves of Mr. Slope.' He thought (this was in 1876) that it 'has become one of those novels which do not quite die at once.' This now looks like an excessively modest estimate. *Barchester Towers* pleases more readers than ever before.

DR AND MRS PROUDIE

THIS narrative is supposed to commence immediately after the installation of Dr Proudie. I will not describe the ceremony, as I do not precisely understand its nature. I am ignorant whether a bishop be chaired like a member of parliament, or carried in a gilt coach like a lord mayor, or sworn in like a justice of peace, or introduced like a peer to the upper house, or led between two brethren like a knight of the garter; but I do know that every

FROM *Barchester Towers,* 1857, chs. iii–iv.

thing was properly done, and that nothing fit or becoming to a young bishop was omitted on the occasion.

Dr Proudie was not the man to allow anything to be omitted that might be becoming to his new dignity. He understood well the value of forms, and knew that the due observance of rank could not be maintained unless the exterior trappings belonging to it were held in proper esteem. He was a man born to move in high circles; at least so he thought himself, and circumstances had certainly sustained him in this view. He was the nephew of an Irish baron by his mother's side, and his wife was the niece of a Scotch earl. He had for years held some clerical office appertaining to courtly matters, which had enabled him to live in London, and to entrust his parish to his curate. He had been preacher to the royal beefeaters,[1] curator of theological manuscripts in the Ecclesiastical Courts, chaplain to the Queen's yeomanry guard, and almoner[2] to his Royal Highness the Prince of Rappe-Blankenberg.

His residence in the metropolis, rendered necessary by the duties thus entrusted to him, his high connections, and the peculiar talents and nature of the man, recommended him to persons in power; and Dr Proudie became known as a useful and rising clergyman.

Some few years since, even within the memory of many who are not yet willing to call themselves old, a liberal clergyman was a person not frequently to be met. Sydney Smith[3] was such, and was looked on as little better than an infidel; a few others also might be named, but they were 'raræ aves,'[4] and were regarded with doubt and distrust by their brethren. No man was so surely a tory as a country rector—nowhere were the powers that be so cherished as at Oxford.

When, however, Dr Whately[5] was made an archbishop, and Dr Hampden[6] some years afterwards regius professor, many wise divines saw that a change was taking place in men's minds, and that more liberal ideas would henceforward be suitable to the priests as well as to the laity. Clergymen began to be heard of who had ceased to anathematise papists on the one hand, or vilify dissenters on the other. It appeared clear that high church

[1] Popular name for the Yeomen of the Guard and Warders of the Tower of London.]
[2] Official distributor of alms.]
[3] Clergyman and writer (1771–1845), noted for his wit.]
[4] Rare birds.]
[5] An Oxford scholar (1787–1863) who became Archbishop of Dublin in 1831.]
[6] Also an Oxford scholar and a 'liberal' in theological views. His appointment as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford in 1836 and as Bishop of Hereford in 1847 caused bitter controversies in the Church.]

principles, as they are called, were no longer to be surest claims to promotion with at any rate one section of statesmen, and Dr Proudie was one among those who early in life adapted himself to the views held by the whigs on most theological and religious subjects. He bore with the idolatry of Rome, tolerated even the infidelity of Socinianism,[7] and was hand in glove with the Presbyterian Synods of Scotland and Ulster.

Such a man at such a time was found to be useful, and Dr Proudie's name began to appear in the newspapers. He was made one of a commission who went over to Ireland to arrange matters preparative to the working of the national board; he became honorary secretary to another commission nominated to inquire into the revenues of cathedral chapters; and had had something to do with both the regium donum [8] and the Maynooth grant.[9]

It must not on this account be taken as proved that Dr Proudie was a man of great mental powers, or even of much capacity for business, for such qualities had not been required in him. In the arrangement of those church reforms with which he was connected, the ideas and original conception of the work to be done were generally furnished by the liberal statesman of the day, and the labour of the details was borne by officials of a lower rank. It was, however, thought expedient that the name of some clergyman should appear in such matters, and as Dr Proudie had become known as a tolerating divine, great use of this sort was made of his name. If he did not do much active good, he never did any harm; he was amenable to those who were really in authority, and at the sittings of the various boards to which he belonged maintained a kind of dignity which had its value.

He was certainly possessed of sufficient tact to answer the purpose for which he was required without making himself troublesome; but it must not therefore be surmised that he doubted his own power, or failed to believe that he could himself take a high part in high affairs when his own turn came. He was biding his time, and patiently looking forward to the days when he himself would sit authoritative at some board, and talk and direct, and rule the roost, while lesser stars sat around and obeyed, as he had so well accustomed himself to do.

[7 A heretical (by orthodox tenets) interpretation of the nature of Christ and the sacraments, taught by Lelio (1525–62) and Fausto (1539–1604) Sozzini.]

[8 'Royal gift': an annual subsidy formerly given by the British government to the Presbyterian clergy in Ireland.]

[9 Money granted by the British government, in 1845, to increase the annual subsidy paid to the National College of St. Patrick at Maynooth, in Ireland.]

His reward and his time had now come. He was selected for the vacant bishopric, and on the next vacancy which might occur in any diocese would take his place in the House of Lords,[10] prepared to give not a silent vote in all matters concerning the weal of the church establishment. Toleration was to be the basis on which he was to fight his battles, and in the honest courage of his heart he thought no evil would come to him in encountering even such foes as his brethren of Exeter and Oxford.

Dr Proudie was an ambitious man, and before he was well consecrated Bishop of Barchester, he had begun to look up to archiepiscopal splendour, and the glories of Lambeth, or at any rate of Bishopsthorpe.[11] He was comparatively young, and had, as he fondly flattered himself, been selected as possessing such gifts, natural and acquired, as must be sure to recommend him to a yet higher notice, now that a higher sphere was opened to him. Dr Proudie was, therefore, quite prepared to take a conspicuous part in all theological affairs appertaining to these realms; and having such views, by no means intended to bury himself at Barchester as his predecessor had done. No: London should still be his ground: a comfortable mansion in a provincial city might be well enough for the dead months of the year. Indeed Dr Proudie had always felt it necessary to his position to retire from London when other great and fashionable people did so; but London should still be his fixed residence, and it was in London that he resolved to exercise that hospitality so peculiarly recommended to all bishops by St Paul.[12] How otherwise could he keep himself before the world? how else give to the government, in matters theological, the full benefit of his weight and talents?

This resolution was no doubt a salutary one as regarded the world at large, but was not likely to make him popular either with the clergy or people of Barchester. Dr Grantly[13] had always lived there; and in truth it was hard for a bishop to be popular after Dr Grantly. His income had averaged 9000*l.* a year; his successor was to be rigidly limited to 5000*l.* He had but one child on whom to spend his money; Dr Proudie had seven or eight. He had been a man of few personal expenses, and they had been confined to the tastes of a moderate gentleman; but Dr Proudie had to maintain a position in fashionable society, and had that to do with com-

[10 By virtue of their office, bishops of the Church of England sit in the House of Lords.]

[11 Lambeth and Bishopsthorpe are the residences of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York respectively.]

[12 See 1 Timothy, iii, 2.]

[13 Dr. Proudie's predecessor as bishop. Archdeacon Grantly is his son.]

paratively small means. Dr Grantly had certainly kept his carriage, as became a bishop; but his carriage, horses, and coachman, though they did very well for Barchester, would have been almost ridiculous at Westminster. Mrs Proudie determined that her husband's equipage should not shame her, and things on which Mrs Proudie resolved, were generally accomplished.

From all this it was likely to result that Dr Proudie would not spend much money at Barchester; whereas his predecessor had dealt with the tradesmen of the city in a manner very much to their satisfaction. The Grantlys, father and son, had spent their money like gentlemen; but it soon became whispered in Barchester that Dr Proudie was not unacquainted with those prudent devices by which the utmost show of wealth is produced from limited means.

In person Dr Proudie is a good looking man; spruce and dapper, and very tidy. He is somewhat below middle height, being about five feet four; but he makes up for the inches which he wants by the dignity with which he carries those which he has. It is no fault of his own if he has not a commanding eye, for he studies hard to assume it. His features are well formed, though perhaps the sharpness of his nose may give to his face in the eyes of some people an air of insignificance. If so, it is greatly redeemed by his mouth and chin, of which he is justly proud.

Dr Proudie may well be said to have been a fortunate man, for he was not born to wealth, and he is now bishop of Barchester; but nevertheless he has his cares. He has a large family, of whom the three eldest are daughters, now all grown up and fit for fashionable life; and he has a wife. It is not my intention to breathe a word against the character of Mrs Proudie, but still I cannot think that with all her virtues she adds much to her husband's happiness. The truth is that in matters domestic she rules supreme over her titular lord, and rules with a rod of iron. Nor is this all. Things domestic Dr Proudie might have abandoned to her, if not voluntarily, yet willingly. But Mrs Proudie is not satisfied with such home dominion, and stretches her power over all his movements, and will not even abstain from things spiritual. In fact, the bishop is henpecked.

The archdeacon's wife, in her happy home at Plumstead, knows how to assume the full privileges of her rank, and expresses her own mind in becoming tone and place. But Mrs Grantly's sway, if sway she has, is easy and beneficent. She never shames her husband; before the world she is a pattern of obedience; her voice is never loud, nor her look sharp: doubtless she

values power, and has not unsuccessfully striven to acquire it; but she knows what should be the limit of a woman's rule.

Not so Mrs Proudie. This lady is habitually authoritative to all, but to her poor husband she is despotic. Successful as has been his career in the eyes of the world, it would seem that in the eyes of his wife he is never right. All hope of defending himself has long passed from him; indeed he rarely ever attempts self-justification; and is aware that submission produces the nearest approach to peace which his own house can ever attain.

Mrs Proudie has not been able to sit at the boards and committees to which her husband has been called by the state; nor, as he often reflects, can she make her voice heard in the House of Lords. It may be that she will refuse to him permission to attend to this branch of a bishop's duties; it may be that she will insist on his close attendance to his own closet. He has never whispered a word on the subject to living ears, but he has already made his fixed resolve. Should such an attempt be made he will rebel. Dogs have turned against their masters, and Neapolitans against their rulers, when oppression has been too severe. And Dr Proudie feels within himself that if the cord be drawn too tight, he also can muster courage and resist.

The state of vassalage in which our bishop has been kept by his wife has not tended to exalt his character in the eyes of his daughters, who assume in addressing their father too much of that authority which is not properly belonging, at any rate, to them. They are, on the whole, fine engaging young ladies. They are tall and robust like their mother, whose high cheek bones, and—, we may say auburn hair, they all inherit. They think somewhat too much of their grand uncles, who have not hitherto returned the compliment by thinking much of them. But now that their father is a bishop, it is probable that family ties will be drawn closer. Considering their connection with the church, they entertain but few prejudices against the pleasures of the world; and have certainly not distressed their parents, as too many English girls have lately done, by any enthusiastic wish to devote themselves to the seclusion of a protestant nunnery. Dr Proudie's sons are still at school.

One other marked peculiarity in the character of the bishop's wife must be mentioned. Though not averse to the society and manners of the world, she is in her own way a religious woman; and the form in which this tendency shows itself in her is by a strict observance of Sabbatarian rule. Dissipation and low dresses during the week are, under her control, atoned for by three services, an evening sermon read by herself, and a perfect absti-

nence from any cheering employment on the Sunday. Unfortunately for those under her roof to whom the dissipation and low dresses are not extended, her servants namely and her husband, the compensating strictness of the Sabbath includes all. Woe betide the recreant housemaid who is found to have been listening to the honey of a sweetheart in the Regent's park, instead of the soul-stirring evening discourse of Mr Slope. Not only is she sent adrift, but she is so sent with a character which leaves her little hope of a decent place. Woe betide the six-foot hero who escorts Mrs Proudie to her pew in red plush breeches, if he slips away to the neighboring beer-shop, instead of falling into the back seat appropriated to his use. Mrs Proudie has the eyes of Argus [14] for such offenders. Occasional drunkenness in the week may be overlooked, for six feet on low wages are hardly to be procured if the morals are always kept at a high pitch; but not even for grandeur or economy will Mrs Proudie forgive a desecration of the Sabbath.

In such matters Mrs Proudie allows herself to be often guided by that eloquent preacher, the Rev Mr Slope, and as Dr Proudie is guided by his wife, it necessarily follows that the eminent man we have named has obtained a good deal of control over Dr Proudie in matters concerning religion. Mr Slope's only preferment has hitherto been that of reader and preacher in a London district church: and on the consecration of his friend the new bishop, he readily gave this up to undertake the onerous but congenial duties of domestic chaplain to his lordship.

Mr Slope, however, on his first introduction, must not be brought before the public at the tail of a chapter.

THE BISHOP'S CHAPLAIN

Of the Rev Mr Slope's parentage I am not able to say much. I have heard it asserted that he is lineally descended from that eminent physician [15] who assisted at the birth of Mr T. Shandy, and that in early years he added an 'c' to his name, for the sake of euphony, as other great men have done before him. If this be so, I presume he was christened Obadiah, for that is his name, in commemoration of the conflict in which his ancestor [16] so distinguished himself. All my researches on the subject have, however, failed in enabling me to fix the date on which the family changed its religion.

[14 Hundred-eyed monster in Greek mythology.]
[15 Dr. Slop, in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.]
[16 Obadiah in *Tristram Shandy*; see note to p. 453.]

He had been a sizar[17] at Cambridge, and had there conducted himself at any rate successfully, for in due process of time he was an M.A., having university pupils under his care. From thence he was transferred to London, and became preacher at a new district church built on the confines of Baker Street. He was in this position when congenial ideas on religious subjects recommended him to Mrs Proudie, and the intercourse had become close and confidential.

Having been thus familiarly thrown among the Misses Proudie, it was no more than natural that some softer feeling than friendship should be engendered. There have been some passages of love between him and the eldest hope, Olivia; but they have hitherto resulted in no favourable arrangement. In truth, Mr Slope having made a declaration of affection, afterwards withdrew it on finding that the doctor had no immediate worldly funds with which to endow his child; and it may easily be conceived that Miss Proudie, after such an announcement on his part, was not readily disposed to receive any further show of affection. On the appointment of Dr Proudie to the bishopric of Barchester, Mr Slope's views were in truth somewhat altered. Bishops, even though they be poor, can provide for clerical children, and Mr Slope began to regret that he had not been more disinterested. He no sooner heard the tidings of the doctor's elevation, than he recommenced his siege, not violently, indeed, but respectfully, and at a distance. Olivia Proudie, however, was a girl of spirit: she had the blood of two peers in her veins, and better still, she had another lover on her books; so Mr Slope sighed in vain; and the pair soon found it convenient to establish a mutual bond of inveterate hatred.

It may be thought singular that Mrs Proudie's friendship for the young clergyman should remain firm after such an affair; but, to tell the truth, she had known nothing of it. Though very fond of Mr Slope herself, she had never conceived the idea that either of her daughters would become so, and remembering their high birth and social advantages, expected for them matches of a different sort. Neither the gentleman nor the lady found it necessary to enlighten her. Olivia's two sisters had each known of the affair, so had all the servants, so had all the people living in the adjoining houses on either side; but Mrs Proudie had been kept in the dark.

Mr Slope soon comforted himself with the reflection, that as he had been selected as chaplain to the bishop, it would probably be in his power to get the good things in the bishop's gift, without troubling himself with

[17 Student at Cambridge who performed menial tasks in return for an allowance toward his expenses.]

the bishop's daughter; and he found himself able to endure the pangs of rejected love. As he sat himself down in the railway carriage, confronting the bishop and Mrs Proudie, as they started on their first journey to Barchester, he began to form in his own mind a plan of his future life. He knew well his patron's strong points, but he knew the weak ones as well. He understood correctly enough to what attempts the new bishop's high spirit would soar, and he rightly guessed that public life would better suit the great man's taste, than the small details of diocesan duty.

He, therefore, he, Mr Slope, would in effect be bishop of Barchester. Such was his resolve; and to give Mr Slope his due, he had both courage and spirit to bear him out in his resolution. He knew that he should have a hard battle to fight, for the power and patronage of the see would be equally coveted by another great mind—Mrs Proudie would also choose to be bishop of Barchester. Mr Slope, however, flattered himself that he could out-manœuvre the lady. She must live much in London, while he would always be on the spot. She would necessarily remain ignorant of much, while he would know everything belonging to the diocese. At first, doubtless, he must flatter and cajole, perhaps yield, in some things; but he did not doubt of ultimate triumph. If all other means failed, he could join the bishop against his wife, inspire courage into the unhappy man, lay an axe to the root of the woman's power, and emancipate the husband.

Such were his thoughts as he sat looking at the sleeping pair in the railway carriage, and Mr Slope is not the man to trouble himself with such thoughts for nothing. He is possessed of more than average abilities, and is of good courage. Though he can stoop to fawn, and stoop low indeed, if need be, he has still within him the power to assume the tyrant; and with the power he has certainly the wish. His acquirements are not of the highest order, but such as they are they are completely under control, and he knows the use of them. He is gifted with a certain kind of pulpit eloquence, not likely indeed to be persuasive with men, but powerful with the softer sex. In his sermons he deals greatly in denunciations, excites the minds of his weaker hearers with a not unpleasant terror, and leaves an impression on their minds that all mankind are in a perilous state, and all womankind too, except those who attend regularly to the evening lectures in Baker Street. His looks and tones are extremely severe, so much so that one cannot but fancy that he regards the greater part of the world as being infinitely too bad for his care. As he walks through the streets, his very face denotes his horror of the world's wickedness; and there is always an anathema lurking in the corner of his eye.

In doctrine, he, like his patron, is tolerant of dissent, if so strict a mind can be called tolerant of anything. With Wesleyan-Methodists he has something in common, but his soul trembles in agony at the iniquities of the Puseyites.[18] His aversion is carried to things outward as well as inward. His gall rises at a new church with a high pitched roof; a full-breasted black silk waistcoat is with him a symbol of Satan; and a profane jest-book would not, in his view, more foully desecrate the church seat of a Christian, than a book of prayer printed with red letters, and ornamented with a cross on the back. Most active clergymen have their hobby, and Sunday observances are his. Sunday, however, is a word which never pollutes his mouth—it is always 'the Sabbath.' The 'desecration of the Sabbath,' as he delights to call it, is to him meat and drink:—he thrives upon that as policemen do on the general evil habits of the community. It is the loved subject of all his evening discourses, the source of all his eloquence, the secret of all his power over the female heart. To him the revelation of God appears only in that one law given for Jewish observance. To him the mercies of our Saviour speak in vain, to him in vain has been preached that sermon which fell from divine lips on the mountain—'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth'—'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.' To him the New Testament is comparatively of little moment, for from it can he draw no fresh authority for that dominion which he loves to exercise over at least a seventh part of man's allotted time here below.

Mr Slope is tall, and not ill made. His feet and hands are large, as has ever been the case with all his family, but he has a broad chest and wide shoulders to carry off these excrescences, and on the whole his figure is good. His countenance, however, is not specially prepossessing. His hair is lank, and of a dull pale reddish hue. It is always formed into three straight lumpy masses, each brushed with admirable precision, and cemented with much grease; two of them adhere closely to the sides of his face, and the other lies at right angles above them. He wears no whiskers, and is always punctiliously shaven. His face is nearly of the same colour as his hair, though perhaps a little redder: it is not unlike beef,—beef, however, one would say, of a bad quality. His forehead is capacious and high, but square and heavy, and unpleasantly shining. His mouth is large, though his lips are thin and bloodless; and his big, prominent, pale brown eyes inspire anything but confidence. His nose, however, is his redeeming feature: it is

[18] The high-church party in the Church of England, so called because Dr. E. B. Pusey of Oxford was one of its leaders.]

pronounced straight and well-formed; though I myself should have liked it better did it not possess a somewhat spongy, porous appearance, as though it had been cleverly formed out of a red coloured cork.

I could never endure to shake hands with Mr Slope. A cold, clammy perspiration always exudes from him, the small drops are ever to be seen standing on his brow, and his friendly grasp is unpleasant.

Such is Mr Slope—such is the man who has suddenly fallen into the midst of Barchester Close, and is destined there to assume the station which has heretofore been filled by the son of the late bishop. Think, oh, my meditative reader, what an associate we have here for those comfortable prebendaries, those gentlemanlike clerical doctors, those happy well-used well-fed minor canons, who have grown into existence at Barchester under the kindly wings of Bishop Grantly!

But not as a mere associate for these does Mr Slope travel down to Barchester with the bishop and his wife. He intends to be, if not their master, at least the chief among them.[19] He intends to lead, and to have followers; he intends to hold the purse strings of the diocese, and draw round him an obedient herd of his poor and hungry brethren.

And here we can hardly fail to draw a comparison between the archdeacon and our new private chaplain; and despite the manifold faults of the former, one can hardly fail to make it much to his advantage.

Both men are eager, much too eager, to support and increase the power of their order. Both are anxious that the world should be priest-governed, though they have probably never confessed so much, even to themselves. Both begrudge any other kind of dominion held by man over man. Dr Grantly, if he admits the Queen's supremacy in things spiritual, only admits it as being due to the *quasi* priesthood conveyed in the consecrating qualities of her coronation; and he regards things temporal as being held by their nature subject to those which are spiritual. Mr Slope's idea of sacerdotal rule are of quite a different class. He cares nothing, one way or the other, for the Queen's supremacy; these to his ears are empty words, meaning nothing. Forms he regards but little, and such titular expressions as supremacy, consecration, ordination, and the like, convey of themselves no significance to him. Let him be supreme who can. The temporal king, judge, or gaoler, can work but on the body. The spiritual master, if he have the necessary gifts, and can duly use them, has a wider field of empire. He works upon the soul. If he can make himself be believed, he can be all powerful over those who listen. If he be careful to meddle with none who

[19 See Matthew, xxiii, 10–11.]

are too strong in intellect, or too weak in flesh, he may indeed be supreme. And such was the ambition of Mr Slope.

Dr Grantly interfered very little with the worldly doings of those who were in any way subject to him. I do not mean to say that he omitted to notice misconduct among his clergy, immorality in his parish, or omissions in his family; but he was not anxious to do so where the necessity could be avoided. He was not troubled with a propensity to be curious, and as long as those around him were tainted with no heretical leaning towards dissent, as long as they fully and freely admitted the efficacy of Mother Church, he was willing that that mother should be merciful and affectionate, prone to indulgence, and unwilling to chastise. He himself enjoyed the good things of this world, and liked to let it be known that he did so. He cordially despised any brother rector who thought harm of dinner-parties, or dreaded the dangers of a moderate claret-jug; consequently dinner-parties and claret-jugs were common in the diocese. He liked to give laws and to be obeyed in them implicitly, but he endeavoured that his ordinances should be within the compass of the man, and not unpalatable to the gentleman. He had ruled among his clerical neighbours now for sundry years, and as he had maintained his power without becoming unpopular, it may be presumed that he had exercised some wisdom.

Of Mr Slope's conduct much cannot be said, as his grand career is yet to commence; but it may be premised that his tastes will be very different from those of the archdeacon. He conceives it to be his duty to know all the private doings and desires of the flock entrusted to his care. From the poorer classes he exacts an unconditional obedience to set rules of conduct, and if disobeyed he has recourse, like his great ancestor,[20] to the fulminations of an Ernulfus: 'Thou shalt be damned in thy going in and in thy coming out—in thy eating and thy drinking,' &c. &c. &c. With the rich, experience has already taught him that a different line of action is necessary. Men in the upper walks of life do not mind being cursed, and the women, presuming that it be done in delicate phrase, rather like it. But he has not, therefore, given up so important a portion of believing Christians. With the men, indeed, he is generally at variance; they are hardened sinners, on whom the voice of the priestly charmer too often falls in vain; but with the ladies, old and young, firm and frail, devout and dissipated, he is, as he conceives, all powerful. He can reprove faults with so much flattery, and utter censure in so caressing a manner, that the female heart,

[20 In *Tristram Shandy*, III, x, xi, Dr. Slop directs against Obadiah a great curse composed by Ernulfus, a medieval English bishop (1040–1124).]

if it glow with a spark of low church susceptibility, cannot withstand him. In many houses he is thus an admired guest: the husbands, for their wives' sake, are fain to admit him; and when once admitted it is not easy to shake him off. He has, however, a pawing, greasy way with him, which does not endear him to those who do not value him for their souls' sake, and he is not a man to make himself at once popular in a large circle such as is now likely to surround him at Barchester.

Samuel Butler

THE WAY OF ALL FLESH

[Butler's writings against Darwin, his translations of Homer, his contributions to the 'Homeric question,' and most of his other works are almost forgotten now, but his novels, *Erewhon*, *Erewhon Revisited*, and *The Way of All Flesh*, have become minor classics. Only the first two of these appeared in his lifetime. He began *The Way of All Flesh* in 1872, worked at it irregularly until 1884, and then laid it aside, not quite finished. It was published in 1903, after his death.

The irony, the pleasant perverseness, and the wit of *The Way of All Flesh* have delighted many readers who may never have heard how autobiographical it is—though they must have divined that before reading very far in it—and who did not realize that it was to some degree a serious effort on Butler's part to illustrate certain theories of heredity which he championed against Darwinism. Butler detested his parents, the Theobald and Christina of the novel. He shared the opinion of Swift's Lilliputians that parents are 'the last of all others to be trusted with the education of their own children.' He scorned all the Victorian shibboleths, smashed all the idols, and generally 'fought the good faith' in his books, while living a conventional Victorian gentleman's existence himself.

I

MR. PONTIFEX was not the man to trouble himself much about his motives. People were not so introspective then as we are now; they lived more according to a rule of thumb. Dr. Arnold [1] had not yet

[1 English historian and divine (1795–1842), headmaster of Rugby School, 1828–42. His reforms in education were very influential and widely copied. He was the father of Matthew Arnold.]

FROM *The Way of All Flesh*, 1903, chs. vi, xx. Reprinted by permission of E. P. Dutton, Inc., New York; Jonathan Cape, Limited; and the Executors of Samuel Butler.

sown that crop of earnest thinkers which we are now harvesting, and men did not see why they should not have their own way if no evil consequences to themselves seemed likely to follow upon their doing so. Then as now, however, they sometimes let themselves in for more evil consequences than they had bargained for.

Like other rich men at the beginning of this century he ate and drank a good deal more than was enough to keep him in health. Even his excellent constitution was not proof against a prolonged course of overfeeding and what we should now consider overdrinking. His liver would not unfrequently get out of order, and he would come down to breakfast looking yellow about the eyes. Then the young people knew that they had better look out. It is not as a general rule the eating of sour grapes [2] that causes the children's teeth to be set on edge. Well-to-do parents seldom eat many sour grapes; the danger to the children lies in the parents eating too many sweet ones.

I grant that at first sight it seems very unjust, that the parents should have the fun and the children be punished for it, but young people should remember that for many years they were part and parcel of their parents and therefore had a good deal of the fun in the person of their parents. If they have forgotten the fun now, that is no more than people do who have a headache after having been tipsy overnight. The man with a headache does not pretend to be a different person from the man who got drunk, and claim that it is his self of the preceding night and not his self of this morning who should be punished; no more should offspring complain of the headache which it has earned when in the person of its parents, for the continuation of identity, though not so immediately apparent, is just as real in one case as in the other. What is really hard is when the parents have the fun after the children have been born, and the children are punished for this.

On these, his black days, he would take very gloomy views of things and say to himself that in spite of all his goodness to them his children did not love him. But who can love any man whose liver is out of order? How base, he would exclaim to himself, was such ingratitude! How especially hard upon himself, who had been such a model son, and always honoured and obeyed his parents though they had not spent one hundredth part of the money upon him which he had lavished upon his own children. 'It is always the same story,' he would say to himself, 'the more young people have the more they want, and the less thanks one gets; I have made a great mistake;

[2] See Jeremiah, xxxi, 29; Ezekiel, xviii, 2.]

I have been far too lenient with my children; never mind, I have done my duty by them, and more; if they fail in theirs to me it is a matter between God and them. I, at any rate, am guiltless. Why, I might have married again and become the father of a second and perhaps more affectionate family, etc., etc.' He pitied himself for the expensive education which he was giving his children; he did not see that the education cost the children far more than it cost him, inasmuch as it cost them the power of earning their living easily rather than helped them towards it, and ensured their being at the mercy of their father for years after they had come to an age when they should be independent. A public school [3] education cuts off a boy's retreat; he can no longer become a labourer or a mechanic, and these are the only people whose tenure of independence is not precarious—with the exception of course of those who are born inheritors of money or who are placed young in some safe and deep groove. Mr. Pontifex saw nothing of this; all he saw was that he was spending much more money upon his children than the law would have compelled him to do, and what more could you have? Might he not have apprenticed both his sons to greengrocers? Might he not even yet do so to-morrow morning if he were so minded? The possibility of this course being adopted was a favourite topic with him when he was out of temper; true, he never did apprentice either of his sons to greengrocers, but his boys comparing notes together had sometimes come to the conclusion that they wished he would.

At other times when not quite well he would have them in for the fun of shaking his will at them. He would in his imagination cut them all out one after another and leave his money to found almshouses, till at last he was obliged to put them back, so that he might have the pleasure of cutting them out again the next time he was in a passion.

Of course if young people allow their conduct to be in any way influenced by regard to the wills of living persons they are doing very wrong and must expect to be sufferers in the end, nevertheless the powers of will-dangling and will-shaking are so liable to abuse and are continually made so great an engine of torture that I would pass a law, if I could, to incapacitate any man from making a will for three months from the date of each offence in either of the above respects and let the bench of magistrates or judge, before whom he has been convicted, dispose of his property as they shall think right and reasonable if he dies during the time that his will-making power is suspended.

Mr. Pontifex would have the boys into the dining-room. 'My dear John,

[3 'Public school' here means what in the United States is called a 'private school.']

my dear Theobald,' he would say, 'look at me. I began life with nothing but the clothes with which my father and mother sent me up to London. My father gave me ten shillings and my mother five for pocket money and I thought them munificent. I never asked my father for a shilling in the whole course of my life, nor took aught from him beyond the small sum he used to allow me monthly till I was in receipt of a salary. I made my own way and I shall expect my sons to do the same. Pray don't take it into your heads that I am going to wear my life out making money that my sons may spend it for me. If you want money you must make it for yourselves as I did, for I give you my word I will not leave a penny to either of you unless you show that you deserve it. Young people seem nowadays to expect all kinds of luxuries and indulgences which were never heard of when I was a boy. Why, my father was a common carpenter, and here you are both of you at public schools, costing me ever so many hundreds a year, while I at your age was plodding away behind a desk in my Uncle Fairlie's counting house. What should I not have done if I had had one half of your advantages? You should become dukes or found new empires in undiscovered countries, and even then I doubt whether you would have done proportionately so much as I have done. No, no, I shall see you through school and college and then, if you please, you will make your own way in the world.'

In this manner he would work himself up into such a state of virtuous indignation that he would sometimes thrash the boys then and there upon some pretext invented at the moment.

And yet, as children went, the young Pontifexes were fortunate; there would be ten families of young people worse off for one better; they ate and drank good wholesome food, slept in comfortable beds, had the best doctors to attend them when they were ill and the best education that could be had for money. The want of fresh air does not seem much to affect the happiness of children in a London alley: the greater part of them sing and play as though they were on a moor in Scotland. So the absence of a genial mental atmosphere is not commonly recognized by children who have never known it. Young people have a marvellous faculty of either dying or adapting themselves to circumstances. Even if they are unhappy—very unhappy—it is astonishing how easily they can be prevented from finding it out, or at any rate from attributing it to any other cause than their own sinfulness.

To parents who wish to lead a quiet life I would say: Tell your children that they are very naughty—much naughtier than most children. Point to

the young people of some acquaintances as models of perfection and impress your own children with a deep sense of their own inferiority. You carry so many more guns than they do that they cannot fight you. This is called moral influence, and it will enable you to bounce them as much as you please. They think you know and they will not have yet caught you lying often enough to suspect that you are not the unworldly and scrupulously truthful person which you represent yourself to be; nor yet will they know how great a coward you are, nor how soon you will run away, if they fight you with persistency and judgement. You keep the dice and throw them both for your children and yourself. Load them then, for you can easily manage to stop your children from examining them. Tell them how singularly indulgent you are; insist on the incalculable benefit you conferred upon them, firstly in bringing them into the world at all, but more particularly in bringing them into it as your own children rather than anyone else's. Say that you have their highest interests at stake whenever you are out of temper and wish to make yourself unpleasant by way of balm to your soul. Harp much upon these highest interests. Feed them spiritually upon such brimstone and treacle as the late Bishop of Winchester's Sunday stories. You hold all the trump cards, or if you do not you can filch them; if you play them with anything like judgement you will find yourselves heads of happy, united, God-fearing families, even as did my old friend Mr. Pontifex. True, your children will probably find out all about it some day, but not until too late to be of much service to them or inconvenience to yourself.

Some satirists have complained of life inasmuch as all the pleasures belong to the fore part of it and we must see them dwindle till we are left, it may be, with the miseries of a decrepit old age.

To me it seems that youth is like spring, an overpraised season—delightful if it happen to be a favoured one, but in practice very rarely favoured and more remarkable, as a general rule, for biting east winds than genial breezes. Autumn is the mellower season, and what we lose in flowers we more than gain in fruits. Fontenelle[4] at the age of ninety, being asked what was the happiest time of his life, said he did not know that he had ever been much happier than he then was, but that perhaps his best years had been those when he was between fifty-five and seventy-five, and Dr. Johnson placed the pleasures of old age far higher than those of youth. True, in old age we live under the shadow of Death, which, like a sword of Damocles, may descend at any moment, but we have so long found life to

[4 French writer (1657–1757).]

be an affair of being rather frightened than hurt that we have become like the people who live under Vesuvius,[5] and chance it without much misgiving.

II

THE birth of his son opened Theobald's eyes to a good deal which he had but faintly realized hitherto. He had had no idea how great a nuisance a baby was. Babies come into the world so suddenly at the end, and upset everything so terribly when they do come: why cannot they steal in upon us with less of a shock to the domestic system? His wife, too, did not recover rapidly from her confinement; she remained an invalid for months; here was another nuisance and an expensive one, which interfered with the amount which Theobald liked to put by out of his income against, as he said, a rainy day, or to make provision for his family if he should have one. Now he was getting a family, so that it became all the more necessary to put money by, and here was the baby hindering him. Theorists may say what they like about a man's children being a continuation of his own identity, but it will generally be found that those who talk in this way have no children of their own. Practical family men know better.

About twelve months after the birth of Ernest there came a second, also a boy, who was christened Joseph, and in less than twelve months afterwards, a girl, to whom was given the name of Charlotte. A few months before this girl was born Christina paid a visit to the John Pontifexes in London, and, knowing her condition, passed a good deal of time at the Royal Academy exhibition looking at the types of female beauty portrayed by the Academicians, for she had made up her mind that the child this time was to be a girl. Alethea warned her not to do this, but she persisted, and certainly the child turned out plain, but whether the pictures caused this or no I cannot say.

Theobald had never liked children. He had always got away from them as soon as he could, and so had they from him; oh, why, he was inclined to ask himself, could not children be born into the world grown up? If Christina could have given birth to a few full-grown clergymen in priest's orders —of moderate views, but inclining rather to Evangelicalism, with comfortable livings and in all respects facsimiles of Theobald himself—why, there might have been more sense in it; or if people could buy ready-made children at a shop of whatever age and sex they liked, instead of always having

[5 See Stevenson, pp. 397–404.]

to make them at home and to begin at the beginning with them—that might do better, but as it was he did not like it. He felt as he had felt when he had been required to come and be married to Christina—that he had been going on for a long time quite nicely, and would much rather continue things on their present footing. In the matter of getting married he had been obliged to pretend he liked it; but times were changed, and if he did not like a thing now, he could find a hundred unexceptionable ways of making his dislike apparent.

It might have been better if Theobald in his younger days had kicked more against his father: the fact that he had not done so encouraged him to expect the most implicit obedience from his own children. He could trust himself, he said (and so did Christina), to be more lenient than perhaps his father had been to himself; his danger, he said (and so again did Christina), would be rather in the direction of being too indulgent; he must be on his guard against this, for no duty could be more important than that of teaching a child to obey its parents in all things.

He had read not long since of an Eastern traveller, who, while exploring somewhere in the more remote parts of Arabia and Asia Minor, had come upon a remarkably hardy, sober, industrious little Christian community—all of them in the best of health—who had turned out to be the actual living descendants of Jonadab,[6] the son of Rechab; and two men in European costume, indeed, but speaking English with a broken accent, and by their colour evidently Oriental, had come begging to Battersby soon afterwards, and represented themselves as belonging to this people; they had said they were collecting funds to promote the conversion of their fellow tribesmen to the English branch of the Christian religion. True, they turned out to be impostors, for when he gave them a pound and Christina five shillings from her private purse, they went and got drunk with it in the next village but one to Battersby; still, this did not invalidate the story of the Eastern traveller. Then there were the Romans—whose greatness was probably due to the wholesome authority exercised by the head of a family over all its members. Some Romans had even killed their children; this was going too far, but then the Romans were not Christians, and knew no better.

The practical outcome of the foregoing was a conviction in Theobald's mind, and if in his, then in Christina's, that it was their duty to begin training up their children in the way they should go, even from their earliest infancy. The first signs of self-will must be carefully looked for, and plucked

[6 See II Kings, x, 15; Jeremiah, xxxv, 6, 8, 14, 16, 19.]

up by the roots at once before they had time to grow. Theobald picked up this numb serpent of a metaphor and cherished it in his bosom.

Before Ernest could well crawl he was taught to kneel; before he could well speak he was taught to lisp the Lord's prayer, and the general confession. How was it possible that these things could be taught too early? If his attention flagged or his memory failed him, here was an ill weed which would grow apace, unless it were plucked out immediately, and the only way to pluck it out was to whip him, or shut him up in a cupboard, or dock him of some of the small pleasures of childhood. Before he was three years old he could read and, after a fashion, write. Before he was four he was learning Latin, and could do rule of three sums.

As for the child himself, he was naturally of an even temper; he doted upon his nurse, on kittens and puppies, and on all things that would do him the kindness of allowing him to be fond of them. He was fond of his mother, too, but as regards his father, he has told me in later life he could remember no feeling but fear and shrinking. Christina did not remonstrate with Theobald concerning the severity of the tasks imposed upon their boy, nor yet as to the continual whippings that were found necessary at lesson times. Indeed, when during any absence of Theobald's the lessons were entrusted to her, she found to her sorrow that it was the only thing to do, and she did it no less effectually than Theobald himself, nevertheless she was fond of her boy, which Theobald never was, and it was long before she could destroy all affection for herself in the mind of her first-born. But she persevered.

William James

TWO LETTERS ON DEATH

¶ William James as 'man thinking' is represented in this volume by an excerpt from one of his philosophical essays. Here it is James as son and brother who is revealed. He is the same James, unaffected, sympathetic, completely honest; only here we see him not in the lecture room but in the solitude of those moments in every life when out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. These two letters are in every sense characteristic: no rhetoric, no conventionalities, no sentimentalism, no 'O eloquent, just, and mighty Death!' but sincere, plainspoken affection: 'If you go, it will not be an inharmonious thing. . . Good-night, my sacred old Father.'

BOLTON ST., LONDON, DECEMBER 14, 1882

DARLING OLD FATHER,[1]—Two letters, one from my Alice[2] last night, and one from Aunt Kate to Harry[3] just now, have somewhat dispelled the mystery in which the telegrams left your condition; and although their

[1 James's father, Henry James, Sr., was the son of an Irish immigrant who made a fortune in business and became a prominent citizen of Albany, N.Y. Henry went to Union College and Princeton Theological Seminary, but after two years' study abandoned forever the Calvinistic divinity. He lived in New York City and, from time to time, in Europe.

He was a man of great independence of mind and decided opinion, religious by nature yet scornful of orthodox theologies (he turned to Swedenborg); full of kindness, sympathy, and curiosity—traits inherited by his more celebrated son William. He loved to argue with his five children, to sharpen their wits. An unusual man, he was repaid by unusual affection. His daughter's diary records that a week before his death she asked him whether he had thought what he should like to have done about his funeral. 'He was immediately very much interested, not having apparently thought of it before; he reflected for some time, and then said with the greatest solemnity and looking so majestic: "Tell him to say only this: 'Here lies a man, who has thought all his life that the ceremonies attending birth, marriage and death were all damned non-sense.' Don't let him say a word more!" ' (*Letters of William James*, 1, 16).]

[2 His sister (1848–92). See the next letter.]

[3 Henry James (1843–1916), who became a famous novelist.]

FROM *The Letters of William James*, 1920, 1926. Reprinted by permission of the Executors of the Estate of Henry James.

news is several days earlier than the telegrams, I am free to suppose that the latter report only an aggravation of the symptoms the letters describe. It is far more agreeable to think of this than of some dreadful unknown and sudden malady.

We have been so long accustomed to the hypothesis of your being taken away from us, especially during the past ten months, that the thought that this may be your last illness conveys no very sudden shock. You are old enough, you've given your message to the world in many ways and will not be forgotten; you are here left alone, and on the other side, let us hope and pray, dear, dear old Mother is waiting for you to join her. If you go, it will not be an inharmonious thing. Only, if you are still in possession of your normal consciousness, I should like to see you once again before we part. I stayed here only in obedience to the last telegram, and am waiting now for Harry—who knows the exact state of my mind, and who will know yours—to telegraph again what I shall do. Meanwhile, my blessed old Father, I scribble this line (which may reach you though I should come too late), just to tell you how full of the tenderest memories and feelings about you my heart has for the last few days been filled. In that mysterious gulf of the past into which the present soon will fall and go back and back, yours is still for me the central figure. All my intellectual life I derive from you; and though we have often seemed at odds in the expression thereof, I'm sure there's a harmony somewhere, and that our strivings will combine. What my debt to you is goes beyond all my power of estimating,—so early, so penetrating and so constant has been the influence. You need be in no anxiety about your literary remains.[4] I will see them well taken care of, and that your words shall not suffer for being concealed. At Paris I heard that Milsand,[5] whose name you may remember in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' and elsewhere, was an admirer of the 'Secret of Swedenborg,'[6] and Hodgson[7] told me your last book had deeply impressed him. So will it be; especially, I think, if a collection of *extracts* from your various writings were published, after the manner of the extracts from Carlyle, Ruskin, & Co. I have long thought such a volume would be the best monument to you.—As for us; we shall live on each in his way,—feeling somewhat unprotected, old as we are, for the absence of the parental bosoms as a refuge, but holding fast together in that common sacred memory. We will stand

[4 William James published them in 1885.]
[5 Joseph Milsand, a French writer.]
[6 A book by Henry James, Sr.]
[7 Shadworth Hodgson, English philosopher and friend of William James.]

by each other and by Alice, try to transmit the torch in our offspring as you did in us, and when the time comes for being gathered in, I pray we may, if not all, some at least, be as ripe as you. As for myself, I know what trouble I've given you at various times through my peculiarities; and as my own boys grow up, I shall learn more and more of the kind of trial you had to overcome in superintending the development of a creature different from yourself, for whom you felt responsible. I say this merely to show how my *sympathy* with you is likely to grow much livelier, rather than to fade—and not for the sake of regrets.—As for the other side, and Mother, and our all possibly meeting, I *can't* say anything. More than ever at this moment do I feel that if that *were* true, all would be solved and justified. And it comes strangely over me in bidding you good-bye how a life is but a day and expresses mainly but a single note. It is so much like the act of bidding an ordinary good-night. Good-night, my sacred old Father! If I don't see you again—Farewell! a blessed farewell! Your

WILLIAM

CHOCORUA, N.H., JULY 6, 1891.

DEAREST ALICE,—. . . Of course [this medical verdict on your case may mean] as all men know, a finite length of days; and then, good-bye to neurasthenia and neuralgia and headache, and weariness and palpitation and disgust all at one stroke—I should think you would be reconciled to the prospect with all its pluses and minuses! I know you've never cared for life, and to me, now at the age of nearly fifty, life and death seem singularly close together in all of us—and life a mere farce of frustration in all, so far as the realization of the innermost ideals go to which we are made respectively capable of feeling an affinity and responding. Your frustrations are only rather more flagrant than the rule; and you've been saved many forms of self-dissatisfaction and misery which appertain to such a multiplication of responsible relations to different people as I, for instance, have got into. Your fortitude, good spirits and unsentimentality have been simply unexampled in the midst of your physical woes; and when you're relieved from your post, just *that* bright note will remain behind, together with the inscrutable and mysterious character of the doom of nervous weakness which has chained you down for all these years. As for that, there's more in it than has ever been told to so-called science. These inhibitions, these split-up selves, all these new facts that are gradually coming to light about our organization, these enlargements of the self in trance, etc., are bringing me to turn for light in the direction of all sorts of despised spiritualistic and

unscientific ideas. Father would find in me today a much more receptive listener—all *that* philosophy has got to be brought in. And what a queer contradiction comes to the ordinary scientific argument against immortality (based on body being mind's condition and mind going *out* when body is gone), when one must believe (as now, in these neurotic cases) that some infernality in the body *prevents* really existing parts of the mind from coming to their effective rights at all, suppresses them, and blots them out from participation in this world's experiences, although they are *there* all the time. When that which is *you* passes out of the body, I am sure that there will be an explosion of liberated force and life till then eclipsed and kept down. I can hardly imagine *your* transition without a great oscillation of both 'worlds' as they regain their new equilibrium after the change! Everyone will feel the shock, but you yourself will be more surprised than anybody else.

It may seem odd for me to talk to you in this cool way about your end; but, my dear little sister, if one has things present to one's mind, and I know they are present enough to *your* mind, why not speak them out? I am sure you appreciate that best. How many times I have thought, in the past year, when my days were so full of strong and varied impression and activities, of the long unchanging hours in bed which those days stood for with you, and wondered how you bore the slow-paced monotony at all, as you did! You can't tell how I've pitied you. But you *shall* come to your rights erelong. Meanwhile take things gently. Look for the little good in each day as if life were to last a hundred years. Above all things, save yourself from bodily pain, if it can be done. You've had too much of that. Take all the morphia (or other forms of opium if that disagrees) you want, and don't be afraid of becoming an opium-drunkard. What was opium created for except for such times as this? Beg the good Katharine (to whom *our* debt can never be extinguished) to write me a line every week, just to keep the currents flowing, and so farewell until I write again. Your ever loving,

W. J.

Edmund Gosse

FATHER AND SON

¶[Sir Edmund Gosse (1849–1928) wrote poetry, literary histories, biographies of Ibsen, Donne, Gray, Taylor, Browne, Congreve, and Swinburne, and many critical essays. His little memoir of his relations with his father, *Father and Son*, published anonymously in 1907, is probably better known today than all his scholarly writings. It is the ancient story, told in Victorian terms, of conflict between generations. As Gosse said, it is 'a *document*,' a 'record of educational and religious conditions which, having passed away, will never return,' a 'diagnosis of a dying Puritanism.' The elder Gosse was a man of intelligence and learning; but in religion, the master passion of his life, he was dominated by a crude Fundamentalism and a Biblical literalism which, for all except a few immovable diehards like himself, were soon to become impossible.

The events narrated in this selection took place when Gosse was a young boy. Later, when he grew up and left home, he abandoned the religion of his father, insisting on the right to think for himself. As a result, their intimacy was destroyed. Such painful estrangements are not uncommon, but they have seldom been described with more feeling than they are in *Father and Son*.

WHEN it was quite certain that no alleviations and no medical care could prevent, or even any longer postpone, the departure of my Mother, I believe that my future conduct became the object of her greatest and her most painful solicitude. She said to my Father that the worst trial of her faith came from the feeling that she was called upon to leave that child whom she had so carefully trained from his earliest infancy for the peculiar service of the Lord, without any knowledge of what his further course would be. In many conversations, she most tenderly and

FROM *Father and Son*, 1907. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

closely urged my Father, who, however, needed no urging, to watch with unceasing care over my spiritual welfare. As she grew nearer her end, it was observed that she became calmer, and less troubled by fears about me. The intensity of her prayers and hopes seemed to have a prevailing force; it would have been a sin to doubt that such supplications, such confidence and devotion, such an emphasis of will, should not be rewarded by an answer from above in the affirmative. She was able, she said, to leave me 'in the hands of her loving Lord,' or, on another occasion, 'to the care of her covenant God.'

Although her faith was so strong and simple, my Mother possessed no quality of the mystic. She never pretended to any visionary gifts, believed not at all in dreams or portents, and encouraged nothing in herself or others which was superstitious or fantastic. In order to realise her condition of mind, it is necessary, I think, to accept the view that she had formed a definite conception of the absolute, unmodified and historical veracity, in its direct and obvious sense, of every statement contained within the covers of the Bible. For her, and for my Father, nothing was symbolic, nothing allegorical or allusive in any part of Scripture, except what was, in so many words, proffered as a parable or a picture. Pushing this to its extreme limit, and allowing nothing for the changes of scene or time or race, my parents read injunctions to the Corinthian converts without any suspicion that what was apposite in dealing with half-breed Achaian colonists of the first century might not exactly apply to respectable English men and women of the nineteenth. They took it, text by text, as if no sort of difference existed between the surroundings of Trimalchion's feast[1] and those of a City dinner. Both of my parents, I think, were devoid of sympathetic imagination; in my Father, I am sure, it was singularly absent. Hence, although their faith was so strenuous that many persons might have called it fanatical, there was no mysticism about them. They went rather to the opposite extreme, to the cultivation of a rigid and iconoclastic literalness.

This was curiously exemplified in the very lively interest which they both took in what is called 'the interpretation of prophecy,' and particularly in unwrapping the dark sayings bound up in the Book of Revelation. In their impartial survey of the Bible, they came to this collection of solemn and splendid visions, sinister and obscure, and they had no intention of allowing these to be merely stimulating to the fancy, or vaguely doctrinal in

[1 A lavish dinner party given by a rich vulgarian, described in the *Cena Trimalchionis* of Petronius (first century of this era).]

symbol. When they read of seals broken and of vials poured forth, of the star which was called Wormwood [2] that fell from Heaven, and of men whose hair was as the hair of women, and their teeth as the teeth of lions,[3] they did not admit for a moment that these vivid mental pictures were of a poetic character, but they regarded them as positive statements, in guarded language, describing events which were to happen, and could be recognised when they did happen. It was the explanation, the perfectly prosaic and positive explanation, of all these wonders which drew them to study the Jukeses and the Newtons whose books they so much enjoyed. They were helped by these guides to recognise in wild Oriental visions direct statements regarding Napoleon III and Pope Pius IX and the King of Piedmont, historic figures which they conceived as foreshadowed, in language which admitted of plain interpretation, under the names of denizens of Babylon and companions of the Wild Beast.

My Father was in the habit of saying, in later years, that no small element in his wedded happiness was the fact that my Mother and he were of one mind in the interpretation of Sacred Prophecy. Looking back, it appears to me that this unusual mental exercise was almost their only relaxation, and that in their economy it took the place which is taken, in profaner families, by cards or the piano. It was a distraction; it took them completely out of themselves. During those melancholy weeks at Pimlico, I read aloud another work of the same nature as those of Newton and Jukes, the 'Horæ Apocalypticæ' of a Mr. Elliott. This was written, I think, in a less disagreeable style, and certainly it was less opaquely obscure to me. My recollection distinctly is that when my Mother could endure nothing else, the arguments of this book took her thoughts away from her pain and lifted her spirits. Elliott saw 'the queenly arrogance of Popery' everywhere, and believed that the very last days of Babylon the Great were come. Lest I say what may be thought extravagant, let me quote what my Father wrote in his diary at the time of my Mother's death. He said that the thought that Rome was doomed (as seemed not impossible in 1857) so affected my Mother that it 'irradiated her dying hours with an assurance that was like the light of the Morning Star, the harbinger of the rising sun.'

After our return to Islington, there was a complete change in my relation to my Mother. At Pimlico, I had been all-important, her only companion, her friend, her confidant. But now that she was at home again, people and things combined to separate me from her. Now, and for the

[2 Revelation, viii, 11.]
[3 Revelation, ix, 8.]

first time in my life, I no longer slept in her room, no longer sank to sleep under her kiss, no longer saw her mild eyes smile on me with the earliest sunshine. Twice a day, after breakfast and before I went to rest, I was brought to her bedside; but we were never alone, other people, sometimes strange people, were there. We had no cosy talk; often she was too weak to do more than pat my hand; her loud and almost constant cough terrified and harassed me. I felt, as I stood, awkwardly and shyly, by her high bed, that I had shrunken into a very small and insignificant figure, that she was floating out of my reach, that all things, but I knew not what nor how, were coming to an end. She herself was not herself; her head that used to be held so erect, now rolled or sank upon the pillow; the sparkle was all extinguished from those bright, dear eyes. I could not understand it; I meditated long, long upon it all in my infantile darkness, in the garret, or in the little slip of a cold room where my bed was now placed; and a great, blind anger against I knew not what awakened in my soul.

The two retreats which I have mentioned were now all that were left to me. In the back-parlour some one from outside gave me occasional lessons, of a desultory character. The breakfast-room was often haunted by visitors, unknown to me by face or name; ladies, who used to pity me and even to pet me, until I became nimble in escaping from their caresses. Everything seemed to be unfixed, uncertain; it was like being on the platform of a railway-station waiting for a train. In all this time, the agitated, nervous presence of my Father, whose pale face was permanently drawn with anxiety, added to my perturbation, and I became miserable, stupid, as if I had lost my way in a cold fog.

Had I been older and more intelligent, of course, it might have been of him and not of myself that I should have been thinking. As I now look back upon that tragic time, it is for him that my heart bleeds,—for them both, so singularly fitted as they were to support and cheer one another in an existence which their own innate and cultivated characteristics had made little hospitable to other sources of comfort. This is not to be dwelt on here. But what must be recorded was the extraordinary tranquillity, the serene and sensible resignation, with which at length my parents faced the awful hour. Language cannot utter what they suffered, but there was no rebellion, no repining; in their case even an atheist might admit that the overpowering miracle of grace was mightily efficient.

It seems almost cruel to the memory of their opinions that the only words which rise to my mind, the only ones which seem in the least degree adequate to describe the attitude of my parents, had fallen from the pen

of one, whom, in their want of imaginative sympathy, they had regarded as anathema. But John Henry Newman might have come from the contemplation of my Mother's death-bed, when he wrote: 'All the trouble which the world inflicts upon us, and which flesh cannot but feel,—sorrow, pain, care, bereavement,—these avail not to disturb the tranquillity and the intensity with which faith gazes at the Divine Majesty.' It was 'tranquillity,' it was not the rapture of the mystic. Almost in the last hour of her life, urged to confess her 'joy' in the Lord, my Mother, rigidly honest, meticulous in self-analysis, as ever, replied: 'I have peace, but not *joy*. It would not do to go into eternity with a lie in my mouth.'

When the very end approached, and her mind was growing clouded, she gathered her strength together to say to my Father, 'I shall walk with Him in white. Won't you take your lamb and walk with me?' Confused with sorrow and alarm, my Father failed to understand her meaning. She became agitated, and she repeated two or three times: 'Take our lamb, and walk with me!' Then my Father comprehended, and pressed me forward; her hand fell softly upon mine and she seemed content. Thus was my dedication, that had begun in my cradle, sealed with the most solemn, the most poignant and irresistible insistence, at the death-bed of the holiest and purest of women. But what a weight, intolerable as the burden of Atlas, to lay on the shoulders of a little fragile child! . . .

My spiritual condition occupied my Father's thoughts very insistently at this time. Closing, as he did, most of the doors of worldly pleasure and energy upon his conscience, he had continued to pursue his scientific investigations without any sense of sin. Most fortunate it was, that the collecting of marine animals in the tidal pools, and the description of them in pages which were addressed to the wide scientific public, at no time occurred to him as in any way inconsistent with his holy calling. His conscience was so delicate, and often so morbid in its delicacy, that if that had occurred to him, he would certainly have abandoned his investigations, and have been left without an employment. But happily he justified his investigation by regarding it as a glorification of God's created works. In the introduction to his 'Actinologia Britannica,' written at the time which I have now reached in this narrative, he sent forth his labours with a phrase which I should think unparalleled in connection with a learned and technical biological treatise. He stated concerning that book, that he published it 'as one more tribute humbly offered to the glory of the Triune God, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.' Scientific investigation

sincerely carried out in that spirit became a kind of week-day interpretation of the current creed of Sundays.

The development of my faculties, of which I have spoken, extended to the religious sphere no less than to the secular. Here also, as I look back, I see that I was extremely imitative. I expanded in the warmth of my Father's fervour, and, on the whole, in a manner that was satisfactory to him. He observed the richer hold that I was now taking on life; he saw my faculties branching in many directions, and he became very anxious to secure my maintenance in grace. In earlier years, certain sides of my character had offered a sort of passive resistance to his ideas. I had let what I did not care to welcome pass over my mind in the curious density that children adopt in order to avoid receiving impressions—blankly, dumbly, achieving by stupidity what they cannot achieve by argument. I think that I had frequently done this; that he had been brought up against a dead wall; although on other sides of my nature I had been responsive and docile. But now, in my tenth year, the imitative faculty got the upper hand, and nothing seemed so attractive as to be what I was expected to be. If there was a doubt now, it lay in the other direction; it seemed hardly normal that so young a child should appear so receptive and so apt.

My Father believed himself justified, at this juncture, in making a tremendous effort. He wished to secure me finally, exhaustively, before the age of puberty could dawn, before my soul was fettered with the love of carnal things. He thought that if I could now be identified with the 'saints,' and could stand on exactly their footing, a habit of conformity would be secured. I should meet the paganising tendencies of advancing years with security if I could be forearmed with all the weapons of a sanctified life. He wished me, in short, to be received into the community of the Brethren [4] on the terms of an adult. There were difficulties in the way of carrying out this scheme, and they were urged upon him, more or less courageously, by the elders of the church. But he overbore them. What the difficulties were, and what were the arguments which he used to sweep those difficulties away, I must now explain, for in this lay the centre of our future relations as father and son.

In dealing with the peasants around him, among whom he was engaged in an active propaganda, my Father always insisted on the necessity of conversion. There must be a new birth and being, a fresh creation in God.

[4 The Gosses were members of a small Calvinistic sect known as the Plymouth Brethren. They practiced adult baptism and were strict Fundamentalists. They had no priests and no ritual.]

This crisis he was accustomed to regard as manifesting itself in a sudden and definite upheaval. There might have been prolonged practical piety, deep and true contrition for sin, but these, although the natural and suitable prologue to conversion, were not conversion itself. People hung on at the confines of regeneration, often for a very long time; my Father dealt earnestly with them, the elders ministered to them, with explanation, exhortation and prayer. Such persons were in a gracious state, but they were not in a state of grace. If they should suddenly die, they would pass away in an unconverted condition, and all that could be said in their favour was a vague expression of hope that they would benefit from God's uncovenanted mercies.

But on some day, at some hour and minute, if life was spared to them, the way of salvation would be revealed to these persons in such an aspect that they would be enabled instantaneously to accept it. They would take it consciously, as one takes a gift from the hand that offers it. This act of taking was the process of conversion, and the person who so accepted was a child of God now, although a single minute ago he had been a child of wrath. The very root of human nature had to be changed, and, in the majority of cases, this change was sudden, patent, palpable.

I have just said, 'in the majority of cases,' because my Father admitted the possibility of exceptions. The formula was, 'If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' [5] As a rule, no one could possess the Spirit of Christ, without a conscious and full abandonment of the soul, and this, however carefully led up to, and prepared for with tears and renunciations, was not, could not, be made, except at a set moment of time. Faith, in an esoteric and almost symbolic sense, was necessary, and could not be a result of argument, but was a state of heart. In these opinions my Father departed no wise from the strict evangelical doctrine of the Protestant churches, but he held it in a mode and with a severity peculiar to himself. Now, it is plain that this state of heart, this voluntary deed of acceptance, presupposed a full and rational consciousness of the relations of things. It might be clearly achieved by a person of humble cultivation, but only by one who was fully capable of independent thought, in other words by a more or less adult person. The man or woman claiming the privileges of conversion must be able to understand and to grasp what his religious education was aiming at.

It is extraordinary what trouble it often gave my Father to know whether he was justified in admitting to the communion people of very limited

[5 Romans, viii, 9.]

powers of expression. A harmless, humble labouring man would come with a request to be allowed to 'break bread.' It was only by the use of strong leading questions that he could be induced to mention Christ as the ground of his trust at all. I recollect an elderly agricultural labourer being closeted for a long time with my Father, who came out at last, in a sort of dazed condition, and replied to our inquiries,—with a shrug of his shoulders as he said it,—'I was obliged to put the Name and Blood and Work of Jesus into his very mouth. It is true that he assented cordially at last, but I confess I was grievously daunted by the poor intelligence!'

But there was, or there might be, another class of persons, whom early training, separation from the world, and the care of godly parents had so early familiarised with the acceptable calling of Christ that their conversion had occurred, unperceived and therefore unrecorded, at an extraordinarily early age. It would be in vain to look for a repetition of the phenomenon in those cases. The heavenly fire must not be expected to descend a second time; the lips are touched with the burning coal [6] once, and once only. If, accordingly, these precociously selected spirits are to be excluded because no new birth is observed in them at a mature age, they must continue outside in the cold, since the phenomenon cannot be repeated. When, therefore, there is not possible any further doubt of their being in possession of salvation, longer delay is useless, and worse than useless. The fact of conversion, though not recorded nor even recollected, must be accepted on the evidence of confession of faith, and as soon as the intelligence is evidently developed, the person not merely may, but should be accepted into communion, although still immature in body, although in years still even a child. This my Father believed to be my case, and in this rare class did he fondly persuade himself to station me.

As I have said, the congregation,—although docile and timid, and little able, as units, to hold their own against their minister,—behind his back were faintly hostile to this plan. None of their own children had ever been so much as suggested for membership, and each of themselves, in ripe years, had been subjected to severe cross-examination. I think it was rather a bitter pill for some of them to swallow that a pert little boy of ten should be admitted, as a grown-up person, to all the hard-won privileges of their order. Mary Grace Burmington came back from her visits to the cottagers, reporting disaffection here and there, grumblings in the rank and file. But quite as many, especially of the women, enthusiastically supported my Father's wish, gloried aloud in the manifestations of my early piety, and

[6 Isaiah, vi, 6–7.]

professed to see in it something of miraculous promise. The expression 'another Infant Samuel' [7] was widely used. I became quite a subject of contention. A war of the sexes threatened to break out over me; I was a disturbing element at cottage breakfasts. I was mentioned at public prayer-meetings, not indeed by name, but, in the extraordinary illusive way customary in the devotions, as 'one amongst us of tender years' or as 'a sapling in the Lord's vineyard.'

To all this my Father put a stop in his own high-handed fashion. After the morning meeting, one Sunday in the autumn of 1859, he desired the attention of the saints to a personal matter which was, perhaps, not unfamiliar to them by rumour. That was, he explained, the question of the admission of his beloved little son to the communion of saints in the breaking of bread. He allowed—and I sat there in evidence, palely smiling at the audience, my feet scarcely touching the ground—that I was not what is styled adult; I was not, he frankly admitted, a grown-up person. But I was adult in a knowledge of the Lord; I possessed an insight into the plan of salvation which many a hoary head might envy for its fullness, its clearness, its conformity with Scripture doctrine. This was a palpable hit at more than one stumbler and fumbler after the truth, and several hoary heads were bowed.

My Father then went on to explain very fully the position which I have already attempted to define. He admitted the absence in my case of a sudden, apparent act of conversion resulting upon conviction of sin. But he stated the grounds of his belief that I had, in still earlier infancy, been converted, and he declared that if so, I ought no longer to be excluded from the privileges of communion. He said, moreover, that he was willing on this occasion to waive his own privilege as a minister, and that he would rather call on Brother Fawkes and Brother Bere, the leading elders, to examine the candidate in his stead. This was a master-stroke, for Brothers Fawkes and Bere had been suspected of leading the disaffection, and this threw all the burden of responsibility on them. The meeting broke up in great amiability, and my Father and I went home together in the very highest of spirits. I, indeed, in my pride, touched the verge of indiscretion by saying: 'When I have been admitted to fellowship, Papa, shall I be allowed to call you "belovèd Brother"?' My Father was too well pleased with the morning's work to be critical. He laughed, and answered; 'That, my love, though strictly correct, would hardly, I fear, be thought judicious!'

It was suggested that my tenth birthday, which followed this public

[7 See 1 Samuel, i–ii.]

announcement by a few days, would be a capital occasion for me to go through the ordeal. Accordingly, after dark (for our new lamp was lighted for the first time in honour of the event), I withdrew alone into our drawing-room, which had just, at length, been furnished, and which looked, I thought, very smart. Hither came to me, first Brother Fawkes, by himself; then Brother Bere, by himself; and then both together, so that you may say, if you are pedantically inclined, that I underwent three successive interviews. My Father, out of sight somewhere, was, of course, playing the part of stage manager.

I felt not at all shy, but so highly strung that my whole nature seemed to throb with excitement. My first examiner, on the other hand, was extremely confused. Fawkes, who was a builder in a small business of his own, was short and fat; his complexion, which wore a deeper and more uniform rose-colour than usual, I observed to be starred with dewdrops of nervous emotion, which he wiped away at intervals with a large bandana handkerchief. He was so long in coming to the point, that I was obliged to lead him to it myself, and I sat up on the sofa in the full lamplight, and testified my faith in the atonement with a fluency that surprised myself. Before I had done, Fawkes, a middle-aged man with the reputation of being a very stiff employer of labour, was weeping like a child.

Bere, the carpenter, a long, thin and dry man, with a curiously immobile eye, did not fall so easily a prey to my fascinations. He put me through my paces very sharply, for he had something of the temper of an attorney mingled with his religiousness. However, I was equal to him, and he, too, though he held his own head higher, was not less impressed than Fawkes had been, by the surroundings of the occasion. Neither of them had ever been in our drawing-room since it was furnished, and I thought that each of them noticed how smart the wall-paper was. Indeed, I believe I drew their attention to it. After the two solitary examinations were over, the elders came in again, as I have said, and they prayed for a long time. We all three knelt at the sofa, I between them. But by this time, to my great exaltation of spirits there had succeeded an equally dismal depression. It was my turn now to weep, and I dimly remember my Father coming into the room, and my being carried up to bed, in a state of collapse and fatigue, by the silent and kindly Miss Marks.

On the following Sunday morning, I was the principal subject which occupied an unusually crowded meeting. My Father, looking whiter and yet darker than usual, called upon Brother Fawkes and Brother Bere to state to the assembled saints what their experiences had been in connec-

tion with their visits to 'one' who desired to be admitted to the breaking of bread. It was tremendously exciting to me to hear myself spoken of with this impersonal publicity, and I had no fear of the result.

Events showed that I had no need of fear. Fawkes and Bere were sometimes accused of a rivalry, which indeed broke out a few years later, and gave my Father much anxiety and pain. But on this occasion their unanimity was wonderful. Each strove to exceed the other in the tributes which they paid to my piety. My answers had been so full and clear, my humility (save the mark!) had been so sweet, my acquaintance with Scripture so amazing, my testimony to all the leading principles of salvation so distinct and exhaustive, that they could only say that they had felt confounded, and yet deeply cheered and led far along their own heavenly path, by hearing such accents fall from the lips of a babe and a suckling. I did not like being described as a suckling, but every lot has its crumpled rose-leaf, and in all other respects the report of the elders was a triumph. My Father then clenched the whole matter by rising and announcing that I had expressed an independent desire to confess the Lord by the act of public baptism, immediately after which I should be admitted to communion 'as an adult.' Emotion ran so high at this, that a large portion of the congregation insisted on walking with us back to our garden-gate, to the stupefaction of the rest of the villagers.

My public baptism was the central event of my whole childhood. Everything, since the earliest dawn of consciousness, seemed to have been leading up to it. Everything, afterwards, seemed to be leading down and away from it. The practice of immersing communicants on the sea-beach at Oddicombe had now been completely abandoned, but we posssessed as yet no tank for a baptismal purpose in our own Room. The Room in the adjoining town, however, was really quite a large chapel, and it was amply provided with the needful conveniences. It was our practice, therefore, at this time, to claim the hospitality of our neighbours. Baptisms were made an occasion for friendly relations between the two congregations, and led to pleasant social intercourse. I believe that the ministers and elders of the two meetings arranged to combine their forces at these times, and to baptize communicants from both congregations.

The minister of the town meeting was Mr. S., a very handsome old gentleman, of venerable and powerful appearance. He had snowy hair and a long white beard, but from under shaggy eyebrows there blazed out great black eyes which warned the beholder that the snow was an ornament and not a sign of decrepitude. The eve of my baptism at length drew near; it was

fixed for October 12, almost exactly three weeks after my tenth birthday. I was dressed in old clothes, and a suit of smarter things was packed up in a carpet-bag. After night-fall, this carpet-bag, accompanied by my Father, myself, Miss Marks and Mary Grace, was put in a four-wheeled cab, and driven, a long way in the dark, to the chapel of our friends. There we were received, in a blaze of lights, with a pressure of hands, with a murmur of voices, with ejaculations and even with tears, and were conducted, amid unspeakable emotion, to places of honour in the front row of the congregation.

The scene was one which would have been impressive, not merely to such hermits as we were, but even to worldly persons accustomed to life and to its curious and variegated experiences. To me it was dazzling beyond words, inexpressibly exciting, an initiation to every kind of publicity and glory. There were many candidates, but the rest of them,—mere grown-up men and women,—gave thanks aloud that it was their privilege to follow where I led. I was the acknowledged hero of the hour. Those were days when newspaper enterprise was scarcely in its infancy, and the event owed nothing to journalistic effort. In spite of that, the news of this remarkable ceremony, the immersion of a little boy of ten years old 'as an adult,' had spread far and wide through the county in the course of three weeks. The chapel of our hosts was, as I have said, very large; it was commonly too large for their needs, but on this night it was crowded to the ceiling, and the crowd had come—as every soft murmurer assured me—to see *me*.

There were people there who had travelled from Exeter, from Dartmouth, from Totnes, to witness so extraordinary a ceremony. There was one old woman of eighty-five who had come, my neighbours whispered to me, all the way from Moreton-Hampstead, on purpose to see me baptized. I looked at her crumpled countenance with amazement, for there was no curiosity, no interest visible in it. She sat there perfectly listless, looking at nothing, but chewing between her toothless gums what appeared to be a jujube.

In the centre of the chapel-floor a number of planks had been taken up, and revealed a pool which might have been supposed to be a small swimming-bath. We gazed down into this dark square of mysterious waters, from the tepid surface of which faint swirls of vapour rose. The whole congregation was arranged, tier above tier, about the four straight sides of this pool; every person was able to see what happened in it without any unseemly struggling or standing on forms. Mr. S. now rose, an impressive hieratic figure, commanding attention and imploring perfect silence. He

held a small book in his hand, and he was preparing to give out the number of a hymn, when an astounding incident took place.

There was a great splash, and a tall young woman was perceived to be in the baptismal pool, her arms waving above her head, and her figure held upright in the water by the inflation of the air underneath her crinoline, which was blown out like a bladder, as in some extravagant old fashion-plate. Whether her feet touched the bottom of the font I cannot say, but I suppose they did so. An indescribable turmoil of shrieks and cries followed on this extraordinary apparition. A great many people excitedly called upon other people to be calm, and an instance was given of the remark of James Smith that

> He who, in quest of quiet, 'Silence!' hoots
> Is apt to make the hubbub he imputes.

The young woman, in a more or less fainting condition, was presently removed from the water, and taken into the sort of tent which was prepared for candidates. It was found that she herself had wished to be a candidate and had earnestly desired to be baptized, but that this had been forbidden by her parents. On the supposition that she fell in by accident, a pious coincidence was detected in this affair; the Lord had pre-ordained that she should be baptized in spite of all opposition. But my Father, in his shrewd way, doubted. He pointed out to us, next morning, that, in the first place, she had not, in any sense, been baptized, as her head had not been immersed; and that, in the second place, she must have deliberately jumped in, since, had she stumbled and fallen forward, her hands and face would have struck the water, whereas they remained quite dry. She belonged, however, to the neighbour congregation, and we had no responsibility to pursue the inquiry any further.

Decorum being again secured, Mr. S., with unimpaired dignity, proposed to the congregation a hymn, which was long enough to occupy them during the preparations for the actual baptism. He then retired to the vestry, and I (for I was to be the first to testify) was led by Miss Marks and Mary Grace into the species of tent of which I have just spoken. Its pale sides seemed to shake with the jubilant singing of the saints outside, while part of my clothing was removed and I was prepared for immersion. A sudden cessation of the hymn warned us that the Minister was now ready, and we emerged into the glare of lights and faces to find Mr. S. already standing in the water up to his knees. Feeling as small as one of our microscopical specimens, almost infinitesimally tiny as I descended into his Titanic arms,

I was handed down the steps to him. He was dressed in a kind of long surplice, underneath which—as I could not, even in that moment, help observing—the air gathered in long bubbles which he strove to flatten out. The end of his noble beard he tucked away; his shirt-sleeves were turned up at the wrist.

The entire congregation was now silent, so silent that the uncertain splashing of my feet as I descended seemed to deafen me. Mr. S., a little embarrassed by my short stature, succeeded at length in securing me with one palm on my chest and the other between my shoulders. He said, slowly, in a loud, sonorous voice that seemed to enter my brain and empty it, 'I baptize thee, my Brother, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost!' Having intoned this formula, he then gently flung me backwards until I was wholly under the water, and then—as he brought me up again, and tenderly steadied my feet on the steps of the font, and delivered me, dripping and sputtering, into the anxious hands of the women, who hurried me to the tent—the whole assembly broke forth in a thunder of song, a pæan of praise to God for this manifestation of his marvellous goodness and mercy. So great was the enthusiasm, that it could hardly be restrained so as to allow the other candidates, the humdrum adults who followed in my wet and glorious foosteps, to undergo a ritual about which, in their case, no one in the congregation pretended to be able to take even the most languid interest.

My Father's happiness during the next few weeks it is now pathetic to me to look back upon. His sternness melted into a universal complaisance. He laughed and smiled, he paid to my opinions the tribute of the gravest consideration, he indulged,—utterly unlike his wont,—in shy and furtive caresses. I could express no wish that he did not attempt to fulfil, and the only warning which he cared to give me was one, very gently expressed, against spiritual pride.

This was certainly required, for I was puffed out with a sense of my own holiness. I was religiously confidential with my Father, condescending with Miss Marks (who I think had given up trying to make it all out), haughty with the servants and insufferably patronising with those young companions of my own age with whom I was now beginning to associate.

I would fain close this remarkable episode on a key of solemnity, but alas! if I am to be loyal to the truth, I must record that some of the other little boys presently complained to Mary Grace that I put out my tongue at them in mockery, during the service in the Room, to remind them that I now broke bread as one of the 'Saints' and that they did not.

James Thurber

UNIVERSITY DAYS

¶ Mr. Thurber (1894—) grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and attended the Ohio State University he writes about in 'University Days.' He records of his youth that 'There is no clearly traceable figure or pattern in this phase of his life. If he knew where he was going, it is not apparent from this distance. He fell down a great deal during this period, because of a trick he had of walking into himself. His gold-rimmed glasses forever needed straightening, which gave him the appearance of a person who hears somebody calling him but can't make out where the sound is coming from.' After graduation, he worked for the State Department for two years, was a reporter in Columbus and in Paris, and since 1926 has been on the staff of *The New Yorker*, in which many of his writings and drawings first appeared.

To anybody unfamiliar with Mr. Thurber's productions such an outline tells little; besides, 'Thurber's life,' according to the first authority, 'baffles and irritates the biographer because of its lack of design. One has the disturbing feeling that the man contrived to be some place without actually having gone there.' All that Mr. Thurber's admirers know, and all they need to know, about his life is contained in his writings, especially *My Life and Hard Times*, from which the selections here reprinted are taken.

The best of Mr. Thurber's work to 1945 is collected in *The Thurber Carnival*. 'University Days' and 'Draft Board Nights' were originally published in *The New Yorker*.

I PASSED all the other courses that I took at my University, but I could never pass botany. This was because all botany students had to spend several hours a week in a laboratory looking through a microscope at plant

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cells, and I could never see through a microscope. I never once saw a cell through a microscope. This used to enrage my instructor. He would wander around the laboratory pleased with the progress all the students were making in drawing the involved and, so I am told, interesting structure of flower cells, until he came to me. I would just be standing there. 'I can't see anything,' I would say. He would begin patiently enough, explaining how anybody can see through a microscope, but he would always end up in a fury, claiming that I could *too* see through a microscope but just pretended that I couldn't. 'It takes away from the beauty of flowers anyway,' I used to tell him. 'We are not concerned with beauty in this course,' he would say. 'We are concerned solely with what I may call the *mechanics* of flars.' 'Well,' I'd say, 'I can't see anything.' 'Try it just once again,' he'd say, and I would put my eye to the microscope and see nothing at all, except now and again a nebulous milky substance—a phenomenon of maladjustment. We were supposed to see a vivid, restless clockwork of sharply defined plant cells. 'I see what looks like a lot of milk,' I would tell him. This, he claimed, was the result of my not having adjusted the microscope properly, so he would readjust it for me, or rather, for himself. And I would look again and see milk.

I finally took a deferred pass, as they called it, and waited a year and tried again. (You had to pass one of the biological sciences or you couldn't graduate.) The professor had come back from vacation brown as a berry, bright-eyed, and eager to explain cell-structure again to his classes. 'Well,' he said to me, cheerily, when we met in the first laboratory hour of the semester, 'we're going to see cells this time, aren't we?' 'Yes, sir,' I said. Students to right of me and to left of me and in front of me were seeing cells; what's more, they were quietly drawing pictures of them in their notebooks. Of course, I didn't see anything.

'We'll try it,' the professor said to me, grimly, 'with every adjustment of the microscope known to man. As God is my witness, I'll arrange this glass so that you see cells through it or I'll give up teaching. In twenty-two years of botany, I—' He cut off abruptly for he was beginning to quiver all over, like Lionel Barrymore, and he genuinely wished to hold onto his temper; his scenes with me had taken a great deal out of him.

So we tried it with every adjustment of the microscope known to man. With only one of them did I see anything but blackness or the familiar lacteal opacity, and that time I saw, to my pleasure and amazement, a variegated constellation of flecks, specks, and dots. These I hastily drew. The instructor, noting my activity, came back from an adjoining desk, a

smile on his lips and his eyebrows high in hope. He looked at my cell drawing. 'What's that?' he demanded, with a hint of a squeal in his voice. 'That's what I saw,' I said. 'You didn't, you didn't, you *did*n't!' he screamed, losing control of his temper instantly, and he bent over and squinted into the microscope. His head snapped up. 'That's your eye!' he shouted. 'You've fixed the lens so that it reflects! You've drawn your eye!'

Another course that I didn't like, but somehow managed to pass, was economics. I went to that class straight from the botany class, which didn't help me any in understanding either subject. I used to get them mixed up. But not as mixed up as another student in my economics class who came there direct from a physics laboratory. He was a tackle on the football team, named Bolenciecwcz. At that time Ohio State University had one of the best football teams in the country, and Bolenciecwcz was one of its outstanding stars. In order to be eligible to play it was necessary for him to keep up in his studies, a very difficult matter, for while he was not dumber than an ox he was not any smarter. Most of his professors were lenient and helped him along. None gave him more hints, in answering questions, or asked him simpler ones than the economics professor, a thin, timid man named Bassum. One day when we were on the subject of transportation and distribution, it came Bolenciecwcz's turn to answer a question. 'Name one means of transportation,' the professor said to him. No light came into the big tackle's eyes. 'Just any means of transportation,' said the professor. Bolenciecwcz sat staring at him. 'That is,' pursued the professor, 'any medium, agency, or method of going from one place to another.' Bolenciecwcz had the look of a man who is being led into a trap. 'You may choose among steam, horse-drawn, or electrically propelled vehicles,' said the instructor. 'I might suggest the one which we commonly take in making long journeys across land.' There was a profound silence in which everybody stirred uneasily, including Bolenciecwcz and Mr. Bassum. Mr. Bassum abruptly broke this silence in an amazing manner. "Choo-choo-choo,' he said, in a low voice, and turned instantly scarlet. He glanced appealingly around the room. All of us, of course, shared Mr. Bassum's desire that Bolenciecwcz should stay abreast of the class in economics, for the Illinois game, one of the hardest and most important of the season, was only a week off. 'Toot, tooot, too-tooooooot!' some student with a deep voice moaned, and we all looked encouragingly at Bolenciecwcz. Somebody else gave a fine imitation of a locomotive letting off steam. Mr. Bassum himself rounded off the little show. 'Ding, dong, ding, dong,' he said

hopefully. Bolenciecwcz was staring at the floor now, trying to think, his great brow furrowed, his huge hands rubbing together, his face red.

'How did you come to college this year, Mr. Bolenciecwcz?' asked the professor. '*Chuffa*, chuffa, *chuffa*, chuffa.'

'M'father sent me,' said the football player.

'What on?' asked Bassum.

'I git an 'lowance,' said the tackle, in a low, husky voice, obviously embarrassed.

'No, no,' said Bassum. 'Name a means of transportation. What did you *ride* here on?'

'Train,' said Bolenciecwcz.

'Quite right,' said the professor. 'Now, Mr. Nugent, will you tell us——'

If I went through anguish in botany and economics—for different reasons—gymnasium work was even worse. I don't even like to think about it. They wouldn't let you play games or join in the exercises with your glasses on and I couldn't see with mine off. I bumped into professors, horizontal bars, agricultural students, and swinging iron rings. Not being able to see, I could take it but I couldn't dish it out. Also, in order to pass gymnasium (and you had to pass it to graduate) you had to learn to swim if you didn't know how. I didn't like the swimming pool, I didn't like swimming, and I didn't like the swimming instructor, and after all these years I still don't. I never swam but I passed my gym work anyway, by having another student give my gymnasium number (978) and swim across the pool in my place. He was a quiet, amiable blonde youth, number 473, and he would have seen through a microscope for me if we could have got away with it, but we couldn't get away with it. Another thing I didn't like about gymnasium work was that they made you strip the day you registered. It is impossible for me to be happy when I am stripped and being asked a lot of questions. Still, I did better than a lanky agricultural student who was cross-examined just before I was. They asked each student what college he was in—that is, whether Arts, Engineering, Commerce or Agriculture. 'What college are you in?' the instructor snapped at the youth in front of me. 'Ohio State University,' he said promptly.

It wasn't that agricultural student but it was another a whole lot like him who decided to take up journalism, possibly on the ground that when farming went to hell he could fall back on newspaper work. He didn't realize, of course, that that would be very much like falling back full-length on a kit of carpenter's tools. Haskins didn't seem cut out for journalism, being too embarrassed to talk to anybody and unable to use a

typewriter, but the editor of the college paper assigned him to the cow barns, the sheep house, the horse pavilion, and the animal husbandry department generally. This was a genuinely big 'beat,' for it took up five times as much ground and got ten times as great a legislative appropriation as the College of Liberal Arts. The agricultural student knew animals, but nevertheless his stories were dull and colorlessly written. He took all afternoon on each of them, on account of having to hunt for each letter on the typewriter. Once in a while he had to ask somebody to help him hunt. 'C' and 'L,' in particular, were hard letters for him to find. His editor finally got pretty much annoyed at the farmer-journalist because his pieces were so uninteresting. 'See here, Haskins,' he snapped at him one day, 'why is it we never have anything hot from you on the horse pavilion? Here we have two hundred head of horses on this campus—more than any other university in the Western Conference except Purdue—and yet you never get any real low down on them. Now shoot over to the horse barns and dig up something lively.' Haskins shambled out and came back in about an hour; he said he had something. 'Well, start it off snappily,' said the editor. 'Something people will read.' Haskins set to work and in a couple of hours brought a sheet of typewritten paper to the desk; it was a two-hundred word story about some disease that had broken out among the horses. Its opening sentence was simple but arresting. It read: 'Who has noticed the sores on the tops of the horses in the animal husbandry building?'

Ohio State was a land grant university and therefore two years of military drill was compulsory. We drilled with old Springfield rifles and studied the tactics of the Civil War even though the World War was going on at the time. At 11 o'clock each morning thousands of freshmen and sophomores used to deploy over the campus, moodily creeping up on the old chemistry building. It was good training for the kind of warfare that was waged at Shiloh [1] but it had no connection with what was going on in Europe. Some people used to think there was German money behind it, but they didn't dare say so or they would have been thrown in jail as German spies. It was a period of muddy thought and marked, I believe, the decline of higher education in the Middle West.

As a soldier I was never any good at all. Most of the cadets were glumly indifferent soldiers, but I was no good at all. Once General Littlefield, who was commandant of the cadet corps, popped up in front of me during regimental drill and snapped, 'You are the main trouble with this university!' I think he meant that my type was the main trouble with the univer-

[1 In Tennessee, 1862.]

sity but he may have meant me individually. I was mediocre at drill, certainly—that is, until my senior year. By that time I had drilled longer than anybody else in the Western Conference, having failed at military at the end of each preceding year so that I had to do it all over again. I was the only senior still in uniform. The uniform which, when new, had made me look like an interurban railway conductor, now that it had become faded and too tight made me look like Bert Williams in his bellboy act. This had a definitely bad effect on my morale. Even so, I had become by sheer practise little short of wonderful at squad manoeuvres.

One day General Littlefield picked our company out of the whole regiment and tried to get it mixed up by putting it through one movement after another as fast as we could execute them: squads right, squads left, squads on right into line, squads right about, squads left front into line etc. In about three minutes one hundred and nine men were marching in one direction and I was marching away from them at an angle of forty degrees, all alone. 'Company, halt!' shouted General Littlefield, 'That man is the only man who has it right!' I was made a corporal for my achievement.

The next day General Littlefield summoned me to his office. He was swatting flies when I went in. I was silent and he was silent too, for a long time. I don't think he remembered me or why he had sent for me, but he didn't want to admit it. He swatted some more flies, keeping his eyes on them narrowly before he let go with the swatter. 'Button up your coat!' he snapped. Looking back on it now I can see that he meant me although he was looking at a fly, but I just stood there. Another fly came to rest on a paper in front of the general and began rubbing its hind legs together. The general lifted the swatter cautiously. I moved restlessly and the fly flew away. 'You startled him!' barked General Littlefield, looking at me severely. I said I was sorry. 'That won't help the situation!' snapped the General, with cold military logic. I didn't see what I could do except offer to chase some more flies toward his desk, but I didn't say anything. He stared out the window at the faraway figures of co-eds crossing the campus toward the library. Finally, he told me I could go. So I went. He either didn't know which cadet I was or else he forgot what he wanted to see me about. It may have been that he wished to apologize for having called me the main trouble with the university; or maybe he had decided to compliment me on my brilliant drilling of the day before and then at the last minute decided not to. I don't know. I don't think about it much any more.

DRAFT BOARD NIGHTS

I LEFT the University in June, 1918, but I couldn't get into the army on account of my sight, just as grandfather couldn't get in on account of his age. He applied several times and each time he took off his coat and threatened to whip the men who said he was too old. The disappointment of not getting to Germany (he saw no sense in everybody going to France) and the strain of running around town seeing influential officials finally got him down in bed. He had wanted to lead a division and his chagrin at not even being able to enlist as a private was too much for him. His brother Jake, some fifteen years younger than he was, sat up at night with him after he took to bed, because we were afraid he might leave the house without even putting on his clothes. Grandfather was against the idea of Jake watching over him—he thought it was a lot of tomfoolery—but Jake hadn't been able to sleep at night for twenty-eight years, so he was the perfect person for such a vigil.

On the third night, grandfather was wakeful. He would open his eyes, look at Jake, and close them again, frowning. He never answered any question Jake asked him. About four o'clock that morning, he caught his brother sound asleep in the big leather chair beside the bed. When once Jake did fall asleep he slept deeply, so that grandfather was able to get up, dress himself, undress Jake, and put him in bed without waking him. When my Aunt Florence came into the room at seven o'clock, grandfather was sitting in the chair reading the *Memoirs of U. S. Grant* and Jake was sleeping in the bed. 'He watched while I slept,' said grandfather, 'so now I'm watchin' while he sleeps.' It seemed fair enough.

One reason we didn't want grandfather to roam around at night was that he had said something once or twice about going over to Lancaster, his old home town, and putting his problem up to 'Cump'—that is, General William Tecumseh Sherman, also an old Lancaster boy. We knew that his inability to find Sherman would be bad for him and we were afraid that he might try to get there in the little electric runabout that had been bought for my grandmother. She had become, surprisingly enough, quite skilful at getting around town in it. Grandfather was astonished and a little indignant when he saw her get into the contraption and drive off smoothly and easily. It was her first vehicular triumph over him in almost fifty years of married life and he determined to learn to drive

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the thing himself. A famous old horseman, he approached it as he might have approached a wild colt. His brow would darken and he would begin to curse. He always leaped into it quickly, as if it might pull out from under him if he didn't get into the seat fast enough. The first few times he tried to run the electric, he went swiftly around in a small circle, drove over the curb, across the sidewalk, and up onto the lawn. We all tried to persuade him to give up, but his spirit was aroused. 'Git that goddam buggy back in the road!' he would say, imperiously. So we would manoeuver it back into the street and he would try again. Pulling too savagely on the guiding-bar—to teach the electric a lesson—was what took him around in a circle, and it was difficult to make him understand that it was best to relax and not get mad. He had the notion that if you didn't hold her, she would throw you. And a man who (or so he often told us) had driven a four-horse McCormick reaper when he was five years old did not intend to be thrown by an electric runabout.

Since there was no way of getting him to give up learning to operate the electric, we would take him out to Franklin Park, where the roadways were wide and unfrequented, and spend an hour or so trying to explain the differences between driving a horse and carriage and driving an electric. He would keep muttering all the time; he never got it out of his head that when he took the driver's seat the machine flattened its ears on him, so to speak. After a few weeks, nevertheless, he got so he could run the electric for a hundred yards or so along a fairly straight line. But whenever he took a curve, he invariably pulled or pushed the bar too quickly and too hard and headed for a tree or a flower bed. Someone was always with him and we would never let him take the car out of the park.

One morning when grandmother was all ready to go to market, she called the garage and told them to send the electric around. They said that grandfather had already been there and taken it out. There was a tremendous to-do. We telephoned Uncle Will and he got out his Lozier and we started off to hunt for grandfather. It was not yet seven o'clock and there was fortunately little traffic. We headed for Franklin Park, figuring that he might have gone out there to try to break the car's spirit. One or two early pedestrians had seen a tall old gentleman with a white beard driving a little electric and cussing as he drove. We followed a tortuous trail and found them finally on Nelson Road, about four miles from the town of Shepard. Grandfather was standing in the road shouting, and the back wheels of the electric were deeply entangled in a barbed-wire fence. Two workmen and a farmhand were trying to get the thing loose. Grand-

father was in a state of high wrath about the electric. 'The —— —— —— backed up on me!' he told us.

But to get back to the war. The Columbus draft board never called grandfather for service, which was a lucky thing for them because they would have had to take him. There were stories that several old men of eighty or ninety had been summoned in the confusion, but somehow or other grandfather was missed. He waited every day for the call, but it never came. My own experience was quite different. I was called almost every week, even though I had been exempted from service the first time I went before the medical examiners. Either they were never convinced that it was me or else there was some clerical error in the records which was never cleared up. Anyway, there was usually a letter for me on Monday ordering me to report for examination on the second floor of Memorial Hall the following Wednesday at 9 P.M. The second time I went up I tried to explain to one of the doctors that I had already been exempted. 'You're just a blur to me,' I said, taking off my glasses. 'You're absolutely nothing to me,' he snapped, sharply.

I had to take off all my clothes each time and jog around the hall with a lot of porters and bank presidents' sons and clerks and poets. Our hearts and lungs would be examined, and then our feet; and finally our eyes. That always came last. When the eye specialist got around to me, he would always say, 'Why, you couldn't get into the service with sight like that!' 'I know,' I would say. Then a week or two later I would be summoned again and go through the same rigmarole. The ninth or tenth time I was called, I happened to pick up one of several stethoscopes that were lying on a table and suddenly, instead of finding myself in the line of draft men, I found myself in the line of examiners. 'Hello, doctor,' said one of them, nodding. 'Hello,' I said. That, of course, was before I took my clothes off; I might have managed it naked, but I doubt it. I was assigned, or rather drifted, to the chest-and-lung section, where I began to examine every other man, thus cutting old Dr. Ridgeway's work in two. 'I'm glad to have you here, doctor,' he said.

I passed most of the men that came to me, but now and then I would exempt one just to be on the safe side. I began by making each of them hold his breath and then say 'mi, mi, mi, mi' until I noticed Ridgeway looking at me curiously. He, I discovered, simply made them say 'ah,' and sometimes he didn't make them say anything. Once I got hold of a man who, it came out later, had swallowed a watch—to make the doctors believe there was something wrong with him inside (it was common subterfuge:

men swallowed nails, hairpins, ink, etc., in an effort to be let out). Since I didn't know what you were supposed to hear through a stethoscope, the ticking of the watch at first didn't surprise me, but I decided to call Dr. Ridgeway into consultation, because nobody else had ticked. 'This man seems to tick,' I said to him. He looked at me in surprise but didn't say anything. Then he thumped the man, laid his ear to his chest, and finally tried the stethoscope. 'Sound as a dollar,' he said. 'Listen lower down,' I told him. The man indicated his stomach. Ridgeway gave him a haughty, indignant look. 'That is for the abdominal men to worry about,' he said, and moved off. A few minutes later, Dr. Blythe Ballomy got around to the man and listened, but he didn't blink an eye; his grim expression never changed. 'You have swallowed a watch, my man,' he said crisply. The draftee reddened in embarrassment and uncertainty. 'On *purpose*?' he asked. 'That I can't say,' the doctor told him, and went on.

I served with the draft board for about four months. Until the summonses ceased, I couldn't leave town and as long as I stayed and appeared promptly for examination, even though I did the examining, I felt that technically I could not be convicted of evasion. During the daytime, I worked as publicity agent for an amusement park, the manager of which was a tall, unexpected young man named Byron Landis. Some years before, he had dynamited the men's lounge in the statehouse annex for a prank; he enjoyed pouring buckets of water on sleeping persons, and once he had barely escaped arrest for jumping off the top of the old Columbus Transfer Company building with a homemade parachute.

He asked me one morning if I would like to take a ride in the new Scarlet Tornado, a steep and wavy roller-coaster. I didn't want to but I was afraid he would think I was afraid, so I went along. It was about ten o'clock and there was nobody at the park except workmen and attendants and concessionaires in their shirtsleeves. We climbed into one of the long gondolas of the roller-coaster and while I was looking around for the man who was going to run it, we began to move off. Landis, I discovered, was running it himself. But it was too late to get out; we had begun to climb, clickety-clockety, up the first steep incline, down the other side of which we careened at eighty miles an hour. 'I didn't know you could run this thing!' I bawled at my companion, as we catapulted up a sixty-degree arch and looped headlong into space. 'I didn't either!' he bawled back. The racket and the rush of air were terrific as we roared into the pitch-black Cave of Darkness and came out and down Monohan's Leap, so called because a workman named Monohan had been forced to jump from it when

caught between two approaching experimental cars while it was being completed. That trip, although it ended safely, made a lasting impression on me. It is not too much to say that it has flavored my life. It is the reason I shout in my sleep, refuse to ride on the elevated, keep jerking the emergency brake in cars other people are driving, have the sensation of flying like a bird when I first lie down, and in certain months can't keep anything on my stomach.

During my last few trips to the draft board, I went again as a draft prospect, having grown tired of being an examiner. None of the doctors who had been my colleagues for so long recognized me, not even Dr. Ridgeway. When he examined my chest for the last time, I asked him if there hadn't been another doctor helping him. He said there had been. 'Did he look anything like me?' I asked. Dr. Ridgeway looked at me. 'I don't think so,' he said, 'he was taller.' (I had my shoes off while he was examining me.) 'A good pulmonary man,' added Ridgeway. 'Relative of yours?' I said yes. He sent me on to Dr. Quimby, the specialist who had examined my eyes twelve or fifteen times before. He gave me some simple reading tests. 'You could never get into the army with eyes like that,' he said. 'I know,' I told him.

Late one morning, shortly after my last examination, I was awakened by the sound of bells ringing and whistles blowing. It grew louder and more insistent and wilder. It was the Armistice.

Walter Savage Landor

PETER THE GREAT AND ALEXIS[1]

¶ Imaginary conversations of the illustrious dead have been composed by many authors, from Lucian, who in a sense created this literary form in his *Dialogues of the Dead*, to Santayana and his *Dialogues in Limbo*. Landor's are counted among the best and, except for a few lyrics, he is nowadays better known for his dialogues than for anything else. The interest of their subjects has not faded; neither has the grace and polish of Landor's prose style.

Landor published five volumes of *Imaginary Conversations* between 1824 and 1829, during his first long residence in Italy. They present famous and near-famous men and women from all periods of history—Æsop, Epicurus, Mohamet, Calvin, and many others, down to George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. They must be read, as of course they were intended to be read, as literature, not history. Some are more 'accurate' than others, to be sure; but they are all imaginative, artistic interpretations, not historical transcriptions. Landor was no more troubled about 'accuracy' or anachronisms than Shakespeare was in *Julius Caesar*: the dramatic presentation of character was the thing that interested him.

[[1]] Peter the Great (1672–1725), Emperor of Russia and 'father of his country,' made Russia a great power. He fought a long war (1700–1721) with Sweden, added Baltic territories to his dominions, and introduced European civilization into Russia. He founded St. Petersburg as his capital. Everyone knows the story of how, as a young man, he worked in the shipyards of Holland and England in order to learn naval architecture.

His son Alexis (1690–1718) entered the Army when he grew up, and was entrusted with many commissions by his father, but he hated military life and shirked it as best he could. Finally, in 1716, when ordered to rejoin the Army, he fled to Vienna. Peter was incensed at his escape. He persuaded Alexis to return by promising not to punish him. But when he came back, Alexis was terrorized by his father. He was forced to renounce succession to the throne; both he and his mother were accused of conspiring against Peter and both were consequently treated as traitors. Peter, with the 'advice' of his ministers, had Alexis tortured so brutally that he died.

Landor, for the purposes of his Conversation, adopts what is said to have been the official explanation of Alexis's death: that he died of shock after hearing the sentence of death.]

FROM *Imaginary Conversations*, 1824–9.

Peter. And so, after flying from thy father's house, thou hast returned again from Vienna. After this affront in the face of Europe, thou darest to appear before me?

Alexis. My emperor and father! I am brought before your majesty, not at my own desire.

Peter. I believe it well.

Alexis. I would not anger you.

Peter. What hope hadst thou, rebel, in thy flight to Vienna?

Alexis. The hope of peace and privacy; the hope of security; and above all things, of never more offending you.

Peter. That hope thou hast accomplished.

Thou imaginedst then that my brother of Austria [2] would maintain thee at his court . . . speak!

Alexis. No, sir! I imagined that he would have afforded me a place of refuge.

Peter. Didst thou then take money with thee?

Alexis. A few gold pieces.

Peter. How many?

Alexis. About sixty.

Peter. He would have given thee promises for half the money; but the double of it does not purchase a house: ignorant wretch!

Alexis. I knew as much as that; although my birth did not appear to destine me to purchase a house anywhere; and hitherto your liberality, my father, hath supplied my wants of every kind.

Peter. Not of wisdom, not of duty, not of spirit, not of courage, not of ambition. I have educated thee among my guards and horses, among my drums and trumpets, among my flags and masts. When thou wert a child, and couldst hardly walk, I have taken thee into the arsenal, though children should not enter, according to regulations; I have there rolled cannon-balls before thee over iron plates; and I have shown thee bright new arms, bayonets and sabres; and I have pricked the back of my hands until the blood came out in many places; and I have made thee lick it; and I have then done the same to thine. Afterward, from thy tenth year, I have mixed gunpowder in thy grog; I have peppered thy peaches; I have poured bilge-water (with a little good wholesome tar in it) upon thy melons; I have brought out girls to mock thee and cocker [3] thee, and talk like mariners, to make thee braver. Nothing would do. Nay, recollect thee! I have myself

[2] Charles VI, who had been hospitable to Alexis.]

[3] Pamper.]

led thee forth to the window when fellows were hanged and shot; and I have shown thee every day the halves and quarters of bodies; and I have sent an orderly or chamberlain for the heads; and I have pulled the cap up from over the eyes; and I have made thee, in spite of thee, look steadfastly upon them; incorrigible coward!

And now another word with thee about thy scandalous flight from the palace; in time of quiet too! To the point! did my brother of Austria invite thee? Did he, or did he not?

Alexis. May I answer without doing an injury or disservice to his Imperial Majesty?

Peter. Thou mayest. What injury canst thou or any one do, by the tongue, to such as he is?

Alexis. At the moment, no; he did not. Nor indeed can I assert that he at any time invited me: but he said he pitied me.

Peter. About what? hold thy tongue: let that pass. Princes never pity but when they would make traitors: then their hearts grow tenderer than tripe. He pitied thee, kind soul, when he would throw thee at thy father's head; but finding thy father too strong for him, he now commiserates the parent, laments the son's rashness and disobedience, and would not make God angry for the world. At first, however, there must have been some overture on his part; otherwise thou art too shame-faced for intrusion. Come . . . thou hast never had wit enough to lie . . . tell me the truth, the whole truth.

Alexis. He said that, if ever I wanted an asylum, his court was open to me.

Peter. Open! so is the tavern; but folks pay for what they get there. Open truly! and didst thou find it so?

Alexis. He received me kindly.

Peter. I see he did.

Alexis. Derision, O my father, is not the fate I merit.

Peter. True, true! it was not intended.

Alexis. Kind father! punish me then as you will.

Peter. Villain! wouldst thou kiss my hand too? Art thou ignorant that the Austrian threw thee away from him, with the same indifference as he would the outermost leaf of a sandy sunburnt lettuce?

Alexis. Alas! I am not ignorant of this.

Peter. He dismissed thee at my order. If I had demanded from him his daughter, to be the bedfellow of a Kalmuc,[4] he would have given her, and praised God.

[4 Name of a Mongol tribe.]

Alexis. O father! is his baseness my crime?

Peter. No; thine is greater. Thy intention, I know, is to subvert the institutions it has been the labour of my lifetime to establish. Thou hast never rejoiced at my victories.

Alexis. I have rejoiced at your happiness and your safety.

Peter. Liar! coward! traitor! when the Polanders and Swedes fell before me, didst thou from thy soul congratulate me? Didst thou get drunk at home or abroad, or praise the Lord of Hosts and saint Nicolas? Wert thou not silent and civil and low-spirited?

Alexis. I lamented the irretrievable loss of human life; I lamented that the bravest and noblest were swept away the first; that the gentlest and most domestic were the earliest mourners: that frugality was supplanted by intemperance; that order was succeeded by confusion; and that your majesty was destroying the glorious plans you alone were capable of devising.

Peter. I destroy them! how? Of what plans art thou speaking?

Alexis. Of civilising the Muscovites.[5] The Polanders in part were civilised: the Swedes more than any other nation on the continent; and so excellently versed were they in military science, and so courageous, that every man you killed cost you seven or eight.

Peter. Thou liest; nor six. And civilised forsooth! Why, the robes of the metropolitan,[6] him at Upsal, are not worth three ducats, between Jew and Livornese.[7] I have no notion that Poland and Sweden shall be the only countries that produce great princes. What right have they to such as Gustavus [8] and Sobieski? [9] Europe ought to look to this, before discontent becomes general, and the people does to us what we have the privilege of doing to the people. I am wasting my words: there is no arguing with positive fools like thee. So thou wouldst have desired me to let the Polanders and Swedes lie still and quiet! Two such powerful nations!

Alexis. For that reason and others I would have gladly seen them rest, until our own people had increased in numbers and prosperity.

Peter. And thus thou disputest my right, before my face, to the exercise of the supreme power.

Alexis. Sir! God forbid!

Peter. God forbid indeed! What care such villains as thou art what

[5 Russians generally, not merely inhabitants of Moscow.]

[6 The Archbishop of Sweden.]

[7 Between moneylender and merchant. 'Livornese' means of Leghorn (in Italy).]

[8 Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, 1611–32.]

[9 King John III of Poland, who defeated the Turks at Vienna in 1683.]

God forbids! He forbids the son to be disobedient to the father: he forbids . . . he forbids . . . twenty things. I do not wish, and will not have a successor who dreams of dead people.

Alexis. My father! I have dreamt of none such.

Peter. Thou hast; and hast talked about them . . . Scythians [10] I think they call 'em. Now who told thee, Mr. Professor, that the Scythians were a happier people than we are; that they were inoffensive; that they were free; that they wandered with their carts from pasture to pasture, from river to river; that they traded with good faith; that they fought with good courage; that they injured none, invaded none, and feared none? At this rate I have effected nothing. The great founder of Rome, I heard in Holland, slew his brother for despiting the weakness of his walls: and shall the founder of this better place spare a degenerate son, who prefers a vagabond life to a civilised one, a cart to a city, a Scythian to a Muscovite? Have I not shaved my people, and breeched them? Have I not formed them into regular armies, with bands of music and havresacs? [11] Are bows better than cannon? shepherds than dragoons, mare's milk than brandy, raw steaks than broiled? Thine are tenets that strike at the root of politeness and sound government. Every prince in Europe is interested in rooting them out by fire and sword. There is no other way with false doctrines: breath against breath does little.

Alexis. Sire, I never have attempted to disseminate my opinions.

Peter. How couldst thou? the seed would fall only on granite. Those, however, who caught it brought it to me.

Alexis. Never have I undervalued civilisation: on the contrary, I regretted whatever impeded it. In my opinion, the evils that have been attributed to it, sprang from its imperfections and voids; and no nation has yet acquired it more than very scantily.

Peter. How so? give me thy reasons; thy fancies rather; for reason thou hast none.

Alexis. When I find the first of men, in rank and genius, hating one another, and becoming slanderers and liars in order to lower and vilify an opponent; when I hear the God of mercy invoked to massacres, and thanked for furthering what he reprobates and condemns; I look back in vain on any barbarous people for worse barbarism. I have expressed my admiration

[10 Ancient nomadic people who lived north of the Black Sea. Herodotus has a famous account of them (bk. IV), and there are many other references to them in Greek literature.]

[11 Haversacks.]

of our forefathers, who, not being Christians, were yet more virtuous than those who are; more temperate, more just, more sincere, more chaste, more peaceable.

Peter. Malignant atheist!

Alexis. Indeed, my father, were I malignant I must be an atheist; for malignity is contrary to the command, and inconsistent with the belief, of God.

Peter. Am I Czar of Muscovy, and hear discourses on reason and religion! from my own son too! No, by the Holy Trinity! thou art no son of mine. If thou touchest my knee again, I crack thy knuckles with this tobacco-stopper: I wish it were a sledge-hammer for thy sake. Off, sycophant! Off, run-away slave!

Alexis. Father! father! my heart is broken! If I have offended, forgive me.

Peter. The state requires thy signal punishment.

Alexis. If the state requires it, be it so: but let my father's anger cease!

Peter. The world shall judge between us. I will brand thee with infamy.

Alexis. Until now, O father! I never had a proper sense of glory. Hear me, O Czar! let not a thing so vile as I am stand between you and the world! Let none accuse you!

Peter. Accuse me! rebel! Accuse me! traitor!

Alexis. Let none speak ill of you, O my father! The public voice shakes the palace; the public voice penetrates the grave; it precedes the chariot of Almighty God, and is heard at the judgment-seat.

Peter. Let it go to the devil! I will have none of it here in Petersburgh. Our church says nothing about it; our laws forbid it. As for thee, unnatural brute, I have no more to do with thee neither!

Ho there! chancellor! What! come at last! Wert napping, or counting thy ducats?

Chancellor. Your majesty's will and pleasure!

Peter. Is the senate assembled in that room?

Chancellor. Every member, sire.

Peter. Conduct this youth with thee, and let them judge him: thou understandest me.

Chancellor. Your majesty's commands are the breath of our nostrils.

Peter. If these rascals are remiss, I will try my new cargo of Livonian hemp upon 'em.

Chancellor (*returning*). Sire! sire!

Peter. Speak fellow! Surely they have not condemned him to death,

without giving themselves time to read the accusation, that thou comest back so quickly.

Chancellor. No, sire! Nor has either been done.

Peter. Then thy head quits thy shoulders.

Chancellor. O sire!

Peter. Curse thy silly *sires!* what art thou about?

Chancellor. Alas! he fell.

Peter. Tie him up to thy chair then. Cowardly beast! what made him fall?

Chancellor. The hand of Death; the name of father.

Peter. Thou puzzlest me; prythee speak plainlier.

Chancellor. We told him that his crime was proven and manifest; that his life was forfeited.

Peter. So far, well enough.

Chancellor. He smiled.

Peter. He did! did he! Impudence shall do him little good. Who could have expected it from that smock-face! Go on: what then?

Chancellor. He said calmly, but not without sighing twice or thrice, 'Lead me to the scaffold: I am weary of life: nobody loves me.' I condoled with him, and wept upon his hand, holding the paper against my bosom. He took the corner of it between his fingers, and said, 'Read me this paper: read my death-warrant. Your silence and tears have signified it; yet the law has its forms. Do not keep me in suspense. My father says, too truly, I am not courageous: but the death that leads me to my God shall never terrify me.'

Peter. I have seen these white-livered knaves die resolutely: I have seen them quietly fierce like white ferrets, with their watery eyes and tiny teeth. You read it?

Chancellor. In part, sire! When he heard your majesty's name, accusing him of treason and attempts at rebellion and parricide, he fell speechless. We raised him up: he was motionless: he was dead!

Peter. Inconsiderate and barbarous varlet as thou art, dost thou recite this ill accident to a father! And to one who has not dined! Bring me a glass of brandy.

Chancellor. And it please your majesty, might I call a . . . a. . .

Peter. Away, and bring it: scamper! All equally and alike shall obey and serve me.

Harkye! bring the bottle with it: I must cool myself . . . and . . . harkye! a rasher of bacon on thy life! and some pickled sturgeon, and some krout and caviar, and good strong cheese.

Robert E. Sherwood

ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

¶ *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* was one of Mr. Sherwood's long series of theatrical successes, a series that began with *The Road to Rome* in 1927 and was still going strong in 1941, when war turned his talent into other channels. *The Queen's Husband* was produced in 1928, *Waterloo Bridge* in 1929, *Reunion in Vienna* in 1931, *The Petrified Forest* in 1934, *Idiot's Delight* in 1936, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* in 1938, and *There Shall Be No Night* in 1940. Three of these plays (*Idiot's Delight, Abe Lincoln in Illinois,* and *There Shall Be No Night*) won Pulitzer Prizes.

No one who saw *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* could miss the relevance of this dramatic presentation of Lincoln's life, up to the outbreak of the Civil War, to the gloomy calm and the debates of the late 1930's, when another great storm was soon to break. When it did come, Mr. Sherwood went to Washington as special assistant to the Secretary of War and, later, to the Secretary of the Navy. He was director of the overseas branch of the Office of War Information for a time, and also helped to prepare President Roosevelt's speeches (see pp. 68–76 in this volume).

SCENE 9

A speaker's platform in an Illinois town. It is a summer evening in the year 1858.

A light shines down on the speaker at the front of the platform.

At the back of the platform are three chairs. At the right sits JUDGE STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS—*at the left,* ABE, *who has his plug hat on and makes occasional notes on a piece of paper on his knee. The chair in the middle is for* NINIAN,[1] *acting as Moderator, who is now at the front of the platform.*

[[1] Ninian Edwards (1809–89), Lincoln's brother-in-law. It was at his house that Lincoln first met his future wife, Mary Todd.

Douglas and Lincoln were at this time rival candidates for the United States Senate. They had seven debates during the campaign. Douglas's speech as composed by Mr. Sherwood is a pastiche of several genuine utterances plus some (for example, that on labor strikes in the North) which Douglas never made at all. The same is true of Lincoln's: it is made of quotations, paraphrases, and inventions.]

FROM *Abe Lincoln in Illinois.* Copyright 1939 by Robert E. Sherwood; used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

NINIAN

We have now heard the leading arguments from the two candidates for the high office of United States Senator from Illinois—Judge Stephen A. Douglas and Mr. Abraham Lincoln. A series of debates between these two eminent citizens of Illinois has focused upon our state the attention of the entire nation, for here are being discussed the vital issues which now affect the lives of all Americans and the whole future history of our beloved country. According to the usual custom of debate, each of the candidates will now speak in rebuttal. . . Judge Douglas.

(NINIAN *retires and sits, as* DOUGLAS *comes forward. He is a brief but magnetic man, confident of his powers.*)

DOUGLAS

My fellow citizens: My good friend, Mr. Lincoln, has addressed you with his usual artless sincerity, his pure, homely charm, his perennial native humor. He has even devoted a generously large portion of his address to most amiable remarks upon my fine qualities as a man, if not as a statesman. For which I express deepest gratitude. But—at the same time—I most earnestly beg you not to be deceived by his seeming innocence, his carefully cultivated spirit of good will. For in each of his little homilies lurk concealed weapons. Like Brutus, in Shakespeare's immortal tragedy,[2] Mr. Lincoln is an honorable man. But, also like Brutus, he is an adept at the art of inserting daggers between an opponent's ribs, just when said opponent least expects it. Behold me, gentlemen—I am covered with scars. And yet—somehow or other—I am still upright. Perhaps because I am supported by that sturdy prop called 'Truth.' Truth—which, crushed to earth by the assassin's blades, doth rise again! Mr. Lincoln makes you laugh with his pungent anecdotes. Then he draws tears from your eyes with his dramatic pictures of the plight of the black slave labor in the South. Always, he guides you skilfully to the threshold of truth, but then, as you are about to cross it, diverts your attention elsewhere. For one thing—he never, by any mischance, makes reference to the condition of labor here in the North! Oh, no! Perhaps New England is so far beyond the bounds of his parochial ken that he does not know that tens of thousands of working men and women in the textile industry are now on STRIKE! And why are they on strike? Because from early morning to dark of night—fourteen hours a day—those 'free' citizens must toil at shattering looms in soulless factories and never see the sun; and then, when their fearful day's work at

[2 *Julius Caesar.*]

last comes to its exhausted end, these ill-clad and undernourished laborers must trudge home to their foul abodes in tenements that are not fit habitations for rats! What kind of Liberty is this? And if Mr. Lincoln has not heard of conditions in Massachusetts—how has it escaped his attention that here in our own great state no wheels are now turning on that mighty railroad, the Illinois Central? Because its oppressed workers are also on STRIKE! Because they too demand a living wage! So it is throughout the North. Hungry men, marching through the streets in ragged order, promoting riots, because they are not paid enough to keep the flesh upon the bones of their babies! What kind of Liberty is *this?* And what kind of equality? Mr. Lincoln harps constantly on this subject of equality. He repeats over and over the argument used by Lovejoy [3] and other abolitionists: to wit, that the Declaration of Independence having declared all men free and equal, by divine law, thus Negro equality is an inalienable right. Contrary to this absurd assumption stands the verdict of the Supreme Court,[4] as it was clearly stated by Chief Justice Taney in the case of Dred Scott. The Negroes are established by this decision as an inferior race of beings, subjugated by the dominant race, enslaved, and therefore, *property*—like all other property! But Mr. Lincoln is inclined to dispute the constitutional authority of the Supreme Court. He has implied, if he did not say so outright, that the Dred Scott decision was a prejudiced one, which must be over-ruled by the voice of the people. Mr. Lincoln is a lawyer, and I presume, therefore, that he knows that when he seeks to destroy public confidence in the integrity, the inviolability of the Supreme Court, he is preaching *revolution!* He is attempting to stir up odium and rebellion in this country against the constituted authorities; he is stimulating the passions of men to resort to violence and to mobs, instead of to the law. He is setting brother against brother! There can be but one consequence of such inflammatory persuasion—and that is *Civil War!* He asks me to state my opinion of the Dred Scott Decision, and I answer him unequivocally by saying, 'I take the decisions of the Supreme Court as the law of the land, and I intend to obey them as such!' Nor will I be swayed from that position by all the rantings of all the fanatics who preach 'racial equality,' who ask us to vote, and eat, and sleep, and marry with Negroes! And I say further —Let each State mind its own business and leave its neighbors alone. If we will stand by that principle, then Mr. Lincoln will find that this great

[3 Elijah Lovejoy (1802–37), who was killed by a mob in Alton, Ill.]

[4 The Court held that Negroes were not included in the Declaration of Independence's statement that 'all men are created free and equal.' Douglas endorsed this opinion.]

republic can exist forever divided into free and slave states. We can go on as we have done, increasing in wealth, in population, in power, until we shall be the admiration and the terror of the world! (*He glares at the audience, then turns, mopping his brow, and resumes his seat.*)

NINIAN (*rising*)

Mr. Lincoln.

(ABE *glances at his notes, takes his hat off, puts the notes in it, then rises slowly and comes forward. He speaks quietly, reasonably. His words come from an emotion so profound that it needs no advertisement.*)

ABE

Judge Douglas has paid tribute to my skill with the dagger. I thank him for that, but I must also admit that he can do more with that weapon than I can. He can keep ten daggers flashing in the air at one time. Fortunately, he's so good at it that none of the knives ever falls and hurts anybody. The Judge can condone slavery in the South and protest hotly against its extension to the North. He can crowd loyalty to the Union and defense of states' sovereignty into the same breath. Which reminds me—and I hope the Judge will allow me one more homely little anecdote, because I'd like to tell about a woman down in Kentucky. She came out of her cabin one day and found her husband grappling with a ferocious bear. It was a fight to the death, and the bear was winning. The struggling husband called to his wife, 'For heaven's sake, *help* me!' The wife asked what could *she* do? Said the husband, 'You could at least *say* something encouraging.' But the wife didn't want to seem to be taking sides in this combat, so she just hollered, 'Go it husband—go it bear!' Now, you heard the Judge make allusion to those who advocate voting and eating and marrying and sleeping with Negroes. Whether he meant me specifically, I do not know. If he did, I can say that just because I do not want a colored woman for a slave, I don't necessarily want her for a wife. I need not have her for either. I can just leave her alone. In some respects, she certainly is not my equal, any more than I am the Judge's equal, in some respects; but in her natural right to eat the bread she earns with her own hands without asking leave of some one else, she is my equal, and the equal of all others. And as to sleeping with Negroes—the Judge may be interested to know that the slave states have produced more than four hundred thousand mulattoes—and I don't think many of them are the children of abolitionists. That word 'abolitionists' brings to mind New England, which also has been men-

tioned. I assure Judge Douglas that I have been there, and I have seen those cheerless brick prisons called factories, and the workers trudging silently home through the darkness. In those factories, cotton that was picked by black slaves is woven into cloth by white people who are separated from slavery by no more than fifty cents a day. As an American, I cannot be proud that such conditions exist. But—as an American—I can ask: would any of those striking workers in the North elect to change places with the slaves in the South? Will they not rather say, 'The remedy is in *our* hands!' And, still as an American, I can say—thank God we live under a system by which men have the *right* to strike! I am not preaching rebellion. I don't have to. This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. If the founding fathers gave us anything, they gave us that. And I am not preaching disrespect for the Supreme Court. I am only saying that the decisions of mortal men are often influenced by unjudicial bias—and the Supreme Court is composed of mortal men, most of whom, it so happens, come from the privileged class in the South. There is an old saying that judges are just as honest as other men, and not more so; and in case some of you are wondering who said that, it was Thomas Jefferson. (*He has half turned to* DOUGLAS). The purpose of the Dred Scott Decision is to make property, and nothing but property, of the Negro in all states of the Union. It is the old issue of property rights versus human rights—an issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall long have been silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same spirit that says, 'You toil and work and earn bread, and I'll eat it.' Whether those words come from the mouth of a king who bestrides his people and lives by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men who seek to enslave another race, it is the same tyrannical principle. As a nation, we began by declaring, 'All men are created equal.' There was no mention of any exceptions to the rule in the Declaration of Independence. But we now practically read it, 'All men are created equal except Negroes.' If we accept this doctrine of race or class discrimination, what is to stop us from decreeing in the future that 'All men are created equal except Negroes, foreigners, Catholics, Jews, or—just poor people?' That is the conclusion toward which the advocates of slavery are driving us. Many good citizens, North and South, agree with the Judge that we

should accept that conclusion—don't stir up trouble—'Let each State mind its own business.' That's the safer course, for the time being. But—I advise you to watch out! When you have enslaved any of your fellow beings, dehumanized him, denied him all claim to the dignity of manhood, placed him among the beasts, among the damned, are you quite sure that the demon you have thus created, will not turn and rend *you*? When you begin qualifying freedom, watch out for the consequences to *you!* And I am not preaching civil war. All I am trying to do—now, and as long as I live—is to state and restate the fundamental virtues of our democracy, which have made us great, and which can make us greater. I believe most seriously that the perpetuation of those virtues is now endangered, not only by the honest proponents of slavery, but even more by those who echo Judge Douglas in shouting, 'Leave it alone!' This is the complacent policy of indifference to evil, and that policy I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republic of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions everywhere to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity; and especially because it forces so many good men among ourselves into an open war with the very fundamentals of civil liberty, denying the good faith of the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but *self-interest*. . . In his final words tonight, the Judge said that we may be 'the terror of the world.' I don't think we want to be that. I think we would prefer to be the encouragement of the world, the proof that man is at last worthy to be free. But—we shall provide no such encouragement, unless we can establish our ability as a nation to live and grow. And we shall surely do neither if these states fail to remain *united*. There can be no distinction in the definitions of liberty as between one section and another, one race and another, one class and another. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' This government can not endure permanently, half slave and half free![5] (*He turns and goes back to his seat.*)

(*The lights fade.*)

[5 This is from Lincoln's 'house divided' speech to the Republican convention that nominated him for the Senate in 1858.]

C. E. M. Joad

WHAT DO WE KNOW OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD?

¶ We reprint here the opening chapter of C. E. M. Joad's *Guide to Philosophy*, a remarkably readable introduction to metaphysics and the theory of knowledge, and probably the best known of his forty-odd books.

After graduation from Oxford in 1914 Mr. Joad was in the Civil Service for sixteen years. In 1930 he became head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology at Birkbeck College, University of London. Besides *Guide to Philosophy* and other works on philosophy (*The Meaning of Life; Matter, Life and Value; Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science; Guide to Modern Thought*) he has written provocative books on politics, religion, war, and education.

INTRODUCTORY. It is not easy to decide how to begin a book on philosophy. Philosophical problems are closely bound up with one another; so closely, that some philosophers think that a completely satisfactory solution of any one of them would entail the solution of them all. Whether this is so we cannot tell, since it is extremely unlikely that a completely satisfactory solution of any one of them will be reached by the human mind in the present state of its development. It is, however, true that most philosophical questions are found sooner or later to raise the same problems. In philosophy all roads lead if not to the same Rome, at least into the same maze, so that it is a matter of not very great moment which you choose at the outset of your journey.

But the fact that there is no very good reason for choosing one rather than another makes it very difficult to choose any, as the logical ass of the philosopher Buridan * (1300–1350), placed between two equally large and

* Actually the illustration of the ass does not appear anywhere in Buridan's writings. It is, however, always associated with him. A similar image appears in Dante's *Paradiso*, and the conceit seems to have been a popular one in the Middle Ages.

FROM *Guide to Philosophy*, 1936. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc., and of the author.

equally succulent bundles of hay, is said to have starved because of an inability to discover any reason why he should proceed in the direction of one rather than of the other.

On reflection I have decided to begin with the problem of sense perception; not because it is any easier or any nearer to solution than any other philosophical problem, but because it entails a consideration of issues which people can explore for themselves: can, and to some extent do, since, of all philosophical conclusions, the conclusion that the outside world is not really 'there' or is not really 'real' is most familiar to, and most frequently derided by, the non-philosophical. But whether people deride it, dismiss it, or embrace it for the controversial discomfiture of their friends, they are at least familiar with it.

COMMONSENSE VIEW OF EXTERNAL WORLD. The problem may be stated fairly simply in the form of a number of questions. What kind of information do our sense organs give us about the external world? Is it reliable information? If it is, what is the nature of the objects about which we receive it? Of what sort of things, in other words, is the external world composed? Common sense answers these questions without much hesitation on the following lines. (1) The external world, it declares, consists of substances which possess qualities; for example, of wood which is hard or soft, of metal which is yellow or silver. (2) These substances we perceive in the form of physical objects such as chairs and tables, gold rings and silver shillings —unless we happen to be scientists, when we perceive what are, presumably, more fundamental substances such as chemical compounds and molecules of which the ordinary substances are composed, and should perceive, if our instruments were delicate enough, which they are not, substances more fundamental still such as atoms and electrons. (3) Physical objects are 'out there' in the world and are revealed to us by our senses exactly as they are. In particular, they are not dependent for their existence upon our perception of them. When our sense organs, eyes, ears or noses, are brought into suitable spatial relations with them, then we are said to know them. But common sense would hold that that which actually *knows* is not itself a sense organ, but is the mind or consciousness. The sense organs, it would be said, are the channels by which knowledge of physical objects is conveyed to the mind.

Now each one of the above propositions is denied by many philosophers, and, although it is by no means clear what propositions ought to be substituted for them, it is reasonably certain that, in the form in which I have

just stated them, none of them is true. The first proposition, that the world consists of substances possessing qualities, will be considered in Chapter VI. The consideration of the second and the third which are largely interdependent brings us to the problem of sense perception. In the present chapter we shall be mainly concerned with the third proposition, which asserts that the physical objects which we perceive are 'out there' in the world, and are in no sense dependent upon our perception of them for their existence. Most philosophers have held that they are not 'out there' in the world in any ordinary sense, and many have come to the conclusion that they are in some sense dependent for their existence upon the mind or minds which perceive them. Other philosophers, while maintaining that *something* exists in the world outside ourselves which is not dependent upon our minds for its existence, have, nevertheless, adduced good reasons for denying that this 'something' is in the least like the physical objects with which, if the commonsense account of the matter is to be believed, we are in contact. They have, that is to say, denied the second of the three propositions asserted above. With the reasons for this latter denial we shall be concerned in the second chapter.

WHAT DO OUR SENSES REVEAL? Let us call the objects of which, common sense would say, our senses make us aware sensible objects. What do our senses tell us about them? At first sight it seems that they tell us a great deal; but on reflection we find that much of the information which our senses seem to give us relates not to what is going on outside ourselves, but to what is going on inside ourselves, not to sensible objects, but to our own experiences.

Let us suppose that I press my tongue against my teeth and ask the question: 'What is it that I experience or am aware of?' At first sight the answer would appear to be: 'I am aware of my teeth.' But is this answer really correct? Is not what I *really* experience a feeling in my tongue—a feeling caused perhaps by the contact between tongue and teeth, but a feeling nevertheless, and since it *is* a feeling, something that is mental? Suppose now, that I press my fingers against the table, is what I experience the table? Again, the obvious answer proves on examination to be doubtful. The *immediate* object of my experience, that of which I am directly aware, is, many would say, a sensation in my fingers, a sensation of smoothness, hardness, and coolness.

Let us take a further example. If I stand two feet away from the fire, I experience heat, and common sense tells me that this heat is a property of

the fire. If, however, I move nearer to the fire, the heat increases in intensity, until it becomes pain. Now, the pain is clearly in me and not in the fire; since, then, the pain is only a more intense degree of the heat, the inference is that the heat also was a sensation of mine, and not a property of the fire. The leg of a cheese mite is so small that, except with the aid of a microscope, we cannot see it. Are we, then, to suppose that the cheese mite cannot see its own leg? This seems unlikely. We must infer, then, that the apparent size of the cheese mite's leg varies according to the nature of the mind perceiving it—that the leg, in fact, has one apparent size for the cheese mite and another for ourselves. But the leg cannot have two different sizes at the same time. Has it, then, any *real* size at all? May it not rather be the case that size is not an intrinsic quality of the object seen, a quality possessed by it in its own right, but is relative to and dependent upon the nature of the perceiver's mind.

THE CASE OF THE STEEPLE. Let us consider the case of size in a little more detail. I am, we will suppose, looking at a church steeple. Its height appears to vary according to the distance from which I view it. It appears, for example, to have one height from a distance of half a mile, another from a distance of a hundred yards, and another from a distance of five yards, while, if I stand right underneath it, I am unable to estimate its height at all. There are thus a number of different heights which the steeple *appears* to have. How am I to tell which one of them is or represents its *real* height? The commonsense answer would probably be, by applying a measuring rod or tape-measure or whatever apparatus is normally used for measuring steeples, and noting the reading on the apparatus in question. Let us suppose that the reading on the piece of apparatus—we will call it a tape-measure—is 150 feet. Then we shall say that 150 feet is the *real* height of the steeple. But will this answer bear investigation? For practical purposes no doubt it will; but for philosophical ones it will not.

In the first place, we have admitted that the steeple *appears* to have different heights to different observers situated at different distances. What we want to know is, which one of these different appearances really *is* its height. Now, 150 feet is one of these heights, the height, namely, which it appears to have to a tape-measure extended to the whole of its very considerable length along the outside of the steeple. But why should the tape-measure be accorded the title of a privileged observer, and why should the position immediately contiguous to the outside wall be regarded as a privileged position, so that we are entitled to say

that *to an observer occupying that position alone* is the *real* height revealed?

Secondly, what sort of information does a reading of 150 feet really give us? We want to know what is the real height of the steeple and we are informed that it is 150 feet. But what is 150 feet? It is a mathematical expression, a name that we give to certain sorts of height, for example to the height possessed by the steeple. Thus, when we want to know what is the real height of the steeple we are told that it is 150 feet, and when we want to know what 150 feet is, we find that it is the sort of height which the steeple, and whatever other things happen to be exactly as tall as the steeple are said to possess. Our information, in fact, is purely circular.

Thirdly, what account are we to give of the tape-measure itself? We have cited a number of illustrations above to suggest that the qualities apparently possessed by sensible objects do not belong to them in actual fact, but are either qualities of our own experience or, since our experience of them varies, are at any rate dependent upon and determined by our experience. But if this is so, we have no right to assume that a tape-measure is exempt from the conclusions suggested by the previous analysis, that it *really* owns in its own right the qualities that it appears to own, and that in particular it has a length which *really* is its length. If we may assume without question these facts about the tape-measure, there would be no need to raise questions about the height of the steeple. But whatever reasons there are for doubting whether the steeple *really* has a height are equally good reasons for doubting whether the tape-measure *really* has a length. We cannot in short establish the *real* height of the steeple by reference to the *real* length of the tape-measure, for it is precisely the meaning of the words 'real height' and 'real length' that is in doubt.

THE SHAPE OF THE PENNY. As with height so with shape. Let us consider as an example the shape of the penny. Common sense supposes the shape to be circular, but from almost any point of view from which the penny is looked at, the penny appears, as we quickly find out when we try to draw it, to be elliptical, the ellipses which we perceive varying in degrees of fatness and thinness according to the angle of vision from which we view the penny. From two positions only does the penny appear to be circular, and these, namely, the position vertically above and the position vertically below the penny, are rather peculiar positions which are comparatively rarely occupied by the human eye.

If the shape of the penny normally appears to be elliptical, why do we

call it circular? It is not easy to say. In the first instance, perhaps, because of the prevalence of a general belief to the effect that it *is* circular, a belief so widespread and deep-seated that anyone who questioned it outside a philosophical discussion would be regarded as imperfectly sane. But how did this general belief arise? On what is it based? Probably it rests at bottom upon the fact that the penny conforms in respect of many of its attributes to the definition of a circle. There is, for example, a point on its surface such that all lines drawn from that point to the circumference are of equal length: its circumference again is equal to $2\pi r$, its area to πr^2. But, if we take our stand on this definition, similar difficulties arise to those which we considered in the case of the steeple. What we want to know is the nature of the shape to which these mathematical properties belong? If we answer that it is a *circular* shape the question arises, does a penny have it? Unfortunately the penny as usually seen does not. Nor does the penny as touched; to feel a penny is not to feel a circular shape but either a flat surface or, if a finger is crooked round its edge, a curving line of metal. Hence, to touch and to sight the penny does not normally *appear* to be circular. But to what, then, does it *appear* to be circular? Presumably to a pair of compasses. But why should its appearance to a pair of compasses, or if the expression be preferred, the reaction of a pair of compasses to it, be presumed to acquaint us with its *real* shape, in some sense in which its appearance to eyes and fingers does not acquaint us with its real shape? Why in fact are the compasses privileged 'observers'? Moreover, what are we to say of the properties of the pair of compasses? Can we, when the existence of physical objects possessing properties in their own right is in question, steal the answer to the question in the case of the compasses in order not to beg it in the case of the penny?

As it is with texture and temperature, as with size and shape, so it is with most, if not all, of the qualities which apparently belong to objects in the external world. In regard to most, if not to all, of these apparent qualities we can truly say that in the last resort they turn out to be relative to ourselves. We have only, for example, to raise the temperatures of our bodies a few degrees, and the world will look different. Still more obviously will it feel different. Yet there is no reason why that world alone should be privileged to be considered real which is perceived by a normal, Nordic adult possessing a body which is heated to a temperature of 98.4 degrees.

IMPLICATIONS OF MODERN SCIENCE. The force of these considerations, in so far as they purport to show the relativity to the perceiver of the qual-

ities apparently existing in the external world, is considerably strengthened by the information which science in general and the sciences of physics and physiology in particular have obtained in regard to the machinery of perception. Before, however, we indicate the bearing of the conclusions of modern science upon the problems under consideration, it is necessary to guard ourselves against misinterpretation by the introduction of a word of warning.

In the first place, the whole question of the relation between science and philosophy is controversial, and many philosophers would maintain that no results reached by science do have or can have any bearing upon philosophical problems.

In the second place, the philosophers whose line of thought I have during the course of the foregoing illustrations been mainly following and with whose general conclusion, namely, that the objects revealed to us in perception are in some sense dependent upon the mind of the perceiver, we are in this chapter mainly concerned, did not introduce scientific considerations into their arguments, or did so only to a very small extent. The philosophers in question (who are sometimes known as subjective idealists) are Locke (1632–1704), Berkeley (1685–1753) and Hume (1711–1776) who lived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the sciences of physics and physiology were comparatively immature, and as a general rule they developed their arguments without reference to such results as these sciences had achieved.

In the third place, it is doubtful whether, even if they had been fully conversant with the conclusions of twentieth century scientists, these philosophers would have been able consistently to use them in support of their general position. At least we are entitled to hope that they would have been too clear headed to have made what would in effect have been a serious elementary blunder. . .

So much having been said by way of qualification and reservation, I propose to enumerate certain considerations afforded by the conclusions of modern science which tend to reinforce the view that the qualities of the objects which we know in sense experience do not belong to them in their own right, but depend in a large measure upon conditions prevailing in the perceiver. Hitherto it has been with the part played by the perceiver's mind that we have been chiefly concerned. We are now under the direction of science to emphasise rather the influence of the perceiver's body in determining what we perceive.

THE PHYSIOLOGIST'S ACCOUNT OF THE MACHINERY OF PERCEPTION. Let us suppose that I am looking at a star, Sirius say, on a dark night. If physics is to be believed, light waves which started to travel from Sirius many years ago reach (after a specified time which astronomers calculate) the earth, impinge upon my retinas and cause me to say that I am seeing Sirius. Now the Sirius about which they convey information to me is the Sirius which existed at the time when they started. This Sirius may, however, no longer exist; it may have disappeared in the interval. To say that one can see what no longer exists is absurd. It follows that, whatever it is that I am seeing, it is not Sirius. What, in fact, I do see is a yellow patch of a particular size, shape and intensity. I infer that this yellow patch had an origin (with which it is connected by a continuous chain of physical events) several years ago and many million miles away. But this inference may be mistaken; the origin of the yellow patch, which I call a star, may be a blow on the nose, or a lamp hanging on the mast of a ship.

Nor is this the only inference involved. It is true that I *think* I am seeing a yellow patch, but am I really justified in holding this belief? So far as physics and physiology are concerned, all that I am entitled to say is that my optic nerve is being stimulated in a certain way, as a result of which certain events are being caused in my brain. Am I really justified in saying any more than this?

In a celebrated example Bertrand Russell cites the case of a physiologist examining the brain of his patient. The physiologist undoubtedly believes himself to be looking at the brain of another person; yet, Russell points out, if physiology is correct in what it asserts, the *cause* of his seeing must be something which is happening in his own. Russell's account of the process is as follows: 'Light waves travel from the brain that is being observed to the eye of the physiologist, at which they only arrive after an interval of time, which is finite though short. The physiologist sees what he is observing only after the light waves have reached his eye; therefore the event which constitutes his seeing comes at the end of a series of events which travel from the observed brain into the brain of the physiologist. We cannot, without a preposterous kind of discontinuity, suppose that the physiologist's percept, which comes at the end of this series, is anywhere else but in the physiologist's head.' When we reflect that, during the period of time which is occupied by the occurrence of the series of events which precede the physiologist's seeing, the patient's brain may have gone out of existence, the difficulty of supposing that the physiologist is really looking at a brain outside his own becomes very great.

TOUCH AND SMELL. Perception by touch makes the matter even plainer. Let us consider in a little more detail the case of a person who presses his fingers against the table. I am doing it now, as I write. Ordinarily I should say that there was contact between two material substances, my fingers and the table. Modern physics, however, lends no countenance to this view. What happens according to the physicist is that electrical repulsion is developed between the atoms composing the finger and those composing the table. The harder I press the table, the stronger are the electrical forces which repel my finger. These electrical forces set up in the nerve cells at the end of my finger a current which reaches my brain, as the result of which I experience the sensation of touching the table. In fact, however, I am not in contact with any object outside my body and, if appropriate parts of my nervous system are suitably stimulated, I shall experience the same sensation of touching the table, although there is no table to touch. What is more, I can experience what appears to be a sensation of a pin prick in the non-existent finger of a hand which has been amputated, provided that the nerve terminals in my arm are suitably manipulated.

As with sight and touch, so with smell. I doubt very much whether even common sense assumes that the smell of a body is something which really belongs to it. Most people would probably agree that a thing's smell is at least not *in the same place* as that which is occupied by the thing. It is, they would say, something which the thing gives off—most people, I imagine, think of smell as a sort of gas composed of molecules—and it is only when the gas reaches the place where one's nostrils are and the molecules of which it is composed stimulate the sensitive tissues inside the nostrils, that certain nervous impulses are despatched to the brain, as a result of which we have the sensation of smelling.* But the connection of this 'something,' the smell which is smelt, with the object which is thought to have originated it remains vague. Similarly with sound! Waves travel through the atmosphere and impinge on the ear drums. Complex events take place in the outer, middle and inner ears. In the inner ear, for example, there is a shell-like bony receptacle, the cochlea, filled with fluid. When the vibrations of the bones and membranes in the middle ear reach the cochlea, the fluid is agitated. The agitation of the fluid imparts a swaying motion to certain long, hair-like threads, the cilia ranged along the inside of the cochlea. The swaying cilia send neural impulses to the brain, as a result

* In fact, odorous substances must be dissolved in the moisture which covers the nasal mucous membrane, before they can evoke the sensation of smell.

of which we hear a sound. But if we were to ask where or what is the sound that is heard, it is extremely difficult to answer.

EDDINGTON'S IDEALIST CONCLUSION. The teaching of physics and physiology with regard to the machinery of perception seems to point to the conclusion that what we actually know, when we have sensory experience, are not the movements of matter, but certain events in ourselves connected with or produced by these movements; not objects external to ourselves, but the effects of the impact of light rays, gases, atmospheric waves and other forms of energy proceeding from these objects upon our bodies.

The following quotation from Sir Arthur Eddington's book *Science and the Unseen World* clearly indicates how large a part of what we know of the external world is conceded by a modern physicist—and in this respect, at least, Eddington's views are in no sense unrepresentative—to be inferred by our minds, instead of being directly perceived by our senses.

'Consider,' says Sir Arthur Eddington, 'how our supposed acquaintance with a lump of matter is attained. Some influence emanating from it plays on the extremity of a nerve starting a series of physical and chemical changes which are propagated along the nerve to a brain cell; there a mystery happens, and an image or sensation arises in the mind which cannot purport to resemble the stimulus which excites it. Everything known about the material world must in one way or another have been inferred from these stimuli transmitted along the nerves. . . The mind as a central receiving station reads the dots and dashes of the incoming nerve-signals. By frequent repetition of their call-signals the various transmitting stations of the outside world become familiar. We begin to feel quite a homely acquaintance with 2LO and 5XX. But a broadcasting station is not *like* its call-signal; there is no commensurability in their natures. So, too, the chairs and tables around us which broadcast to us incessantly those signals which affect our sight and touch cannot in their nature be like unto the signals or to the sensations which the signals awake at the end of their journey. . . It is an astonishing feat of deciphering that we should have been able to infer an orderly scheme of natural knowledge from such indirect communication.'

From these considerations Sir Arthur Eddington proceeds to derive conclusions which, as the reader will see in the next chapter, are almost indistinguishable from those of idealist philosophers. Having stressed the roundabout and inferential character of our knowledge of the external world, he

proceeds to contrast it with the directness and immediacy of our knowledge of ourselves.

'Clearly,' he continues, 'there is one kind of knowledge which cannot pass through such channels, namely, knowledge of the intrinsic nature of that which lies at the far end of the lines of communication.'

This is not an inferred knowledge of outside things from the messages which they send us over the telephone lines of nervous communication; it is knowledge of something as it is in itself. And this something as it is in itself, the one thing we know directly as it really is, turns out to be mental; it is a mind. 'Mind,' Sir Arthur Eddington concludes, 'is the first and most direct thing in our experience; all else is remote inference.' We have, he adds, an acquaintance with the 'mental and spiritual nature of ourselves, known in our minds by an intimate contact transcending the methods of physics.'

SIGNIFICANCE OF CONCLUSIONS DERIVED FROM SCIENCE. I do not wish to suggest that the above conclusion is necessarily true. As we shall see below, any philosophy which asserts, as the subjective idealists did, that the objects which we know in perception are existent in or even dependent upon the mind of the perceiver is precluded from making use of any of the considerations upon which the scientist's conclusions are based. I have introduced the scientific account of perception at this stage because my present purpose is to accumulate considerations, from whatever source they may be derived, which militate against the commonsense view that the external world is composed of physical objects possessing qualities in their own right, which by a sort of divine revelation are presented to the mind exactly as they are. Whether we emphasise the part played by the mind in the process of perception or by the body and the sense organs, it seems almost impossible to resist the view that the qualities of the world we perceive depend very largely upon ourselves. For how otherwise, it may be asked, are we to explain the fact of differing perceptions of the same thing. If X sees a carnation blue, and Y, who is colour-blind, sees it green, it is very difficult to suppose that the carnation is both green and blue at the same time. On the other hand there seems no good ground for affirming that it *really* is blue because it is blue to normal vision, and that its appearance to the colour-blind man is not, therefore, its *real* appearance, merely because the colour-blind man is in a minority. The plain implication seems to be that the difference between the apparent colours is due to a difference in

the physiological machineries of the two perceivers. Moreover, if we place santonin in our eyes, we see everything yellow. Since we cannot suppose that the alteration in our visual apparatus has produced a corresponding alteration in the world outside us, we can only conclude that the appearance of yellowness is the result of a peculiar condition of our visual organs. But, if this is true in regard to yellowness, there is no reason why it should not be true in regard to all the colours which we normally believe ourselves to perceive in the outside world.

Bertrand Russell

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE

Bertrand Russell (1872—), one of the foremost of living philosophers, has written some thirty books in the past half century. These range from manifestoes on manners and morals (*On Education*, 1926; *Marriage and Morals*, 1929; *The Conquest of Happiness*, 1930) and popular introductions to philosophy (*The Problems of Philosophy*, 1912; *History of Western Philosophy*, 1945), to treatises on logic, physics, and pure mathematics (*Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, 1919; *The Analysis of Matter*, 1927; *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, 1940). In the world of learning the work for which he is best known is *Principia Mathematica* (1910), written in collaboration with A. N. Whitehead. He was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1950.

His recent book on *Human Knowledge* is an inquiry into the conditions, nature, and sources of our knowing. Like his other works it discusses difficult questions in plain and lucid language; for 'Philosophy,' as he writes in his preface, 'deals with matters of interest to the general educated public, and loses much of its value if only a few professionals can understand what is said.'

SCIENTIFIC knowledge aims at being wholly impersonal, and tries to state what has been discovered by the collective intellect of mankind. In this chapter I shall consider how far it succeeds in this aim, and what elements of individual knowledge have to be sacrificed in order to achieve the measure of success that is possible.

The community knows both more and less than the individual: it knows, in its collective capacity, all the contents of the encyclopedia and all the contributions to the proceedings of learned bodies, but it does not know

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the warm and intimate things that make up the color and texture of an individual life. When a man says, 'I can never convey the horror I felt on seeing Buchenwald' or 'No words can express my joy at seeing the sea again after years in a prison camp,' he is saying something which is strictly and precisely true: he possesses, through his experience, knowledge not possessed by those whose experience has been different, and not completely capable of verbal expression. If he is a superb literary artist, he may create in sensitive readers a state of mind not wholly unlike his own, but if he tries scientific methods the stream of his experience will be lost and dissipated in a dusty desert.

Language, our sole means of communicating *scientific* knowledge, is essentially social in its origin and in its main functions. It is true that if a mathematician were wrecked on a desert island with a notebook and a pencil, he would, in all likelihood, seek to make his solitude endurable by calculations using the language of mathematics; it is true also that a man may keep a diary which he intends to conceal from all eyes but his own. On a more everyday plane, most of us use words in solitary thinking. Nevertheless, the chief purpose of language is communication, and to serve this purpose it must be public, not a private dialect invented by the speaker. It follows that what is most personal in each individual's experience tends to evaporate during the process of translation into language. What is more, the very publicity of language is in large part a delusion. A given form of words will usually be interpreted by competent hearers in such a way as to be true for all of them or false for all of them, but in spite of this it will not have the same meaning for all of them. Differences which do not affect the truth or falsehood of a statement are usually of little practical importance and are therefore ignored, with the result that we all believe our private world to be much more like the public world than it really is.

This is easily proved by considering the process of learning to understand language. There are two ways of getting to know what a word means: one is by a definition in terms of other words, which is called *verbal* definition; the other is by frequently hearing the word when the object which it denotes is present, which is called *ostensive* definition. It is obvious that ostensive definition is alone possible in the beginning, since verbal definition presupposes a knowledge of the words used in the *definiens*.[1] You can learn by a verbal definition that a pentagon is a plane figure with five sides, but a child does not learn in this way the meaning of everyday words such as 'rain,' 'sun,' 'dinner,' or 'bed.' These are taught by using the appropriate

[1] Defining part.]

word emphatically while the child is noticing the object concerned. Consequently the meaning that the child comes to attach to the word is a product of his personal experience, and varies according to his circumstances and his sensorium. A child who frequently experiences a mild drizzle will attach a different idea to the word 'rain' from that formed by a child who has only experienced tropical torrents. A short-sighted and a long-sighted child will connect different images with the word 'bed.'

It is true that education tries to depersonalize language, and with a certain measure of success. 'Rain' is no longer the familiar phenomenon, but 'drops of water falling from clouds toward the earth,' and 'water' is no longer what makes you wet, but H_2O. As for hydrogen and oxygen, they have verbal definitions which have to be learned by heart; whether you understand them does not matter. And so, as your instruction proceeds, the world of words becomes more and more separated from the world of the senses; you acquire the art of using words correctly, as you might acquire the art of playing the fiddle; in the end you become such a virtuoso in the manipulation of phrases that you need hardly ever remember that words have meanings. You have then become completely a public character, and even your inmost thoughts are suitable for the encyclopedia. But you can no longer hope to be a poet, and if you try to be a lover you will find your depersonalized language not very successful in generating the desired emotions. You have sacrificed expression to communication, and what you can communicate turns out to be abstract and dry.

It is an important fact that the nearer we come to the complete abstractness of logic, the less is the unavoidable difference between different people in the meaning attached to a word. I see no reason why there should be any difference at all between two suitably educated persons in the idea conveyed to them by the word '3481.' The words 'or' and 'not' are capable of having exactly the same meaning for two different logicians. Pure mathematics, throughout, works with concepts which are capable of being completely public and impersonal. The reason is that they derive nothing from the senses, and that the senses are the source of privacy. The body is a sensitive recording instrument, constantly transmitting messages from the outside world; the messages reaching one body are never quite the same as those reaching another, though practical and social exigencies have taught us ways of disregarding the differences between the percepts of neighboring persons. In constructing physics we have emphasized the spatio-temporal aspect of our perceptions, which is the aspect that is most abstract and most nearly akin to logic and mathematics. This we have done in the pur-

suit of publicity, in order to communicate what is communicable and to cover up the rest in a dark mantle of oblivion.

Space and time, however, as human beings know them, are not in reality so impersonal as science pretends. Theologians conceive God as viewing both space and time from without, impartially, and with a uniform awareness of the whole; science tries to imitate this impartiality with some apparent success, but the success is in part illusory. Human beings differ from the theologians' God in the fact that their space and time have a *here* and *now*. What is here and now is vivid; what is remote has a gradually increasing dimness. All our knowledge of events radiates from a space-time center, which is the little region that we are occupying at the moment. 'Here' is a vague term: in astronomical cosmology the Milky Way may count as 'here'; in the study of the Milky Way 'here' is the solar system; in the study of the solar system 'here' is the earth; in geography it is the town or district in which we live; in physiological studies of sensation it is the brain as opposed to the rest of the body. Larger 'heres' always contain smaller ones as parts; all 'heres' contain the brain of the speaker, or part of it. Similar considerations apply to 'now.'

Science professes to eliminate 'here' and 'now.' When some event occurs on the earth's surface, we give its position in the space-time manifold by assigning latitude, longitude, and date. We have developed a technique which insures that all accurate observers with accurate instruments will arrive at the same estimate of latitude, longitude, and date. Consequently there is no longer anything personal in these estimates, in so far as we are content with numerical statements of which the meaning is not too closely investigated. Having arbitrarily decided that the longitude of Greenwich and the latitude of the equator are to be zero, other latitudes and longitudes follow. But what is 'Greenwich'? This is hardly the sort of term that ought to occur in an impartial survey of the universe, and its definition is not mathematical. The best way to define 'Greenwich' is to take a man to it and say, 'Here is Greenwich.' If someone else has already determined the latitude and longitude of the place where you are, 'Greenwich' can be defined by its latitude and longitude relative to that place; it is, for example, so many degrees east and so many degrees north of New York. But this does not get rid of 'here,' which is now New York instead of Greenwich.

Moreover it is absurd to *define* either Greenwich or New York by its latitude and longitude. Greenwich is an actual place, inhabited by actual people, and containing buildings which antedate its longitudinal pre-

eminence. You can, of course, describe Greenwich, but there always might be another town with the same characteristics. If you want to be *sure* that your description applies to no other place, the only way is to mention its relation to some other place—for instance, by saying that it is so many miles down the Thames from London Bridge. But then you will have to define 'London Bridge.' Sooner or later you are faced with the necessity of defining some place as 'here,' and this is an egocentric definition, since the place in question is not 'here' for everybody. There may be a way of escape from this conclusion; at a later stage, we will resume the question. But there is no obvious or easy way of escape, and until one is found all determinations of latitude and longitude are infected with the subjectivity of 'here.' This means that although different people assign the same latitude and longitude to a place, they do not, in ultimate analysis, attach the same meaning to the figures at which they arrive.

The common world in which we believe ourselves to live is a construction, partly scientific, partly pre-scientific. We perceive tables as circular or rectangular, in spite of the fact that a painter, to reproduce their appearance, has to paint ellipses or non-rectangular quadrilaterals. We see a person as of about the same size whether he is two feet from us or twelve. Until our attention is drawn to the facts, we are quite unconscious of the corrections that experience has led us to make in interpreting sensible appearances. There is a long journey from the child who draws two eyes in a profile to the physicist who talks of electrons and protons, but throughout this journey there is one constant purpose: to eliminate the subjectivity of sensation and substitute a kind of knowledge which can be the same for all percipients. Gradually the difference between what is sensed and what is believed to be objective grows greater; the child's profile with two eyes is still very like what is seen, but the electrons and protons have only a remote resemblance of logical structure. The electrons and protons, however, have the merit that they *may* be what actually exists where there are no sense organs, whereas our immediate visual data, owing to their subjectivity, are almost certainly not what takes place in the physical objects that we are said to see.

The electrons and protons—assuming it scientifically correct to believe in them—do not depend for their existence upon being perceived; on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that they existed for countless ages before there were any percipients in the universe. But although perception is not needed for their existence, it is needed to give us a reason for believing in their existence. Hundreds of thousands of years ago, a vast and

remote region emitted incredible numbers of photons, which wandered through the universe in all directions. At last a very few of them hit a photographic plate, in which they caused chemical changes which made parts of the plate look black instead of white when examined by an astronomer. This tiny effect upon a minute but highly educated organism is our only reason for believing in the existence of a nebula comparable in size with the Milky Way. The order for knowledge is the inverse of the causal order. In the order for knowledge, what comes first is the brief subjective experience of the astronomer looking at a pattern of black and white, and what comes last is the nebula, vast, remote, and belonging to the distant past.

In considering the reasons for believing in any empirical statement, we cannot escape from perception with all its personal limitations. How far the information which we obtain from this tainted source can be purified in the filter of scientific method, and emerge resplendently godlike in its impartiality, is a difficult question, with which we shall be much concerned. But there is one thing that is obvious from the start: Only in so far as the initial perceptual datum [2] is trustworthy can there be any reason for accepting the vast cosmic edifice of inference which is based upon it.

I am not suggesting that the initial perceptual datum must be accepted as indubitable; that is by no means the case. There are well-known methods of strengthening or weakening the force of individual testimony; certain methods are used in the law courts, somewhat different ones are used in science. But all depend upon the principle that *some* weight is to be attached to every piece of testimony, for it is only in virtue of this principle that a number of concordant testimonies are held to give a high probability. Individual percepts are the basis of all our knowledge, and no method exists by which we can begin with data which are public to many observers.

[2 What is 'given,' assumed.]

William James

PRAGMATISM'S CONCEPTION OF TRUTH

William James (1842–1910) credited his friend C. S. Peirce with the invention of the term 'pragmatism,' but it was James himself who did most to expound it, popularize it, and make it a party slogan in philosophical disputes. The word may not be so challenging nowadays as it used to be, but the questions that gave rise to it, and that it sought to answer, are as debatable as ever, even though the old wine of pragmatism may be in new bottles labeled 'instrumentalism.' James's best explanations of his views are found in his volume of lectures, *Pragmatism. A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (1907). He permitted himself to say in a letter to his brother that 'I shouldn't be surprised if ten years hence it should be rated as "epoch-making," for of the definitive triumph of that general way of thinking I can entertain no doubt whatever—I believe it to be something quite like the protestant reformation.' Whether the book was indeed so epoch-making may be decided by the historians of philosophy; but there is no doubt that it is an excellent and representative statement of a way of thinking extremely characteristic and influential in the twentieth century.

Only the first half of the chapter on 'Pragmatism's Conception of Truth' is reprinted here, and the opening paragraph is omitted.

. . . I FULLY expect to see the pragmatist[1] view of truth run through the classic stages of a theory's career. First, you know, a new theory is attacked as absurd; then it is admitted to be true, but obvious and insignificant; finally it is seen to be so important that its adversaries claim that they themselves discovered it. Our doctrine of truth is at present in the first of these three stages, with symptoms of the second stage having begun in certain quarters. I wish that this lecture might help it beyond the first stage in the eyes of many of you.

[1 The word comes from Greek 'pragma,' an act or deed.]

FROM *Pragmatism*, 1907. Reprinted by permission of Paul R. Reynolds & Son, New York.

Truth, as any dictionary will tell you, is a property of certain of our ideas. It means their 'agreement,' as falsity means their disagreement, with 'reality.' Pragmatists and intellectualists both accept this definition as a matter of course. They begin to quarrel only after the question is raised as to what may precisely be meant by the term 'agreement,' and what by the term 'reality,' when reality is taken as something for our ideas to agree with.

In answering these questions the pragmatists are more analytic and painstaking, the intellectualists more offhand and irreflective. The popular notion is that a true idea must copy its reality. Like other popular views, this one follows the analogy of the most usual experience. Our true ideas of sensible things do indeed copy them. Shut your eyes and think of yonder clock on the wall, and you get just such a true picture or copy of its dial. But your idea of its 'works' (unless you are a clock-maker) is much less of a copy, yet it passes muster, for it in no way clashes with the reality. Even though it should shrink to the mere word 'works,' that word still serves you truly; and when you speak of the 'time-keeping function' of the clock, or of its spring's 'elasticity,' it is hard to see exactly what your ideas can copy.

You perceive that there is a problem here. Where our ideas cannot copy definitely their object, what does agreement with that object mean? Some idealists seem to say that they are true whenever they are what God means that we ought to think about that object. Others hold the copy-view all through, and speak as if our ideas possessed truth just in proportion as they approach to being copies of the Absolute's eternal way of thinking.

These views, you see, invite pragmatistic discussion. But the great assumption of the intellectualists is that truth means essentially an inert static relation. When you've got your true idea of anything, there's an end of the matter. You're in possession; you *know*; you have fulfilled your thinking destiny. You are where you ought to be mentally; you have obeyed your categorical imperative; [2] and nothing more need follow on that climax of your rational destiny. Epistemologically you are in stable equilibrium.

Pragmatism, on the other hand, asks its usual question. 'Grant an idea or belief to be true,' it says, 'what concrete difference will its being true make in any one's actual life? How will the truth be realized? What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false? What, in short, is the truth's cash-value in experiential terms?'

The moment pragmatism asks this question, it sees the answer: *True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify.*

[2 A famous phrase in Kant's ethical writings. The imperative is 'Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become by thy will a universal law of nature.']

False ideas are those that we can not. That is the practical difference it makes to us to have true ideas; that, therefore, is the meaning of truth, for it is all that truth is known-as.

This thesis is what I have to defend. The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events. Its verity *is* in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its veri-*fication*. Its validity is the process of its valid-*ation*.

But what do the words verification and validation themselves pragmatically mean? They again signify certain practical consequences of the verified and validated idea. It is hard to find any one phrase that characterizes these consequences better than the ordinary agreement-formula—just such consequences being what we have in mind whenever we say that our ideas 'agree' with reality. They lead us, namely, through the acts and other ideas which they instigate, into or up to, or towards, other parts of experience with which we feel all the while—such feeling being among our potentialities—that the original ideas remain in agreement. The connexions and transitions come to us from point to point as being progressive, harmonious, satisfactory. This function of agreeable leading is what we mean by an idea's verification. Such an account is vague and it sounds at first quite trivial, but it has results which it will take the rest of my hour to explain.

Let me begin by reminding you of the fact that the possession of true thoughts means everywhere the possession of invaluable instruments of action; and that our duty to gain truth, so far from being a blank command from out of the blue, or a 'stunt' self-imposed by our intellect, can account for itself by excellent practical reasons.

The importance to human life of having true beliefs about matters of fact is a thing too notorious. We live in a world of realities that can be infinitely useful or infinitely harmful. Ideas that tell us which of them to expect count as the true ideas in all this primary sphere of verification, and the pursuit of such ideas is a primary human duty. The possession of truth, so far from being here an end in itself, is only a preliminary means towards other vital satisfactions. If I am lost in the woods and starved, and find what looks like a cow-path, it is of the utmost importance that I should think of a human habitation at the end of it, for if I do so and follow it, I save myself. The true thought is useful here because the house which is its object is useful. The practical value of true ideas is thus primarily derived from the practical importance of their objects to us. Their objects are,

indeed, not important at all times. I may on another occasion have no use for the house; and then my idea of it, however verifiable, will be practically irrelevant, and had better remain latent. Yet since almost any object may some day become temporarily important, the advantage of having a general stock of *extra* truths, of ideas that shall be true of merely possible situations, is obvious. We store such extra truths away in our memories, and with the overflow we fill our books of reference. Whenever such an extra truth becomes practically relevant to one of our emergencies, it passes from cold-storage to do work in the world and our belief in it grows active. You can say of it then either that 'it is useful because it is true' or that 'it is true because it is useful.' Both these phrases mean exactly the same thing, namely that here is an idea that gets fulfilled and can be verified. True is the name for whatever idea starts the verification-process, useful is the name for its completed function in experience. True ideas would never have been singled out as such, would never have acquired a class-name, least of all a name suggesting value, unless they had been useful from the outset in this way.

From this simple cue pragmatism gets her general notion of truth as something essentially bound up with the way in which one moment in our experience may lead us towards other moments which it will be worth while to have been led to. Primarily, and on the common-sense level, the truth of a state of mind means this function of *a leading that is worth while*. When a moment in our experience, of any kind whatever, inspires us with a thought that is true, that means that sooner or later we dip by that thought's guidance into the particulars of experience again and make advantageous connexion with them. This is a vague enough statement, but I beg you to retain it, for it is essential.

Our experience meanwhile is all shot through with regularities. One bit of it can warn us to get ready for another bit, can 'intend' or be 'significant of' that remoter object. The object's advent is the significance's verification. Truth, in these cases, meaning nothing but eventual verification, is manifestly incompatible with waywardness on our part. Woe to him whose beliefs play fast and loose with the order which realities follow in his experience; they will lead him nowhere or else make false connexions.

By 'realities' or 'objects' here, we mean either things of common sense, sensibly present, or else common-sense relations, such as dates, places, distances, kinds, activities. Following our mental image of a house along the cow-path, we actually come to see the house; we get the image's full verifi-

cation. *Such simply and fully verified leadings are certainly the originals and prototypes of the truth-process.* Experience offers indeed other forms of truth-process, but they are all conceivable as being primary verifications arrested, multiplied or substituted one for another.

Take, for instance, yonder object on the wall. You and I consider it to be a 'clock,' altho no one of us has seen the hidden works that make it one. We let our notion pass for true without attempting to verify. If truths mean verification-process essentially, ought we then to call such unverified truths as this abortive? No, for they form the overwhelmingly large number of the truths we live by. Indirect as well as direct verifications pass muster. Where circumstantial evidence is sufficient, we can go without eye-witnessing. Just as we here assume Japan to exist without ever having been there, because it *works* to do so, everything we know conspiring with the belief, and nothing interfering, so we assume that thing to be a clock. We *use* it as a clock, regulating the length of our lecture by it. The verification of the assumption here means its leading to no frustration or contradiction. Verifi*ability* of wheels and weights and pendulum is as good as verification. For one truth-process completed there are a million in our lives that function in this state of nascency. They turn us *towards* direct verification; lead us into the *surroundings* of the objects they envisage; and then, if everything runs on harmoniously, we are so sure that verification is possible that we omit it, and are usually justified by all that happens.

Truth lives, in fact, for the most part on a credit system. Our thoughts and beliefs 'pass,' so long as nothing challenges them, just as bank-notes pass so long as nobody refuses them. But this all points to direct face-to-face verifications somewhere, without which the fabric of truth collapses like a financial system with no cash-basis whatever. You accept my verification of one thing, I yours of another. We trade on each other's truth. But beliefs verified concretely by *somebody* are the posts of the whole superstructure.

Another great reason—beside economy of time—for waiving complete verification in the usual business of life is that all things exist in kinds and not singly. Our world is found once for all to have that peculiarity. So that when we have once directly verified our ideas about one specimen of a kind, we consider ourselves free to apply them to other specimens without verification. A mind that habitually discerns the kind of thing before it, and acts by the law of the kind immediately, without pausing to verify, will be a 'true' mind in ninety-nine out of a hundred emergencies, proved so by its conduct fitting everything it meets, and getting no refutation.

Indirectly or only potentially verifying processes may thus be true as well as full verification-processes. They work as true processes would work, give us the same advantages, and claim our recognition for the same reasons. All this on the common-sense level of matters of fact, which we are alone considering.

But matters of fact are not our only stock in trade. *Relations among purely mental ideas* form another sphere where true and false beliefs obtain, and here the beliefs are absolute, or unconditional. When they are true they bear the name either of definitions or of principles. It is either a principle or a definition that 1 and 1 make 2, that 2 and 1 make 3, and so on; that white differs less from gray than it does from black; that when the cause begins to act the effect also commences. Such propositions hold of all possible 'ones,' of all conceivable 'whites' and 'grays' and 'causes.' The objects here are mental objects. Their relations are perceptually obvious at a glance, and no sense-verification is necessary. Moreover, once true, always true, of those same mental objects. Truth here has an 'eternal' character. If you can find a concrete thing anywhere that is 'one' or 'white' or 'gray' or an 'effect,' then your principles will everlastingly apply to it. It is but a case of ascertaining the kind, and then applying the law of its kind to the particular object. You are sure to get truth if you can but name the kind rightly, for your mental relations hold good of everything of that kind without exception. If you then, nevertheless, failed to get truth concretely, you would say that you had classed your real objects wrongly.

In this realm of mental relations, truth again is an affair of leading. We relate one abstract idea with another, framing in the end great systems of logical and mathematical truth, under the respective terms of which the sensible facts of experience eventually arrange themselves, so that our eternal truths hold good of realities also. This marriage of fact and theory is endlessly fertile. What we say is here already true in advance of special verification, *if we have subsumed our objects rightly.* Our ready-made ideal framework for all sorts of possible objects follows from the very structure of our thinking. We can no more play fast and loose with these abstract relations than we can do so with our sense-experiences. They coerce us; we must treat them consistently, whether or not we like the results. The rules of addition apply to our debts as rigorously as to our assets. The hundredth decimal of π, the ratio of the circumference to its diameter, is predetermined ideally now, tho no one may have computed it. If we should ever need the figure in our dealings with an actual circle we should need

to have it given rightly, calculated by the usual rules; for it is the same kind of truth that those rules elsewhere calculate.

Between the coercions of the sensible order and those of the ideal order, our mind is thus wedged tightly. Our ideas must agree with realities, be such realities concrete or abstract, be they facts or be they principles, under penalty of endless inconsistency and frustration.

So far, intellectualists can raise no protest. They can only say that we have barely touched the skin of the matter.

Realities mean, then, either concrete facts, or abstract kinds of thing and relations perceived intuitively between them. They furthermore and thirdly mean, as things that new ideas of ours must no less take account of, the whole body of other truths already in our possession. But what now does 'agreement' with such threefold realities mean?—to use again the definition that is current.

Here it is that pragmatism and intellectualism begin to part company. Primarily, no doubt, to agree means to copy, but we saw that the mere word 'clock' would do instead of a mental picture of its works, and that of many realities our ideas can only be symbols and not copies. 'Past time,' 'power,' 'spontaneity,'—how can our mind copy such realities?

To 'agree' in the widest sense with a reality *can only mean to be guided either straight up to it or into its surroundings, or to be put into such working touch with it as to handle either it or something connected with it better than if we disagreed.* Better either intellectually or practically! And often agreement will only mean the negative fact that nothing contradictory from the quarter of that reality comes to interfere with the way in which our ideas guide us elsewhere. To copy a reality is, indeed, one very important way of agreeing with it, but it is far from being essential. The essential thing is the process of being guided. Any idea that helps us to *deal*, whether practically or intellectually, with either the reality or its belongings, that doesn't entangle our progress in frustrations, that *fits*, in fact, and adapts our life to the reality's whole setting, will agree sufficiently to meet the requirement. It will hold true of that reality.

Thus, *names* are just as 'true' or 'false' as definite mental pictures are. They set up similar verification-processes, and lead to fully equivalent practical results.

All human thinking gets discursified; we exchange ideas; we lend and borrow verifications, get them from one another by means of social intercourse. All truth thus gets verbally built out, stored up, and made available

for every one. Hence, we must *talk* consistently just as we must *think* consistently: for both in talk and thought we deal with kinds. Names are arbitrary, but once understood they must be kept to. We mustn't now call Abel 'Cain' or Cain 'Abel.' If we do, we ungear ourselves from the whole book of Genesis, and from all its connexions with the universe of speech and fact down to the present time. We throw ourselves out of whatever truth that entire system of speech and fact may embody.

The overwhelming majority of our true ideas admit of no direct or face-to-face verification—those of past history, for example, as of Cain and Abel. The stream of time can be remounted only verbally, or verified indirectly by the present prolongations or effects of what the past harbored. Yet if they agree with these verbalities and effects, we can know that our ideas of the past are true. *As true as past time itself was*, so true was Julius Cæsar, so true were antediluvian monsters, all in their proper dates and settings. That past time itself was, is guaranteed by its coherence with everything that's present. True as the present *is*, the past *was* also.

Agreement thus turns out to be essentially an affair of leading—leading that is useful because it is into quarters that contain objects that are important. True ideas lead us into useful verbal and conceptual quarters as well as directly up to useful sensible termini. They lead to consistency, stability and flowing human intercourse. They lead away from excentricity and isolation, from foiled and barren thinking. The untrammelled flowing of the leading-process, its general freedom from clash and contradiction, passes for its indirect verification; but all roads lead to Rome, and in the end and eventually, all true processes must lead to the face of directly verifying sensible experiences *somewhere*, which somebody's ideas have copied.

Such is the large loose way in which the pragmatist interprets the word agreement. He treats it altogether practically. He lets it cover any process of conduction from a present idea to a future terminus, provided only it run prosperously. It is only thus that 'scientific' ideas, flying as they do beyond common sense, can be said to agree with their realities. It is, as I have already said, *as if* reality were made of ether, atoms or electrons, but we mustn't think so literally. The term 'energy' doesn't even pretend to stand for anything 'objective.' It is only a way of measuring the surface of phenomena so as to string their changes on a simple formula.

Yet in the choice of these man-made formulas we can not be capricious with impunity any more than we can be capricious on the common-sense practical level. We must find a theory that will *work*; and that means some-

thing extremely difficult; for our theory must mediate between all previous truths and certain new experiences. It must derange common sense and previous belief as little as possible, and it must lead to some sensible terminus or other that can be verified exactly. To 'work' means both these things; and the squeeze is so tight that there is little loose play for any hypothesis. Our theories are wedged and controlled as nothing else is. Yet sometimes alternative theoretic formulas are equally compatible with all the truths we know, and then we choose between them for subjective reasons. We choose the kind of theory to which we are already partial; we follow 'elegance' or 'economy.' Clerk-Maxwell [3] somewhere says it would be 'poor scientific taste' to choose the more complicated of two equally well-evidenced conceptions; and you will all agree with him. Truth in science is what gives us the maximum possible sum of satisfactions, taste included, but consistency both with previous truth and with novel fact is always the most imperious claimant. . .

[3 Experimental physicist at Cambridge, celebrated for his work on the kinetic theory of gases, on electricity, and on magnetism. One of the foremost scientists of the nineteenth century.]

George Santayana

WILLIAM JAMES

¶ 'Only an American—and I am not one except by long association—can speak for the heart of America. I try to understand it, as a family friend may who has a different temperament.' So Mr. Santayana writes in the preface to *Character and Opinion in the United States*. The 'United States' of his title consists of the environs of Boston, to be sure, but this limitation in no way diminishes the excellence of the essays. They are not intended as a guidebook to the country or a set of tourist's impressions, like Henry James's *The American Scene*. They are mostly meditations on the persons, customs, and opinions that Mr. Santayana knew long and intimately in America: Harvard, William James, Josiah Royce, and their milieu. When he does generalize about the American character, however, his observations are wise and just.

Readers interested in Mr. Santayana's further reminiscences of the United States, and especially of the Boston and Harvard of his day, should not fail to read the second volume of his autobiography, *The Middle Span* (1945).

William James enjoyed in his youth what are called advantages: he lived among cultivated people, travelled, had teachers of various nationalities. His father [1] was one of those somewhat obscure sages whom early America produced: mystics of independent mind, hermits in the desert of business, and heretics in the churches. They were intense individualists, full of veneration for the free souls of their children, and convinced that every one should paddle his own canoe, especially on the high seas. William James accordingly enjoyed a stimulating if slightly irregular

[1 See pp. 463–6.]

From *Character and Opinion in the United States*, 1920. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

education: he never acquired that reposeful mastery of particular authors and those safe ways of feeling and judging which are fostered in great schools and universities. In consequence he showed an almost physical horror of club sentiment and of the stifling atmosphere of all officialdom. He had a knack for drawing, and rather the temperament of the artist; but the unlovely secrets of nature and the troubles of man preoccupied him, and he chose medicine for his profession. Instead of practising, however, he turned to teaching physiology, and from that passed gradually to psychology and philosophy.

In his earlier years he retained some traces of polyglot student days at Paris, Bonn, Vienna, or Geneva; he slipped sometimes into foreign phrases, uttered in their full vernacular; and there was an occasional afterglow of Bohemia about him, in the bright stripe of a shirt or the exuberance of a tie. On points of art or medicine he retained a professional touch and an unconscious ease which he hardly acquired in metaphysics. I suspect he had heartily admired some of his masters in those other subjects, but had never seen a philosopher whom he would have cared to resemble. Of course there was nothing of the artist in William James, as the artist is sometimes conceived in England, nothing of the æsthete, nothing affected or limp. In person he was short rather than tall, erect, brisk, bearded, intensely masculine. While he shone in expression and would have wished his style to be noble if it could also be strong, he preferred in the end to be spontaneous, and to leave it at that; he tolerated slang in himself rather than primness. The rough, homely, picturesque phrase, whatever was graphic and racy, recommended itself to him; and his conversation outdid his writing in this respect. He believed in improvisation, even in thought; his lectures were not minutely prepared. Know your subject thoroughly, he used to say, and trust to luck for the rest. There was a deep sense of insecurity in him, a mixture of humility with romanticism: we were likely to be more or less wrong anyhow, but we might be wholly sincere. One moment should respect the insight of another, without trying to establish too regimental a uniformity. If you corrected yourself tartly, how could you know that the correction was not the worse mistake? All our opinions were born free and equal, all children of the Lord, and if they were not consistent that was the Lord's business, not theirs. In reality, James was consistent enough, as even Emerson (more extreme in this sort of irresponsibility) was too. Inspiration has its limits, sometimes very narrow ones. But James was not consecutive, not insistent; he turned to a subject afresh, without egotism or pedantry; he dropped his old points, sometimes

very good ones; and he modestly looked for light from others, who had less light than himself.

His excursions into philosophy were accordingly in the nature of raids, and it is easy for those who are attracted by one part of his work to ignore other parts, in themselves perhaps more valuable. I think that in fact his popularity does not rest on his best achievements. His popularity rests on three somewhat incidental books, *The Will to Believe, Pragmatism,* and *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* whereas, as it seems to me, his best achievement is his *Principles of Psychology*. In this book he surveys, in a way which for him is very systematic, a subject made to his hand. In its ostensible outlook it is a treatise like any other, but what distinguishes it is the author's gift for evoking vividly the very life of the mind. This is a work of imagination; and the subject as he conceived it, which is the flux of immediate experience in men in general, requires imagination to read it at all. It is a literary subject, like autobiography or psychological fiction, and can be treated only poetically; and in this sense Shakespeare is a better psychologist than Locke or Kant. Yet this gift of imagination is not merely literary; it is not useless in divining the truths of science, and it is invaluable in throwing off prejudice and scientific shams. The fresh imagination and vitality of William James led him to break through many a false convention. He saw that experience, as we endure it, is not a mosaic of distinct sensations, nor the expression of separate hostile faculties, such as reason and the passions, or sense and the categories; it is rather a flow of mental discourse, like a dream, in which all divisions and units are vague and shifting, and the whole is continually merging together and drifting apart. It fades gradually in the rear, like the wake of a ship, and bites into the future, like the bow cutting the water. For the candid psychologist, carried bodily on this voyage of discovery, the past is but a questionable report, and the future wholly indeterminate; everything is simply what it is experienced as being.

At the same time, psychology is supposed to be a science, a claim which would tend to confine it to the natural history of man, or the study of behaviour, as is actually proposed by Auguste Comte and by some of James's own disciples, more jejune if more clear-headed than he. As matters now stand, however, psychology as a whole is not a science, but a branch of philosophy; it brings together the literary description of mental discourse and the scientific description of material life, in order to consider the relation between them, which is the nexus of human nature.

What was James's position on this crucial question? It is impossible to reply unequivocally. He approached philosophy as mankind originally

approached it, without having a philosophy, and he lent himself to various hypotheses in various directions. He professed to begin his study on the assumptions of common sense, that there is a material world which the animals that live in it are able to perceive and to think about. He gave a congruous extension to this view in his theory that emotion is purely bodily sensation, and also in his habit of conceiving the mind as a total shifting sensibility. To pursue this path, however, would have led him to admit that nature was automatic and mind simply cognitive, conclusions from which every instinct in him recoiled. He preferred to believe that mind and matter had independent energies and could lend one another a hand, matter operating by motion and mind by intention. This dramatic, amphibious way of picturing causation is natural to common sense, and might be defended if it were clearly defined; but James was insensibly carried away from it by a subtle implication of his method. This implication was that experience or mental discourse not only constituted a set of substantive facts, but the *only* substantive facts; all else, even that material world which his psychology had postulated, could be nothing but a verbal or fantastic symbol for sensations in their experienced order. So that while nominally the door was kept open to any hypothesis regarding the conditions of the psychological flux, in truth the question was prejudged. The hypotheses, which were parts of this psychological flux, could have no object save other parts of it. That flux itself, therefore, which he could picture so vividly, was the fundamental existence. The *sense* of bounding over the waves, the *sense* of being on an adventurous voyage, was the living fact; the rest was dead reckoning. Where one's gift is, there will one's faith be also; and to this poet appearance was the only reality.

This sentiment, which always lay at the back of his mind, reached something like formal expression in his latest writings, where he sketched what he called radical empiricism. The word experience is like a shrapnel shell, and bursts into a thousand meanings. Here we must no longer think of its setting, its discoveries, or its march; to treat it radically we must abstract its immediate objects and reduce it to pure data. It is obvious (and the sequel has already proved) that experience so understood would lose its romantic signification, as a personal adventure or a response to the shocks of fortune. 'Experience' would turn into a cosmic dance of absolute entities created and destroyed *in vacuo* [2] according to universal laws, or perhaps by chance. No minds would gather this experience, and no material agencies would impose it; but the immediate objects present to any one would

[2 In empty space.]

simply be parts of the universal fireworks, continuous with the rest, and all the parts, even if not present to anybody, would have the same status. Experience would then not at all resemble what Shakespeare reports or what James himself had described in his psychology. If it could be experienced as it flows in its entirety (which is fortunately impracticable), it would be a perpetual mathematical nightmare. Every whirling atom, every changing relation, and every incidental perspective would be a part of it. I am far from wishing to deny for a moment the scientific value of such a cosmic system, if it can be worked out; physics and mathematics seem to me to plunge far deeper than literary psychology into the groundwork of this world; but human experience is the stuff of literary psychology; we cannot reach the stuff of physics and mathematics except by arresting or even hypostatising [3] some elements of appearance, and expanding them on an abstracted and hypothetical plane of their own. Experience, as memory and literature rehearse it, remains nearer to us than that: it is something dreamful, passionate, dramatic, and significative.

Certainly this personal human experience, expressible in literature and in talk, and no cosmic system however profound, was what James knew best and trusted most. Had he seen the developments of his radical empiricism, I cannot help thinking he would have marvelled that such logical mechanisms should have been hatched out of that egg. The principal problems and aspirations that haunted him all his life long would lose their meaning in that cosmic atmosphere. The pragmatic nature of truth, for instance, would never suggest itself in the presence of pure data; but a romantic mind soaked in agnosticism, conscious of its own habits and assuming an environment the exact structure of which can never be observed, may well convince itself that, for experience, truth is nothing but a happy use of signs—which is indeed the truth of literature. But if we once accept *any* system of the universe as literally true, the value of convenient signs to prepare us for such experience as is yet absent cannot be called truth: it is plainly nothing but a necessary inaccuracy. So, too, with the question of the survival of the human individual after death. For radical empiricism a human individual is simply a certain cycle or complex of terms, like any other natural fact; that some echoes of his mind should recur after the regular chimes have ceased, would have nothing paradoxical about it. A mathematical world is a good deal like music, with its repetitions and transpositions, and a little trill, which you might call a person, might well peep up here and there all over a vast composition. Something

[3] Assuming to be substantial realities.]

of that sort may be the truth of spiritualism; but it is not what the spiritualists imagine. Their whole interest lies not in the experiences they have, but in the interpretation they give to them, assigning them to troubled spirits in another world; but both another world and a spirit are notions repugnant to a radical empiricism.

I think it is important to remember, if we are not to misunderstand William James, that his radical empiricism and pragmatism were in his own mind only methods; his doctrine, if he may be said to have had one, was agnosticism. And just because he was an agnostic (feeling instinctively that beliefs and opinions, if they had any objective beyond themselves, could never be sure they had attained it), he seemed in one sense so favourable to credulity. He was not credulous himself, far from it; he was well aware that the trust he put in people or ideas might betray him. For that very reason he was respectful and pitiful to the trustfulness of others. Doubtless they were wrong, but who were we to say so? In his own person he was ready enough to face the mystery of things, and whatever the womb of time might bring forth; but until the curtain was rung down on the last act of the drama (and it might have no last act!) he wished the intellectual cripples and the moral hunchbacks not to be jeered at; perhaps they might turn out to be the heroes of the play. Who could tell what heavenly influences might not pierce to these sensitive half-flayed creatures, which are lost on the thick-skinned, the sane, and the duly goggled? We must not suppose, however, that James meant these contrite and romantic suggestions dogmatically. The agnostic, as well as the physician and neurologist in him, was never quite eclipsed. The hope that some new revelation might come from the lowly and weak could never mean to him what it meant to the early Christians. For him it was only a right conceded to them to experiment with their special faiths; he did not expect such faiths to be discoveries of absolute fact, which everybody else might be constrained to recognise. If any one had made such a claim, and had seemed to have some chance of imposing it universally, James would have been the first to turn against him; not, of course, on the ground that it was *impossible* that such an orthodoxy should be true, but with a profound conviction that it was to be feared and distrusted. No: the degree of authority and honour to be accorded to various human faiths was a moral question, not a theoretical one. All faiths were what they were experienced as being, in their capacity of faiths; these faiths, not their objects, were the hard facts we must respect. We cannot pass, except under the illusion of the moment, to anything firmer or on a deeper level. There was accordingly no sense of security, no

joy, in James's apology for personal religion. He did not really believe; he merely believed in the right of believing that you might be right if you believed.

It is this underlying agnosticism that explains an incoherence which we might find in his popular works, where the story and the moral do not seem to hang together. Professedly they are works of psychological observation; but the tendency and suasion in them seems to run to disintegrating the idea of truth, recommending belief without reason, and encouraging superstition. A psychologist who was not an agnostic would have indicated, as far as possible, whether the beliefs and experiences he was describing were instances of delusion or of rare and fine perception, or in what measure they were a mixture of both. But James—and this is what gives such romantic warmth to these writings of his—disclaims all antecedent or superior knowledge, listens to the testimony of each witness in turn, and only by accident allows us to feel that he is swayed by the eloquence and vehemence of some of them rather than of others. This method is modest, generous, and impartial; but if James intended, as I think he did, to picture the *drama* of human belief, with its risks and triumphs, the method was inadequate. Dramatists never hesitate to assume, and to let the audience perceive, who is good and who bad, who wise and who foolish, in their pieces; otherwise their work would be as impotent dramatically as scientifically. The tragedy and comedy of life lie precisely in the contrast between the illusions or passions of the characters and their true condition and fate, hidden from them at first, but evident to the author and the public. If in our diffidence and scrupulous fairness we refuse to take this judicial attitude, we shall be led to strange conclusions. The navigator, for instance, trusting his 'experience' (which here, as in the case of religious people, means his imagination and his art), insists on believing that the earth is spherical; he has sailed round it. That is to say, he has seemed to himself to steer westward and westward, and has seemed to get home again. But how should he know that home is now where it was before, or that his past and present impressions of it come from the same, or from any, material object? How should he know that space is as trim and tri-dimensional as the discredited Euclidians used to say it was? If, on the contrary, my worthy aunt, trusting to her longer and less ambiguous experience of her garden, insists that the earth is flat, and observes that the theory that it is round, which is only a theory, is much less often tested and found useful than her own perception of its flatness, and that moreover that theory is pedantic, intellectualistic, and a product of academies, and a rash dogma

to impose on mankind for ever and ever, it might seem that on James's principle we ought to agree with her. But no; on James's real principles we need not agree with her, nor with the navigator either. Radical empiricism, which is radical agnosticism, delivers us from so benighted a choice. For the quarrel becomes unmeaning when we remember that the earth is *both* flat and round, if it is experienced as being both. The substantive fact is not a single object on which both the perception and the theory are expected to converge; the substantive facts are the theory and the perception themselves. And we may note in passing that empiricism, when it ceases to value experience as a means of discovering external things, can give up its ancient prejudice in favour of sense as against imagination, for imagination and thought are immediate experiences as much as sensation is; they are therefore, for absolute empiricism, no less actual ingredients of reality.

In *The Varieties of Religious Experience* we find the same apologetic intention running through a vivid account of what seems for the most part (as James acknowledged) religious disease. Normal religious experience is hardly described in it. Religious experience, for the great mass of mankind, consists in simple faith in the truth and benefit of their religious traditions. But to James something so conventional and rationalistic seemed hardly experience and hardly religious; he was thinking only of irruptive visions and feelings as interpreted by the mystics who had them. These interpretations he ostensibly presents, with more or less wistful sympathy for what they were worth; but emotionally he wished to champion them. The religions that had sprung up in America spontaneously—communistic, hysterical, spiritistic, or medicinal—were despised by select and superior people. You might inquire into them, as you might go slumming, but they remained suspect and distasteful. This picking up of genteel skirts on the part of his acquaintance prompted William James to roll up his sleeves—not for a knock-out blow, but for a thorough clinical demonstration. He would tenderly vivisect the experiences in question, to show how living they were, though of course he could not guarantee, more than other surgeons do, that the patient would survive the operation. An operation that eventually kills may be technically successful, and the man may die cured; and so a description of religion that showed it to be madness might first show how real and how warm it was, so that if it perished, at least it would perish understood.

I never observed in William James any personal anxiety or enthusiasm for any of these dubious tenets. His conception even of such a thing as free-will, which he always ardently defended, remained vague; he avoided defin-

ing even what he conceived to be desirable in such matters. But he wished to protect the weak against the strong, and what he hated beyond everything was the *non possumus* [4] of any constituted authority. Philosophy for him had a Polish constitution; so long as a single vote was cast against the majority, nothing could pass. The suspense of judgement which he had imposed on himself as a duty, became almost a necessity. I think it would have depressed him if he had had to confess that any important question was finally settled. He would still have hoped that something might turn up on the other side, and that just as the scientific hangman was about to despatch the poor convicted prisoner, an unexpected witness would ride up in hot haste, and prove him innocent. Experience seems to most of us to lead to conclusions, but empiricism has sworn never to draw them.

In the discourse on 'The Energies of Men,' certain physiological marvels are recorded, as if to suggest that the resources of our minds and bodies are infinite, or can be infinitely enlarged by divine grace. Yet James would not, I am sure, have accepted that inference. He would, under pressure, have drawn in his mystical horns under his scientific shell; but he was not naturalist enough to feel instinctively that the wonderful and the natural are all of a piece, and that only our degree of habituation distinguishes them. A nucleus, which we may poetically call the soul, certainly lies within us, by which our bodies and minds are generated and controlled, like an army by a government. In this nucleus, since nature in a small compass has room for anything, vast quantities of energy may well be stored up, which may be tapped on occasion, or which may serve like an electric spark to let loose energy previously existing in the grosser parts. But the absolute autocracy of this central power, or its success in imposing extraordinary trials on its subjects, is not an obvious good. Perhaps, like a democratic government, the soul is at its best when it merely collects and coordinates the impulses coming from the senses. The inner man is at times a tyrant, parasitical, wasteful, and voluptuous. At other times he is fanatical and mad. When he asks for and obtains violent exertions from the body, the question often is, as with the exploits of conquerors and conjurers, whether the impulse to do such prodigious things was not gratuitous, and the things nugatory. Who would wish to be a mystic? James himself, who by nature was a spirited rather than a spiritual man, had no liking for sanctimonious transcendentalists, visionaries, or ascetics; he hated minds that run thin. But he hastened to correct this manly impulse, lest it should be unjust, and forced himself to overcome his repugnance. This was

[4 'We cannot.']

made easier when the unearthly phenomenon had a healing or saving function in the everyday material world; miracle then re-established its ancient identity with medicine, and both of them were humanised. Even when this union was not attained, James was reconciled to the miracle-workers partly by his great charity, and partly by his hunter's instinct to follow a scent, for he believed discoveries to be imminent. Besides, a philosopher who is a teacher of youth is more concerned to give people a right start than a right conclusion. James fell in with the hortatory tradition of college sages; he turned his psychology, whenever he could do so honestly, to purposes of edification; and his little sermons on habit, on will, on faith, and this on the latent capacities of men, were fine and stirring, and just the sermons to preach to the young Christian soldier. He was much less sceptical in morals than in science. He seems to have felt sure that certain thoughts and hopes —those familiar to a liberal Protestantism—were every man's true friends in life. This assumption would have been hard to defend if he or those he habitually addressed had ever questioned it; yet his whole argument for voluntarily cultivating these beliefs rests on this assumption, that they are beneficent. Since, whether we will or no, we cannot escape the risk of error, and must succumb to some human or pathological bias, at least we might do so gracefully and in the form that would profit us most, by clinging to those prejudices which help us to lead what we all feel is a good life. But what is a good life? Had William James, had the people about him, had modern philosophers anywhere, any notion of that? I cannot think so. They had much experience of personal goodness, and love of it; they had standards of character and right conduct; but as to what might render human existence good, excellent, beautiful, happy, and worth having as a whole, their notions were utterly thin and barbarous. They had forgotten the Greeks, or never known them.

This argument accordingly suffers from the same weakness as the similar argument of Pascal in favour of Catholic orthodoxy. You should force yourself to believe in it, he said, because if you do so and are right you win heaven, while if you are wrong you lose nothing. What would Protestants, Mohammedans, and Hindus say to that? Those alternatives of Pascal's are not the sole nor the true alternatives; such a wager—betting on the improbable because you are offered big odds—is an unworthy parody of the real choice between wisdom and folly. There is no heaven to be won in such a spirit, and if there was, a philosopher would despise it. So William James would have us bet on immortality, or bet on our power to succeed, because if we win the wager we can live to congratulate ourselves on our

true instinct, while we lose nothing if we have made a mistake; for unless you have the satisfaction of finding that you have been right, the dignity of having been right is apparently nothing. Or if the argument is rather that these beliefs, whether true or false, make life better in this world, the thing is simply false. To be boosted by an illusion is not to live better than to live in harmony with the truth; it is not nearly so safe, not nearly so sweet, and not nearly so fruitful. These refusals to part with a decayed illusion are really an infection to the mind. Believe, certainly; we cannot help believing; but believe rationally, holding what seems certain for certain, what seems probable for probable, what seems desirable for desirable, and what seems false for false.

In this matter, as usual, James had a true psychological fact and a generous instinct behind his confused moral suggestions. It is a psychological fact that men are influenced in their beliefs by their will and desires; indeed, I think we can go further and say that in its essence belief is an expression of impulse, of readiness to act. It is only peripherally, as our action is gradually adjusted to things, and our impulses to our possible or necessary action, that our ideas begin to hug the facts, and to acquire a true, if still a symbolic, significance. We do not need a will to believe; we only need a will to study the object in which we are inevitably believing. But James was thinking less of belief in what we find than of belief in what we hope for: a belief which is not at all clear and not at all necessary in the life of mortals. Like most Americans, however, only more lyrically, James felt the call of the future and the assurance that it could be made far better, totally other, than the past. The pictures that religion had painted of heaven or the millennium were not what he prized, although his Swedenborgian connection [5] might have made him tender to them, as perhaps it did to familiar spirits. It was the moral succour offered by religion, its open spaces, the possibility of miracles *in extremis*,[6] that must be retained. If we recoiled at the thought of being dupes (which is perhaps what nature intended us to be), were we less likely to be dupes in disbelieving these sustaining truths than in believing them? Faith was needed to bring about the reform of faith itself, as well as all other reforms.

In some cases faith in success could nerve us to bring success about, and so justify itself by its own operation. This is a thought typical of James at his worst—a worst in which there is always a good side. Here again psychological observation is used with the best intentions to hearten oneself and

[5] James's father was much influenced by Swedenborgian doctrines. See p. 464.]
[6] At the last.]

other people; but the fact observed is not at all understood, and a moral twist is given to it which (besides being morally questionable) almost amounts to falsifying the fact itself. Why does belief that you can jump a ditch help you to jump it? Because it is a symptom of the fact that you *could* jump it, that your legs were fit and that the ditch was two yards wide and not twenty. A rapid and just appreciation of these facts has given you your confidence, or at least has made it reasonable, manly, and prophetic; otherwise you would have been a fool and got a ducking for it. Assurance is contemptible and fatal unless it is self-knowledge. If you had been rattled you might have failed, because that would have been a symptom of the fact that you were out of gear; you would have been afraid because you trembled, as James at his best proclaimed. You would never have quailed if your system had been reacting smoothly to its opportunities, any more than you would totter and see double if you were not intoxicated. Fear is a sensation of actual nervousness and disarray, and confidence a sensation of actual readiness; they are not disembodied feelings, existing for no reason, the devil Funk and the angel Courage, one or the other of whom may come down arbitrarily into your body, and revolutionise it. That is childish mythology, which survives innocently enough as a figure of speech, until a philosopher is found to take that figure of speech seriously. Nor is the moral suggestion here less unsound. What is good is not the presumption of power, but the possession of it: a clear head, aware of its resources, not a fuddled optimism, calling up spirits from the vasty deep.[7] Courage is not a virtue, said Socrates, unless it is also wisdom. Could anything be truer both of courage in doing and of courage in believing? But it takes tenacity, it takes *reasonable* courage, to stick to scientific insights such as this of Socrates or that of James about the emotions; it is easier to lapse into the traditional manner, to search natural philosophy for miracles and moral lessons, and in morals proper, in the reasoned expression of preference, to splash about without a philosophy.

William James shared the passions of liberalism. He belonged to the left, which, as they say in Spain, is the side of the heart, as the right is that of the liver; at any rate there was much blood and no gall in his philosophy. He was one of those elder Americans still disquieted by the ghost of tyranny, social and ecclesiastical. Even the beauties of the past troubled him; he had a puritan feeling that they were tainted. They had been cruel and frivolous, and must have suppressed far better things. But what, we may ask, might these better things be? It may do for a revolutionary politician

[7 See *I Henry IV*, III, i, 53.]

to say: 'I may not know what I want—except office—but I know what I don't want'; it will never do for a philosopher. Aversions and fears imply principles of preference, goods acknowledged; and it is the philosopher's business to make these goods explicit. Liberty is not an art, liberty must be used to bring some natural art to fruition. Shall it be simply eating and drinking and wondering what will happen next? If there is some deep and settled need in the heart of man, to give direction to his efforts, what else should a philosopher do but discover and announce what that need is?

There is a sense in which James was not a philosopher at all. He once said to me: 'What a curse philosophy would be if we couldn't forget all about it!' In other words, philosophy was not to him what it has been to so many, a consolation and sanctuary in a life which would have been unsatisfying without it. It would be incongruous, therefore, to expect of him that he should build a philosophy like an edifice to go and live in for good. Philosophy to him was rather like a maze in which he happened to find himself wandering, and what he was looking for was the way out. In the presence of theories of any sort he was attentive, puzzled, suspicious, with a certain inner prompting to disregard them. He lived all his life among them, as a child lives among grown-up people; what a relief to turn from those stolid giants, with their prohibitions and exactions and tiresome talk, to another real child or a nice animal! Of course grown-up people are useful, and so James considered that theories might be; but in themselves, to live with, they were rather in the way, and at bottom our natural enemies. It was well to challenge one or another of them when you got a chance; perhaps that challenge might break some spell, transform the strange landscape, and simplify life. A theory while you were creating or using it was like a story you were telling yourself or a game you were playing; it was a warm, self-justifying thing then; but when the glow of creation or expectation was over, a theory was a phantom, like a ghost, or like the minds of other people. To all other people, even to ghosts, William James was the soul of courtesy; and he was civil to most theories as well, as to more or less interesting strangers that invaded him. Nobody ever recognised more heartily the chance that others had of being right, and the right they had to be different. Yet when it came to understanding what they meant, whether they were theories or persons, his intuition outran his patience; he made some brilliant impressionistic sketch in his fancy and called it by their name. This sketch was as often flattered as distorted, and he was at times the dupe of his desire to be appreciative and give the devil his due; he was too impulsive for exact sympathy; too subjective, too romantic, to be just.

Love is very penetrating, but it penetrates to possibilities rather than to facts. The logic of opinions, as well as the exact opinions themselves, were not things James saw easily, or traced with pleasure. He liked to take things one by one, rather than to put two and two together. He was a mystic, a mystic in love with life. He was comparable to Rousseau and to Walt Whitman; he expressed a generous and tender sensibility, rebelling against sophistication, and preferring daily sights and sounds, and a vague but indomitable faith in fortune, to any settled intellectual tradition calling itself science or philosophy.

A prophet is not without honour save in his own country; [8] and until the return wave of James's reputation reached America from Europe, his pupils and friends were hardly aware that he was such a distinguished man. Everybody liked him, and delighted in him for his generous, gullible nature and brilliant sallies. He was a sort of Irishman among the Brahmins, and seemed hardly imposing enough for a great man. They laughed at his erratic views and his undisguised limitations. Of course a conscientious professor ought to know everything he professes to know, but then, they thought, a dignified professor ought to seem to know everything. The precise theologians and panoplied idealists, who exist even in America, shook their heads. What sound philosophy, said they to themselves, could be expected from an irresponsible doctor, who was not even a college graduate, a crude empiricist, and vivisector of frogs? On the other hand, the solid men of business were not entirely reassured concerning a teacher of youth who seemed to have no system in particular—the ignorant rather demand that the learned should have a system in store, to be applied at a pinch; and they could not quite swallow a private gentleman who dabbled in hypnotism, frequented mediums, didn't talk like a book, and didn't write like a book, except like one of his own. Even his pupils, attached as they invariably were to his person, felt some doubts about the profundity of one who was so very natural, and who after some interruption during a lecture—and he said life was a series of interruptions—would slap his forehead and ask the man in the front row 'What *was* I talking about?' Perhaps in the first years of his teaching he felt a little in the professor's chair as a military man might feel when obliged to read the prayers at a funeral. He probably conceived what he said more deeply than a more scholastic mind might have conceived it; yet he would have been more comfortable if some one else had said it for him. He liked to open the window, and look out for a moment. I think he was glad when the bell rang, and he could be himself

[8 Matthew, xiii, 57.]

again until the next day. But in the midst of this routine of the class-room the spirit would sometimes come upon him, and, leaning his head on his hand, he would let fall golden words, picturesque, fresh from the heart, full of the knowledge of good and evil. Incidentally there would crop up some humorous characterisation, some candid confession of doubt or of instinctive preference, some pungent scrap of learning; radicalisms plunging sometimes into the sub-soil of all human philosophies; and, on occasion, thoughts of simple wisdom and wistful piety, the most unfeigned and manly that anybody ever had.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

PLATO AND BACON

¶ Macaulay has not fared too well in the twentieth century. His Whiggism, his Protestantism, his enthusiasm about the social progress of Victorian England, his confidence in *laissez-faire* arrangements in society have given him a reputation, no doubt an exaggerated one, for complacency. Everybody knows the remark of a contemporary that he wished he were as sure of anything as Macaulay was of everything. This Olympian assurance is particularly distasteful to readers who have turned to other dogmas, other social systems, and other views of history than Macaulay's, including some that he thought wholly pernicious and others that he considered dead and buried.

Whatever may be thought of some of his ideas, there is no denying his power as a writer. He may oversimplify issues and overcolor scenes—what historian does not?—but he makes the issues live ones and the scenes brilliant and memorable. His long essay on Bacon (1837), from which this contrast between Plato and Bacon is taken, is a good example both of his magisterial manner and of the ideas he cherished.

. . . The difference between the philosophy of Bacon and that of his predecessors cannot, we think, be better illustrated than by comparing his views on some important subjects with those of Plato. We select Plato, because we conceive that he did more than any other person towards giving to the minds of speculative men that bent which they retained till they received from Bacon a new impulse in a diametrically opposite direction.

It is curious to observe how differently these great men estimated the value of every kind of knowledge. Take Arithmetic for example. Plato, after speaking slightly of the convenience of being able to reckon and compute

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in the ordinary transactions of life, passes to what he considers as a far more important advantage. The study of the properties of numbers, he tells us, habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth, and raises it above the material universe. He would have his disciples apply themselves to this study,—not that they may be able to buy or sell,—not that they may qualify themselves to be shopkeepers or travelling merchants,—but that they may learn to withdraw their minds from the ever-shifting spectacle of this visible and tangible world, and to fix them on the immutable essence of things.*

Bacon on the other hand, valued this branch of knowledge only on account of its uses with reference to that visible and tangible world which Plato so much despised. He speaks with scorn of the mystical arithmetic of the later Platonists; and laments the propensity of mankind to employ, on mere matters of curiosity, powers, the whole exertion of which is required for purposes of solid advantage. He advises arithmeticians to leave these trifles, and to employ themselves in framing convenient expressions, which may be of use in physical researches.†

The same reasons which led Plato to recommend the study of arithmetic, led him to recommend also the study of mathematics. The vulgar crowd of geometricians, he says, will not understand him. They have practice always in view. They do not know that the real use of the science is to lead man to the knowledge of abstract, essential, eternal truth.‡ Indeed, if we are to believe Plutarch, Plato carried this feeling so far, that he considered geometry as degraded by being applied to any purpose of vulgar utility. Archytas,[1] it seems, had framed machines of extraordinary power, on mathematical principles.§ Plato remonstrated with his friend; and declared that this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft, fit only for carpenters and wheelwrights. The office of geometry, he said, was to discipline the mind, not to minister to the base wants of the body. His interference was successful; and from that time, according to Plutarch, the science of mechanics was considered as unworthy of the attention of a philosopher.

Archimedes in a later age imitated and surpassed Archytas. But even Archimedes was not free from the prevailing notion that geometry was degraded by being employed to produce any thing useful. It was with diffi-

* Plato's *Republic*, Book 7.

† *De Augmentis*, Lib. 3, Cap. 6.

‡ Plato's *Republic*, Book 7.

[1 He was credited with having invented the screw and the pulley.]

§ Plutarch, *Sympos.*, viii, and *Life of Marcellus*. The machines of Archytas are also mentioned by Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius.

culty that he was induced to stoop from speculation to practice. He was half ashamed of those inventions [2] which were the wonder of hostile nations; and always spoke of them slightingly as mere amusements—as trifles in which a mathematician might be suffered to relax his mind after intense application to the higher parts of his science.

The opinion of Bacon on this subject was diametrically opposed to that of the ancient philosophers. He valued geometry chiefly, if not solely, on account of those uses which to Plato appeared so base. And it is remarkable that the longer he lived the stronger this feeling became. When, in 1605, he wrote the two books on the 'Advancement of Learning,' he dwelt on the advantages which mankind derived from mixed mathematics; but he at the same time admitted, that the beneficial effect produced by mathematical study on the intellect, though a collateral advantage, was 'no less worthy than that which was principal and intended.' But it is evident that his views underwent a change. When, nearly twenty years later, he published the *De Augmentis*, which is the treatise on the 'Advancement of Learning,' greatly expanded and carefully corrected, he made important alterations in the part which related to mathematics. He condemned with severity the high pretensions of the mathematicians,—'delicias et fastum mathematicorum.' Assuming the well-being of the human race to be the end of knowledge,* he pronounced that mathematical science could claim no higher rank than that of an appendage, or an auxiliary to other sciences. Mathematical science, he says, is the handmaid of natural philosophy—she ought to demean herself as such—and he declares that he cannot conceive by what ill chance it has happened that she presumes to claim precedence over her mistress. He predicts,—a prediction which would have made Plato shudder,—that as more and more discoveries are made in physics, there will be more and more branches of mixed mathematics. Of that collateral advantage, the value of which, twenty years before, he rated so highly, he says not one word. This omission cannot have been the effect of mere inadvertence. His own treatise was before him. From that treatise he deliberately expunged whatever was favorable to the study of pure mathematics, and inserted several keen reflections on the ardent votaries of that study. This fact in our opinion, admits of only one explanation. Bacon's love of those pursuits which directly tend to improve the condition of mankind, and his

[2 Among them the water-screw, military machines, and a planetarium. He founded the science of hydrostatics.]

* Usui et commodis hominum consulimus.[3]

[3 'We have considered the profit and interests of men.']

jealousy of all pursuits merely curious, had grown upon him, and had, it may be, become immoderate. He was afraid of using any expression which might have the effect of inducing any man of talents to employ in speculations, useful only to the mind of the speculator, a single hour which might be employed in extending the empire of man over matter.* If Bacon erred here, we must acknowledge that we greatly prefer his error to the opposite error of Plato.—We have no patience with a philosophy which, like those Roman matrons who swallowed abortives in order to preserve their shapes, takes pains to be barren for fear of being homely.

Let us pass to astronomy. This was one of the sciences which Plato exhorted his disciples to learn, but for reasons far removed from common habits of thinking. 'Shall we set down astronomy,' says Socrates, 'among the subjects of study?' † 'I think so,' answers his young friend Glaucon: 'to know something about the seasons, about the months and the years is of use for military purposes, as well as for agriculture and navigation.' 'It amuses me,' says Socrates, 'to see how afraid you are lest the common herd of people should accuse you of recommending useless studies.' He then proceeds in that pure and magnificent diction, which, as Cicero said Jupiter would use if Jupiter spoke Greek, to explain, that the use of astronomy is not to add to the vulgar comforts of life, but to assist in raising the mind to the contemplation of things which are to be perceived by the pure intellect alone. The knowledge of the actual motions of the heavenly bodies he considers as of little value. The appearances which make the sky beautiful at night are, he tells us, like the figures which a geometrician draws on the sand, mere examples, mere helps to feeble minds. We must get beyond them; we must neglect them; we must attain to an astronomy which is as independent of the actual stars as geometrical truth is independent of the lines of an ill-drawn diagram. This is, we imagine, very nearly, if not exactly, the astronomy which Bacon compared to the ox of Prometheus ‡—a sleek, well shaped hide, stuffed with rubbish, goodly to look at, but containing nothing to eat. He complained that astronomy had, to its great injury, been separated from natural philosophy, of which it was one of the noblest provinces, and annexed to the domain of mathematics. The world stood in need, he said, of a very different astronomy—of a *living astronomy*, § of an

* Compare the passage relating to mathematics in the Second Book of the Advancement of Learning with the *De Augmentis*, Lib. 3, Cap. 6.

† Plato's *Republic*, Book 7.

‡ *De Augmentis*, Lib. 3, Cap. 4.

§ Astronomia viva.

astronomy which should set * forth the nature, the motion, and the influences of the heavenly bodies, as they really are.

On the greatest and most useful of all inventions,—the invention of alphabetical writing,—Plato did not look with much complacency. He seems to have thought that the use of letters had operated on the human mind as the use of the go-cart in learning to walk, or of corks in learning to swim, is said to operate on the human body. It was a support which soon became indispensable to those who used it,—which made vigorous exertion first unnecessary, and then impossible. The powers of the intellect would, he conceived, have been more fully developed without this delusive aid. Men would have been compelled to exercise the understanding and the memory; and, by deep and assiduous meditation, to make truth thoroughly their own. Now, on the contrary, much knowledge is traced on paper, but little is engraved in the soul. A man is certain that he can find information at a moment's notice when he wants it. He therefore suffers it to fade from his mind. Such a man cannot in strictness be said to know any thing. He has the show without the reality of wisdom. These opinions Plato has put into the mouth of an ancient King of Egypt.† But it is evident from the context that they were his own; and so they were understood to be by Quinctilian.‡ Indeed they are in perfect accordance with the whole Platonic system.

Bacon's views, as may easily be supposed, were widely different.§ The powers of the memory, he observes, without the help of writing, can do little towards the advancement of any useful science. He acknowledges that the memory may be disciplined to such a point as to be able to perform very extraordinary feats. But on such feats he sets little value. The habits of his mind, he tells us, are such that he is not disposed to rate highly any accomplishment, however rare, which is of no practical use to mankind. As to these prodigious achievements of the memory, he ranks them with the exhibitions of rope-dancers and tumblers. 'The two performances,' he says, 'are of much the same sort. The one is an abuse of the powers of the body; the other is an abuse of the powers of the mind. Both may perhaps excite our wonder; but neither is entitled to our respect.'

To Plato, the science of medicine appeared one of very disputable advan-

* 'Quæ substantiam et motum et influxum cœlestium, prout re vera sunt proponat.' Compare this language with Plato's, ' τὰ δ'ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐάσομεν.' [4]

[4 'Things in the heavens we shall leave out of consideration.']

† Plato's *Phædrus*.

‡ Quinctilian, XI.

§ *De Augmentis*, Lib. 5, Cap. 5.

tage.* He did not indeed object to quick cures for acute disorders, or for injuries produced by accidents. But the art which resists the slow sap of a chronic disease—which repairs frames enervated by lust, swollen by gluttony, or inflamed by wine—which encourages sensuality, by mitigating the natural punishment of the sensualist, and prolongs existence when the intellect has ceased to retain its entire energy—had no share of his esteem. A life protracted by medical skill he pronounced to be a long death. The exercise of the art of medicine ought, he said, to be tolerated so far as that art may serve to cure the occasional distempers of men whose constitutions are good. As to those who have bad constitutions, let them die;—and the sooner the better. Such men are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their domestic affairs. That however is comparatively of little consequence. But they are incapable of study and speculation. If they engage in any severe mental exercise, they are troubled with giddiness and fulness of the head; all which they lay to the account of philosophy. The best thing that can happen to such wretches is to have done with life at once. He quotes mythical authority in support of this doctrine; and reminds his disciples that the practice of the sons of Æsculapius,[5] as described by Homer, extended only to the cure of external injuries.

Far different was the philosophy of Bacon. Of all the sciences, that which he seems to have regarded with the greatest interest was the science which, in Plato's opinion, would not be tolerated in a well regulated community. To make men perfect was no part of Bacon's plan. His humble aim was to make imperfect men comfortable. The beneficence of his philosophy resembled the beneficence of the common Father, whose sun rises on the evil and the good—whose rain descends for the just and the unjust. In Plato's opinion man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion philosophy was made for man; it was a means to an end;—and that end was to increase the pleasures, and to mitigate the pains of millions who are not and cannot be philosophers. That a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales,[6] should be treated as a *caput lupinum*[7] because he could not read the Timæus[8] without a headache, was a notion which the humane

* Plato's *Republic*, Book 3.

[5 God of medicine.]

[6 The *Heptameron*, love stories by Queen Margaret of Navarre (1492–1549).]

[7 Wolf's head. 'Let him be treated like a wolf's head' meant treated like an outlaw, killed on sight.]

[8 One of Plato's major works.]

spirit of the English school of wisdom altogether rejected. Bacon would not have thought it beneath the dignity of a philosopher to contrive an improved garden chair for such a valetudinarian,—to devise some way of rendering his medicines more palatable,—to invent repasts which he might enjoy, and pillows on which he might sleep soundly; and this though there might not be the smallest hope that the mind of the poor invalid would ever rise to the contemplation of the ideal beautiful and the ideal good. As Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of the art of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ; and reminded his readers that the great physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the physician of the body.*

When we pass from the science of medicine to that of legislation, we find the same difference between the systems of these two great men. Plato, at the commencement of the fine Dialogue on Laws, lays it down as a fundamental principle, that the end of legislation is to make men virtuous. It is unnecessary to point out the extravagant conclusions to which such a proposition leads. Bacon well knew to how great an extent the happiness of every society must depend on the virtue of its members; and he also knew what legislators can, and what they cannot do for the purpose of promoting virtue. The view which he has given of the end of legislation and of the principal means for the attainment of that end, has always seemed to us eminently happy; even among the many happy passages of the same kind with which his works abound. 'Finis et scopus quem leges intueri atque ad quem jussiones et sanctiones suas dirigere debent, non alius est quam ut cives feliciter degant. Id fiet si pietate et religione recte instituti, moribus honesti, armis adversus hostes externos tuti, legum auxilio adversus seditiones et privatas injurias muniti, imperio et magistratibus obsequentes, copiis et opibus locupletes et florentes fuerint.' † The end is the well-being of the people. The means are the imparting of moral and religious education; the providing of every thing necessary for defence against foreign enemies; the maintaining of internal order; the establishing of a judicial, financial, and commercial system, under which wealth may be rapidly accumulated and securely enjoyed.

Even with respect to the form in which laws ought to be drawn, there is a remarkable difference of opinion between the Greek and the Englishman. Plato thought a preamble essential; Bacon thought it mischievous. Each

* *De Augmentis*, Lib. 4, Cap. 2.

† *De Augmentis*, Lib. 8, Cap. 3, Alph. 5 [translated by the rest of the paragraph].

was consistent with himself. Plato, considering the moral improvement of the people as the end of legislation, justly inferred that a law which commanded and threatened, but which neither convinced the reason nor touched the heart, must be a most imperfect law. He was not content with deterring from theft a man who still continued to be a thief at heart,—with restraining a son who hated his mother from beating his mother. The only obedience on which he set so much value, was the obedience which an enlightened understanding yields to reason, and which a virtuous disposition yields to precepts of virtue. He really seems to have believed that, by prefixing to every law an eloquent and pathetic exhortation, he should, to a great extent, render penal enactments superfluous. Bacon entertained no such romantic hopes; and he well knew the practical inconveniences of the course which Plato recommended. 'Neque nobis,' says he, 'prologi legum qui inepti olim habiti sunt et leges introducunt disputantes non jubentes utique placerent si priscos mores ferre possemus. . . Quantum fieri potest prologi evitentur et lex incipiat a jussione.' * [9]

Had Plato lived to finish the 'Critias,' a comparison between that noble fiction and the 'New Atlantis,' would probably have furnished us with still more striking instances. It is amusing to think with what horror he would have seen such an institution as 'Solomon's House' [10] rising in his republic; with what vehemence he would have ordered the brewhouses, the perfume-houses, and the dispensatories to be pulled down; and with what inexorable rigor he would have driven beyond the frontier all the Fellows of the College, Merchants of light and Depredators, Lamps and Pioneers.

To sum up the whole: we should say that the aim of the Platonic philosophy was to exalt man into a god. The aim of the Baconian philosophy was to provide man with what he requires while he continues to be man. The aim of the Platonic philosophy was to raise us far above vulgar wants. The aim of the Baconian philosophy was to supply our vulgar wants. The former aim was noble; but the latter was attainable. Plato drew a good bow; but, like Acestes in Virgil,[11] he aimed at the stars; and therefore, though there was no want of strength or skill, the shot was thrown away. His arrow was indeed followed by a track of dazzling radiance, but it struck nothing.

* *De Augmentis*, Lib. 8, Cap. 3, Alph. 69.

[9 'If we could hold to ancient customs, preambles of laws, anciently considered foolish and introducing laws by disputing and not by commanding, would certainly displease us. . . So far as possible, let preambles be avoided, and let the law begin by commanding.']

[10 A research institute in Bacon's *New Atlantis*.]

[11 *Aeneid*, v, 519–29.]

'Volens liquidis in nubibus arsit arundo
Signavitque viam flammis, tenuisque recessit
Consumpta in ventos.' [12]

Bacon fixed his eye on a mark which was placed on the earth and within bow-shot, and hit it in the white. The philosophy of Plato began in words and ended in words,—noble words indeed,—words such as were to be expected from the finest of human intellects exercising boundless dominion over the finest of human languages. The philosophy of Bacon began in observations and ended in arts.

The boast of the ancient philosophers was, that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was indeed the only practical good which the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect; and undoubtedly if they had effected this, they would have deserved the greatest praise. But the truth is, that in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than nothing. They promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it. . .

[[12] Chafed by the speed, it fired; and, as it flew,
A train of following flames, ascending, drew:
Kindling they mount, and mark the shiny way;
Across the skies as falling meteors play,
And vanish into wind, or in a blaze decay (Dryden).]

A. N. Whitehead

THE ABSTRACT NATURE OF MATHEMATICS

¶ A. N. Whitehead (1861–1947) often wrote as vividly and as challengingly in his more popular books as he wrote profoundly in his formal mathematical and physical treatises. Adequate judgment of his *Principia Mathematica* (with Bertrand Russell, 1910), *Principles of Natural Knowledge* (1919), *The Concept of Nature* (1920), or *Process and Reality* (1929) can be made only by specialists, but even the non-specialist, if he is familiar with the intellectual history of the twentieth century, is aware of the lasting importance of those works. There are other books, addressed to the general educated public, which have been almost as provocative and influential in their spheres as *Principia Mathematica* and *Process and Reality* are in theirs. Of these the best are *Science and the Modern World* (1925), *Religion in the Making* (1926), and *Adventures of Ideas* (1933).

An Introduction to Mathematics (first published in 1911) is a minor work when compared with any of those named above, but it is none the less an unusual one on a subject frequently obscure to all but the elect. Woodrow Wilson said somewhere that so far as he knew, the natural carnal man never desired to study mathematics. Matthew Arnold was of the same opinion, as were many others. But perhaps their lack of appreciation was due to the fault Whitehead emphasizes: that mathematics is too often taught as a mere technical procedure unrelated to general conceptions; that students are not made to see, from the beginning of their study, the connections between mathematics, philosophy, and science generally. However this may be, the opening chapter of *An Introduction to Mathematics*, brief as it is, does more than many introductions to make one see the appeal of its subject.

FROM *An Introduction to Mathematics*, 1948. Reprinted by permission of the Oxford University Press.

THE study of mathematics is apt to commence in disappointment. The important applications of the science, the theoretical interest of its ideas, and the logical rigour of its methods, all generate the expectation of a speedy introduction to processes of interest. We are told that by its aid the stars are weighed and the billions of molecules in a drop of water are counted. Yet, like the ghost of Hamlet's father,[1] this great science eludes the efforts of our mental weapons to grasp it—' 'Tis here, 'tis there, 'tis gone'—and what we do see does not suggest the same excuse for illusiveness as sufficed for the ghost, that it is too noble for our gross methods. 'A show of violence,' if ever excusable, may surely be 'offered' to the trivial results which occupy the pages of some elementary mathematical treatises.

The reason for this failure of the science to live up to its reputation is that its fundamental ideas are not explained to the student disentangled from the technical procedure which has been invented to facilitate their exact presentation in particular instances. Accordingly, the unfortunate learner finds himself struggling to acquire a knowledge of a mass of details which are not illuminated by any general conception. Without a doubt, technical facility is a first requisite for valuable mental activity: we shall fail to appreciate the rhythm of Milton, or the passion of Shelley, so long as we find it necessary to spell the words and are not quite certain of the forms of the individual letters. In this sense there is no royal road to learning. But it is equally an error to confine attention to technical processes, excluding consideration of general ideas. Here lies the road to pedantry.

The object of the following chapters is not to teach mathematics, but to enable students from the very beginning of their course to know what the science is about, and why it is necessarily the foundation of exact thought as applied to natural phenomena. All allusion in what follows to detailed deductions in any part of the science will be inserted merely for the purpose of example, and care will be taken to make the general argument comprehensible, even if here and there some technical process or symbol which the reader does not understand is cited for the purpose of illustration.

The first acquaintance which most people have with mathematics is through arithmetic. That two and two make four is usually taken as the

[1 See *Hamlet*, I, i, 141–2, 144.]

type of a simple mathematical proposition which everyone will have heard of. Arithmetic, therefore, will be a good subject to consider in order to discover, if possible, the most obvious characteristic of the science. Now, the first noticeable fact about arithmetic is that it applies to everything, to tastes and to sounds, to apples and to angels, to the ideas of the mind and to the bones of the body. The nature of the things is perfectly indifferent, of all things it is true that two and two make four. Thus we write down as the leading characteristic of mathematics that it deals with properties and ideas which are applicable to things just because they are things, and apart from any particular feelings, or emotions, or sensations, in any way connected with them. This is what is meant by calling mathematics an abstract science.

The result which we have reached deserves attention. It is natural to think that an abstract science cannot be of much importance in the affairs of human life, because it has omitted from its consideration everything of real interest. It will be remembered that Swift, in his description of Gulliver's voyage to Laputa,[2] is of two minds on this point. He describes the mathematicians of that country as silly and useless dreamers, whose attention has to be awakened by flappers. Also, the mathematical tailor measures his height by a quadrant, and deduces his other dimensions by a rule and compasses, producing a suit of very ill-fitting clothes. On the other hand, the mathematicians of Laputa, by their marvellous invention of the magnetic island floating in the air, ruled the country and maintained their ascendency over their subjects. Swift, indeed, lived at a time peculiarly unsuited for gibes at contemporary mathematicians. Newton's *Principia*[3] had just been written, one of the great forces which have transformed the modern world. Swift might just as well have laughed at an earthquake.

But a mere list of the achievements of mathematics is an unsatisfactory way of arriving at an idea of its importance. It is worth while to spend a little thought in getting at the root reason why mathematics, because of its very abstractness, must always remain one of the most important topics for thought. Let us try to make clear to ourselves why explanations of the order of events necessarily tend to become mathematical.

Consider how all events are interconnected. When we see the lightning, we listen for the thunder; when we hear the wind, we look for the waves on the sea; in the chill autumn, the leaves fall. Everywhere order reigns, so that when some circumstances have been noted we can foresee that others

[2] In the third book of *Gulliver's Travels*.]

[3] *Gulliver's Travels* appeared in 1726, Newton's *Principia* in 1687.]

will also be present. The progress of science consists in observing these interconnexions and in showing with a patient ingenuity that the events of this ever-shifting world are but examples of a few general connexions or relations called laws. To see what is general in what is particular and what is permanent in what is transitory is the aim of scientific thought. In the eye of science, the fall of an apple, the motion of a planet round a sun, and the clinging of the atmosphere to the earth are all seen as examples of the law of gravity. This possibility of disentangling the most complex evanescent circumstances into various examples of permanent laws is the controlling idea of modern thought.

Now let us think of the sort of laws which we want in order completely to realize this scientific ideal. Our knowledge of the particular facts of the world around us is gained from our sensations. We see, and hear, and taste, and smell, and feel hot and cold, and push, and rub, and ache, and tingle. These are just our own personal sensations: my toothache cannot be your toothache, and my sight cannot be your sight. But we ascribe the origin of these sensations to relations between the things which form the external world. Thus the dentist extracts not the toothache but the tooth. And not only so, we also endeavour to imagine the world as one connected set of things which underlies all the perceptions of all people. There is not one world of things for my sensations and another for yours, but one world in which we both exist. It is the same tooth both for dentist and patient. Also we hear and we touch the same world as we see.

It is easy, therefore, to understand that we want to describe the connexions between these external things in some way which does not depend on any particular sensations, nor even on all the sensations of any particular person. The laws satisfied by the course of events in the world of external things are to be described, if possible, in a neutral universal fashion, the same for blind men as for deaf men, and the same for beings with faculties beyond our ken as for normal human beings.

But when we have put aside our immediate sensations, the most serviceable part—from its clearness, definiteness, and universality—of what is left is composed of our general ideas of the abstract formal properties of things; in fact, the abstract mathematical ideas mentioned above. Thus it comes about that, step by step, and not realizing the full meaning of the process, mankind has been led to search for a mathematical description of the properties of the universe, because in this way only can a general idea of the course of events be formed, freed from reference to particular persons or to particular types of sensation. For example, it might be asked at din-

ner: 'What was it which underlay my sensation of sight, yours of touch, and his of taste and smell?' the answer being 'an apple.' But in its final analysis, science seeks to describe an apple in terms of the positions and motions of molecules, a description which ignores me and you and him, and also ignores sight and touch and taste and smell. Thus mathematical ideas, because they are abstract, supply just what is wanted for a scientific description of the course of events.

This point has usually been misunderstood, from being thought of in too narrow a way. Pythagoras[4] had a glimpse of it when he proclaimed that number was the source of all things. In modern times the belief that the ultimate explanation of all things was to be found in Newtonian mechanics was an adumbration of the truth that all science as it grows towards perfection becames mathematical in its ideas.

[4 One of the greatest figures in the history of ancient thought. He had a school in southern Italy in the sixth century B.C., which was devoted to religion and philosophy. He discovered the musical octave and the 'Pythagorean theorem' in geometry. Plato owed a great deal to Pythagorean doctrines.]

Hans Zinsser

RATS AND MEN

Hans Zinsser (1878–1940) was a bacteriologist who taught at Stanford, Columbia, and Harvard universities, wrote several text books on his specialty, and won many honors in the scientific world. To the public, however, he was known as the author of *Rats, Lice and History*, an uncommonly readable book, learned but unpedantic, about typhus and its effects on civilization. Written 'at odd moments as a relaxation from studies of typhus fever in the laboratory and in the field,' it is intended not only to tell the story of typhus but to be a 'protest against the American attitude which tends to insist that a specialist should have no interests beyond his chosen field.' Zinsser believed that 'one type of intelligent occupation should, in all but exceptional cases, increase the capacity for comprehension in general . . . that art and sciences have much in common and both may profit by mutual appraisal.' His book shows that he himself had both the scientific and the artistic temperament.

It is quite impossible to make a case for the presence of true rats in Europe proper during classical times, much as this would clarify the epidemiological situation. It is conceivable that the manner of transmission of plague and typhus may have undergone modification since the Peloponnesian Wars [1] by changed adaptations to hosts, both insect and rodent. But it would seem much more likely that the zoölogical differentiations between rodents so similar and closely related as mice and rats were inaccurate in ancient records, and that rats may have existed—though undomesticated. This would give us a wider latitude for speculation regarding the nature of epidemics, which, to be sure, were rarely, under the circumstances of ancient life, as widespread or deadly as they became with the

[1 Between Athens and Sparta, 431–404 B.C.]

From *Rats, Lice and History*. Copyright 1935, 1940 by Hans Zinsser. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Co.

later concentrations of population and of urban habits. At any rate, if rats had been present in those times in anything like the numbers in which they are found to-day, we should probably have reliable records. It may well be that the frugality of well-run households, like that of Penelope,[2] gave little encouragement to house rats to become parasitic on man to the extent to which they have since.

All this is conjecture. According to the wisest students of the subject, there is no certain knowledge of rats in Europe, within historic periods, until shortly after the Crusades. In prehistoric days they certainly existed there—but later disappeared. Fossil remains of rats have been found in the Pliocene period of Lombardy (the Mastodon period of Europe) and in the later Pleistocene of Crete. They were present during the glacial period with the lake dwellers, whom they pestered in Mecklenburg and Western Germany. From that time on, there were either few or no rats until thousands of years later.

In regard to the reappearance of rats in Europe, our industrious colleagues, the zoölogists, have gathered an immense amount of information, much of which has been interestingly summarized by Barrett-Hamilton and Hinton in their *History of British Mammals*, and by Donaldson in his *Memoir on the Rat*. Before we proceed to this subject, however, it will be profitable to consider the striking analogy between rats and men. More than any other species of animal, the rat and mouse have become dependent on man, and in so doing they have developed characteristics which are amazingly human.

In the first place, like man, the rat has become practically omnivorous. It eats anything that lets it and—like man—devours its own kind, under stress. It breeds at all seasons and—again like man—it is most amorous in the springtime.* It hybridizes easily and, judging by the strained relation-

[2 In Homer's *Odyssey*.]

* On first sight, the fertility of rats would seem far to outstrip that of man; for rats reach adolescence when a little more than half grown, and produce one or two litters a year, averaging from five to ten in number. The difference from man, however, is not so striking if one remembers Donaldson's calculation that one rat year equals thirty years for man, and makes the comparison with human society of former years—in savage communities, or before the humane and sane practice of birth control had begun to weaken the inhibitions of religion in such matters. Many examples not too unlike conditions among rats could be cited—such as, for instance, the story of Samuel Wesley, father of John, which we take from a review by J. C. Minot of Laver's biography of Wesley. Samuel had fourteen children with his good Sukey before 1701, when he left her because she refused to pray for William III as the lawful King of England. On the accession of Queen Anne, he was reconciled and bestowed five more children upon the fortunate woman. The oldest of these pledges of reconciliation was the immortal John Wesley.

ship between the black and the brown rat, develops social or racial prejudices against this practice. The sex proportions are like those among us. Inbreeding takes place readily. The males are larger, the females fatter. It adapts itself to all kinds of climates. It makes ferocious war upon its own kind, but has not, as yet, become nationalized. So far, it has still stuck to tribal wars—like man before nations were invented. If it continues to ape man as heretofore, we may, in a few centuries, have French rats eating German ones, or Nazi rats attacking Communist or Jewish rats; however, such a degree of civilization is probably not within the capacities of any mere animal. Also—like man—the rat is individualistic until it needs help. That is, it fights bravely alone against weaker rivals, for food or for love; but it knows how to organize armies and fight in hordes when necessary.

Donaldson, basing his calculations mainly on stages in the development of the nervous system, reckons three years of a rat life as ninety years for man. By this scale, the rat reaches puberty at about sixteen, and arrives at the menopause at the equivalent of forty-five. In following man about all over the earth, the rat has—more than any other living creature except man—been able to adapt itself to any conditions of seasonal changes or climate.

The first rat to arrive in Europe was *Mus rattus*—the black rat, house rat, or ship rat. It may have wandered in between 400 and 1100 A.D., with the hordes that swept into Europe from the East in that period of great unrest—the *Völkerwanderung*.[3] It may not have arrived until somewhat later, when the first Crusaders returned. It is not mentioned in the Epinal Glossary of 700 A.D., but may have been meant by the word 'raet' in the English Archbishop Ælfric's Vocabulary of 1000 A.D. But the authorities from whom we cite this call attention to the fact that the word 'rata' was the Provençal for the domestic mouse of that time, and the word may have been introduced into England.* Hamilton and Hinton say that the first clear differentiation between rats and mice is found in the writings of

[3 Migration of peoples.]

* Rats and mice belong to the same genus, and the closeness of the relationship is attested by the experiment of Ivanoff, who artificially inseminated a white mouse with the sperm of a white rat, and obtained two hybrids after a pregnancy of twenty-seven days. Mice may have developed out of rats under circumstances which made it less desirable to be large and ferocious than to be able to get into a smaller hole—the advantages of which may be appreciated by those of us who have lived in the world during the post-war years.

Giraldus Cambrensis (1147–1223). After that date, it is referred to frequently.

As to the Eastern origin of the black rat, there seems to be no difference of opinion among authorities, though there is much uncertainty about the exact part of the Orient from which it came. De L'Isle believes that the *Mus alexandrinus* represents the source stock of the European *Mus rattus*. This—the Alexandrine rat—did not, according to him, become parasitic on human society until the seventh century—living before this time a wild existence, possibly in the Arabian deserts, a fact which would account for its failure to migrate into classical Europe with trade, and, in the early Middle Ages, with Saracen invasions. By the time of the Crusaders, it had begun to domesticate and consequently to follow human travel. Being a climber and therefore a ship rat, it spread rapidly to Mediterranean ports, where, according to Hamilton and Hinton, its arrival by sea is witnessed to by the name πόντικος [4] applied to it by the modern Greeks; 'pantagena' by the Venetians. The Genoese mistook it for a mole, calling it 'Salpa,' another point of evidence that it may have been new to them.

From the time of its arrival, the rat spread across Europe with a speed superior even to that of the white man in the Americas. Before the end of the thirteenth century, it had become a pest. The legend of the *Rattenfänger von Hameln*,[5] who piped the children into the hollow Koppenberg because the town refused his pay for piping the rats into the Weser, is placed at or about 1284. By this time, the rat had penetrated into England. It had reached Ireland some time before this, where it was the 'foreign' or 'French' mouse, 'ean francach.' Our authorities tell us that in Ireland, even until very recent times, everything foreign was called 'francach,' or French. A little later, the rat was in Denmark, Norway, and the adjacent islands. By Shakespeare's time, the black rat was so formidable a nuisance that days of prayer for protection against its ravages were set aside, and rat catchers (see *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III) were important officials, probably calling themselves, as they would to-day, scientists or artists (or 'rattors' —*cf.* 'realtors' and 'morticians').

For twice as long as the Vandals had their day in North Africa, or the Saracens in Spain, or the Normans in Italy, the black rats had their own way in Europe. Their reign covered the periods of the devastating epidemics of plague that swept through the battle areas of the Thirty Years' War and the later ones of the seventeenth century. And during the centuries of its

[4 Of the sea.]
[5 The Pied Piper of Hamelin.]

supremacy there occurred the most destructive typhus epidemics, accompanying wars and famines, that have occurred up to our own time. Whether the black rats of mediæval Europe played a rôle in these remains uncertain. That they played the leading part in the plague epidemics of this time seems beyond question.

But just as the established civilizations of Northern Europe were swept aside by the mass invasions of barbarians from the East, so the established hegemony of the black rat was eventually wiped out with the incursion of the hordes of the brown rat, or *Mus decumanus*—the ferocious, short-nosed, and short-tailed Asiatic that swept across the Continent in the early eighteenth century; until at the present time, the slender-nosed, long-tailed, climbing *Mus rattus* has been all but exterminated in its former strongholds, and continues to thrive only in relatively small groups along the littoral, in seaports, on islands, or in countries like South American and other tropical regions where it is not confined to parasitic life in competition with its larger and more barbaric rival, or where the brown *conquistadores* have not yet arrived. It maintains its former superiority only on ships, where, because of its greater ability in climbing, it can still hold its own.*

The brown rat, too, came from the East. It is now known as the 'common' rat and, because of a mistaken notion of its origin, as *Mus norvegicus*. Its true origin, according to Hamilton and Hinton, is probably Chinese Mongolia or the region east of Lake Baikal, in both of which places forms resembling it have been found indigenous. The same writers quote Blasius, who believes that the ancients about the Caspian Sea may have known this rat. Claudius Ælianus, a Roman rhetorician of the second century, in his *De Animalium Natura*, speaks of 'little less than Ichneumons, making periodical raids in infinite numbers' in the countries along the Caspian, 'swimming over rivers holding each other's tails.' This may or may not be so; but it seems certain that this rat was not known in Western Europe until the eighteenth century.

Pallas (1831), in his *Zoögraphica Rosso-Asiatica*, records that in 1727 —a mouse year—great masses of these rats swam across the Volga after an earthquake. They invaded Astrakhan, and thence rapidly spread westward. They reached England, probably by ship, in 1728, and were unjustly called the 'Hanoverian rat' because of the unpopularity of the House of Hanover, though probably they had not arrived in Germany at that time. They were seen in Prussia in 1750, and were common by 1780. This rat

* In a recent rat survey of Boston, black rats were found in only a single small and circumscribed area, close to the docks.

was unknown to Buffon in 1753 and to Linnæus in 1758—but both of these gentlemen were already 'famous' scientists at this time, and most likely occupied in attending committee meetings. The brown rat arrived in Norway in 1762, a little later in Spain, and in Scotland about 1770. By 1775 it had come to America from England. It appears to have had a hard time only in countries where the population is what is spoken as of 'thrifty.' In Scotland, it took from 1776 to 1834 to get from Selkirk to Morayshire; it did not dare enter Switzerland until 1869, and has never done very well among the Switzers. It spread slowly across our continent, owing to deserts, rivers, and long distances between 'hand-outs.' Consequently, it did not arrive in California until shortly after 1851. Now that it is there, it thrives in that wonderful climate as hardly elsewhere. At the present time the rat has spread across the North American Continent from Panama to Alaska, has penetrated to all the less tropical parts of South America, to the South Sea Islands, to New Zealand, and to Australia. In fact, it has conquered the world. Only the extreme cold of Greenland does not seem to attract it. Unlike the Eskimo, it has had the good sense, whenever introduced to the arctic regions, to wander southward at the first opportunity.

Wherever it has gone, it has driven out the black rat and all rival rodents that compete with it. From the point of view of all other living creatures, the rat is an unmitigated nuisance and pest. There is nothing that can be said in its favor.* It can live anywhere and eat anything. It burrows for itself when it has to, but, when it can, it takes over the habitations of other animals, such as rabbits, and kills them and their young. It climbs and it swims.

It carries diseases of man and animals—plague, typhus, trichinella spiralis, rat-bite fever, infectious jaundice, possibly Trench fever, probably foot-and-mouth disease and a form of equine 'influenza.' Its destructiveness is

* Of course, rats might form a cheap source of food. They have been eaten without harm under stress—at the siege of Paris in 1871, and before that by the French garrison at Malta in 1798, where, according to Lantz, food was so scarce that a rat carcass brought a high price. The same writer states that Dr. Kane of the arctic ship *Advance* ate rats through the winter, and avoided scurvy—from which his more fastidious companions all suffered. For the following story we cannot vouch. It is related to us that a learned specialist on rodents was lecturing, some years ago, in one of the more distinguished university centres in the United States. After the lecture, he was taken to a restaurant famous for its terrapin. He enjoyed his meal and praised the quality of the *pièce de résistance*, but recognized the bones on his plate as those of rats. He is said later to have visited the albino rattery where the 'terrapin' was bred. The matter might be looked into as a commercial possibility. Robert Southey once suggested that the first requisite to successful rat eradication was to make them a table delicacy.

almost unlimited. Lantz, of the United States Department of Agriculture, has made some approximate estimates of this, as follows (we abbreviate):—

Rats destroy cultivated grain as seeds, sprouts, or after ripening.

They eat Indian corn, both during growth and in the cribs, and have been known to get away with half of the crop. A single rat can eat from forty to fifty pounds a year.

They destroy merchandise, both stored and in transit, books, leather, harness, gloves, cloth, fruit, vegetables, peanuts, and so forth.

The rat is the greatest enemy of poultry, killing chicks, young turkeys, ducks, pigeons; also eating enormous numbers of eggs.

Rats destroy wild birds, ducks, woodcocks, and song birds.

They attack bulbs, seeds, and young plants or flowers.

They cause enormous damage to buildings, by gnawing wood, pipes, walls, and foundations.

Hagenbeck had to kill three elephants because the rats had gnawed their feet. Rats have killed young lambs and gnawed holes in the bellies of fat swine.

They have gnawed holes in dams and started floods; they have started fires by gnawing matches; they have bitten holes in mail sacks and eaten the mail; they have actually caused famines in India by wholesale crop destruction in scant years.

They have nibbled at the ears and noses of infants in their cribs; starving rats once devoured a man who entered a disused coal mine.

A rat census is obviously impossible. It is quite certain, however, that they breed more rapidly than they are destroyed in many places in the world. We can appraise the rat population only by the numbers that are killed in organized rat campaigns and by the amount of destruction they cause. In about 1860, Shipley tells us, there was a slaughterhouse for horses on Montfaucon, which it was planned to remove farther away from Paris. The carcasses of horses amounted to sometimes thirty-five a day, and were regularly cleaned up completely by rats in the following night. Dusaussois had the idea of trying to find out how many rats were engaged in this gruesome traffic. He set horse-meat bait in enclosures from which the exit of rats could be prevented, and in the course of the first night killed 2650. By the end of a month, he had killed over 16,000. Shipley estimates that there are about forty million rats in England at one time. In 1881 there was a rat plague in certain districts of India. The crops of the preceding two years were below average and a large part of them had been destroyed by

rats. Rewards offered for rat destruction led to a killing of over 12,000,000 rats. Shipley estimates that a single rat does about 7s. 6d. worth of damage in a year, which makes a charge of £15,000,000 upon Great Britain and Ireland. It costs about sixty cents to two dollars a year to feed a rat on grain. Every rat on a farm costs about fifty cents a year. Lantz adds to this that hotel managers estimate five dollars a year as a low estimate of the loss inflicted by a rat. He thinks that in the thickly populated parts of the country an estimate of one rat per acre is not excessive, and that in most of our cities there are as many rats as people. He investigated, in 1909, the approximate total damage by rats in the cities of Washington and Baltimore. From the data he obtained, he calculated the annual damage in the two cities as amounting to $400,000 and $700,000 respectively—which, considering the populations, amounted to an average loss of $1.27 a year per person. On the same basis, the urban population of the United States, at that time 28,000,000 people, sustained an annual direct injury of $35,000,000 a year. In Denmark, the estimated rat cost is about $1.20 a person; in Germany, eighty-five cents a person; in France, a little over a dollar. Add to this the inestimable depreciation of property and the costs of protection.

All this has nothing to do with our main subject, but we were started on rats, and it is just as well to give thought to the problem of what rat extermination for sanitary purposes is likely to mean in other respects.

The tremendous speed with which rats swarmed over the continents of the world can be readily understood if one reads the observations of actual rat migrations made in modern times. The seasonal migration of rats from buildings to the open fields takes place with the coming of the warm weather and the growth of vegetation; and a return to shelter follows with the cold weather. Dr. Lantz tells us that in 1903 hordes of rats migrated over several counties in Western Illinois, suddenly appearing when for several years no abnormal numbers had been seen. An eyewitness stated to Lantz that, as he was returning to his home on a moonlight night, he heard a rustling in a near-by field, and saw a great army of rats cross the road in front of him. The army of rats stretched away as far as he could see in the moonlight. This, to be sure, was before the Eighteenth Amendment,[6] but there must have been some fact behind it, since heavy damage was caused by rats in the entire surrounding country of farms and villages in the ensuing winter and summer. On one farm, in the month of April, about 3500 rats were caught in traps. Lantz himself saw a similar migration in the valley of the Kansas River, in 1904; and Lantz, being at that time an

[6] Prohibiting the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors.]

officer and gentleman of the United States Agricultural Service, cannot be under the suspicion that is aroused by accounts of armies of rats seen by moonshine. In England a general movement of rats inland from the coast occurs every October, and this migration is connected with the closing of the herring season. During the herring catch, rats swarm all over the coast, attracted by the food supply of herring cleaning; when it is over, they go back to their regular haunts. In South America, Lantz advises us, rat plagues are periodic in Paraná, in Brazil, and occur at intervals of about thirty years. In Chile, the same thing has been observed, at intervals of fifteen to twenty-five years. Studies of these migrations have shown that the rat plagues are associated with the ripening and decay of a dominant species of bamboo in each country. For a year or two, the ripening seed in the forests supplies a favorite food for the rats. They multiply enormously, and eventually, this food supply failing, they go back to the cultivated areas. A famine was caused in 1878 in the state of Paraná by the wholesale destruction of the corn, rice, and mandioca crops by rats. The invasion of Bermuda by rats in 1615, and their sudden disappearance, are as dramatic as the rise and fall of some of the short-lived Indian empires of Central and South America. Black rats appeared in that year, and within the two following ones increased with alarming rapidity. They devoured fruits, plants, and trees to such an extent that a famine resulted, and a law required every man in the islands to keep twelve traps set. Nothing, however, was of any use, until finally the rats disappeared with a suddenness that makes it almost necessary to assume that they died of a pestilence.

As we have indicated in a preceding paragraph, the natural history of the rat is tragically similar to that of man. Offspring of widely divergent evolutionary directions, men and rats reached present stages of physical development within a few hundred thousand years of each other—since remnants of both are found in the fossils of the glacial period.

Some of the more obvious qualities in which rats resemble men—ferocity, omnivorousness, and adaptability to all climates—have been mentioned above. We have also alluded to the irresponsible fecundity with which both species breed at all seasons of the year with a heedlessness of consequences which subjects them to wholesale disaster on the inevitable, occasional failure of the food supply. In this regard, it is only fair to state—in justice to man—that, as far as we can tell, the rat does this of its own free and stupid gluttony, while man has tradition, piety, and the duty of furnishing cannon fodder to contend with, in addition to his lower instincts. But these are, after all, phenomena of human biology, and man cannot be

absolved of responsibility for his stupidities because they are the results of wrong-headedness rather than the consequences of pure instinct—certainly not if they result in identical disasters.

Neither rat nor man has achieved social, commercial, or economic stability. This has been, either perfectly or to some extent, achieved by ants and by bees, by some birds, and by some of the fishes in the sea. Man and the rat are merely, so far, the most successful animals of prey. They are utterly destructive of other forms of life. Neither of them is of the slightest earthly use to any other species of living things. Bacteria nourish plants; plants nourish man and beast. Insects, in their well-organized societies, are destructive of one form of living creature, but helpful to another. Most other animals are content to lead peaceful and adjusted lives, rejoicing in vigor, grateful for this gift of living, and doing the minimum of injury to obtain the things they require. Man and the rat are utterly destructive. All that nature offers is taken for their own purposes, plant or beast.

Gradually these two have spread across the earth, keeping pace with each other and unable to destroy each other, though continually hostile. They have wandered from East to West, driven by their physical needs, and—unlike any other species of living things—have made war upon their own kind. The gradual, relentless, progressive extermination of the black rat by the brown has no parallel in nature so close as that of the similar extermination of one race of man by another. Did the Danes conquer England; or the Normans the Saxon-Danes; or the Normans the Sicilian-Mohammedans; or the Moors the Latin-Iberians; or the Franks the Moors; or the Spanish the Aztecs and the Incas; or the Europeans in general the simple aborigines of the world by qualities other than those by which *Mus decumanus* has driven out *Mus rattus*? In both species, the battle has been pitilessly to the strong. And the strong have been pitiless. The physically weak have been driven before the strong—annihilated, or constrained to the slavery of doing without the bounties which were provided for all equally. Isolated colonies of black rats survive, as weaker nations survive until the stronger ones desire the little they still possess.

The rat has an excuse. As far as we know, it does not appear to have developed a soul, or that intangible quality of justice, mercy, and reason that psychic evolution has bestowed upon man. We must not expect too much. It takes a hundred thousand years to alter the protuberances on a bone, the direction of a muscle; much longer than this to develop a lung from a gill, or to atrophy a tail. It is only about twenty-five hundred years since Plato, Buddha, and Confucius; only two thousand years since Christ.

In the meantime, we have had Homer and Saint Francis, Copernicus and Galileo; Shakespeare, Pascal, Newton, Goethe, Bach, and Beethoven, and a great number of lesser men and women of genius who have demonstrated the evolutionary possibilities of the human spirit. If such minds have been rare, and spread thinly over three thousand years, after all, they still represent the sports that indicate the high possibilities of fortunate genetic combinations. And these must inevitably increase if the environment remains at all favorable. If no upward progress in spirit or intelligence seems apparent, let us say, between the best modern minds and that of Aristotle, we must remember that, in terms of evolutionary change, three thousand years are negligible. If, as in the last war and its subsequent imbecilities, mankind returns completely to the rat stage of civilization, this surely shows how very rudimentary an emergence from the Neanderthal our present civilization represents—how easily the thin, spiritual veneer is cracked under any strain that awakens the neolithic beast within. Nevertheless, for perhaps three or five thousand years, the beast has begun to ponder and grope. Isolated achievements have demonstrated of what the mind and spirit are capable when a happy combination of genes occurs under circumstances that permit the favored individual to mature. And the most incomprehensible but hopeful aspect of the matter is the fact that successive generations have always bred an adequate number of individuals sufficiently superior to the brutal mass to keep alive a reverence for these supreme achievements and make them a cumulative heritage. It is more than likely —biologically considered—that by reason of this progressive accumulation of the best that superior specimens of our species have produced, the evolution toward higher things may gain velocity with time, and that in another hundred thousand years the comparison of the race of men with that of rats may be less humiliatingly obvious.

Man and the rat will always be pitted against each other as implacable enemies. And the rat's most potent weapons against mankind have been its perpetual maintenance of the infectious agents of plague and of typhus fever.

J. W. N. Sullivan

THE VALUES OF SCIENCE

¶ J. W. N. Sullivan (1886–1937), an Englishman who for a time lived in America, was a journalist and novelist whose journalism and novels are forgotten but whose books on science were a remarkable achievement in presenting the nature of scientific activity in lucid language. The best known of these is *The Limitations of Science* (1933); others are *Aspects of Science* (1923) and *Science: a New Outlook* (1935). He also wrote a book on Beethoven (1927) and a study of Sir Isaac Newton (1938), whom he considered the perfect scientific man.

Without neglecting the practical advantages of science, Sullivan emphasizes its value in providing the 'contemplative imagination with objects of great æsthetic charm.' 'The truly significant change in modern science is not to be found in its increased powers to aid man's progress, but in the change in its metaphysical foundations.'

THE æsthetic appeal of science is due to the fact that it bestows comprehension. Under the phrase, 'æsthetic emotion,' a number of elements are lumped together, and some only of them are present in any particular case. Our reaction to any great work of art is complex. But one of the most important of our reactions, in many cases, is that our desire for comprehension is gratified. To comprehend a thing is to see it in its relations, to see it in its place within a particular framework.

In the case of a work of literature this framework is provided by the artist's personal vision of life. This is, as it were, the unspoken context within which everything that the artist says acquires a meaning. And our lasting reaction to a work of art, the degree to which it works in us and modifies us when we have forgotten all its details, is dependent on the

FROM *The Limitations of Science*. Copyright 1933 by The Viking Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York.

depth and comprehensiveness of this vision. This is the light which pervades the whole work, and bestows on it such harmony as it possesses, a harmony which lies much deeper than anything the artist may achieve by the technical dovetailing of the elements of his work. The chief function of art is to communicate this vision, and it is the mystery and miracle of art that it can do so.

The comprehension bestowed by a work of art is really the communication of the artist's personal vision. The comprehension bestowed by science is not so obviously personal. Indeed, it is generally supposed to be wholly impersonal. The framework of reference, or 'vision,' within which a scientific theory exists is the group of fundamental concepts and principles in terms of which that region of nature is to be described. These fundamental terms have often been regarded as necessary and unchangeable. We have seen that they are not. Theoretically they have alternatives, although their adoption at that particular time may seem to have been psychologically inevitable.

The Newtonian concepts, for instance, were the final formulation of ideas which, in a more or less vague state, had been 'in the air' for many years. Similarly, the biological theory of evolution has a long history. The Darwinian form of it, in fact, was independently hit upon by two different men. It was, as people say, 'bound to come.' Nevertheless, even if the impetus of the whole scientific movement was towards the Newtonian concepts, we see now that those concepts were not theoretically necessary. Einstein's utterly dissimilar way of looking at the same group of phenomena was a theoretically possible alternative. Not that Einstein could have produced his theory if he had lived at Newton's time. In the absence of the necessary mathematical technique that would have been impossible. In Newton's time it is probable that Einstein would either have developed Newton's theory or else have been the impotent prey of intuitions that he could not formulate. But this would have been merely an accident of history. Theoretically, the Newtonian concepts had alternatives. They were chosen although, as a mere matter of psychology, it may be, there was in fact no choice.

Einstein's theory is perhaps the clearest instance that can be given of our assertion that even a scientific theory may possess a personal element. Einstein's theory is so original that it is very difficult, even after the event, to provide it with an ancestry. It was not in the least a natural culmination of the ideas that preceded it. It was a bolt from the blue. The extraordinary lack of comprehension with which the scientific world at first greeted it

was due not to its technical difficulties, but to the unfamiliarity of the outlook it assumed. It seemed to be the product of an alien mind.

We could say of this theory what Einstein said of some of the work of Gauss,[1] that, if its author had not thought of it, there is no reason to suppose that it would ever have been thought of. Science provides few instances of theories as original as this—indeed, perhaps there is no other scientific theory so intensely original as Einstein's theory. But there are other scientific theories which have a strong element of originality. Maxwell's[2] electromagnetic theory, for example, was a very lonely achievement.

And it is precisely this quality of originality which is the personal element in science. The majority of men of science, including some of the greatest, impress us as journeying along the highroad. Newton, for instance, revealed nothing totally unsuspected by the best of his contemporaries. It is as if many converging lines of thought came to a focus in him. Newton's great quality was not a bewildering originality, but a bewildering and unequalled mastery of his material. Other men could see his problems; only Newton could solve them.

But the men who strike us as having branched away from the highroad, and having thereby given science an entirely new direction, have put to themselves entirely new problems. It is here, of course, that the personal element in the creation of a scientific theory is most clearly revealed. The history of science is not the history of some sort of automatic development. The actual course that science has pursued depends very largely on the types of mind which, as historical accidents, happen to have risen to the level of genius at favorable instants.

It is often said that the essential distinction between science and art consists in the fact that science makes appeal to universal assent, whereas art does not. A scientific statement, we are told, is open to verification by anybody, whereas a work of art appeals only to people with certain sensibilities. A work of music means nothing to a man who is tone-deaf. Science deals with a 'public' world, whereas art is concerned with a private world. A colour-blind man, for instance, would not appreciate painting, whereas a man born blind could master the whole theory of optics.

What are the primary judgments to which, according to this theory, science appeals? So far as the science of physics is concerned, they are judgments about the indications of measuring instruments. We have to say, for example, that a pointer coincides with a certain mark on a scale.

[1 Famous German mathematician (1777–1855).]
[2 James Clerk Maxwell. See p. 531.]

We have to agree, also, about number judgments. We have to agree that an urn contains twelve balls, and not eleven or thirteen. These are the only judgments, we are told, that are involved in science, and about these we can secure unanimity. Two observers, with different color perceptions, might disagree as to the colour of some particular bright line in the spectrum, but they would both agree as to its position on a numbered scale, that is, they would agree about its wave-length. And it is its wave-length, not its colour, that is dealt with by science. In any scientific statement where a colour is mentioned, the name of the colour could be deleted, and a figure for a wave-length substituted, without harming anything in the statement. The same is true about any scientific statement which seems to appeal to judgments about which men might differ. Two men might disagree as to whether one note was the octave of another, judging by sound only, but they would agree as to whether its rate of vibration, measured on a scale, was or was not double that of the other. And that, we are told, is all that is necessary for the purposes of science.

Now we may admit that universal agreement may be obtained about such things as the number of objects in a collection or coincidences in space without therefore concluding that science is potentially capable of securing universal assent. For science consists of a great deal more than such elementary judgments. The chief thing about science is its theories, and it is surely obvious that not all men are capable of assenting to its theories. A man may agree that a star crosses a wire in a transit telescope at the moment when the hands of a clock mark a certain time, but the theorem which enabled the astronomer to predict that occurrence may be for ever inaccessible to him. As a matter of fact, the upholders of this theory, which professes to be so realistic in the sense of dispensing with all 'subjective' elements, are not realistic at all.

A man may be blind, deaf, dumb, and paralysed—that, they cheerfully maintain, does not matter at all. But he must be a very fine reasoner. If we adopt this criterion that the truth of science is to be decided by a unanimous vote, then we must point out this unanimity, when it comes to actual science, and is not confined to such questions as the number of matches in a match-box, cannot be obtained. A large section of mankind, perhaps the majority, are congenitally incapable of understanding Einstein's theory, for example. If such people are to be ruled out as not affecting the unanimous vote, on what ground is the poet to be differentiated who rules out all those people who are insensitive to poetry? In both cases the claim could be made that *if* all people possessed the requisite sensibilities or faculties,

the vote would be unanimous. And this is, in fact, the implied claim of those who preach the complete objectivity of science. For their criterion for objectivity is merely universal assent.

But even if we abandon the criterion of universal assent, and grant votes only to those capable of forming a judgment, we still do not get unanimity. It is notorious that theories that have been found convincing by some scientific men have been found unconvincing by others. Faraday,[3] for instance, was opposed to the atomic theory at a time when, in the judgment of most of his contemporaries, it was well established.

At the present day we have an interesting example of the influence of purely 'subjective' factors in the creation of scientific theories in the methods adopted by Einstein and Eddington [4] respectively in their attempts to reduce the laws of electromagnetism to geometry. Judged by the scientific criterion of accounting for phenomena there seems nothing to choose between them. But Einstein has said that he dislikes Eddington's theory, although he is unable to disprove it, and Eddington has said of Einstein's theory that it is a matter of taste.[5] Here we are in a region where the ordinary 'objective' criteria fail us. Our attitude towards these theories seems to depend on considerations which are, at bottom, æsthetic.

Other instances could be given, particularly from present-day quantum theory, where a chain of reasoning which is found quite convincing by one authority is found unconvincing by another. And the different judgments seem to depend on considerations which the authorities concerned find too elusive for expression. This dilemma sometimes becomes so acute, Professor Levy [6] tells us, that a scientific society, in view of the conflicting reports of its referees, cannot decide whether to publish a certain paper or not. And Poincaré [7] has told us that even in pure mathematics, where reason, one would think, is most pure and undefiled, a proof which is quite satisfactory to one mathematician is often not at all satisfactory to another. Indeed, Poincaré was led to divide mathematicians into psychological types, and to point out that a kind of reasoning which would convince one type

[3] English chemist and physicist (1791–1867) who made important discoveries concerning electricity.]

[4] Sir Arthur S. Eddington (1882–1944), English mathematician and astronomer. See p. 514.]

[5] Compare Clerk Maxwell's remark, p. 531.]

[6] Professor Hyman Levy (1889—), English mathematician and author of many books and articles on science.]

[7] French mathematician (1854–1912).]

would never convince another. These differences, in his opinion, are fundamental, and play a great part in the actual construction of science.

In view of these facts it is obviously misleading to present science as differing fundamentally from the arts by its 'impersonal' character. There is no absolute difference here, but only a difference of degree. Science is less personal than the arts, but it is a mistake to suppose that it is wholly impersonal. The reason for the difference lies in the fact that beauty and truth, in spite of Keats,[8] are commonly distinguished. A work of art aims more consciously and deliberately at beauty than does a scientific theory. There are some works of art, indeed, where it is difficult to see that the criterion of truthfulness has any relevance at all. This is most obviously the case with some musical works. There are other works of art—e.g. in literature and painting—where truthfulness is relevant. And while it is probably true that no scientific theory has been constructed in complete independence of æsthetic considerations, it is nevertheless true that these alone are not sufficient.

Perhaps this is as far as the discussion can be carried on the common-sense level. A further analysis would have to distinguish between, for example, the 'truth' of mathematics and the 'truth' of physics. And we would have to question the complete independence of the quality called 'beauty.' We have already likened mathematics to music, and it could be objected that, since a mathematical development must be logical, any æsthetic charm it possesses must be incidental. But a musical development also obeys laws; it is not capricious. And although these laws are doubtless more various than those of logic and have not yet been isolated and given names, they nevertheless exist.

And in neither case is the beauty of the development some kind of extraneous quality mysteriously added on. It is in virtue of the fact that the development does obey laws that it is beautiful. Here, at any rate, we see some sense in Keats's remark that Truth is Beauty. When we come to an activity, such as physics, or a great part of literature, which is concerned with matters of fact, the notion of truth becomes somewhat different. Here we have the criterion of correspondence with an external world which need not have been as it is. But here, again, the truth is beautiful. Everywhere we encounter what Einstein calls 'pre-established harmonies,' and since the discovery and revelation of such harmonies is the concern, in their different regions, of both the artist and the man of science,

[8 'Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty' ('Ode on a Grecian Urn').]

we see once again that there is no essential distinction between the sciences and the arts.

In discussing the æsthetic aspect of science we have been discussing, perhaps at too great length, an aspect which appeals to the layman hardly at all. The layman is impressed, naturally enough, by the magnificent panorama of nature that science spreads before him, but the beauty of scientific theories is perhaps a consideration that appeals only to the scientific man.

The matter is different, however, when we come to what may be called the *moral* values incorporated in science. These have always been held, theoretically, in the greatest respect, especially the chief of them, namely, disinterested passion for the truth. But, as we have said, if we are to judge by its comparative rarity in the other activities of mankind, it is the most unpopular of virtues. How does it come about, then, that it plays so dominant a role in science? The first, and most obvious, reason is that science is an activity where success is not possible on any other terms. A business man, by concealment and misrepresentation, may become rich, that is, he may, by his standards, achieve success. A politician who was impatient with misleading catchwords, who really tried to think things out, would probably find his 'usefulness' destroyed, since he might become incapable even of simulating that degree of conviction and moral fervour which is necessary to sway large audiences. And an advocate whose speeches should reflect the purely scientific attitude, giving every fact its true weight, would not be likely to have a very successful career. Even those advocates who, we are told, never embrace a cause of whose justice they are not convinced, are hardly scientific, since they evidently have an extraordinary capacity for arriving at definite conclusions on matters which are obviously debatable.

Science is the activity where truthfulness is most obviously an essential condition for success. Its success, in fact, is measured by its truthfulness. Of hardly any other human activity can this be said. In nearly everything else truth is a means and not an end. And if it turns out to be an unsatisfactory means, it is quite natural that it should be replaced by something else. But a scientific man who should misrepresent his observations, or deliberately concoct arguments in order to reach false conclusions, would merely be stultifying himself as a scientific man. He would not be prosecuting science. An advertisement may tell lies, but then telling the truth is not its object. Its object is to sell the stuff, which is an entirely different object. This is not to say, of course, that scientific men invariably tell the

truth, or try to, even about their science. They have been known to lie, but they did not lie in order to serve science but, usually, religious or anti-religious prejudices. They were aiming at a different form of 'success.'

Such cases are, as it happens, very rare. Perhaps the reason is to be found in the fact that the success thereby achieved is very short-lived. Always the experiments are repeated, or the reasoning checked. The rigorous criticism, the complete lack of indulgence, that is shown by the scientific world, is one of its most agreeable characteristics. Its one simple but devastating criterion, 'Is it true?' is perhaps the chief characteristic that makes it seem such an oasis for the spirit in the modern world.

One reason, then, for the embodiment of the disinterested passion for truth in science is that the activity is meaningless without it. But how did men come to pursue an object which can only be reached by what seems to be generally considered as a very painful discipline? The answer is that, owing to the nature of the subject-matter of science, the discipline was not felt to be painful. On all matters where their passions are strongly engaged, men prize certitude and fear knowledge. From certitude can come purpose and a feeling of strength. It breeds courage and action, and is a ready means of ensuring that most desired of all things, an increased sense of vitality. Only the man of strong convictions can be a popular leader of mankind. For most men in most matters, whether it be the justice of a war, the rightness of a political creed, the guilt of a criminal, the wholesomeness of apples, certitude, in the entire absence of adequate evidence, is easily arrived at and passionately welcomed.

The scientific insistence on evidence, and the scientific absence of generosity in drawing conclusions from evidence, are resented in these matters. The scientific attitude, it is felt, with its promise of a long and very probably inconclusive investigation, would merely dam up the emotions that are clamouring for an outlet. But the matters with which science has hitherto been chiefly concerned are comparatively indifferent to us. For that reason science has been so successful. When Galileo investigated the law governing the motion of falling bodies,[9] we cannot imagine that he cared in the least what the law would turn out to be. He could search for the truth with a single mind because none of his emotions could be outraged by the result. Similarly Newton's demonstration of the law of inverse squares roused no horror anywhere. Nobody had a strong emotional preference for the law of inverse cubes.

Towards most of the results of science we are indifferent. Their charm

[9 In his famous experiment of dropping weights from the Tower of Pisa.]

lies in the fact that they illustrate a harmony, but the results, in themselves, are matters of indifference. Any other results would do, provided they illustrated an equally beautiful harmony. The empirical fact that the velocity of light is nearer to 186,000 miles per second than it is to double that figure, excites no particular interest. But the fact that there must be an unsurpassable critical velocity in the sort of non-Euclidean universe we live in, is a matter of great interest.

Our reaction to most scientific facts is one of indifference, and our reaction to most scientific theories is one of purely æsthetic appreciation. But when a scientific theory has a philosophic, religious, or briefly, a 'human' interest, we find at once that we are no longer content with our role of the disinterested seeker after truth. The opposition encountered by the Copernican theory and the Darwinian theory gives sufficient evidence of this. The splendid moral integrity manifested in scientific work, therefore, is due very largely to the nature of scientific material. It shows us the height to which man can rise, provided that a part only of his nature is involved. Science is truthful because it has practically no temptation to be anything else. In his work the scientific man is an artist, and his moral standard is superb, but the value of his example to the rest of mankind is limited by the fact that, in his work, the scientific man is not completely a man.

Julian Huxley

THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN

Julian Huxley (1887—), like his famous grandfather Thomas Henry Huxley, is both a professional biologist and a humanist, and like his grandfather, he has written on social as well as scientific problems. He taught biology at Oxford, the Rice Institute in Texas, and the University of London, and from 1935 to 1942 was Secretary of the Zoological Society of London. In 1947–8 he served as Director General of UNESCO.

His reflections on life and the condition of man are represented by *Essays of a Biologist* (1923) and *The Stream of Life* (1926), to mention only two of his earlier writings, and by half a dozen books published in the 1940's: *Man Stands Alone* (1941), *Evolution, the Modern Synthesis* (1942), *On Living in a Revolution* (1944), *TVA: Adventure in Planning* (1943), *Man in the Modern World* (1947), *Evolution and Ethics* (1947). 'The most vital task of the present age,' he believes, 'is to formulate a social basis for civilization, to dethrone economic ideals and replace them by human ones.' To this task biology can contribute by providing what Mr. Huxley considers the proper background of a new world-picture. 'Man as an organism, but a unique and very strange organism, human evolution as an integral part of life's evolution, but operating through novel and peculiar mechanisms—without this background our world-picture will be falsified, and our attempts at transforming our civilization will wholly or partly fail.'

MAN'S opinion of his own position in relation to the rest of the animals has swung pendulum-wise between too great or too little a conceit of himself, fixing now too large a gap between himself and the animals, now too small. The gap, of course, can be diminished or increased at either

FROM *Man Stands Alone*. Copyright 1941 by Julian S. Huxley. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.

the animal or the human end. One can, like Descartes,[1] make animals too mechanical, or, like most unsophisticated people, humanize them too much. Or one can work at the human end of the gap, and then either dehumanize one's own kind into an animal species like any other, or superhumanize it into beings a little lower than the angels.[2]

Primitive and savage man, the world over, not only accepts his obvious kinship with the animals but also projects into them many of his own attributes. So far as we can judge, he has very little pride in his own humanity. With the advent of settled civilization, economic stratification, and the development of an elaborate religion as the ideological mortar of a now class-ridden society, the pendulum began slowly to swing into the other direction. Animal divinities and various physiological functions such as fertility gradually lost their sacred importance. Gods became anthropomorphic and human psychological qualities pre-eminent. Man saw himself as a being set apart, with the rest of the animal kingdom created to serve his needs and pleasure, with no share in salvation, no position in eternity. In Western civilization this swing of the pendulum reached its limit in developed Christian theology and in the philosophy of Descartes: both alike inserted a qualitative and unbridgeable barrier between all men and any animals.

With Darwin, the reverse swing was started. Man was once again regarded as an animal, but now in the light of science rather than of unsophisticated sensibility. At the outset, the consequences of the changed outlook were not fully explored. The unconscious prejudices and attitudes of an earlier age survived, disguising many of the moral and philosophical implications of the new outlook. But gradually the pendulum reached the furthest point of its swing. What seemed the logical consequences of the Darwinian postulates were faced: man is an animal like any other; accordingly, his views as to the special meaning of human life and human ideals need merit no more consideration in the light of eternity (or of evolution) than those of a bacillus or a tapeworm. Survival is the only criterion of evolutionary success: therefore, all existing organisms are of equal value. The idea of progress is a mere anthropomorphism. Man happens to be the dominant type at the moment, but he might be replaced by the ant or the rat. And so on.

The gap between man and animal was here reduced not by exaggerating

[1 French philosopher and mathematician (1596–1650). He considered animals mere automata.]

[2 Psalm viii, 5.]

the human qualities of animals, but by minimizing the human qualities of men. Of late years, however, a new tendency has become apparent. It may be that this is due mainly to the mere increase of knowledge and the extension of scientific analysis. It may be that it has been determined by social and psychological causes. Disillusionment with *laisser faire* [3] in the human economic sphere may well have spread to the planetary system of *laisser faire* that we call natural selection. With the crash of old religious, ethical, and political systems, man's desperate need for some scheme of values and ideals may have prompted a more critical re-examination of his biological position. Whether this be so is a point that I must leave to the social historians. The fact remains that the pendulum is again on the swing, the man-animal gap again broadening. After Darwin, man could no longer avoid considering himself as an animal; but he is beginning to see himself as a very peculiar and in many ways a unique animal. The analysis of man's biological uniqueness is as yet incomplete. This essay is an attempt to review its present position.

The first and most obviously unique characteristic of man is his capacity for conceptual thought; if you prefer objective terms, you will say his employment of true speech, but that is only another way of saying the same thing. True speech involves the use of verbal signs for objects, not merely for feelings. Plenty of animals can express the fact that they are hungry; but none except man can ask for an egg or a banana. And to have words for objects at once implies conceptual thought, since an object is always one of a class. No doubt, children and savages are as unaware of using conceptual thought as Monsieur Jourdain [4] was unaware of speaking in prose; but they cannot avoid it. Words are tools which automatically carve concepts out of experience. The faculty of recognizing objects as members of a class provides the potential basis for the concept: the use of words at once actualizes the potentiality.

This basic human property has had many consequences. The most important was the development of a cumulative tradition. The beginnings of tradition, by which experience is transmitted from one generation to the next, are to be seen in many higher animals. But in no case is the tradition cumulative. Offspring learn from parents, but they learn the same kind and quantity of lessons as they, in turn, impart: the transmission of experience never bridges more than one generation. In man, however, tradition is an independent and potentially permanent activity, capable of indefinite im-

[3 In economics, 'free enterprise,' i.e. freedom from governmental regulation.]
[4 In Molière's comedy, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.]

provement in quality and increase in quantity. It constitutes a new accessory process of heredity in evolution, running side by side with the biological process, a heredity of experience to supplement the universal heredity of living substance.

The existence of a cumulative tradition has as its chief consequence—or if you prefer, its chief objective manifestation—the progressive improvement of human tools and machinery. Many animals employ tools; but they are always crude tools employed in a crude way. Elaborate tools and skilled technique can develop only with the aid of speech and tradition.

In the perspective of evolution, tradition and tools are the characters which have given man his dominant position among organisms. This biological dominance is, at present, another of man's unique properties. In each geological epoch of which we have knowledge, there have been types which must be styled biologically dominant: they multiply, they extinguish or reduce competing types, they extend their range, they radiate into new modes of life. Usually at any one time there is one such type—the placental mammals, for instance, in the Cenozoic Epoch; but sometimes there is more than one. The Mesozoic is usually called the Age of Reptiles, but in reality the reptiles were then competing for dominance with the insects: in earlier periods we should be hard put to it to decide whether trilobites, nautiloids, or early fish were *the* dominant type. To-day, however, there is general agreement that man is the sole type meriting the title. Since the early Pleistocene, widespread extinction has diminished the previously dominant group of placental mammals, and man has not merely multiplied, but has evolved, extended his range, and increased the variety of his modes of life.

Biology thus reinstates man in a position analogous to that conferred on him as Lord of Creation by theology. There are, however, differences, and differences of some importance for our general outlook. In the biological view, the other animals have not been created to serve man's needs, but man has evolved in such a way that he has been able to eliminate some competing types, to enslave others by domestication, and to modify physical and biological conditions over the larger part of the earth's land area. The theological view was not true in detail or in many of its implications; but it had a solid biological basis.

Speech, tradition, and tools have led to many other unique properties of man. These are, for the most part, obvious and well known, and I propose to leave them aside until I have dealt with some less familiar human characteristics. For the human species, considered as a species, is unique in cer-

tain purely biological attributes; and these have not received the attention they deserve, either from the zoological or the sociological standpoint.

In the first place, man is by far the most variable wild species known. Domesticated species like dog, horse, or fowl may rival or exceed him in this particular, but their variability has obvious reasons, and is irrelevant to our inquiry.

In correlation with his wide variability, man has a far wider range than any other animal species, with the possible exception of some of his parasites. Man is also unique as a dominant type. All other dominant types have evolved into many hundreds or thousands of separate species, grouped in numerous genera, families, and larger classificatory groups. The human type has maintained its dominance without splitting: man's variety has been achieved within the limits of a single species.

Finally, man is unique among higher animals in the method of his evolution. Whereas, in general, animal evolution is divergent, human evolution is reticulate. By this is meant that in animals, evolution occurs by the isolation of groups which then become progressively more different in their genetic characteristics, so that the course of evolution can be represented as a divergent radiation of separate lines, some of which become extinct, others continue unbranched, and still others divergently branch again. Whereas in man, after incipient divergence, the branches have come together again, and have generated new diversity from their Mendelian recombinations,[5] this process being repeated until the course of human descent is like a network.

All these biological peculiarities are interconnected. They depend on man's migratory propensities, which themselves arise from his fundamental peculiarities, of speech, social life, and relative independence of environment. They depend again on his capacity, when choosing mates, for neglecting large differences of colour and appearance which would almost certainly be more than enough to deter more instinctive and less plastic animals. Thus divergence, though it appears to have gone quite a long way in early human evolution, generating the very distinct white, black, and yellow subspecies and perhaps others, was never permitted to attain its normal culmination. Mutually infertile groups were never produced; man remained a single species. Furthermore, crossing between distinct types, which is a rare and extraordinary phenomenon in other animals, in him

[5 Refers to laws of heredity formulated by the Austrian botanist G. J. Mendel (1822–84).]

became normal and of major importance. According to Mendelian laws, such crosses generate much excess variability by producing new recombinations. Man is thus more variable than other species for two reasons. First, because migration has recaptured for the single interbreeding group divergences of a magnitude that in animals would escape into the isolation of separate species; and secondly, because the resultant crossing has generated recombinations which both quantitatively and qualitatively are on a far bigger scale than is supplied by the internal variability of even the numerically most abundant animal species.

We may contrast this with the state of affairs among ants, the dominant insect group. The ant type is more varied than the human type; but it has achieved this variability by intense divergent evolution. Several thousand species of ants are known, and the number is being added to each year with the increase of biological exploration. Ways of life among ants are divided among different subtypes, each rigidly confined to its own methods. Thus even if ants were capable of accumulating experience, there could exist no single world-wide ant tradition. The fact that the human type comprises but one biological species is a consequence of his capacity for tradition, and also permits his exploitation of that unique capacity to the utmost.

Let us remind ourselves that superposed upon this purely biological or genetic variability is the even greater amount of variability due to differences of upbringing, profession, and personal tastes. The final result is a degree of variation that would be staggering if it were not so familiar. It would be fair to say that, in respect to mind and outlook, individual human beings are separated by differences as profound as those which distinguish the major groups of the animal kingdom. The difference between a somewhat subnormal member of a savage tribe and a Beethoven or a Newton is assuredly comparable in extent with that between a sponge and a higher mammal. Leaving aside such vertical differences, the lateral difference between the mind of, say, a distinguished general or engineer of extrovert type and of an introvert genius in mathematics or religious mysticism is no less than that between an insect and a vertebrate. This enormous range of individual variation in human minds often leads to misunderstanding and even mutual incomprehensibility; but it also provides the necessary basis for fruitful division of labour in human society.

Another biological peculiarity of man is the uniqueness of his evolutionary history. Writers have indulged their speculative fancy by imagining other organisms endowed with speech and conceptual thought—talking rats, rational ants, philosophic dogs, and the like. But closer analysis shows

that these fantasies are impossible. A brain capable of conceptual thought could not have been developed elsewhere than in a human body.

The course followed by evolution appears to have been broadly as follows. From a generalized early type, various lines radiate out, exploiting the environment in various ways. Some of these comparatively soon reach a limit to their evolution, at least as regards major alteration. Thereafter they are limited to minor changes such as the formation of new genera and species. Others, on the other hand, are so constructed that they can continue their career, generating new types which are successful in the struggle for existence because of their greater control over the environment and their greater independence of it. Such changes are legitimately called 'progressive.' The new type repeats the process. It radiates out into a number of lines, each specializing in a particular direction. The great majority of these come up against dead ends and can advance no further: specialization is one-sided progress, and after a longer or shorter time, reaches a biomechanical limit. The horse stock cannot reduce its digits below one; the elephants are near the limits of size for terrestrial animals; feathered flight cannot become aerodynamically more efficient than in existing birds, and so on.

Sometimes all the branches of a given stock have come up against their limit, and then either have become extinct or have persisted without major change. This happened, for instance, to the echinoderms, which with their sea-urchins, starfish, brittle-stars, sea-lilies, sea-cucumbers, and other types now extinct had pushed the life that was in them into a series of blind alleys: they have not advanced for perhaps a hundred million years, nor have they given rise to other major types.

In other cases, all but one or two of the lines suffer this fate, while the rest repeat the process. All reptilian lines were blind alleys save two—one which was transformed into the birds, and another which became the mammals. Of the bird stock, all lines came to a dead end; of the mammals, all but one—the one which became man.

Evolution is thus seen as an enormous number of blind alleys, with a very occasional path of progress. It is like a maze in which almost all turnings are wrong turnings. The goal of the evolutionary maze, however, is not a central chamber, but a road which will lead indefinitely onwards.

If now we look back upon the past history of life, we shall see that the avenues of progress have been steadily reduced in number, until by the Pleistocene period, or even earlier, only one was left. Let us remember that we can and must judge early progress in the light of its latest steps. The most recent step has been the acquisition of conceptual thought, which has

enabled man to dethrone the non-human mammals from their previous position of dominance. It is biologically obvious that conceptual thought could never have arisen save in an animal, so that all plants, both green and otherwise, are at once eliminated. As regards animals, I need not detail all the early steps in their progressive evolution. Since some degree of bulk helps to confer independence of the forces of nature, it is obvious that the combination of many cells to form a large individual was one necessary step, thus eliminating all single-celled forms from such progress. Similarly, progress is barred to specialized animals with no blood-system, like planarian worms; to internal parasites, like tapeworms; to animals with radial symmetry and consequently no head, like echinoderms.

Of the three highest animal groups—the molluscs, the arthropods, and the vertebrates—the molluscs advanced least far. One condition for the later steps in biological progress was land life. The demands made upon the organism by exposure to air and gravity called forth biological mechanisms, such as limbs, sense-organs, protective skin, and sheltered development, which were necessary foundations for later advance. And the molluscs have never been able to produce efficient terrestrial forms: their culmination is in marine types like squid and octopus.

The arthropods, on the other hand, have scored their greatest successes on land, with the spiders and especially the insects. Yet the fossil record reveals a lack of all advance, even in the most successful types such as ants, for a long time back—certainly during the last thirty million years, probably during the whole of the Tertiary epoch. Even during the shorter of these periods, the mammals were still evolving rapidly, and man's rise is contained in a fraction of this time.

What was it that cut the insects off from progress? The answer appears to lie in their breathing mechanism. The land arthropods have adopted the method of air-tubes or tracheae, branching to microscopic size and conveying gases directly to and from the tissues, instead of using the dual mechanism of lungs and bloodstream. The laws of gaseous diffusion are such that respiration by tracheae is extremely efficient for very small animals, but becomes rapidly less efficient with increase of size, until it ceases to be of use at a bulk below that of a house mouse. It is for this reason that no insect has ever become, by vertebrate standards, even moderately large.

It is for the same reason that no insect has ever become even moderately intelligent. The fixed pathways of instinct, however elaborate, require far fewer nerve-cells than the multiple switchboards that underlie intelligence. It appears to be impossible to build a brain mechanism for flexible beha-

viour with less than a quite large minimum of neurones; and no insect has reached a size to provide this minimum.

Thus only the land vertebrates are left. The reptiles shared biological dominance with the insects in the Mesozoic. But while the insects had reached the end of their blind alley, the reptiles showed themselves capable of further advance. Temperature regulation is a necessary basis for final progress, since without it the rate of bodily function could never be stabilized, and without such stabilization, higher mental processes could never become accurate and dependable.

Two reptilian lines achieved this next step, in the guise of the birds and the mammals. The birds soon, however, came to a dead end, chiefly because their forelimbs were entirely taken up in the specialization for flight. The subhuman mammals made another fundamental advance, in the shape of internal development, permitting the young animal to arrive at a much more advanced stage before it was called upon to face the world. They also (like the birds) developed true family life.

Most mammalian lines, however, cut themselves off from indefinite progress by one-sided evolution, turning their limbs and jaws into specialized and therefore limited instruments. And, for the most part, they relied mainly on the crude sense of smell, which cannot present as differentiated a pattern of detailed knowledge as can sight. Finally, the majority continued to produce their young several at a time, in litters. As J. B. S. Haldane has pointed out, this gives rise to an acute struggle for existence in the prenatal period, a considerable percentage of embryos being aborted or resorbed. Such intra-uterine selection will put a premium upon rapidity of growth and differentiation, since the devil takes the hindmost; and this rapidity of development will tend automatically to be carried on into postnatal growth.

As everyone knows, man is characterized by a rate of development which is abnormally slow as compared with that of any other mammal. The period from birth to the first onset of sexual maturity comprises nearly a quarter of the normal span of his life, instead of an eighth, a tenth or twelfth, as in some other animals. This again is in one sense a unique characteristic of man, although from the evolutionary point of view it represents merely the exaggeration of a tendency which is operative in other Primates. In any case, it is a necessary condition for the evolution and proper utilization of rational thought. If men and women were, like mice, confronted with the problems of adult life and parenthood after a few weeks, or even, like whales, after a couple of years, they could never acquire the skills of body

and mind that they now absorb from and contribute to the social heritage of the species.

This slowing (or 'foetalization,' as Bolk has called it, since it prolongs the foetal characteristics of earlier ancestral forms into postnatal development and even into adult life) has had other important by-products for man. Here I will mention but one—his nakedness. The distribution of hair on man is extremely similar to that on a late foetus of a chimpanzee, and there can be little doubt that it represents an extension of this temporary anthropoid phase into permanence. Hairlessness of body is not a unique biological characteristic of man; but it is unique among terrestrial mammals, save for a few desert creatures, and some others which have compensated for loss of hair by developing a pachydermatous skin. In any case, it has important biological consequences, since it must have encouraged the comparatively defenceless human creatures in their efforts to protect themselves against animal enemies and the elements, and so has been a spur to the improvement of intelligence.

Now, foetalization could never have occurred in a mammal producing many young at a time, since intra-uterine competition would have encouraged the opposing tendency. Thus we may conclude that conceptual thought could develop only in a mammalian stock which normally brings forth but one young at a birth. Such a stock is provided in the Primates—lemurs, monkeys, and apes.

The Primates also have another characteristic which was necessary for the ancestor of a rational animal—they are arboreal. It may seem curious that living in trees is a pre-requisite of conceptual thought. But Elliot Smith's analysis has abundantly shown that only in an arboreal mammal could the forelimb become a true hand, and sight become dominant over smell. Hands obtain an elaborate tactile pattern of what they handle, eyes an elaborate visual pattern of what they see. The combination of the two kinds of pattern, with the aid of binocular vision, in the higher centres of the brain allowed the Primate to acquire a wholly new richness of knowledge about objects, a wholly new possibility of manipulating them. Tree life laid the foundation both for the fuller definition of objects by conceptual thought and for the fuller control of them by tools and machines.

Higher Primates have yet another pre-requisite of human intelligence—they are all gregarious. Speech, it is obvious, could never have been evolved in a solitary type. And speech is as much the physical basis of conceptual thought as is protoplasm the physical basis of life.

For the passage, however, of the critical point between subhuman and

human, between the biological subordination and the biological primacy of intelligence, between a limited and a potentially unlimited tradition—for this it was necessary for the arboreal animal to descend to the ground again. Only in a terrestrial creature could fully erect posture be acquired; and this was essential for the final conversion of the arms from locomotor limbs into manipulative hands. Furthermore, just as land life, ages previously, had demanded and developed a greater variety of response than had been required in the water, so now it did the same in relation to what had been required in the trees. An arboreal animal could never have evolved the skill of the hunting savage, nor ever have proceeded to the domestication of other animals or to agriculture.

We are now in a position to define the uniqueness of human evolution. The essential character of man as a dominant organism is conceptual thought. And conceptual thought could have arisen only in a multicellular animal, an animal with bilateral symmetry, head and blood system, a vertebrate as against a mollusc or an arthropod, a land vertebrate among vertebrates, a mammal among land vertebrates. Finally, it could have arisen only in a mammalian line which was gregarious, which produced one young at a birth instead of several, and which had recently become terrestrial after a long period of arboreal life.

There is only one group of animals which fulfils these conditions—a terrestrial offshoot of the higher Primates. Thus not merely has conceptual thought been evolved only in man: it could not have been evolved except in man. There is but one path of unlimited progress through the evolutionary maze. The course of human evolution is as unique as its result. It is unique not in the trivial sense of being a different course from that of any other organism, but in the profounder sense of being the only path that could have achieved the essential characters of man. Conceptual thought on this planet is inevitably associated with a particular type of Primate body and Primate brain.

A further property of man in which he is unique among higher animals concerns his sexual life. Man is prepared to mate at any time: animals are not. To start with, most animals have a definite breeding season; only during this period are their reproductive organs fully developed and functional. In addition to this, higher animals have one or more sexual cycles within their breeding seasons, and only at one phase of the cycle are they prepared to mate. In general, either a sexual season or a sexual cycle, or both, operates to restrict mating.

In man, however, neither of these factors is at work. There appear to be

indications of a breeding season in some primitive peoples like the Eskimo, but even there they are but relics. Similarly, while there still exist physiological differences in sexual desire at different phases of the female sexual cycle, these are purely quantitative, and may readily be overridden by psychological factors. Man, to put it briefly, is continuously sexed: animals are discontinuously sexed. If we try to imagine what a human society would be like in which the sexes were interested in each other only during the summer, as in songbirds, or, as in female dogs, experienced sexual desire only once every few months, or even only once in a lifetime, as in ants, we can realize what this peculiarity has meant. In this, as in his slow growth and prolonged period of dependence, man is not abruptly marked off from all other animals, but represents the culmination of a process that can be clearly traced among other Primates. What the biological meaning of this evolutionary trend may be is difficult to understand. One suggestion is that it may be associated with the rise of mind to dominance. The bodily functions, in lower mammals rigidly determined by physiological mechanisms, come gradually under the more plastic control of the brain. But this, for what it is worth, is a mere speculation.

Another of the purely biological characters in which man is unique is his reproductive variability. In a given species of animals, the maximum litter-size may, on occasions, reach perhaps double the minimum, according to circumstances of food and temperature, or even perhaps threefold. But during a period of years, these variations will be largely equalized within a range of perhaps fifty percent either way from the average, and the percentage of wholly infertile adults is very low. In man, on the other hand, the range of positive fertility is enormous—from one to over a dozen, and in exceptional cases to over twenty; and the number of wholly infertile adults is considerable. This fact, in addition to providing a great diversity of patterns of family life, has important bearings on evolution. It means that in the human species differential fertility is more important as a basis for selection than is differential mortality; and it provides the possibility of much more rapid selective change than that found in wild animal species. Such rapidity of evolution would, of course, be effectively realized only if the stocks with large families possessed a markedly different hereditary constitution from those with few children; but the high differential fertility of unskilled workers as against the professional classes in England, or of the French Canadians against the rest of the inhabitants of Canada, demonstrates how rapidly populations may change by this means.

Still another point in which man is biologically unique is the length and

relative importance of his period of what we may call 'post-maturity.' If we consider the female sex, in which the transition from reproductive maturity to non-reproductive post-maturity is more sharply defined than in the male, we find, in the first place, that in animals a comparatively small percentage of the population survives beyond the period of reproduction; in the second place, that such individuals rarely survive long, and so far as known never for a period equal to or greater than the period during which reproduction was possible; and thirdly, that such individuals are rarely of importance in the life of the species. The same is true of the male sex, provided we do not take the incapacity to produce fertile gametes as the criterion of post-maturity, but rather the appearance of signs of age, such as the beginnings of loss of vigour and weight, decreased sexual activity, or greying hair.

It is true that in some social mammals, notably among ruminants and Primates, an old male or old female is frequently found as leader of the herd. Such cases, however, provide the only examples of the special biological utility of post-mature individuals among animals; they are confined to a very small proportion of the population, and it is uncertain to what extent such individuals are post-mature in the sense we have defined. In any event, it is improbable that the period of post-maturity is anywhere near so long as that of maturity. But in civilized man the average expectation of life now includes over ten post-mature years, and about a sixth of the population enjoys a longer post-maturity than maturity. What is more, in all advanced human societies a large proportion of the leaders of the community are always post-mature. All the members of the British War Cabinet are post-mature.

This is truly a remarkable phenomenon. Through the new social mechanisms made possible by speech and tradition, man has been able to utilize for the benefit of the species a period of life which in almost all other creatures is a mere superfluity. We know that the dominance of the old can be over-emphasized; but it is equally obvious that society cannot do without the post-mature. To act on the slogan 'Too old at forty'—or even at forty-five—would be to rob man of one of his unique characteristics, whereby he utilizes tradition to the best advantage.

We have now dealt in a broad way with the unique properties of man both from the comparative and the evolutionary point of view. Now we can return to the present and the particular and discuss these properties and their consequences a little more in detail. First, let us remind ourselves that the gap between human and animal thought is much greater than is usually supposed. The tendency to project familiar human qualities into

animals is very strong, and colours the ideas of nearly all people who have not special familiarity both with animal behaviour and scientific method.

Let us recall a few cases illustrating the unhuman characteristics of animal behaviour. Everyone is familiar with the rigidity of instinct in insects. Worker ants emerge from their pupal case equipped not with the instincts to care for ant grubs in general, but solely with those suitable to ant grubs of their own species. They will attempt to care for the grubs of other species, but appear incapable of learning new methods if their instincts kill their foster children. Or again, a worker wasp, without food for a hungry grub, has been known to bite off its charge's tail and present it to its head. But even in the fine flowers of vertebrate evolution, the birds and mammals, behaviour, though it may be more plastic than in the insects, is as essentially irrational. Birds, for instance, seem incapable of analysing unfamiliar situations. For them some element in the situation may act as its dominant symbol, the only stimulus to which they can react. At other times, it is the organization of the situation as a whole which is the stimulus: if the whole is interfered with, analysis fails to dissect out the essential element. A hen meadow-pipit feeds her young when it gapes and squeaks in the nest. But if it has been ejected by a young cuckoo, gaping and squeaking has no effect, and the rightful offsping is neglected and allowed to die, while the usurper in the nest is fed. The pipit normally cares for its own young, but not because it recognizes them as such.

Mammals are no better. A cow deprived of its calf will be quieted by the provision of a crudely stuffed calfskin. Even the Primates are no exception. Female baboons whose offspring have died will continue carrying the corpses until they have not merely putrefied but mummified. This appears to be due not to any profundity of grief, but to a contact stimulus: the mother will react similarly to any moderately small and furry object.

Birds and especially mammals are, of course, capable of a certain degree of analysis, but this is effected, in the main, by means of trial and error through concrete experience. A brain capable of conceptual thought appears to be the necessary basis for speedy and habitual analysis. Without it, the practice of splitting up situations into their components and assigning real degrees of significance to the various elements remains rudimentary and rare, whereas with man, even when habit and trial and error are prevalent, conceptual thought is of major biological importance. The behaviour of animals is essentially arbitrary, in that it is fixed within narrow limits. In man it has become relatively free—free at the incoming and the outgoing ends alike. His capacity for acquiring knowledge has been largely released

from arbitrary symbolism, his capacity for action, from arbitrary canalizations of instinct. He can thus rearrange the patterns of experience and action in a far greater variety, and can escape from the particular into the general.

Thus man is more intelligent than the animals because his brain mechanism is more plastic. This fact also gives him, of course, the opportunity of being more nonsensical and perverse: but its primary effects have been more analytical knowledge and more varied control. The essential fact, from my present standpoint, is that the change has been profound and in an evolutionary sense rapid. Although it has been brought about by the gradual quantitative enlargement of the association areas of the brain, the result has been almost as abrupt as the change (also brought about quantitatively) from solid ice to liquid water. We should remember that the machinery of the change has been an increase in plasticity and potential variety: it is by a natural selection of ideas and actions that the result has been greater rationality instead of greater irrationality.

This increase of flexibility has also had other psychological consequences which rational philosophers are apt to forget: and in some of these, too, man is unique. It has led, for instance, to the fact that man is the only organism normally and inevitably subject to psychological conflict. You can give a dog neurosis, as Pavlov did, by a complicated laboratory experiment: you can find cases of brief emotional conflict in the lives of wild birds and animals. But, for the most part, psychological conflict is shirked by the simple expedient of arranging that now one and now another instinct should dominate the animal's behaviour. I remember in Spitsbergen finding the nest of a Red-throated Diver on the shore of an inland pool. The sitting bird was remarkably bold. After leaving the nest for the water, she stayed very close. She did not, however, remain in a state of conflict between fear of intruders and desire to return to her brooding. She would gradually approach as if to land, but eventually fear became dominant, and when a few feet from the shore she suddenly dived, and emerged a good way farther out—only to repeat the process. Here the external circumstances were such as to encourage conflict, but even so what are the most serious features of human conflict were minimized by the outlet of alternate action.

Those who take up bird-watching as a hobby tend at first to be surprised at the way in which a bird will turn, apparently without transition or hesitation, from one activity to another—from fighting to peaceable feeding, from courtship to uninterested preening, from panic flight to unconcern.

However, all experienced naturalists or those habitually concerned with animals recognize such behaviour as characteristic of the subhuman level. It represents another aspect of the type of behaviour I have just been describing for the Red-throated Diver. In this case, the internal state of the bird changes, presumably owing to some form of physiological fatigue or to a diminution of intensity of a stimulus with time or distance; the type of behaviour which had been dominant ceases to have command over the machinery of action, and is replaced by another which just before had been subordinate and latent.

As a matter of fact, the prevention of conflict between opposed modes of action is a very general phenomenon, of obvious biological utility, and it is only the peculiarities of the human mind which have forced its partial abandonment on man. It begins on the purely mechanical level with the nervous machinery controlling our muscles. The main muscles of a limb, for instance, are arranged in two antagonistic sets, the flexors bending and the extensors straightening it. It would obviously be futile to throw both sets into action at the same time, and economical when one set is in action to reduce to the minimum any resistance offered by the other. This has actually been provided for. The nervous connections in the spinal cord are so arranged that when a given muscle receives an impulse to contract, its antagonist receives an impulse causing it to lose some of its tone and thus, by relaxing below its normal level, to offer the least possible resistance to the action of the active muscle.

Sherrington discovered that the same type of mechanism was operative in regard to the groups of muscles involved in whole reflexes. A dog, for instance, cannot very well walk and scratch itself at the same time. To avoid the waste involved in conflict between the walking and the scratching reflex, the spinal cord is constructed in such a way that throwing one reflex into action automatically inhibits the other. In both these cases, the machinery for preventing conflicts of activity resides in the spinal cord. Although the matter has not yet been analysed physiologically, it would appear that the normal lack of conflict between instincts which we have just been discussing is due to some similar type of nervous mechanism in the brain.

When we reach the human level, there are new complications; for, as we have seen, one of the peculiarities of man is the abandonment of any rigidity of instinct, and the provision of association-mechanisms by which any activity of the mind, whether in the spheres of knowing, feeling, or willing, can be brought into relation with any other. It is through this that man has

acquired the possibility of a unified mental life. But, by the same token, the door is opened to the forces of disruption, which may destroy any such unity and even prevent him from enjoying the efficiency of behaviour attained by animals. For, as Sherrington has emphasized, the nervous system is like a funnel, with a much larger space for intake than for outflow. The intake cone of the funnel is represented by the receptor nerves, conveying impulses inward to the central nervous system from the sense-organs: the outflow tube is, then, through the effector nerves, conveying impulses outwards to the muscles, and there are many more of the former than of the latter. If we like to look at the matter from a rather different standpoint, we may say that, since action can be effected only by muscles (strictly speaking, also by the glands, which are disregarded here for simplicity's sake), and since there are a limited number of muscles in the body, the only way for useful activity to be carried out is for the nervous system to impose a particular pattern of action on them, and for all other competing or opposing patterns to be cut out. Each pattern, when it has seized control of the machinery of action, *should* be in supreme command, like the captain of a ship. Animals are, in many ways, like ships which are commanded by a number of captains in turn, each specializing in one kind of action, and popping up and down between the authority of the bridge and the obscurity of their private cabins according to the business on hand. Man is on the way to achieving permanent unity of command, but the captain has a disconcerting way of dissolving into a wrangling committee.

Even on the new basis, however, mechanisms exist for minimizing conflict. They are what are known by psychologists as suppression and repression. From our point of view, repression is the more interesting. It implies the forcible imprisonment of one of two conflicting impulses in the dungeons of the unconscious mind. The metaphor is, however, imperfect. For the prisoner in the mental dungeon can continue to influence the tyrant above in the daylight of consciousness. In addition to a general neurosis, compulsive thoughts and acts may be thrust upon the personality. Repression may thus be harmful; but it can also be regarded as a biological necessity for dealing with inevitable conflict in the early years of life, before rational judgment and control are possible. Better to have the capacity for more or less unimpeded action, even at the expense of possible neurosis, than an organism constantly inactivated like the ass between the two bundles of hay, balanced in irresolution.[6]

In repression, not only is the defeated impulse banished to the uncon-

[6 See pp. 281, 505–6.]

scious, but the very process of banishment is itself unconscious. The inhibitory mechanisms concerned in it must have been evolved to counteract the more obvious possibilities of conflict, especially in early life, which arose as by-products of the human type of mind.

In suppression, the banishment is conscious, so that neurosis is not likely to appear. Finally, in rational judgment, neither of the conflicting impulses is relegated to the unconscious, but they are balanced in the light of reason and experience, and control of action is consciously exercised.

I need not pursue the subject further. Here I am only concerned to show that the great biological advantages conferred on man by the unification of mind have inevitably brought with them certain counterbalancing defects. The freedom of association between all aspects and processes of the mind has provided the basis for conceptual thought and tradition; but it has also provided potential antagonists, which in lower organisms were carefully kept apart, with the opportunity of meeting face to face, and has thus made some degree of conflict unavoidable.

In rather similar fashion, man's upright posture has brought with it certain consequential disadvantages in regard to the functioning of his internal organs and his proneness to rupture. Thus man's unique characteristics are by no means wholly beneficial.

In close correlation with our subjection to conflict is our proneness to laughter. So characteristic of our species is laughter that man has been defined as the laughing animal. It is true that, like so much else of man's uniqueness, it has its roots among the animals, where it reveals itself as an expression of a certain kind of general pleasure—and thus in truth perhaps more of a smile than a laugh. And in a few animals—ravens, for example,—there are traces of a malicious sense of humour. Laughter in man, however, is much more than this. There are many theories of laughter, many of them containing a partial truth. But biologically the important feature of human laughter seems to lie in its providing a release for conflict, a resolution of troublesome situations.

This and other functions of laughter can be exaggerated so that it becomes as the crackling of thorns under the pot, and prevents men from taking anything seriously; but in due proportion its value is very great as a lubricant against troublesome friction and a lightener of the inevitable gravity and horror of life, which would otherwise become portentous and overshadowing. True laughter, like true speech, is a unique possession of man.

Those of man's unique characteristics which may better be called psy-

chological and social than narrowly biological spring from one or other of three characteristics. The first is his capacity for abstract and general thought: the second is the relative unification of his mental processes, as against the much more rigid compartmentalization of animal mind and behaviour: the third is the existence of social units, such as tribe, nation, party, and church, with a continuity of their own, based on organized tradition and culture.

There are various by-products of the change from pre-human to the human type of mind which are, of course, also unique biologically. Let us enumerate a few: pure mathematics; musical gifts; artistic appreciation and creation; religion; romantic love.

Mathematical ability appears, almost inevitably, as something mysterious. Yet the attainment of speech, abstraction, and logical thought, bring it into potential being. It may remain in a very rudimentary state of development; but even the simplest arithmetical calculations are a manifestation of its existence. Like any other human activity, it requires proper tools and machinery. Arabic numerals, algebraic conventions, logarithms, the differential calculus, are such tools: each one unlocks new possibilities of mathematical achievement. But just as there is no essential difference between man's conscious use of a chipped flint as an implement and his design of the most elaborate machine, so there is none between such simple operations as numeration or addition and the comprehensive flights of higher mathematics. Again, some people are by nature more gifted than others in this field; yet no normal human being is unable to perform some mathematical operations. Thus the capacity for mathematics is, as I have said, a by-product of the human type of mind.

We have seen, however, that the human type of mind is distinguished by two somewhat opposed attributes. One is the capacity for abstraction, the other for synthesis. Mathematics is one of the extreme by-products of our capacity for abstraction. Arithmetic abstracts objects of all qualities save their enumerability; the symbol π abstracts in a single Greek letter a complicated relation between the parts of all circles. Art, on the other hand, is an extreme by-product of our capacity for synthesis. In one unique production, the painter can bring together form, colour, arrangement, associations of memory, emotion, and idea. Dim adumbrations of art are to be found in a few creatures such as bower-birds; but nothing is found to which the word can rightly be applied until man's mind gave the possibility of freely mingling observations, emotions, memories, and ideas, and subjecting the mixture to deliberate control.

But it is not enough here to enumerate a few special activities. In point of fact, the great majority of man's activities and characteristics are by-products of his primary distinctive characteristics, and therefore, like them, biologically unique.

On the one hand, conversation, organized games, education, sport, paid work, gardening, the theatre; on the other, conscience, duty, sin, humiliation, vice, penitence—these are all such unique by-products. The trouble, indeed, is to find any human activities which are not unique. Even the fundamental biological attributes such as eating, sleeping, and mating have been tricked out by man with all kinds of unique frills and peculiarities.

There may be other by-products of man's basic uniqueness which have not yet been exploited. For let us remember that such by-products may remain almost wholly latent until demand stimulates invention and invention facilitates development. It is asserted that there exist human tribes who cannot count above two; certainly some savages stop at ten. Here the mathematical faculty is restricted to numeration, and stops short at a very rudimentary stage of this rudimentary process. Similarly, there are human societies in which art has never been developed beyond the stage of personal decoration. It is probable that during the first half of the Pleistocene period, none of the human race had developed either their mathematical or their artistic potentialities beyond such a rudimentary stage.

It is perfectly possible that to-day man's so-called super-normal or extra-sensory faculties are in the same case as were his mathematical faculties during the first or second glaciations of the Ice Age—barely more than a potentiality, with no technique for eliciting and developing them, no tradition behind them to give them continuity and intellectual respectability. Even such simple performances as multiplying two three-figure numbers would have appeared entirely magical to early Stone Age men.

Experiments such as those of Rhine and Tyrrell on extra-sensory guessing, experiences like those of Gilbert Murray on thought transference, and the numerous sporadic records of telepathy and clairvoyance suggest that some people at least possess possibilities of knowledge which are not confined within the ordinary channels of sense-perception. Tyrrell's work is particularly interesting in this connection. As a result of an enormous number of trials with apparatus ingeniously designed to exclude all alternative explanation, he finds that those best endowed with this extra-sensory gift can guess right about once in four times when once in five would be expected on chance alone. The results are definite, and significant in the statistical sense, yet the faculty is rudimentary: it does not permit its pos-

sessor to guess right all the time or even most of the time—merely to achieve a small rise in the percentage of right guessing. If, however, we could discover in what this faculty really consists, on what mechanism it depends, and by what conditions and agencies it can be influenced, it should be capable of development like any other human faculty. Man may thus be unique in more ways than he now suspects.

So far we have been considering the fact of human uniqueness. It remains to consider man's attitude to these unique qualities of his. Professor Everett, of the University of California, in an interesting paper bearing the same title as this essay, but dealing with the topic from the standpoint of the philosopher and the humanist rather than that of the biologist, has stressed man's fear of his own uniqueness. Man has often not been able to tolerate the feeling that he inhabits an alien world, whose laws do not make sense in the light of his intelligence, and in which the writ of his human values does not run. Faced with the prospect of such intellectual and moral loneliness, he has projected personality into the cosmic scheme. Here he has found a will, there a purpose; here a creative intelligence, and there a divine compassion. At one time, he has deified animals, or personified natural forces. At others, he has created a superhuman pantheon, a single tyrannical world ruler, a subtle and satisfying Trinity in Unity. Philosophers have postulated an Absolute of the same nature as mind.

It is only exceptionally that men have dared to uphold their uniqueness and to be proud of their human superiority to the impersonality and irrationality of the rest of the universe. It is time now, in the light of our knowledge, to be brave and face the fact and the consequences of our uniqueness. That is Dr. Everett's view, as it was also that of T. H. Huxley in his famous Romanes lecture. I agree with them; but I would suggest that the antinomy between man and the universe is not quite so sharp as they have made out. Man represents the culmination of that process of organic evolution which has been proceeding on this planet for over a thousand million years. That process, however wasteful and cruel it may be, and into however many blind alleys it may have been diverted, is also in one aspect progressive. Man has now become the sole representative of life in that progressive aspect and its sole trustee for any progress in the future.

Meanwhile it is true that the appearance of the human type of mind, the latest step in evolutionary progress, has introduced both new methods and new standards. By means of his conscious reason and its chief offspring, science, man has the power of substituting less dilatory, less wasteful, and less cruel methods of effective progressive change than those of natural

selection, which alone are available to lower organisms. And by means of his conscious purpose and his set of values, he has the power of substituting new and higher standards for change than those of mere survival and adaptation to immediate circumstances, which alone are inherent in pre-human evolution. To put the matter in another way, progress has hitherto been a rare and fitful by-product of evolution. Man has the possibility of making it the main feature of his own future evolution, and of guiding its course in relation to a deliberate aim.

But he must not be afraid of his uniqueness. There may be other beings in this vast universe endowed with reason, purpose, and aspiration: but we know nothing of them. So far as our knowledge goes, human mind and personality are unique and constitute the highest product yet achieved by the cosmos. Let us not put off our responsibilities onto the shoulders of mythical gods or philosophical absolutes, but shoulder them in the hopefulness of tempered pride. In the perspective of biology, our business in the world is seen to be the imposition of the best and most enduring of our human standards upon ourselves and our planet. The enjoyment of beauty and interest, the achievement of goodness and efficiency, the enhancement of life and its variety—these are the harvest which our human uniqueness should be called upon to yield.

Edwin Grant Conklin

IDEALS AS GOALS

[Professor Conklin (1863—) is a distinguished biologist who has written many studies of man both as a social and intellectual being and as a creature who (in the words of 'Mr. Darwin's famous proposition') is the descendant of 'a hairy, tailed quadruped, probably arboreal in its habits, and an inhabitant of the Old World.' Of his numerous publications on heredity, environment, evolution, and society the most notable are *Heredity and Environment*, *The Mechanism of Evolution*, *The Direction of Human Evolution*, *The Future of Evolution*, *Freedom and Responsibility*, *What is Man?* and *Man, Real and Ideal.*

A native of Ohio and a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, Mr. Conklin taught biology at Northwestern University, at the University of Pennsylvania, and, from 1908 until his retirement in 1933, at Princeton University. He has twice served as president of the American Philosophical Society.

IDEALS are not merely ways of escape from hard realities; what is much more important is that they are stimuli to work for goals that have not yet been reached. For the first time in the long history of life on earth, there has appeared in man a creature capable of taking a conscious part in his own development and evolution. He may not be literally 'Master of Destiny,' but he can at least plan and work to make his ideals become realities.

All that man now has of value beyond what is found in wild nature has been gained by human effort. The whole progress of mankind from savagery to civilization has been won by the struggle to make ideals become real. The ideals that have been most potent in human progress have been

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those which aimed at (1) physical comfort and well being, (2) social security, order, dominance, and power, (3) individual and social freedom, (4) improvement of the individual and the race in body, mind, and morals. Science has contributed enormously to the realization of many of these aims, but it furnishes only means of progress and can influence only indirectly aims and ideals.

(1) *Ethical Goals.* The social conflicts, revolutions, and wars of today are struggles to reach certain goals which are thought to be better than existing realities. Many of these ideals may seem to us foolish, wicked, and destructive of all progress in freedom, ethics, and human welfare, but to their proponents they seem to be desirable goals. But in order to reach these goals, they destroy the freedom, welfare, and lives of the people of other nations and races; their ideals are too narrowly limited to their own people. The world is cursed with primitive tribal ideals of ethics, with 'cheap, vernacular patriotisms,' duties being limited to particular social classes, nations, or races. Nothing less wide than a system of planetary ethics will suffice in so small a world as this.

In the course of human history, ideals of ethics have undergone slow development both in substance and in breadth of application. The crude ethics of earlier times was again and again condemned by Jesus: 'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enimies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. . . For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?' 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' [1] The extraordinary advance of Christian ethics over that of the Jews and all pagan systems was shown in the very fact that it taught an ideal of universal human brotherhood, 'Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.' [2] The world has a long way to go before it realizes these high ideals, but they shine as beacon lights in a dark and stormy night.

Recently a great outcry has been raised against science because it is said to teach no ideals of values and ethics. But if there is any place where truthfulness is more prized and conscious falsehood more fatal than in science, I have yet to hear of it. If there is any occupation in which freedom is more necessary than in science, where is it? The scientist must be free to search and to proclaim, without fear of prejudice or authority. If there is any sub-

[1 Matthew, v, 43–4, 46.]
[2 Colossians, iii, 11.]

ject which is more dependent upon honest and honorable cooperation than science, I should like to learn of it. . . As an illustration of scientific internationalism I call attention to an announcement from the British Association for the Advancement of Science, dated London, February 21, 1941, of its 'decision to join with American scientists in preparing a Democratic Charter of Science to be observed by scientists throughout the world. The first principle to be laid down will be that the fellowship of the commonwealth of science has service to all mankind as its highest aim, and the whole world as its outlook. The Charter will not recognize any barriers of race, creed, or class.' If truthfulness, freedom, honor, humanitarianism, internationalism, universal brotherhood are not ethical ideals, there may be some ground for claiming that the methods, results, and pursuits of science are unethical and are 'destroying western culture.'

Two days after the announcement by the British Association of the proposed 'democratic charter of science' the news from Rome carried Mussolini's speech in which he called for 'that cold, conscious, implacable hate, hate in every home, which is indispensable for victory.' A few days later, *Popolo d'Italia,* Mussolini's newspaper, carried an editorial which closed with these violent words: 'We must hate England as our Roman forefathers hated the Carthaginians and as our fathers hated the Austria of the Hapsburgs. Thus with hate in our hearts we will reach total victory. Therefore, hate the enemy and God curse England!'

In the first World War the 'Hymn of Hate' did not save Germany from defeat and there is no historic justification for supposing that hate will win the second World War for Italy or Germany or Japan or America. We are now being urged to hate our enemies or we shall lose this war. Rex Stout in a powerfully emotional article in the *New York Times Magazine* for January 17, 1943, says that, 'We shall hate, or we shall fail.' He denounces as 'tommyrot,' 'gibbering,' 'sanctimonious double talk,' etc., the Christian ideal of loving one's enemies, but hating their deeds. No doubt this is a hard saying, a counsel of perfection in times such as these. It is always difficult to distinguish between the doer and his deed, and when he is a 'free moral agent' he should be held strictly responsible. The United Nations have said that the authors of inhuman barbarities in this war shall be held accountable and appropriately punished when the war is won, and this has met with general approval.

The idea that the measure of success in this war will depend upon the measure of hate generated is contrary to the historic record of past wars and contrary to what we know of the physiology of human behavior. Hate

may be a powerful motive in causing and waging war but it is not a principal means of success. Hate uncontrolled by reason is madness, insanity, and the greater the hate the less possible it is to control it by reason. Indeed there is an old saying, 'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.' The attempt to work up a frenzy of hate is always a sign of weakness and fear of failure. It is a 'shot in the arm,' a last resort to rally decreasing energy and effort, whether in war or a prize fight. The contestant that 'keeps his head' is in a better position than one who yields to fury. The happy warrior goes forward in a glow of hope of victory and not of hate. Violent emotions weaken rather than strengthen endurance. And looking beyond the war to the objectives for which we are fighting, the worst possible condition would be one in which hate would prevail over reason.

Is the world suffering today from too much reason, too much calm science, or too much uncontrolled emotion? Our greatest dangers, against which we most need national defense, are such wild emotions as these. Emotionalism, sensationalism, irrationalism are our chief dangers, and unless we learn to control these by reason they will destroy us.

(2) *The Need of Religion.* The real and the ideal are not necessarily in conflict; they are antithetical but not antagonistic. Here, as in the antithesis between reason and emotion, there may be cooperation instead of conflict. Again, the desirable condition is one of a proper balance between them. Long ago it was said, 'Where there is no vision the people perish.' [3] 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' [4] Both reality and ideality are necessary for happy and useful living. We must build on the rock of fact, but up into the atmosphere of ideals. Realism without idealism ends in pessimism.

It is here in the realm of ideals and aspirations, as well as in rational processes, that man is most distinct from all other animals. And it is here that one recognizes most clearly what men have generally called divine influence. The real largely refers to what is past, the solid foundation of fact, the forces of nature that *drive* us on. The ideal looks more to the future, to the making real of what is at present only ideal; it is the force which *draws* us on to better things.

The supreme social service of religion is to breathe into the realism of science the spirit of lofty idealism; to cultivate among all classes, races, and nations of men, justice, peace, and mutual service. The needs for such

[3] Proverbs, xxix, 18.]
[4] Matthew, iv, 4; Deuteronomy, viii, 3.]

religion are universal and eternal. It can never be replaced, for there are no substitutes that can take its place; neither science, art, nor forms of social organization, such as democracy, fascism, or communism, can be substituted for it. It can never be outgrown, for its need is omnipresent and ever increasing. The greater the specializations of science become, the greater are the needs of such religious integration. The spirit of enlightened religion is that of faith, hope, and love; its great purpose is to promote the progress of mankind towards the ideals of the Kingdom of God on Earth. Too often, religious organizations have minimized these social and mundane functions by devoting their major efforts to the preparation of individuals for a future life of bliss in some other world than this, neglecting the leading petition in the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.'

Of course, in a very important sense, religion is a personal matter. Edward Caird,* the great Scottish theologian, once said, 'A man's religion is the expression of his ultimate attitude to the universe.' Indeed, every man has some form of religion, however irreligious it may seem to those whose attitude to the universe is different from his own. In this sense, religion includes a man's entire personality; his intellect, emotions, will; thoughts, aspirations, ethical principles. But a purely personal religion fails to accomplish much of a lasting nature for human society. Because of the greater power and permanency of society, all types of religion have established social organizations in which individuals are united by some integrating principle, such as common doctrines, dogmas, and creeds. Many of these ancient beliefs dealt with the nature of the world and man, and in this field they have frequently come into conflict with modern science.

To many persons, religious creeds and dogmas are peculiarly precious. In an age of scientific, social, and religious evolution they wish to preserve unchanged the faith of the fathers. This feeling is very human and understandable. We all want sure foundations in material, intellectual, and social affairs. Earthquakes and social revolutions are uncomfortable, if not terrifying, and yet new knowledge is continually shaking old systems of science, philosophy, and religion.

The antagonism of many scientists to religion is largely antagonism to ancient creeds. They sometimes identify religion with every absurdity of religious belief in primitive ages and stages of culture. There are also

* Edward Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*. Macmillan, London and New York, 1893.

many currently accepted religious dogmas that scientists find it difficult, if not impossible, to accept. This is not so much a revolt against religion as one against the clothes in which religion has been dressed—a revolt against outworn creeds and dogmas in which men long ago clothed their religion. But, in spite of all such criticisms, the needs of the ideals and inspirations of religion were never more evident.

(3) *What Kind of Religion Does Science Leave to Man?* Scientific inquiry has gone far towards establishing the universality of natural law and the nonexistence of supernatural or contra-natural phenomena. Professor W. K. Brooks, of the Johns Hopkins University, once said: 'The idea of the supernatural is due to a misunderstanding; nature is everything that is.' If this is true there is no wonder-working God outside of nature, who suspends the order of nature when it pleases him or in answer to human prayer. Much religious teaching denies or ignores this and still believes in miracles and magic. When a child prays for a sunny day for a picnic or when churches pray for rain in times of drought they call upon God to interfere with the order of nature and to create chaos and confusion in an orderly and dependable universe. All this represents a return to the ideas of a pre-scientific age when the natural causes of the weather were unknown and consequently it was thought that God could send rain in answer to supplication or magic. Such beliefs were common in past times and are widespread today with respect to phenomena, the causes of which are unknown. Thus days of prayer and fasting were formerly appointed to stay the spread of epidemics of smallpox or bubonic plague. Now that their natural causes are known more practical and efficient methods are used. Carrel * says that he knows of cases where various affections, including cancer, have been cured almost instantaneously at Lourdes [5] in answer to prayer, but undoubtedly he must know of many cases where cancer has not been cured by prayer, and even when it has disappeared he has furnished no proof that this would not have occurred spontaneously and without prayer. When the causes of cancer and its cure are known it will cease to be an object of prayer among enlightened people.

There is of course an important effect of prayer, but it is subjective rather than objective. It often directs attention to needs that can be met by human effort, or if this is impossible it cultivates a spirit of resignation to the inevitable. The best illustration of the former is found in the Lord's Prayer in which every petition can be answered by man himself, if suf-

* Alexis Carrel, *Man the Unknown*, p. 149. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1935.

[5 The famous shrine in France.]

ficiently strengthened and inspired; and of the latter, in his prayer in Gethsemane [6] when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and he fell on his face and prayed saying, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.' With increasing resignation he prayed again and once again, saying, 'If this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.' And he then went bravely to his trial and crucifixion. Prayer does not change the laws of nature, but it often changes and strengthens the spirit of man.

The demands of this age are for reality in theology and religion, as well as in science and secular affairs. College and university students are asking, 'What, if anything, is real in religion?' Faith founded upon what is improbable, if not impossible, does not commend itself to the modern mind. No one trained in science, or accustomed to deal with reality, could say with Tertullian, *Credo quia impossible.*[7] Faith must have a basis in fact, whether it be faith in a bank, a friend, or a religious doctrine Many truly religious persons cannot recite the 'Apostles' Creed' without mental reservations and figurative explanations that rob it of much of its original significance, and therefore, according to Bishop Manning * they are not Christians, although they may recognize many of the teachings of Christ as our highest ethical and religious ideals. But if they are thus read out of the church, may they not claim to be followers of the Nazarene, even if afar off?

Of course religious instruction must be adapted to the mental capacities of those taught. Therefore religious teaching is full of symbolism, allegories, parables and is thus adapted to children as well as to philosophers, but nothing is gained by insisting that these symbols shall be interpreted literally by persons of mature mind. The real problem in such teaching is to adjust doctrine to science, faith to knowledge, ideality to reality. Never again among enlightened men will this process be reversed and science be compelled to adjust itself to religious doctrine, knowledge give way to faith, or reality be based upon ideality.

What kind of a religion then does science leave to man? Not one of supernaturalism, mythology and magic but one of nature, order, humanism. The religion of science must be based on the solid ground of reality, but it must reach up into the atmosphere of high ideals. Its God is not a person after the manner of men, who stands outside of nature and now

[6 Matthew, xxvi, 39, 42.]
[7 'I believe because it is impossible.']
* See *New York Times*, March 13, 1933.

and then interferes with its workings, but rather the God of science is 'eternal process moving on' [8] through the evolution of galaxies and solar systems, of earth and life and man, of emotion, intelligence and reason, of society, ethics, and religion, of ideals of truth, beauty, goodness, of human aspirations for freedom, justice, peace. This is the eternal God that science sees in all nature,

> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.*

Conceptions of God have varied widely among peoples of different stages of culture and enlightenment, ranging all the way from gross matter to pure idea, from crude animism and anthropomorphism to immaterial, invisible, eternal spirit. In the childhood age of the individual and the race God is a great man in the skies, or in inaccessible parts of the earth, who causes all activities that occur in nature, and who sees and hears, feels and remembers, rewards or punishes the acts, words, or thoughts of men. In more mature thought, he becomes less personal and more identified with nature and natural law as the cause of all causes, the First Cause, sometimes the power, the will, the mind, the soul of the Universe. Finally, in philosophic thought, God becomes the highest ideal of truth, beauty, goodness that the mind of man can conceive, the grandest, most inspiring, most satisfying Ideal that man can imagine. Immanuel Kant wrote in *The Critique of Pure Reason*: 'For the purely speculative use of reason, the Supreme Being remains, no doubt, an ideal only, but an ideal without a flaw, a notion which finishes and crowns the whole of human knowledge, and the objective reality of which, though it cannot be proved, can neither be disproved.'

No one can furnish scientific proof of the existence or nature of God, nor of a divine plan in the fulfillment of which men may cooperate, but it is evident that such ideals lend strength and courage to mortal men. Religious faith and ideals give the largest value to human life and the greatest stimulus to efforts for improvement. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' [9]

[8 Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, lxxxii.]

* William Wordsworth, *Lines Composed Above Tintern Abbey*.

[9 Matthew, vii, 20.]

The religion of science leaves to us faith in the worth and dignity and almost boundless possibilities of man. The evolution of man from lower orders of life, and of modern man from earlier and more brutish races, does not destroy our faith in his real and potential greatness any more than does his development from a germ cell. Indeed the very fact that such development has taken place justifies our faith that it will go on some time, somewhere. When world-wide wars with their indescribable sufferings and horrors, brutalities and tyrannies shake one's faith in human progress, it is comforting to take the long view of cosmic evolution, to remember that the longest wars are but fractions of a second on the clock of life on earth, and that 'the eternal process moving on' is not likely to stop today or tomorrow.

The religion of science leaves to us faith in the highest ideals of ethics and in the possibility of their realization among all nations and peoples. Whatever the ultimate basis of ethics may be, whether divine commands or the decent social instincts of mankind, the content is much the same. Whether written on tables of stone or on the tables of our hearts, the 'cardinal virtues' are still virtues, the 'deadly sins' are still sins, and the commands of a God without are no more binding than those of a God within.

Some scientists as well as many so-called 'practical men' have regarded the ethics of Jesus of Nazareth as too idealistic for this very real and rude world. But many centuries of hard experience have been demonstrating the fact that there is no other way of permanent social progress. If civilization is to endure and advance it must be by the route of the golden rule, the universal brotherhood of man, and the subordination of selfish interest to the common good. Biology has taught us the superlative importance of the species as compared with the individual, among all organisms the one lives for the many, the individual reproduces and labors and dies when necessary for the race. In man no less than in lower organisms the welfare of the species is of supreme importance. Science no less than religion looks forward to the development of a better race and a better society, where wars shall be no more and where he shall be greatest who is the servant of all.[10]

Finally the religion of science is a religion of progress through education. Even if great importance is placed upon heredity, as it should be, there is no way of improving human heredity except indirectly by means of education. We must learn the facts of human inheritance and then teach the established truths of eugenics in homes and schools and churches. Whether

[10 Matthew, xxiii, 11.]

human improvement is sought through eugenics or euthenics or both, it can be achieved only by means of education. Real education of body, mind and morals is the main hope of mankind, and it must be our chief reliance in overcoming the dangers that now threaten civilization; but first of all, wars must be fought and won to save true education from false propaganda.

Man alone of all creatures on earth is able consciously to conserve the experiences of the past and to pass them on to future generations. This more than any other thing accounts for the relatively rapid development of knowledge, inventions, social institutions, and indeed the whole of civilization. Education not only conserves past experience and passes it on to future generations, but it also conditions the development and character of those generations. In the heredity of every human being there are the potentialities of many different personalities; which of these will develop depends upon environment and training. Some of these potentialities are good, others bad; some of social worth, others destructive of society. It is the aim of good education to develop the former and suppress the latter. This kind of education is not limited to the schools but is the most important social function of the home and the church.

The most enduring effects of education are found in habit-formation. Good education stimulates the formation of good habits of body, mind and morals. Habits are often called 'second nature,' second only to heredity which is 'first nature.' * As Amiel wrote:

> In the conduct of life, habits count for more than maxims; because habit is a living maxim, becomes flesh and instinct. To reform one's maxims is nothing; it is but to change the title of the book. To learn new habits is everything, for it is to reach the substance of life. Life is but a tissue of habits.

It should be the chief function of homes and schools and churches to stimulate the formation of rational and ethical habits.

If civilization is to advance, education from the earliest years must develop ideals of love rather than hate, human brotherhood rather than class, racial or national conflicts, peace rather than war, service rather than selfishness. It must instill reverence not only for truth but also for beauty and righteousness. Doubters and cynics will say that these ideals are pleasant dreams, impossible of realization, but the well-known fact that they have been made real in many persons, families, and communions shows that they are possible of fulfillment and that it is only necessary to extend

* Henri Frédéric Amiel's *Journal*, translated by Mrs. Humphry Ward. Macmillan, London, 1885.

this process of education to wider and larger groups to bring a new and better spirit into the world.

Human progress consists not only in right thinking, but also in right feeling and doing. A proper combination of all of these is necessary for the most useful and happy living. Science properly seeks to eliminate emotions while engaged in the search for truth. For this very reason the scientist more than many others needs to cultivate the emotions that find their highest expression in art, music, poetry, religion. Charles Darwin,* in that part of his *Autobiography* which was written in the last year of his life, confessed that formerly he took great delight in poetry, pictures and music, but that now for many years he could not bear to read a line of poetry, and that he had lost his taste for pictures and music.[11] He says:

> . . . My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding out general laws. . . If I had to live my life again I would make it a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the moral part of our nature.

Other scientists have had a similar experience, but some, unlike Darwin, do not regret it and seem to be proud of the fact that they are superior to such aesthetic emotions. One can only pity them for a loss which they do not realize.

The greatest problems that confront mankind are how to promote social cooperation, how to increase loyalty to truth, how to promote justice, how to expand ethics until it embraces all mankind. These are problems for science as well as for government, education, and religion. Each of these agencies has its own proper function to perform. Science as well as religion includes both faith and works, ideals and their realization. The faith, ideals and ethics of science constitute a form of natural religion.

Scientists generally would agree, I think, that the faith and ideals of science include the following articles: (1) Belief in the universality of that system of law and order known as nature. (2) Confidence that nature is intelligible and that by searching our knowledge of it may be increased. (3) Recognition of the fact that knowledge is relative, not absolute, and that only gradually and by effort do we arrive at truth concerning nature. (4) Realization that there is no way to avoid temporary error, since in

* *Life and Letters*, Vol. 1, pp. 81, 82. Appleton, New York, 1891.

[11 See Arnold, p. 131.]

unexplored fields we learn by trial and error and finally trial and success. (5) The necessity of freedom, openmindedness and sincerity in seeking truth. (6) Confidence that truth is mighty and will prevail, and that even unwelcome truth is better, that is, more useful, than cherished error. (7) Realization that truth cannot be established by compulsion, nor error permanently overcome by force. (8) Belief that the long course of evolution which has led to man, society, intelligence, and ethics is not finished, and that man can now take an intelligent part in his future progress. In these articles of faith the religion of science does not differ essentially from other enlightened religions.

These articles of scientific faith stress the intellectual rather than the emotional aspects of religion; they satisfy the demands of reason but they do not take sufficient account of the longings of the heart. No religion that ministers only to the intellect and not also to the emotions can meet the needs of men, and this accounts in large part for the failure of all essentially intellectual religions to gain popular favor. Contrast the number of persons who go to meetings of Ethical Culture Societies, or Unitarian Churches with the numbers in Roman Catholic and Evangelical Churches; or the number who are interested in philosophy and science with the multitudes who are devoted to movies and sports. This comparison indicates, what human history abundantly proves, that emotion, not reason, is the principal interest of the masses of mankind, and it confirms the opinion of many scholars that religion's greatest field of service is in cultivating the better emotions. It is here that true religion has always exercised its greatest influence. It brings faith and hope and love to desperate, sinful and friendless men; courage to the fearful, strength to the weak, inspiration to the spiritless. It is art and poetry and music and inner joy and harmony. It combines thinking, feeling and doing and thus ministers in unique measure to a more abundant life for all classes and conditions of men.

Ideal religion is one of love, which begins with the love of those persons nearest and dearest, and is then extended to abstractions and ideals such as truth, beauty, goodness, God. 'For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.' (1 John iv. 20.) The pantheistic God of science may command our awe and reverence, but scarcely our love and devotion. It is difficult, if not impossible, to love 'Eternal Process' or the 'Order of Nature.' Men need ideals more human and personal, and for this reason, no doubt, great religions have glorified and sanctified ideal persons—sages, heroes, martyrs, saints—and have personified their highest ideals as deities—Osirus, Ashur, Zeus, Brahma,

Buddha, Yahweh. In the Christian religion these highest ideals are embodied in the persons of a Heavenly Father and a Divine Brother, who usually called himself the son of Man, and, less often, the son of God. Deities have always been clothed in supernaturalism, but when these wrappings are removed, Jesus of Nazareth stands forth as the ideal Man. *Ecce Homo!* [12]

Thomas Jefferson * made for his own use a collection of the very words of Jesus, as reported by the Evangelists, and in writing to John Adams in 1813 he said, that after omitting ambiguous or misunderstood sayings, 'There will be found remaining the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man.' In a letter to Charles Thompson, Secretary of the Congress that adopted the Declaration of Independence, he wrote in 1816 of this collection, which is often called Jefferson's Bible: 'A more beautiful or precious morsel of ethics I have never seen; it it is document in proof that I am a *real Christian*, that is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus.' Renan [13] said of Jesus, 'Among the sons of men there has not appeared a greater than the son of Mary.' The passing centuries of advancing science and learning have but increased our appreciation of the depth of his insight into human nature and human needs, the breadth and wisdom of his ethics, and the heights of his courage and love.

[12 'Behold the man!' (John, xix, 5).]

* *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth, Extracted textually from the Gospels in Greek, Latin, French & English.* With an Introduction by Cyrus Adler, Librarian of the Smithsonian Institution. Printed and bound, by photolithographic process, by order of Congress. Washington, 1904. Also abridged edition, with English text only. Wilfred Funk, New York, 1940.

[13 French writer on religion and history (1823–92).]

Questions

Max Black
THE USES OF LANGUAGE

1. This article on language, although it contains some observations that can hardly be new to you, will be useful if you try to practice what it preaches. Language is so subtle, and so many persons are so easily tricked by it, that you ought to prove (to yourself at least) your skill—in seeing through emotive words when they are used with intent to deceive, in reading between the lines, in judging the tone as well as appearance of a passage—before assuming that you already possess the critical awareness Mr. Black speaks of. Using the procedure suggested on pp. 14–15, analyze some pages from newspapers, magazines, or books (this book you are reading, for instance). The *habit* of using some such procedure is necessary to all critical reading. An experienced reader does not follow it consciously, step by step, every time he reads; but if he is a really critical reader, he has learned these methods so thoroughly that he utilizes them involuntarily, as it were, every time he looks at or listens to words.
2. 'Sentence' (p. 4). See the quotations from Thoreau in the selection by Canby (pp. 37–42). Do Thoreau's and Mr. Black's approaches to sentences differ? If so, why do they differ?
3. What are the differences between linguistic and non-linguistic signs? Between a statement and a suggestion?
4. Do you have to understand the motives of the speaker or writer in order to criticize what he says or writes?
5. What makes words ambiguous?
6. Can a word be both 'emotive' and 'neutral'?
7. Make a list of some of the most popular 'emotive' words and phrases used in advertising.
8. Find some examples in newspaper editorials of neutral, abusive, and honorific words. Translate some editorials from 'emotive' into explicit language, and then 'neutralize' their contents, as Mr. Black does on pp. 12–13.

9. Thoreau is a good example of a writer who has to be 'read between the lines' if you are to understand his mood and his intentions. Find illustrations in 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' of some of the different uses of language described by Mr. Black.
10. On linguistic communication see also Russell, 'Individual and Social Knowledge' (pp. 517–22) and Barzun, 'How to Write and Be Read' (pp. 16–27).

Jacques Barzun

HOW TO WRITE AND BE READ

1. What does Mr. Barzun mean by telling us that writing 'comes before' reading?
2. 'Writing can only be taught by the united efforts of the entire teaching staff.' Is that the way it is taught in your school or college?
3. 'This conscious brutality' (p. 18): why call it that?
4. What is the author's opinion of French methods of teaching writing? What is yours? If you want to learn more about writing in French schools, look up *How the French Boy Learns to Write*, by Rollo W. Brown.
5. Why does Mr. Barzun emphasize preciseness so much? Is his own writing precise?
6. 'As regards writing' (p. 23): but isn't 'as regards' as trite as the 'however's' and the 'Thus we see's' Mr. Barzun objects to?
7. Translate into your English: 'the school does not work in a vacuum but rather in a vortex of destructive forces.' What does he mean?
8. Why is the sentence about Mr. McCaffrey (p. 26) called poetry?
9. Do you think Mr. Barzun understands students and their writing problems? Does this chapter succeed in treating the subject more amiably or more sensibly than other discussions of it that you have been assigned to read?
10. Compare these ideas on writing with those of Maugham and Highet (pp. 54–62 and 166–76). On jargon or cant phrases you should read an essay by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in his *The Art of Writing*.
11. Does the chapter make more plausible to you Thoreau's judgment that 'There is no more Herculean task than to think a thought about this life and then get it expressed' (see p. 39)?
12. If you liked this chapter, you will probably like the one on reading that is referred to in the final sentence. See pp. 61–80 of *Teacher in America*.

Henry David Thoreau
READING

1. Along with this selection you should read H. S. Canby's 'Sentence Maker' (pp. 37–42). Do you think the sentences in 'Reading' bear out what Mr. Canby says in his remarks about Thoreau's style? As well as the sentences in 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' do? Find enough examples to justify your answer.
2. Why 'essentially' students and observers (p. 28)?
3. What is shallow about books of travel (see p. 29)?
4. Find examples of paradox, exaggeration, and epigram in these pages.
5. 'Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written' (p. 29). Why must they? (Make sure you know exactly what 'deliberately' means.)
6. 'It is worth the expense . . . suggestions and provocations' (p. 29). Do you think Thoreau would approve of 'Classics in Translation' courses or other substitutes for the classics?
7. What does he mean by 'What is called eloquence in the forum is commonly found to be rhetoric in the study'? Do you know of any examples?
8. Why does he say the woodchopper was 'above' an interest in the news (p. 33)? Is there anything wrong with being interested in news? What does Thoreau say about it in 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For'?
9. Why does Thoreau think it 'adventurous' to study classics (p. 29)? Do you find it so?
10. Compare Thoreau's treatment of reading with Virginia Woolf's in her 'How Should One Read a Book?' (pp. 43–53). Do they find the same values and pleasures in reading? Do they write about the same kinds of books?
11. You ought now to read Emerson's 'The American Scholar' and to compare his ideas of men and books with Thoreau's.

Henry Seidel Canby
SENTENCE MAKER

1. This examination of Thoreau's art of writing will make sense only if you have read and reread specimens of that writing; see 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' and 'Reading' in this volume. Test Mr. Canby's statements by reference to passages by Thoreau. For example, after quoting Thoreau on style ('His style . . . without digesting,' p. 40), Mr. Canby tells us, 'That last sentence describes the way Thoreau wrote, and the

reason for reading him deliberately.' After examining Thoreau's sentences do you agree with Mr. Canby's judgment? What does he mean by 'deliberately'?

2. 'His profession was living' (p. 37). After reading 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,' do you know what this sentence means? At the beginning of *Walden* Thoreau wrote: 'I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives. . .'
3. 'A *sententia*' (p. 38). Look up the origin of the word 'sentence' in an unabridged dictionary. Do Mr. Canby's quotations from Thoreau seem to you to justify the title of his chapter, 'Sentence Maker'?
4. 'Took back the good ones' (p. 38). Pick out some of the good ones, the ones that 'smell right' to you, in 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' and 'Reading.' What makes them good?
5. On p. 40, in the quotation from Thoreau on De Quincey, why is the word *art* in italics?
6. Thoreau's writing is said to have 'paradox and exaggeration' but 'no intentional obscurity' (pp. 40, 42). Find examples of paradox in 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For.'
7. Test the truth of Mr. Canby's remark that Thoreau 'favored his best sentences at the expense of his chapters and paragraphs' (p. 40).
8. Translate into your own words and explain: 'Expression is the act of the whole man, that our speech may be vascular' (pp. 40–41).
9. What is a 'homeopathic' way of writing? What effect are you told it has on readers?
10. What two principles does Mr. Canby think guided Thoreau in his writing? Why does he think that Thoreau's method of composition becomes 'a curb upon free writing' (p. 42)? What does he mean here by 'free'?
11. Write a theme about your experiences, especially your troubles, with writing, beginning your paper with Thoreau's sentence: 'There is no more Herculean task than to think a thought about this life and then get it expressed' (p. 39).
12. Look up Emerson's memorial address, 'Thoreau.'

Virginia Woolf

HOW SHOULD ONE READ A BOOK?

1. This essay was read at a school. Do you think it would interest students when heard instead of read by them?

2. Why does the writer emphasize the necessity of making up one's own mind about reading? After this emphasis how does she justify her paper?
3. 'And outside . . . across the fields' (p. 44). This recurs twice on pp. 47, 48. Why?
4. 'Do not dictate to your author; try to become him.' How do you 'become him,' and why should you?
5. What is 'the delight of rubbish-reading'?
6. What does the author mean by 'false books, faked books, books that fill the air with decay and disease'?
7. She discriminates among different types of aesthetic experience derived from poetry, fiction and biography. What qualities, and what different aesthetic pleasures, does she find in each of these forms of literature?
8. 'The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading.' What is the other half, and what does she say about it?
9. Paraphrase and explain these sentences from the essay: 'facts are a very inferior form of fiction'; 'the newness of new poetry and fiction is its most superficial quality'; 'to admit authorities, however heavily furred and gowned, into our libraries and let them tell us how to read, what to read, what value to place upon what we read, is to destroy the spirit of freedom which is the breath of those sanctuaries.'
10. Do you think the last few sentences are an appropriate ending? Are they sentimental (consider 'not without a certain envy')?
11. Make the experiment recommended on p. 44: write the best account you can of 'some event that has left a distinct impression on you.'
12. Use the sentence, 'To read a novel is a difficult and complex art,' as the opening one in an essay on your experience with some novel.

W. Somerset Maugham
WRITER AND READER

1. What qualities in prose does Mr. Maugham admire most? Judging by this specimen only, do you think his own writing exemplifies those qualities?
2. 'For to write good prose is an affair of good manners' (p. 58). What does he mean? '. . . good prose should be like the clothes of a well-dressed man, appropriate but unobtrusive' (p. 59). Chesterfield suggests a well-dressed man. Does his prose (pp. 339–51) meet the requirement? Are there, in this volume, any examples of prose that does not seem 'like the clothes of a well-dressed man'?
3. Is what Mr. Maugham says of Hume (p. 54) true of the passage from

Hume on pp. 371–5? (That passage is not the philosophical kind Mr. Maugham means, probably, but it does illustrate Hume's style.)

4. Read twenty pages of Ruskin and see whether your impression of his style is like Mr. Maugham's (p. 56).
5. Why does the author regret the influence of the Bible on English prose style? (See the modern translation on pp. 78–109).
6. What examples of 'elegance' and 'sobriety' (p. 57) can you find in Arnold's 'Literature and Science' (pp. 120–37)?
7. Find out what 'baroque' and 'rococo' mean. Why is poetry called baroque and prose rococo (p. 58)?
8. Swift, Newman, Hazlitt, and Arnold, whose prose styles Mr. Maugham thinks among the best, are represented by selections in this book. Study those selections; try to describe the styles; and compare your opinions with Mr. Maugham's, to see if you agree with his description of the writers' characteristics.
9. 'No reading is worth while unless you enjoy it.' Is that true in your experience? Write a short essay defending or refuting this dictum.

Joseph Conrad

Preface to THE NIGGER OF THE 'NARCISSUS'

1. Restate Conrad's definition of art in your own words. What does he mean, in his definition, by rendering 'justice' to the visible universe?
2. What does the artist have in common with the philosopher and the scientist, and how does he differ fundamentally from them? (On these questions compare the opinions of Sullivan, pp. 572–80).
3. Summarize the two sentences 'But the artist . . . to the unborn' (p. 64). Which 'part of our being' is it, precisely, that the artist appeals to?
4. Which art does Conrad consider the highest?
5. With the sentence about 'an unremitting never-discouraged care for the shape and ring of sentences' (p. 65) compare the quotations from Thoreau's *Journal* on pp. 39–42.
6. 'The light of magic suggestiveness' (p. 65). Can you find examples in Conrad's novels, or in any of the selections in this book?
7. 'All art, therefore, appeals primarily to the senses.' How can this be as true of literature as of painting or music?
8. What is Conrad's conception of the use of fiction?
9. 'To snatch in a moment of courage . . . beginning of the task' (p. 65): and note the phrase 'and without fear' in the following sentence. Why is courage needed?

10. Look up in an unabridged dictionary definitions of realism, romanticism, naturalism, and sentimentalism (see p. 66). Why does Conrad call these 'temporary' formulas?

Robert E. Sherwood

HOW F. D. R.'S SPEECHES WERE WRITTEN

1. Why did President Roosevelt take speeches so seriously?
2. Why did he need a 'sounding board for discussions of the best means of attaining the goals that the President set for himself'?
3. Why did the speeches intended for radio delivery have to be treated differently from others? Why did their punctuation matter so much?
4. See Mr. Sherwood's dramatic reconstructions of Lincoln's and Douglas's speeches (pp. 499–504). What factors (besides radio) have most affected political speeches since Lincoln's day?
5. What is the use of the reference to 'some anonymous citizen in Council Bluffs' (p. 74) and of the phrase 'with the deliberation of an alchemist' (p. 71).
6. Why do you think the writer adds the digression on the President's eating and drinking habits? What impression do you get from these pages of the President's character? Of the White House routine?
7. What evidence is there in this selection that 'Roosevelt knew that he was the voice of America to the rest of the world'?
8. What evidence does the writer provide to support his observation that Roosevelt was 'normally the most untemperamental genius I have ever encountered'?

THE STORY OF JOSEPH

1. If you were previously acquainted with the King James but not the American translation, what do you think of the latter after reading it for the first time? If you were not well acquainted with either one, which do you like better, and why? Which is the more intelligible?
2. Consider the story of Joseph as a narrative. What can you say about its construction and characterization? It is often praised as one of the greatest stories ever written. Do you think it deserves such praise? Test it by the standards that you think a supremely good story must meet.
3. 'But my opinion of the merits of the story is bound to be affected by whether I can accept the religious parts of it.' How sensible and how important does this criticism seem to you?

4. Is the emotion in the story mostly explicit or implicit?
5. If there is a moral or religious idea dominating the story, what is it?
6. Does the frequency of sentences beginning with 'and' in the King James translation diminish your satisfaction in reading it? Why do you suppose the translators used 'and' so often?
7. One of the early sixteenth-century translators of the Bible rendered one sentence: 'And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a lucky fellow.' Would 'lucky fellow' be an acceptable translation today, even though accurate enough?
8. The literary merits and influence of the King James Bible have been highly praised for generations, but see Maugham's criticism on p. 57 of this book. Does it sound plausible? (Naturally your opinion on such matters will not be worth much unless you are familiar with the different prose styles he mentions, but his comments on the King James Bible are nevertheless worth thinking about.)
9. Compare the American translation with the aims as stated in the quotation at the end of the introductory note, p. 77. Do you think the translators succeeded in their effort to produce a translation in idiomatic, clear language? They wanted to steer a middle course between the elevated and the mean in language (do you agree that this is what the quotation says?). Do they use any words or phrases that you dislike?

John Henry Newman
LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. What does Newman mean by the word 'liberal' when he uses it in the phrase 'liberal knowledge'?
2. Which sentence best expresses Newman's conception of liberal education? What, according to him, is the fundamental purpose of liberal education?
3. What does Newman think of the supposed connection between liberal education and religious training? What dignities and what failures of philosophy does he describe?
4. 'To detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant': does your education enable you to do this? How do you know?
5. What distinctions does Newman make between true humility, ordinary condescension, modesty, and self-respect? What is the importance of the distinctions in his argument?
6. Why is the 'gentleman' the product of civilization rather than of Christianity? Cannot a Christian be a gentleman or a gentleman a Christian?
7. Compare Newman's description of the gentleman with the passages from

Hume (pp. 371–5) and Chesterfield (pp. 338–51). Which of the three passages do you like the best? Which tells you the most?

8. Do not fail to observe that the gentleman whom Newman delineates on pp. 117–19) is a *mere* gentleman, not a Christian; therefore, despite his virtues, he is deficient. Would this have made as much difference to Hume and Chesterfield as it does to Newman? Why?

Matthew Arnold

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

1. What is the principal issue in the essay? What is Arnold's thesis concerning it?
2. What is his conception of culture?
3. What does he mean by the humanities? Find his definition. What does he mean by 'literature'?
4. Why does he hold science to be one of the humanities?
5. 'Practical people' (p. 120) have always talked with a smile of Platonism. Macaulay was one of them. (Jefferson and Landor were two others.) Compare Macaulay's passage on Plato (pp. 547–55) with Arnold's. Does Arnold completely accept or reject Plato's views on education?
6. How does the contrast between Plato's outlook and the one Plato satirizes (pp. 120–21) serve to introduce Arnold's theme?
7. 'The English House of Lords or for the pork trade in Chicago' (p. 122). Is this ironical?
8. 'Man is the cynosure of things terrestrial' (p. 125). What does 'cynosure' mean? Find out its source.
9. Why does Arnold believe it is more important for most people to know 'the great results of the scientific investigation of nature' than 'the processes by which those results are reached'? Do you agree?
10. Why does he leave specialists out of consideration when he talks about the best education?
11. What is his chief criticism of those who wish to give physical science the largest place in the curriculum? What do you think of the criticism?
12. How does literature satisfy 'the sense for conduct' and 'the sense for beauty'? Why does he think physical science does not satisfy them so well?
13. How does he attempt to prove the influence of literature on the emotions?
14. Just why is it more important for a student to be able to paraphrase *Macbeth* correctly than to know the diameter of the moon (see pp. 134–5)? What is the point of this illustration?
15. What makes Arnold so certain (p. 136) that the instinct for beauty is

served best by Greek literature and art? (How many students in your college or university study Greek?)

16. Try to reconstruct Huxley's argument in 'Science and Culture' from your reading of Arnold's essay. Then read Huxley's lecture. Does Arnold quote it accurately? Is he fair toward it? Are the two men talking about the same things? Which argument is more convincing to you?
17. Compare this essay with Foerster's (pp. 138–49) and Livingstone's (pp. 150–65).
18. Why is Arnold so polite toward Huxley? Is he being ironical? Is he afraid of him?
19. What would you say are the main characteristics of Arnold's style? Why does he repeat some phrases so often? Why does he use a conversational tone?
20. Arnold is often praised for his urbanity. Find out just what urbanity consists of, and find some examples of it in this essay.

Norman Foerster
LIBERAL EDUCATION

1. How does the author establish the meaning of 'liberal'? Is it the same as 'human' and 'humanistic'? How many meanings of 'free' and 'liberal' are there in the first half of this essay? How many attributes of liberal education does he describe?
2. Does Newman's conception of 'liberal' knowledge (pp. 110–19) agree with Mr. Foerster's?
3. 'The unfree learned the vocations.' Find passages in Newman that illustrate the idea that free is to unfree as liberal is to useful knowledge.
4. 'Ancient culture . . . the present' (p. 140). Note the word 'needs.' If it was 'focused earnestly on the needs,' should the education in question be called vocational? useful? liberal? Are vocational and useful knowledge the same thing? Some years ago an educator wrote an essay entitled 'The Usefulness of Useless Knowledge.' What 'useless' knowledge can be useful?
5. 'The beguiling hope' (p. 140). Why is it 'beguiling'?
6. 'If something . . . made common' (p. 143). Is it so in your college?
7. In what sense are the sciences to be regarded as 'liberal' or 'humanistic' studies?
8. 'Knowledge for its own sake.' Observe that this end, which Mr. Foerster says is characteristic of science, is held by Newman to be characteristic of 'liberal' knowledge. Are the two views contradictory? (On science see the selections by Sullivan and Conklin, pp. 572–80, 603–15.)

9. Why does Mr. Foerster think the social sciences cannot be scientific?
10. What does he mean by 'the climate of opinion' (p. 148)?
11. After reading this essay, do you think it fair to say, as some people do say, that the quarrel between advocates of liberal and of vocational education is a quarrel over mere words? or a quarrel between 'conservatives' or 'reactionaries' and 'liberals' (the liberals in this case being the advocates of vocational education as the most important kind)?
12. The term 'liberal education' has been dropped by many educators in favor of 'general education.' Which do you think is better, and why?
13. How would you answer the assertion that 'Liberal education is a fine thing but you can't eat it'?
14. How convincing is the essay?

Sir Richard Livingstone
EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF CHARACTER

1. What does the author mean by education? (Do not assume that the answer is too obvious to bother with.)
2. How does the quotation from Plato on p. 150 illustrate the author's thesis in this essay? State the thesis. (What is the difference between a thesis and a theme?)
3. Is he a moralist? democrat? fascist? apologist? Find texts to support your answer.
4. 'Fundamentally the political problem is a problem of human character.' Does he prove this? Does his judgment in this sentence agree with Emerson's in 'Politics' (pp. 210–21)?
5. What specific recommendations does Sir Richard Livingstone have for the improvement of education? Does he convince you that they are practical?
6. What does he consider the 'greatest change in the European view of life since the conversion of the Roman world to Christianity'?
7. What relation does he find between Christianity and ethical progress?
8. 'Science has helped mankind greatly' (p. 154). Does this seem an understatement to you?
9. 'Are we providing our citizens with true objects of love and belief? If not, where will they fix their love and their belief?, (p. 155). How much concerned with these problems has your education been?
10. How do the author's remarks on democracy (pp. 160–61) fit other opinions you meet in this book? For example, Carritt's (pp. 252–65), Jefferson's (pp. 194–201), and Becker's (pp. 235–51)?

11. How many of the 'possibilities' named on pp. 161–2 are utilized in the education you are getting or have had?
12. 'Good citizenship and low civilization can go together' (p. 162). Do you accept this? What do the words 'good' and 'low' mean here?
13. 'In accepting law' (p. 162): how do you reconcile this with Emerson's 'The law is only a memorandum' and 'Good men must not obey the laws too well' (pp. 211, 214)?
14. How does the author meet the criticism that he is only 'talking truisms'?
15. Do you think this British writer's diagnosis of educational problems, and the remedies he suggests, are as applicable to American conditions as (let us presume) they are to British ones? Why, or why not?

Gilbert Highet

THE AMERICAN STUDENT AS I SEE HIM

1. Why is the distinction between 'student' and 'scholar' needed in writing and reading this essay?
2. If Mr. Highet had published his impressions in 1951 instead of 1941, which ones do you think might have been different?
3. What are the most serious defects he finds in American schools (not colleges)? What are the reasons for them?
4. Explain: 'crofter' (p. 167), 'labyrinthine' (p. 168), 'mandarinate' (p. 170), 'bombinating' (p. 171), 'myriad' (p. 170), 'dichotomy' (p. 171), 'anomalous' (p. 174).
5. Do you see any significance in the fact that American students call a college or university a 'school'?
6. What does the writer think are the three main characteristics of American students as contrasted with the European students he knew?
7. 'When you and I make jokes . . . margin' (p. 168). Do you believe this?
8. '. . . a few eccentric universities' (p. 170). Do you know which ones?
9. '. . . read and understand *Hamlet*' (p. 171). Is there any connection here between 'understand' and 'reproduce the various explanations' a few lines later? Is reproducing somebody else's explanations a sign of understanding? Or is this an unfair interpretation of Mr. Highet's meaning? If it is, what does he mean?
10. Does he share Mr. Hutton's opinion (see p. 183) that American schools hold back the abler students?
11. '. . . other reasons . . . too controversial' (p. 173). What, for instance?
12. What does the phrase 'democracy in education' mean to you? This essay seems to imply that in the United States it is commonly, and unfortunately, confused with political democracy. In what way? And why unfortunately?

13. 'The task of the university . . . the inessential' (p. 175). The sentence is a metaphorical description of the nature of a university's function, but does it define the function? What does the entire essay assume to be the primary function of a university? Do you think the author would endorse the dictum of President Wilson that 'The object of a university is intellect; as a university its only object is intellect'?
14. 'Character-building' (p. 169). Another quotation from President Wilson (who was president of Princeton University before becoming President of the United States) might furnish you with a good topic for an essay of your own: 'I hear a great deal about character being the object of education. I take leave to believe that a man who cultivates his character consciously will cultivate nothing except what will make him intolerable to his fellowmen. If your object in life is to make a fine fellow of yourself, you will not succeed, and you will not be acceptable to really fine fellows. Character, gentlemen, is a by-product. It comes, whether you will or not, as a consequence of a life devoted to the nearest duty, and the place in which character would be cultivated, if it be a place of study, is a place where study is the object and character is the result.'

Graham Hutton

THE CULT OF THE AVERAGE

1. If you live in the Midwest, do you think Mr. Hutton knows what he is talking about? Is this a fair and accurate picture of education, so far as you know it, in that region? If you do not live in the Midwest, what can you say about the likeness or difference between the education described here and that prevalent in your own section of the country?
2. Can you tell from the text alone that the writer is a foreigner? For what readers does he seem to be writing?
3. Why is the phrase 'leading forth from' (p. 179) within quotation marks?
4. What are said to be the aims of education in the Midwest? (Are they different in the east, north, or south?)
5. Do you accept his statement that 'The midwesterner always distrusted intellectually outstanding people'? How would he, or how would you prove it? Does it imply, conversely, that northerners, easterners, and southerners always trusted intellectually outstanding people?
6. What significance does the author attach to the fact that many private colleges in the Midwest were founded by easterners but the state universities by the midwesterners themselves?
7. 'Work their way through' (p. 180). This feature of American collegiate life never fails to astound Europeans. Compare Highet, p. 167.

8. 'Strange reverence for books' (p. 181). Do you believe this? (Incidentally, look up the origin of the word *glamour*).
9. Consider Mr. Hutton's criticism that the schools and colleges indoctrinate rather than educate. Is he right? How do you know? What has your own experience been? What seems to be his criterion of a good education?
10. In his discussion of the religion of patriotism on p. 184, is his sentence 'The Midwest has proved that' ironic?
11. Apropos of the typical midwestern query 'Will it work?' see the selection on pragmatism (pp. 523–31 in this volume) by William James, who was hardly a typical midwesterner.
12. 'Treats them as men in almost all respects, but agrees in the main not to teach them anything on controversial issues' (p. 188). Is this a correct description?
13. 'Can read, but cannot understand, the great speeches of Calhoun, Webster, Clay, and Douglas' (p. 184). Can you read them and understand them?
14. Compare Mr. Hutton's impressions with Mr. Highet's, pp. 166–76 (but remember that Mr. Highet writes from New York, not from Chicago).

George Santayana
CLASSIC LIBERTY

1. What definition of liberty is implicit in the essay?
2. How can liberty be 'vindicated' by martyrdom, as Mr. Santayana says it was at Thermopylae?
3. Explain the meaning of these phrases: 'public experimental study' (p. 191), 'loquacious, festive little ant-hills' (p. 191), 'impassibility' (p. 191), 'the unanswerable scepticism of silence' (p. 191).
4. 'The conservatives . . . so intelligent were they' (p. 191). Why is it intelligent for conservatives to be radical?
5. 'A prescription to a diseased old man' (p. 191). Who is the old man?
6. What analogy does the author draw between the liberty of Greek cities and the liberty of Greek philosophers?
7. In what ways did the early Christian Church adopt and practice the classic conception of liberty? For what reasons?
8. 'Our modern liberty to drift in the dark' (p. 193). What does he mean?
9. What are the main effects of modern 'liberty,' according to this essay? What kind of liberty do you think the author esteems most highly? Is he an uncritical admirer of Greek liberty? Find passages to support your answer.

10. The essay was written during the First World War. Are any of its ideas 'dated'? Are there any that you think particularly relevant today?

Jefferson and Adams
NATURAL ARISTOCRACY

1. What is the problem treated by Jefferson and Adams? Does it still exist? In the same form?
2. Tell in your own words exactly what Jefferson and Adams mean by 'aristocracy.'
3. Is Jefferson's division of aristocracies into 'natural' and 'artificial' as convincing to you after you have read Adams's reply? Does Adams's letter cause you to think the subject less simple than Jefferson's exposition seemed to make it?
4. What does Jefferson mean by 'mutually indulging its [reason's] errors' (p. 195)?
5. Does Adams agree with Jefferson that enough of the wealthy 'will find their way into every branch of the legislature to protect themselves'? For the same reasons? Do you think the writers are correct about this?
6. Was Jefferson's confidence that voters 'in general . . . will elect the really good and wise' (p. 195) justifiable? Do you think him too optimistic in this? Or Adams too skeptical? How would you establish the correctness of your answer?

   For other opinions on the promises and perils of popular government, see Madison's *Federalist* paper, Emerson's 'Politics,' Carritt's 'The Rights of Man,' and Becker's 'The Reality.'
7. What are the advantages of the 'little republics' Jefferson has in mind? Are there any disadvantages?
8. How 'democratic' is Jefferson's scheme of education? Note that he would not allow all graduates of district high schools to attend the university, or even most of them, but only the best ones. Note also that the words 'democracy' and 'democratic' do not appear in his letter. In Jefferson's time 'democracy' was a word of rather disreputable associations—for example, with 'the mobs of the cities' (p. 198); Jefferson himself habitually described his principles as 'republican.' 'Jefferson was not in any social sense a democrat, and only in a political sense by contrast with his contemporaries' (S. E. Morison and H. S. Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*, 1950, I, 382).

   Which parts of Jefferson's plan for a system of public education seem closest to our present system? Read Hutton's 'The Cult of the Average'

(pp. 177–89). Are these school systems he describes, and the ideals of education they express, Jeffersonian?

9. 'Here every one may have land to labor for himself' (p. 198). Is this still true? As true as it used to be? What difference does the answer make to Jeffersonian views of republican government? See Becker, 'The Reality.'

James Madison
THE FEDERALIST. NO. X

1. Madison states a problem, defines his terms, presents arguments, and finds a solution. Make an outline of his arguments.
2. Is the language like Jefferson's? Does it inspire confidence in the reasonableness of his arguments? What sort of audience is he addressing? Is he appealing to their minds or their emotions? How persuasive does his essay seem to you as a piece of campaign propaganda (which is what it was)?
3. What does 'specious' (p. 202) mean?
4. Why does Madison make such a careful contrast between a 'pure democracy' and a republic, and why does he insist that the United States can succeed only as a republic? What does Madison hold to be the most important differences between a democracy and a republic? Why does he think a republic has more advantages? And why has a large republic more advantages than a small one? Can you support or question his opinion by examples from modern history?

   For another example of Madison's views on republics look up his *Federalist* No. XXXIX, from which the following definition is taken:

> If we resort for a criterion to the different principles on which different forms of government are established, we may define a republic to be, or at least bestow that name on, a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people, and is administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure, for a limited period, or during good behavior. It is *essential* to such a government that it be derived from the great body of the society, not from an inconsiderable proportion, or a favored class of it; otherwise a handful of tyrannical nobles, exercising their oppressions by a delegation of their powers, might aspire to the rank of republicans, and claim for their government the honorable title of republic.

5. Why does Madison put so much emphasis on the conflicts between economic interests in his treatment of political groups? How does he think different economic interests can get along harmoniously enough to form and preserve a stable government?
6. How closely do Madison's views of the rights of man and of governments resemble Jefferson's, as Jefferson's are suggested by his letter to Adams?
7. 'Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm' (p. 205). Does this

prophecy reflect the same attitude as Jefferson's toward the wisdom of the electorate? Does it agree with Emerson's ('Politics')? Before answering reread pp. 207–8.

8. 'The influence of factious leaders . . . the other States' (p. 208). Can you show whether this is still true?

Ralph Waldo Emerson
POLITICS

1. What is Emerson's principal thesis in this essay? Find a good statement of it.
2. Which passages remind you most of Thoreau's 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For'?
3. 'The State must follow, and not lead the character and progress of the citizen' (p. 211). Why is the opposite view so prevalent today (assuming you allow that it is prevalent)? Would Mill (see pp. 222–34) agree with the sentence?
4. 'The law is only a memorandum.' 'Good men must not obey the laws too well.' What do these sentences mean? Do you accept them? Can you be law-abiding without obeying the laws 'too well'?
5. 'In this country . . . only fitter for us' (p. 214). Do you agree that our political institutions are no better inherently but 'only fitter for us'? Do you think most Americans would agree? Why should they, or why should they not?
6. Do Emerson's opinions on property oppose Madison's (see pp. 202–9)?
7. 'A party is perpetually corrupted by personality.' Translate that into your own terms. Is it true? Does a politician corrupt a party, or a party a politician?
8. What would you say to this comment: 'Emerson's fine talk about individualism and the conquest of the state by character is all very well, but he didn't live in the twentieth century; if he had, he wouldn't have been so sure of this'? Is Emerson excessively optimistic about moral progress? What solid reasons can you give for your answer?

   Which judgments or ideas in the essay seem farthest from yours? From most people's, so far as you can tell? Can you refute any of Emerson's?
9. Read Becker, 'The Reality.' Is he any more or less observant or realistic about the nature of political institutions than Emerson is? Can you prove it?
10. What relevance to these matters does Paul (p. 211) have? What did he know, or say, about politics and liberty?

11. Is Emerson's contrast of the characters of the liberal and conservative parties of his day (pp. 214–16) valid for our liberal and conservative parties now?
12. 'Hence, the less government we have, the better' (p. 218). Has he demonstrated this to your satisfaction? Is it a logical conclusion from his premises?
13. Write an essay explaining what you understand by Emerson's assertion that 'governments have their origin in the moral identity of men.'

John Stuart Mill
ON LIBERTY

1. Some students complain that Mill is hard to read. Do you find him so? He often writes long sentences, but his thought may require long sentences. Provided it is clear, a long sentence shows the writer's control of a complicated subject. He is putting things in order, subordinating certain facts or ideas to others. If a subject is involved or profound, any oversimplifying of it—for example, by using short sentences—may misrepresent its real nature.

   Style is a 'thinking out into language'; it comes from the writer's character and his habit of mind, not merely from his practice in writing. What qualities of mind does Mill's style suggest?
2. What is the purpose of the essay?
3. What kind of liberty does he discuss?
4. 'The vital question of the future.' Can you show whether or not it has been a vital one, or the vital one, since Mill wrote his essay? How vital is it today?
5. 'The tyranny of the majority': tyranny in what? by what means?
6. 'Another grand determining principle' (p. 227). What does 'grand' mean here?
7. 'The majority have not yet learnt . . . pubic opinion' (p. 229). Has this prophecy come true? Can you prove it?
8. For what part of your conduct does Mill think you should be 'amenable' to society?
9. What is his principle in deciding ethical questions?
10. Find out what utilitarianism is. How does Mill's argument illustrate utilitarianism?
11. Read the chapter (pp. 405–25) from Mill's *Autobiography*. Are the ideas he got from his education the sort that seem to you consistent with his opinions in *On Liberty*? Why?

12. 'The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way.' Do you believe this? Can you defend it or refute it?
13. Compare Madison (pp. 202–9), Emerson (pp. 210–21), Becker (pp. 235–51), and Carritt (pp. 252–65).

Carl Becker
THE REALITY

1. Outline the essay.
2. Which paragraph states the writer's main thesis?
3. What does he mean by 'exploiting' (p. 238), 'bourgeoisie' (p. 238), 'rococo' (p. 239), 'proletarian peasants and workers' (p. 240)?
4. What are some of the most important impediments to democracy? What caused them? Why did not Jefferson and Madison recognize them?
5. How do Becker, Madison, and Mill differ in their treatment of liberty?
6. Which liberties were most emphasized by the doctrinaires of the eighteenth century? Which ones were least emphasized? Why? Which does Becker think most urgent today?
7. Which segment of society did the bourgeoisie exclude from 'the political country'? Why did it exclude them?
8. How did the technological revolution exert 'a decisive influence in modifying all the habitual patterns of thought and conduct'? How did it change political ideas?
9. Why is self-government called an 'expensive luxury'?
10. 'In any society there is bound to be a close connection between economic and political power.' What other writings (in this book) have discussed or stressed this fact?
11. What criticism does Becker make of the 'traditional concept of individual liberty'?
12. Do Becker and Carritt (pp. 252–65) agree about liberty, equality, and property?
13. Does Becker have any remedies to propose for the ills of modern democracy? If so, what remedies? Does he think modern democracy will survive?

E. F. Carritt
THE RIGHTS OF MAN

1. 'Even a tyrannical majority aims at the happiness of the greater number' (p. 252). Does this justify the majority's tyranny?

2. '. . . the best form of government' (p. 252): why does he not add 'for us,' as Emerson does (p. 214)?
3. 'Freedom to affect others . . . like amount of freedom' (p. 254). Is this Mill's position? See pp. 222–34.
4. Is this author 'telling' you or trying to persuade you? How much agreement or concession does he seem to take for granted?
5. Does he illustrate his statements well enough and frequently enough for you to grasp his arguments without difficulty?
6. What is the difference between natural rights and natural claims?
7. Why is equality the primary, or basic, claim?
8. What is his definition of liberty? Which definitions does he reject, and why?
9. 'It might be convenient . . . liberty of others' (p. 257). How closely does this fit Mill's conception of liberty?
10. Does Mr. Carritt's analysis of liberty make you realize better the difficulty of defining it satisfactorily? Do you think this might be one of his objects in this chapter?
11. Apologists for dictatorships always argue that in those regimes citizens have 'liberty.' Which sort of 'liberty' do they mean? What does the author think of that sort?
12. '. . . laws safeguarding . . . the rich' (pp. 258–9). Find comparable passages in Emerson's 'Politics' (pp. 210–21).
13. On questions of property and liberty compare the opinions in this chapter with those in the selections by Madison (pp. 202–9), Mill (pp. 222–34), Emerson (pp. 210–21), and Becker (pp. 235–51).

E. L. Woodward

L'INQUIÉTUDE RELIGIEUSE

1. How would you describe the writer's mood? Is it one of sadness? regret? despair? uneasiness? resignation?
2. Why did his loss of faith in the Christian order ('the disruption of Christian belief,' p. 272) make him certain that his views on economic and political institutions would also undergo profound changes? What exactly is the connection between his reflections on religion and those on society?
3. Does he convince you that his own loss of faith was typical? Compare 'the generation to which I belong' (p. 268); 'the fate of my own generation' (p. 269).
4. 'The disinherited were now awake' (p. 272). Note the figure, which in his context suggests that while, in the order of religion, Christianity was ex-

piring, in social thought revolutionary socialism was coming to life. Compare the conclusions in this essay on the relation of Christianity and society with Toynbee's 'Civilization on Trial.'

5. What qualities in William Morris appeal to the author?
6. Does Mr. Woodward strike you as one who wants to be fair to different views? Note how he summarizes what can be said for one side and then, in a passage beginning 'Nevertheless' or 'None the less,' counters with arguments or opinions for the other side (pp. 266, 268, 274, 276, 277).
7. Why did revolutionary socialism fail to attract him?
8. 'It is perhaps easier for a historian to be patient' (p. 280). Why is it?
9. What relevance has the last page, on Germany, to the chapter as a whole?
10. For other treatments of some religious topics discussed in this essay see selections by Gosse, Conklin, and Toynbee; and of the social and economic ones, the selection by Becker.

Arnold J. Toynbee
CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL

1. What are the theses that are maintained?
2. In what sense is civilization 'on trial'? Why is it on trial now any more than it ever was?
3. Why does Mr. Toynbee think our 'pre-nationalist mediaeval ancestors' had a better historical vision than we have?
4. Throughout this essay there is a contrast between 'historical horizon' and 'historical vision.' What does the writer mean by these terms, and why are they contrasted? What is the 'unified vision' he urges, and what difference is it to make?
5. 'And even if they were mistaken . . . Hengist and Horsa' (p. 284): why is it better?
6. What are 'higher' religions?
7. Why does he select mostly founders of religions as 'the greatest benefactors' of the living generation of mankind (p. 287)? If he does not tell you explicitly, can you infer the reason?
8. What has been the consequence, in his opinion, of the simultaneous development in modern society of humanitarianism and nationalism?
9. How does Christendom differ from Christianity? What connections does he suggest between Christianity and civilization? Why does he emphasize them? (If this subject interests you, see Mr. Toynbee's 'Christianity and Civilization,' printed in *Civilization on Trial.*)
10. Why does he call North and South America 'a couple of large islands'

(p. 285) instead of 'the two continents'? What is the effect of 'batch' in 'this batch of world wars' (p. 290)? of the 'more unpleasant' alternative (p. 290)?

11. This brief essay touches on some topics that Mr. Toynbee treats at length in his *A Study of History*. If you want to explore his ideas further, look up the one-volume condensation of *A Study of History* by D. C. Somervell.
12. This essay appeared in its original form in 1947. Do you think the author would change anything in it if he were writing it today?

Benjamin Franklin

REMARKS CONCERNING THE SAVAGES OF NORTH AMERICA

1. What difference does it make that Franklin uses the word 'savages' instead of 'Indians' in his title?
2. What are the main objects of Franklin's satire?
3. How much sympathy do you suppose Franklin had with the missionaries' efforts to convert the Indians?
4. What similarities and what differences are there between the irony of these 'Remarks' and that of Swift's *A Modest Proposal* (pp. 329–37)?
5. If you know Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, what resemblances do you find between Swift's methods of satire and Franklin's?
6. Do Franklin's 'savages' measure up to Hume's standards of polite behavior (see pp. 370–75)?
7. What do you think of the Indians' customs, for example, 'not to answer a public Proposition the same day that it is made,' and observing 'a profound Silence' for five or six minutes after a man has made a speech? What does Franklin intend us to think of them?
8. Why does Franklin add the word 'historical' in 'the principal historical Facts' (p. 296)? Why does he have the Indian orator refer to 'these Things which you have heard from your Mothers' and not 'fathers'?
9. Why does he add the note at the end of his 'Remarks'?

Samuel Eliot Morison and *Henry Steele Commager*

THE UNITED STATES IN 1790

1. Which facts about the United States in 1790 do you find most surprising?
2. Why is it said that 'The United States of 1790 was not a nation'?

3. What is meant by 'the cruder phases of democracy' (p. 308)?
4. What were the three political experiments America was attempting, and why was their success so doubtful?
5. What different European opinions of the future of the United States are mentioned? Which of them seems to you the best grounded or the most prophetic?
6. What is implied by the statement that 'no one found much to admire in America in the works of man' (p. 305)?
7. What political habits of Americans today are discernible in this report of America in 1790?
8. Is this description supported by sufficient illustrations or anecdotes to make it convincing as well as vivid?
9. Why are the observations of so many foreigners quoted?
10. Why was Pennsylvania a 'microcosm of the America to be'? Why the social contrasts in Virginia? Why so many slaves in New York State?
11. What seeds of future sectional conflicts can you find in the America of 1790?
12. Do any prejudices, provincialisms, or party views appear in this account? What, if anything, can you guess about the authors' backgrounds?
13. Which of the physical conditions of America in 1790 most affected the social and political character of the society?
14. What characteristics of the America of 1790, as described by Professors Morison and Commager, do you perceive in the sketches of modern America or Americans by Brogan and Hutton (pp. 322–8, 177–89)?
15. In an essay, examine and elaborate some of Turgot's assertions in his letter to Dr. Price (p. 319).
16. How would you illustrate the statements of this chapter by passages from Jefferson, Adams, and Madison (pp. 194–201, 202–9)?

D. W. Brogan
AMERICAN CLIMATE

1. By what means does the author, without resorting to statistics, manage to give the reader enough facts to prove his thesis? What is his thesis?
2. How much knowledge of American climate does he take for granted in the readers? Who are the readers he seems to be writing for? Why is he writing this account?
3. How well do you think he knows the United States? Does he make you realize better the effect of the climate on American civilization?
4. Why is 'capricious,' near the beginning of the first paragraph, an apt word in this context? Which phrase in the same paragraph explains it?

5. Point out some examples of irony of statement and irony of fact.
6. What is the tone of this selection? What is the author's 'approach'? Is it one of amusement, superiority, wonder?
7. If you judge by Mr. Brogan's account, which section of the country has the most deplorable climate?
8. How well does he seem to like California and the Californians?
9. To what 'highly paradoxical destiny' of Los Angeles does he refer (p. 324)?
10. What does he mean by 'had later toughened the New Englanders' (p. 325)? Why does he express it in this way?
11. What is 'the more exigent type of American tourist' (p. 326)?
12. What effect has the American climate had on fashions?
13. You will be interested in comparing parts of Mr. Brogan's book with another recent British examination of the United States, or rather a region of the United States, Graham Hutton's *Midwest at Noon*, a chapter from which is reprinted on pp. 177–89 of this book. Do these two writers have similar opinions about America?

Morison and Commager's 'The United States in 1790' (pp. 300–321) should be read with Mr. Brogan's pages.

Jonathan Swift
A MODEST PROPOSAL

1. This selection can serve to test your comprehension of the nature of satire and irony. First, find out what the words 'satire' and 'irony' mean; find out what they are supposed to do; then reread the selection until you see *how* they do it. Does satire differ from sarcasm? If so, how? Does it differ from the sardonic? Do satire and irony require the same sort of perceptiveness on the reader's part? What various meanings does the adjective 'ironical' have? Is Swift's irony like that of Arnold, Butler, or Thoreau (all of whom are represented in this volume)? Is understatement an essential part of irony?

   Such questions as these, if you try seriously to answer them, should sharpen your understanding of the ways of language as well as the ways of thought, and so make you a more skillful reader.
2. 'A child, just dropped from its dam.' What is gained by putting it in this way instead of 'a child just born'? Note how often Swift uses of human beings terms usually employed of animals, especially those raised for food. Why does he do this?
3. How far did you read before you realized what the 'modest proposal' was? Note that Swift does not give it in so many words until p. 331, where it suddenly confronts us in the phrase 'contribute to the feeding.'

4. On p. 333, what is the effect of 'A very worthy person, a true lover of his country' and 'so deserving a patriot'?
5. What other writings on social or political problems have you read that make successful use of irony and satire? Have irony and satire any disadvantages in the treatment of such subjects?
6. What objections to his public-spirited scheme does Swift anticipate, and how does he meet the objections?
7. The last sentence on the last page deserves special study. What is its purpose, and what would the pamphlet lose if it were omitted?
8. Does writing about human beings in such fashion show Swift to be callous?

Lord Chesterfield
LETTERS TO HIS SON

1. Is it good advice? Do you think Chesterfield understood human nature and society? Which precepts does he emphasize most?
2. Why is he so insistent on reserve and decorum?
3. 'Take the tone of the company that you are in' (p. 343). Why should you?
4. Chesterfield has been condemned as one who stressed good form more than virtue. Judging by these passages, would you say the criticism is justified?
5. What sort of company does he consider the best? He gives reasons; are they good ones?
6. The passage beginning 'Vice in its true light' and ending 'effects of an excellent cause' (p. 346) is important as a statement typical of eighteenth-century ethical literature. (Compare what Newman says of Shaftesbury, pp. 114–15.) Restate it in your own words. How true do you think it is?
7. Chesterfield calls Leonidas and Curtius madmen (pp. 347–8). Why?
8. Do his admonitions amount to anything more than tips on 'how to win friends and influence people'? What is their object, and how worthy is it, in your opinion?
9. Burke, referring to pre-Revolutionary France, declared that 'vice itself lost half its evil by losing half its grossness.' Would Chesterfield endorse the implied proposition that grossness and viciousness are so closely related? Are they?
10. Do your impressions of Chesterfield's character and intelligence conform to those you get after reading Virginia Woolf's essay (pp. 352–7)? Is the one selection of much help in understanding the other?
11. See Newman's description of a gentleman (pp. 117–19), written a century after Chesterfield's letters. Is his gentleman a Chesterfieldian one?

12. Read Hume (pp. 370–75). Do he and Chesterfield have the same point of view? Which selection do you like better, and why?
13. How would you describe Chesterfield's estimate of women? Is it cynical, naive, patronizing, sensible, fantastic?
14. Find out if you can, from books on Chesterfield, what sort of person his son was and whether he fulfilled his father's hopes. Virginia Woolf's essay (pp. 352–7) will give you some information; and see Boswell's comments (p. 364n.)
15. See pp. 358–69 on Chesterfield and Dr. Johnson.

Virginia Woolf
LORD CHESTERFIELD'S LETTERS TO HIS SON

1. 'The little papers [Chesterfield's letters] have the precision and formality of some old-fashioned minuet.' Explain and criticize this description.
2. 'The curtains are very thick and the women are very pure' (p. 352). What is the effect of joining the two statements in this fashion? What judgments of Victorian society do they imply?
3. The *Rape of the Lock* (p. 353). Read or reread the poem; and note Chesterfield's remark about Pope on p. 342.
4. What does 'even to the stars' (p. 356) mean?
5. 'One must perhaps believe in something, and then how difficult to observe the Graces!' (p. 356). Why difficult?
6. 'An age so settled and so circumscribed that masterpieces were possible' (p. 353). Why is such an age required for the production of masterpieces?
7. What faults in Chesterfield are suggested?
8. 'He sat down . . . all the mirrors' (p. 356). Explain the figure. Is it appropriate?
9. 'Lord Chesterfield himself never laughed. He always smiled.' How much does this tell you about him?
10. Why did Chesterfield's letters fail to have the desired effect?
11. How do Chesterfield's dying words, 'Give Dayrolles a chair,' sum up the doctrine of the letters?
12. How would you describe Mrs. Woolf's attitude toward Chesterfield? Does she admire him? Is she ironical about him?

James Boswell

JOHNSON, CHESTERFIELD, AND THE *DICTIONARY*

1. On p. 360 what difference would 'wrote' make if substituted for 'fell a scribbling'?
2. What does Chesterfield's treatment of Johnson's letter (p. 363) tell you about Chesterfield? Does it confirm the impression you get from Chesterfield's letters?
3. Does Chesterfield's letter about the *Dictionary* seem cordial enough?
4. How appropriate is Johnson's letter to Chesterfield? Why is the language so restrained and polite?
5. How much does his account of the Johnson-Chesterfield episode tell you about Boswell's attitude toward Johnson?
6. Look up the Preface to the *Dictionary*, and compare your impressions of it with Boswell's praise. Also look up Johnson's definitions of 'Tory,' 'Whig,' 'pension,' and 'oats' in the *Dictionary*.
7. What does Boswell consider the most remarkable feature of the *Dictionary?*
8. What aspects of Johnson's character and temperament are brought out most strongly in these passages?
9. Why does Boswell quote examples of the *Dictionary's* capricious and inaccurate definitions?
10. What evidence is there that Boswell made efforts to verify stories he heard about Johnson?
11. How much do you learn about Boswell himself from these pages?

David Hume

OF QUALITIES IMMEDIATELY AGREEABLE TO OTHERS

1. What does Hume consider the main social virtues?
2. How does he explain the origin of manners? What, according to him, is the relation between morals and manners?
3. 'What wit is, it may not be easy to define.' Aristotle calls it 'well-bred insolence.' Is this a good definition?
4. Does 'politeness,' as Hume uses the word, mean exactly what it means in common usage today?
5. What kind of self-praise is allowed, and in what circumstances?

6. 'Decency' and 'modesty' are key words in this chapter. What does Hume mean by them? Why are they so important?
7. What name would you give to the 'something mysterious and inexplicable' described in the next to last paragraph?
8. 'The passion between the sexes' (p. 375): can you think of any reason for his use of this phrase instead of the word 'love'?
9. What inferences can you make from this chapter about the author's character and tastes?
10. With Hume's description of qualities agreeable to others, compare a famous nineteenth-century delineation of the gentleman, reprinted from Newman on pp. 117–19. Do Hume and Newman stress the same qualities? Which passage is more precise, and which is more to your liking?

    Also to be read with this selection are the pages from Chesterfield's letters (pp. 338–51). How closely do he and Hume agree?

Charles Lamb

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

1. What does 'superannuated' mean? What term is more common now?
2. Why does Lamb begin in mock-formal style, with 'thy' and 'Reader' and a long periodic sentence? (Can you define a periodic sentence?) What advantages has the conversational manner in which the rest of the essay is composed?
3. How much does the addition of 'as wild animals in cages' add to the meaning of 'doggedly contented' (p. 377)?
4. Sum up in a sentence the idea of the essay.
5. Are Lamb's feelings on retirement like those of other persons you know or have read about? If they are, how does he manage to say anything about them that is worth reading?
6. How much do you learn from the essay about Lamb's tastes and habits?
7. How can Lamb compare his 'works' with those of Aquinas (p. 381)?
8. Would you call the essay regretful, melancholy, or pensive?
9. What is its purpose—to convey a mood, to paint a picture, to give advice?
10. In the final paragraph why is 'perambulating' a better word than 'walking' would be?

Henry David Thoreau

WHERE I LIVED, AND WHAT I LIVED FOR

1. After reading the selection explain what a critic meant by saying that Thoreau's 'profession was living.' What states of life and what moral

standards does Thoreau value most? What reasons does he give for valuing them most?

State in your own language what Thoreau's 'philosophy' is.

2. What, specifically, does Thoreau think is wrong with the lives most people live? How would he have them live instead?
3. Find examples of irony in this chapter. What is the purpose of Thoreau's irony? How does irony differ from satire? Which does Thoreau use more often?
4. Is Thoreau didactic, critical, sententious, hortatory? Which of these terms fits him best?
5. Explain: 'I had had my seeds ready' (p. 385); 'I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?' (p. 390).
6. 'A religious exercise' (p. 389): 'religious' in what sense?
7. Thoreau wrote in his *Journal* (12 November 1851): 'Those sentences are good and well discharged which are like so many little resiliencies from the spring floor of our life. . . Sentences uttered with your back to the wall. . . Sentences in which there is no strain.' What does he mean? Can you find in 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For' any sentences that seem to be 'uttered with your back to the wall'? Why do you choose those sentences as examples instead of others?

   Again, he thought (*Journal*, 2 September 1851) that 'It is vain to write on chosen themes. We must wait till they have kindled a flame in our minds.' In 'Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,' what themes kindled a flame in Thoreau's mind?
8. Paraphrase or summarize the final paragraph, in order to show whether you know what it says. (It is, by the way, a good example of the Transcendentalist mood; see the selection by Canby, p. 39).
9. Is Thoreau anti-social?
10. Which sentence in the chapter gives the clearest statement of why Thoreau went to live by Walden Pond?

Robert Louis Stevenson
ÆS TRIPLEX

1. Has the Latin title any advantages that an English one might not have? What English title would you give to the selection?
2. Which sentence first states the main idea of the essay?
3. Why does Stevenson think funerals 'ludicrous' (p. 398)?
4. What practical advice does he give against the fear of death? How practical does it seem to you?

5. Why is the 'accident that ends it all' called subversive (p. 399)? Why are the dry volumes 'cloudy' (p. 401)?
6. Explain these phrases: 'pule in little atheistic poetry-books' (p. 402); 'mim-mouthed friends and relations' (p. 403); 'to be overwise is to ossify' (p. 403).
7. 'We do not, properly speaking, love life at all, but living.' What is the distinction? Is he consistent about it? Compare, for instance, the sentence on pp. 401–2: 'But we are so fond of life that we have no leisure to entertain the terror of death.'
8. By what arguments or illustrations does he make overanxiety look ridiculous and dangerous?
9. What is the purpose of referring to death by such commonplace terms as 'the thing' and 'the business' (p. 397, find other examples)?
10. Does his mood seem to you one of forced cheerfulness or of sincere, temperamental zest for life?
11. Stevenson admired Thoreau's writings. Do you find in this essay any thoughts, any points of view, that Thoreau would have shared?
12. Is Stevenson morally consistent? Why should one take his advice on these questions? What does the essay suggest concerning his religious views?
13. 'We confound ourselves . . . inappropriateness' (p. 400). Restate this in your own words, and write three or four paragraphs on what it means.
14. Read some of Stevenson's other essays to find out whether 'Aes Triplex' is characteristic of his outlook. 'El Dorado,' 'An Apology for Idlers,' and 'Virginibus Puerisque' are good ones to start with.

John Stuart Mill
CHILDHOOD AND EARLY EDUCATION

1. Sketch James Mill's character by means of the information his son gives in this chapter. When reading some passages (for instance, p. 408) do you not think the father was as long-suffering as the son?
2. Is Mill right in insisting that much more can be learned in a child's early years than he is usually made to learn or allowed to learn? Do you think it is better for children to be undereducated than overeducated? (You might find some useful comments in the selections by Hutton and Highet, pp. 166–76, 177–89).
3. Do you approve of James Mill's insistence that his son give him an oral account of everything he read?
4. How far did you get in reading this before thinking, 'Didn't the boy ever play?' But note what Mill himself says on p. 424: 'I had ample leisure every day to amuse myself.'

5. Why does Mill think the detection of logical fallacies a better intellectual discipline than mathematics?
6. Is there sufficient disclosure of Mill's feelings in this account to show you whether he hated, respected, loved, or feared his father?
7. How do you explain the elder Mill's neglect in training the emotions?
8. 'If I had been by nature . . . above par' (p. 421): are you convinced of this?
9. Do you think he is right in affirming that 'Most boys or youths who have had much knowledge drilled into them, have their mental capacities not strengthened, but overlaid by it'?
10. What are the younger Mill's convictions concerning methods of education? Concerning the aims of education? (Compare Livingstone, Highet, and Hutton, pp. 150–65, 166–76, 177–89).
11. If you are interested in finding out more about Mill's education and his relations with his father, read ch. ii of his *Autobiography*.

Mark Twain (*S. L. Clemens*)
LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI

1. What different devices does the author use to prove that piloting is an 'exact science'?
2. Did piloting turn out to be as romantic an occupation as the boy had expected?
3. How well acquainted with Mr. Bixby do you feel after reading these chapters? What made him so masterly a pilot? How is he made to seem of heroic stature?
4. How many different 'levels' or kinds of language are used in these chapters?
5. Note and study the phrases that make the narrative picturesque. Substitute others of your own; what is the difference? For example, what would be the difference in the first paragraph on p. 426 if Mark Twain had written 'if we lived and were good we could become pirates' instead of 'if we lived and were good, God would permit us to be pirates'; in the second paragraph, 'what made them sleepy' instead of 'what broke them down'; 'eating water-melon rinds and seeds' instead of 'doing a good business in water-melon rinds and seeds'? Try to rewrite the first two pages in your own language, omitting none of the persons or things mentioned. Exercises of this kind, if you take them seriously enough, can sharpen your appreciation of preciseness and vividness in writing.
6. What are the most important and most obvious qualities of Mark Twain's humor? Is it satirical? Does he depend on 'tall tales'? On vivid description of ordinary happenings? On local color?

7. What scenes or situations in these chapters depend for their success on the fact that they are presented from a boy's point of view?
8. 'This fellow had money, too, and hair oil' (p. 429). What does the addition of 'and hair oil' contribute to the description?
9. Who is the chief character in these chapters—Mark Twain, Mr. Bixby, or the river?
10. Read *Huckleberry Finn*, if you have never done so.

Anthony Trollope
THE BISHOP'S HOUSEHOLD

1. Do you think Trollope is to be taken seriously when he says, in the first paragraph, 'I do not precisely understand its nature'? Why does he add 'but I do know that every thing was properly done'?
2. What are Dr. Proudie's qualifications as an ecclesiastical politician? To what is his success attributable?
3. Is Mrs. Proudie a despicable, a strong, or merely an unlikable woman? How did she get so much power over her husband? Why, if she is so astute, is she ignorant of the affair between her daughter and Mr. Slope?
4. 'Considering their connection with the church, they entertain but few prejudices against the pleasures of the world.' Explain the sentence. Is Trollope satirizing the Church, the girls, or their parents?
5. How much does this sentence tell you about Mrs. Proudie: 'not even for grandeur or economy will Mrs Proudie forgive a desecration of the Sabbath'?
6. What is the tone of Trollope's remarks concerning the Church and churchmen? Is it mildly ironic? anticlerical? skeptical?
7. What details in Trollope's description of Mr. Slope make him seem particularly unpleasant?
8. What do you think of Mr. Slope's Christianity? What does Trollope want you to think of it?
9. Of Mr. Slope: 'His acquirements are not of the highest order, but such as they are they are completely under control.' Prove both statements. Why is the terror he excites in his congregations said to be 'not unpleasant'? Why does his gall rise at 'a new church with a high pitched roof' or a 'book of prayer printed with red letters, and ornamented with a cross on the back'?
10. Which character is drawn most convincingly, in your opinion—Dr. Proudie, Mrs. Proudie, or Mr. Slope? Do they seem like individuals or like types?
11. Is Trollope a humorist?

Samuel Butler
THE WAY OF ALL FLESH

1. Study the irony. Is it malicious? amusing? bitter? Is Butler sarcastic or sardonic? How would you describe his mood in these chapters?
2. Does Butler imply that relations between parents and children are usually as he describes them, or that such relations were peculiar to Victorian families, or to his own experience? Does he intend his generalizations on these subjects to be taken seriously? How do you know?
3. What does he mean by 'moral influence'?
4. Do you agree, or do you suppose you will agree, that 'youth is like spring, an overpraised season'?
5. What are Theobald's most obvious (to you, not to himself) characteristics?
6. What does 'this numb serpent of a metaphor' (p. 462) mean?
7. What does 'the education cost the children far more than it cost him' mean? Is Butler suggesting that this is what usually happens?
8. How much do the parenthetical statements '(and so did Christina)' on p. 461, and the last sentence on p. 462, 'But she persevered,' tell you about Christina?
9. 'No duty could be more important than that of teaching a child to obey its parents in all things.' 'Some Romans had even killed their children; this was going too far. . .' How do these sentences illustrate Theobald's views on 'moral influence'?
10. 'Young people . . . circumstances' (p. 458). Use this as the first sentence in an essay on some experience of your own childhood.
11. For another account of a Victorian childhood see Gosse, pp. 467–80.

William James
TWO LETTERS ON DEATH

1. What, in your judgment, is most noteworthy in these two letters?
2. What do they suggest about the writer? Do they strike you as honest? candid? too candid? more emotional or less emotional than the occasion might require?
3. How much can you infer from the letters about the father and sister? Whose character emerges most clearly?
4. What does James mean by 'If you go, it will not be an inharmonious thing'?
5. What does the phrase 'believing agnostic' suggest when applied to William James? Is there any 'believing agnosticism' in these letters?

6. Assuming the letters were read by the persons to whom they were addressed, do you suppose they gave comfort and reassurance?
7. Read the final sentence of George Santayana's 'William James' (p. 546 in this book). Is it supported by these letters?
8. Read James's 'Pragmatism's Conception of Truth.' Does it have anything in common with the letters?

Edmund Gosse
FATHER AND SON

1. 'Both of my parents, I think, were devoid of sympathetic imagination' (p. 468). Do you agree? How would you prove or disprove it?
2. What is to you most admirable and what least admirable in their religious faith?
3. How much does the mother's deathbed affirmation, 'I have peace, but not *joy*,' tell you about her character?
4. What do you think of the father? Was he hypocritical, morbid, courageous, obstinate, affectionate? Was he a crank?
5. Gosse describes 'emotion recollected in tranquillity.' How does he make us perceive the emotions without becoming sentimental himself or allowing us to become so? How sincere do you think he is?
6. What does his language suggest about his later, mature judgments of his youth, his parents, and their religion?
7. Restate in your own words and explain the passage beginning 'my parents read injunctions' and ending 'the nineteenth,' on p. 468.
8. What difference does the word 'fragile' make to 'the shoulders of a little fragile child' (p. 471)?
9. Explain: 'achieving by stupidity what they cannot achieve by argument' (p. 472); 'every lot has its crumpled rose-leaf' (p. 477); 'hieratic figure' (p. 478).
10. Why does he call the other candidates for baptism 'mere grown-up men and women' (p. 478) and 'humdrum adults' (p. 480)?
11. How does the writer succeed in being amusing (if he does succeed) while writing about spiritual and inherently solemn subjects—for example, baptism?
12. See other selections in this book that deal with relations between father and son: Chesterfield (pp. 338–51), Mill (pp. 405–25), and Butler (pp. 455–62).

James Thurber

UNIVERSITY DAYS
and DRAFT BOARD NIGHTS

Although sober analysis often spoils humor, it may be worth while asking yourself just why these pieces are amusing. (If you are not amused by them, it will be worth while analyzing yourself.)

1. What can you infer from the fact that 'University Days' has often been reprinted in anthologies made by teachers?
2. What difference does it make in the first paragraph that *too* and *mechanics* are italicized, and that the botany teacher says 'flars' instead of 'flowers'?
3. The writer of these questions once read 'University Days' with a class that included the son of one of the country's best-known football coaches. The boy was indignant about the satire of Mr. Bolenciecwcz; he thought it lowered the dignity of the sport. 'Anybody as dumb as that couldn't play modern football,' he said. What do you think of his criticism?
4. 'Professors, horizontal bars, agricultural students, and swinging iron rings' (p. 484). Is there any reason for listing them in this order?
5. How much does the word 'moodily' add in 'moodily creeping up on the old chemistry building' (p. 485), and 'unexpected' in 'a tall, unexpected young man' (p. 490)?
6. What is wrong with the opening sentence of Haskins's article (p. 485)?
7. Do the university types described by Mr. Thurber have anything in common with those of Highet's essay (pp. 166–76)?
8. Which of the two sketches by Mr. Thurber do you like better, and why?
9. Try your hand at describing some teachers or college experiences you have had.

Walter Savage Landor

PETER THE GREAT AND ALEXIS

1. What is meant by dramatic verisimilitude, and how does Landor achieve it? This dialogue is short, but consider how much we learn, or think we learn, about the father and son in these few pages. How do we learn it—by facts, by suggestions or allusions, or by our own inferences?
2. Do you think a narrative of the same length could make Peter and Alexis as 'real' as dramatic presentation does? (Try your hand at turning this dialogue into a narrative written in the third person.) What are some advantages and disadvantages of dramatic form as compared with narrative form? Study some examples of each and draw some provisional conclusions.

3. How much liberty with 'historical facts' may a writer of literature take? If this question seems large or vague, perhaps you can attack it by asking yourself first what are the differences between 'history' and 'literature.'
4. How does Landor's commencing the dialogue with a conjunction make the scene more convincing?
5. Find the phrase that you think best describes Peter's opinion of Alexis. What is your own impression of Alexis?
6. So far as we know, Alexis was more vicious than Landor makes him. Why would Landor reveal nothing of that viciousness?
7. How well does Peter understand Christianity? Why does he call Alexis an atheist?
8. How does 'And to one who has not dined!' (p. 498) illuminate Peter's character?
9. One writer on Peter the Great says that although 'no man equally great has ever descended to such depths of cruelty and treachery,' yet he had 'a strain of nobility' which 'extorts from time to time an all-forgiving admiration.' Do you think 'all-forgiving' is the right phrase? Read some historical account of Peter and see whether you agree.
10. For dramatic dialogue of a different kind see the selection by Sherwood (pp. 499–504).

Robert E. Sherwood
ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

1. One of the persistent questions a sensitive reader of this scene will ask himself is, 'Does this language sound like that of Lincoln and Douglas or does it sound like that of the 1930's?' Which phrases or sentences seem to you most likely to be quotations, and which Mr. Sherwood's invention? Read some of the debates for yourself (those at Galesburg and Alton will do as well as any), and see if you can decide.
2. What obligation, if any, has a novelist or playwright to be faithful to the words historical personages actually uttered? Who is to decide? And is this obligation, if it exists, the same if the writer has Julius Caesar speaking as it is if he has Washington or Lincoln speaking?
3. Does Douglas's speech seem less sincere than Lincoln's? Do you suppose it is intended to seem so? Mr. Sherwood writes in his notes to the play: 'I am regretfully aware that this scene does much less than justice to Douglas.' Why should he be regretful?
4. Does the passage on strikes on pp. 500–501 sound like one that would have been made in 1858? (A hard question, perhaps, but see what you can do with it.)

5. What can you infer from these speeches about the people who heard them?
6. In their differences over 'all men are created free and equal' and 'thus Negro equality is an inalienable right' (see p. 501) what does each speaker mean by 'equal,' 'inalienable,' and 'right'?
7. Do you know whether Lincoln was historically correct in his interpretation of the intention of the writers of the Declaration of Independence concerning equality? Try to find out.
8. What is the 'revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow' the government which Lincoln refers to (p. 503)? Is there any such 'right'?
9. What is the main impression, so far as you can tell, that the playwright wants to make on his audience in this scene?
10. Read Mr. Sherwood's notes to this scene (printed with the text, 1939).

C. E. M. Joad
WHAT DO WE KNOW OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD?

Even a person unacquainted with philosophical writings should find 'What Do We Know of the Outside World?' an intelligible and interesting introduction to one of the basic subjects of philosophical inquiry—the nature of human knowledge. He should not need explanatory notes in reading this selection, though one or two questions might be useful to him.

The chapter is, obviously, an essay in exposition. How well do you think the writer succeeds in summarizing quite familiar, apparently simple, but (as it turns out) really complex experiences? Does he convince you that 'common-sense' views of what constitutes knowledge are inadequate? Does he have enough illustrations to make his points? Are you dissatisfied with any of the illustrations? Does he define his terms and use them consistently? After you have finished reading, can you say, if not what knowledge is, what it is not?

The author knows when he begins that his subject is difficult, and evidently he is anxious to present it in clear, nontechnical terms. The reader—certainly this is true of some readers at any rate—thinks when *he* begins that the problem is no great one, but he soon begins to realize that it is far from simple after all. The writer has succeeded only if the reader is in fact made to see that there are real issues here, is enabled to see clearly what they are, and is forced to re-examine his own previous assumptions about them. To appreciate better the skill needed in handling a difficult topic in exposition, try writing a plain explanation of something common but complex: for example, motion, existence, beauty, truth.

Russell's 'Individual and Social Knowledge' (pp. 517–22) should be read with

this selection. Do the authors use similar methods in trying to make their ideas clear? Do you think one writer has been more successful than the other?

Note Woodward's remark (p. 267): 'I had given up reading metaphysics because it seemed to me that for over two thousand years philosophers had asked more or less the same questions.' Could you defend the proposition that it may not be unprofitable to keep on asking the same questions?

Bertrand Russell

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Does the author think that science succeeds in being 'wholly impersonal'? Does it eliminate 'here' and 'now'?
2. Why is it that 'the very publicity of language is in large part a delusion'?
3. What connections between language and science are emphasized?
4. What is the distinction between verbal and ostensive definition?
5. How does language become depersonalized? What are some examples of depersonalized words?
6. He speaks of 'the common world in which we believe ourselves to live' (p. 521). Do we not know whether we live in it? Why does he call this common world a 'construction'?
7. Does the chapter make you skeptical of common-sense assumptions about knowledge? Is it intended to? (Compare Joad, pp. 505–16.)
8. Explain this sentence: 'The order for knowledge is the inverse of the causal order.'
9. Do you think this chapter is, for you, a successful exposition? Does it pose a problem clearly and make you see what is involved? Does it define terms? Does it assume agreement about the meanings of terms?
10. What is his conclusion?
11. See the other selections on this and related topics: Joad (pp. 505–16), Whitehead (pp. 556–60), Black (pp. 3–15), and Sullivan (pp. 572–80).

William James

PRAGMATISM'S CONCEPTION OF TRUTH

You should read the selection several times before attempting the questions. Outlining James's argument will be helpful.

1. What is the problem? Summarize James's solution of it in your own language.

2. How much light do the selections by Joad (pp. 505–16) and Russell (pp. 517–22) throw on the problem?
3. Why is pragmatism called a philosophy of 'instrumentalism'?
4. Is truth, as defined by pragmatism, a matter of expediency? of mere expediency?
5. Consider the statements, 'It is useful because it is true' and 'It is true because it is useful.' Do they mean the same thing?
6. Pragmatism's critics accuse it of holding that truth is 'man-made.' Is the accusation justified?
7. What arguments can you bring against the dictum that 'truth is what works'?
8. What is 'the practical difference it makes to us to have true ideas'? What does James mean by 'realizing' a truth?
9. What difference does or might the pragmatist view of truth make to moral behavior?
10. Read Santayana's portrait of James (pp. 532–46). What criticisms of pragmatism does he make? If you suppose Santayana's picture of James is accurate (a supposition that some critics might not accept), what can you infer about the connection between a man's temperament and the kind of philosophy he adopts?
11. Write an argument for or against these assertions by James: 'Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events' (p. 525). Begin by searching for an adequate definition—your own, not a dictionary's—of 'truth,' and then consider whether James's sentences satisfy you.
12. Criticize the lecture as an exposition of ideas. Does it present the issues clearly, with enough illustrations? Is the lecture dogmatic, modest, confident, persuasive? Why does he try to expound complex ideas in informal or colloquial language? How well does he succeed?

George Santayana
WILLIAM JAMES

1. Read with this essay the two letters by James and the excerpt from one of his philosophical essays (pp. 463–6, 523–31). Do they seem to you to confirm the observations of Mr. Santayana?

   The paragraphs on James's philosophical ideas on pp. 534–43 may puzzle you, but if you reread them several times you should be able to make something of them. (It is questionable whether James would have accepted them as an accurate representation of his views.) The portrait of James the man ought to be clear enough.

2. Is Mr. Santayana critical, patronizing, ironic? How would you sum up his opinions of James?
3. How does the addition of the phrase 'especially on the high seas' clarify and expand the meaning of 'every one should paddle his own canoe' (p. 532)?
4. What is the effect of the word 'exuberance' in 'the exuberance of a tie' (p. 533)? of 'raids' (p. 534)? of 'lyrically' (p. 542)?
5. 'His doctrine . . . was agnosticism' (p. 537). Is this supported by the letters on pp. 463–6?
6. What does the writer mean when he calls James 'a spirited rather than a spiritual man'?
7. What does he mean by 'the hortatory tradition of college sages' (p. 541)? Have you encountered this tradition? Is the phrase 'little sermons' ironic or depreciatory? What of the phrase about 'the young Christian soldier' on p. 541?
8. How much, if anything, can you infer about Mr. Santayana's own beliefs?
9. Which passages make James most real or most attractive to you? What is your final impression of him? Was your impression influenced by the final sentence of the essay?

Thomas Babington Macaulay
PLATO AND BACON

1. What, according to Macaulay, are the most important defects of Plato's philosophy and the most important merits of Bacon's?
2. Which sentence or sentences best sum up the essential differences (in Macaulay's opinion) between the Platonic and Baconian philosophies?
3. What methods does Macaulay use to prove Bacon's superiority? Does he prove it or argue it or assume it?
4. This selection is an excellent example of the use of balance, antithesis, and contrast. Find examples of these in whole paragraphs and in sentences. Is each paragraph on Plato balanced by one on Bacon? How effective, in your judgment, is this use of balance and antithesis?
5. No reader could possibly miss Macaulay's preference for the Baconian philosophy, but study his method of making this sympathy plain. Does he do it mostly by statement, by implication, or by phrases?
6. What assumption about progress underlies this passage?
7. What do you infer regarding Macaulay's conception of the purposes of legislation?
8. If Macaulay is so convinced of the superiority of Bacon's ideas, is he inconsistent in calling Plato the 'finest of human intellects' (p. 555)? And if Plato

was indeed the finest of human intellects, why was he so blind to truths that Bacon and Macaulay saw so clearly?

9. 'He really . . . superfluous' (p. 554). Why does Macaulay add the 'really'? What does 'pathetic' mean? In the next sentence why does Macaulay call Plato's hopes 'romantic'?
10. Does he define terms sufficiently—for instance 'mere matters of curiosity' (p. 548), 'useful' (p. 548), 'well-being' (p. 549)?
11. 'The beneficence of his [Bacon's] philosophy resembled the beneficence of the common Father' (p. 552). Is there anything objectionable in this sentence? Is it logically sound? Is it fair?
12. Before accepting Macaulay's strictures on Plato, read the passages he refers to, especially bk. VII of the *Republic*.
13. See Arnold's passage on Plato (pp. 120–22). How does his attitude differ from Macaulay's?

A. N. Whitehead

THE ABSTRACT NATURE OF MATHEMATICS

1. What kinds of readers does he write for? Does he take for granted an interest in mathematics? How much knowledge of it does he take for granted?
2. Does not the opening sentence seem an unusual one for a chapter whose purpose is to justify and praise its subject? Is there any reason for beginning in this fashion?
3. Considering that this short chapter is the first one in an introduction to mathematics, do you think it succeeds in making its points clear? What are the main points?
4. What is the leading characteristic of mathematics?
5. Why does Whitehead insist on the importance of disentangling the fundamental ideas of mathematics from technical procedure, of reaching its 'general conceptions'? What are they?
6. Has your training in mathematics acquainted you with its general conceptions? Did you, early in your study, 'know what the science is about'?
7. Does mathematics have anything in common with language?
8. Is mathematics important because of or in spite of its abstractness?
9. How does the author define the aim of scientific thought?
10. 'Also we hear and we touch the same world as we see' (p. 559). Compare the selections by Joad and Russell (pp. 505–16, 517–22).
11. In what sense is mathematics the 'queen of the sciences'?
12. How does this account of mathematics illustrate Sullivan's remarks (pp. 572–80) on the aesthetic appeal of science?

Hans Zinsser
RATS AND MEN

1. How does the writer make his unpleasant subject readable?
2. Which sentence on p. 562 gives the main theme or idea of the chapter?
3. Does Zinsser make the analogy between rats and men convincing? Why does he insist upon it at such length? How important does it seem to you?
4. Is this, in your opinion, a successful piece of writing? Does it interest you? (Do not answer this too glibly. Reread the text, and balance the author's evident purposes against his accomplishment before you answer.)
5. 'We may, in a few centuries . . . any mere animal' (p. 563): why does he say 'civilization'?
6. What is the point about 'realtors' and 'morticians' (p. 564)? What is wrong with those terms?
7. Does he make rats seem more human than we are wont to think them, or men more rat-like?
8. What social and ethical standards does he seem to prize most?
9. In comparing small things with great, or mean with splendid ones (as Zinsser does, for example, on p. 569, comparing the invasion of Bermuda by rats and their sudden disappearance with the rise and fall of Indian empires), a writer may be trying either to amuse us or to impress us with satiric or ironic meanings we do not ordinarily think of. Which is Zinsser trying to do? How well does he succeed? Does he ever fail?
10. Why does he add, or what is the effect of his adding, 'the duty of furnishing cannon fodder' (p. 569); 'the rat has an excuse' (p. 570); 'less humiliatingly obvious' (p. 571)?
11. What is his tone? Is it one of irony, of sarcasm, of moralism? Is this scientist writing as a scientist, as a historian, as a journalist, or as a preacher?
12. These observations by a scientist with a keen social conscience, and a taste for finding sermons in his science, should be compared with those of two other specialists in biology represented in this book—Huxley (pp. 581–602) and Conklin (pp. 603–15). With pp. 570–71 on the brevity of civilization, compare Toynbee (pp. 282–92).

J. W. N. Sullivan
THE VALUES OF SCIENCE

1. What does the term 'aesthetic' mean in this selection?
2. What is the function of art, in Sullivan's opinion?
3. What artistic or aesthetic satisfaction does science afford? How does its

appeal differ from the aesthetic appeal of such arts as music or literature?

4. What evidence does he adduce to show that a scientific theory may possess a personal element? (Compare Russell, pp. 517–22.)
5. How important is the personal element in science?
6. Does this exposition make the distinctions between science and art that are implied or assumed in the selections by Arnold, Livingstone, and Foerster (pp. 120–65) seem narrow or mistaken? Have you any doubts whether they know science as well as Sullivan knows the arts?
7. 'The chief thing about science is its theories.' Why is it?
8. Need a work of art be 'true'?
9. Why is Einstein's theory described as 'a bolt from the blue'?
10. Does the author convince you that 'there is no essential distinction between the sciences and the arts'? If there are no essential differences, are there no differences at all?
11. What paradoxes can you point out in this exposition?
12. What does the last sentence ('the scientific man is not completely a man') mean?
13. If science possesses the aesthetic and moral values Sullivan claims for it, why are they not universally recognized or acknowledged? Why do we commonly hear so little about them?

Julian Huxley

THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN

1. What are the biological, psychological, and social characteristics Mr. Huxley finds to be unique in man? Does he account for their uniqueness?
2. '. . . dehumanize one's own kind' (p. 582). In what different ways is this done in the selections by Swift and Zinsser (pp. 329–37, 561–71)?
3. What evidence does Huxley give that evolution is 'an enormous number of blind alleys, with a very occasional path of progress'?
4. Why could a brain capable of conceptual thought develop only in man?
5. How much scientific jargon does the writer use? What kind or kinds of readers does he appear to be writing for?
6. 'The fixed pathways of instinct . . . intelligence' (p. 588). How useful, and how justifiable, in 'scientific' writing is a figure of speech like 'multiple switchboards'? Find other metaphors in this selection and try to determine how much they contribute to clarity and emphasis.
7. What are the main differences, in style and manner, between this essay and the one by Zinsser (pp. 561–71)? Which interests you more? Why?
8. Mr. Huxley emphasizes man's unique capacity for intellectual and social

achievement as much as Zinsser does man's capacity for destructiveness and selfish cruelty. Which writer paints the truer picture? Does each paint the one that seems to him more important or serves his argument best? How does Mr. Huxley's purpose differ from Zinsser's?

9. How does Mr. Huxley's outlook compare with that of Mr. Conklin?
10. Why is it important to this argument to show the lack of affection in animals?
11. Note the phrase 'the perspective of biology' (p. 602). Why define our business in the world by the perspective of biology rather than by other perspectives?
12. '. . . tempered pride' (p. 603). Why should it be tempered?
13. Look up *Hamlet*, II, ii, 313–29. How does that judgment of man's nature compare with Zinsser's, Mr. Huxley's, and Mr. Conklin's?
14. What can you infer regarding Mr. Huxley's attitude toward religion? Is he as sympathetic with it as Mr. Conklin is?
15. Why does he think it takes courage to face the 'consequences of our uniqueness'?

Edwin Grant Conklin
IDEALS AS GOALS

1. This essay is a statement by an eminent scientist of his opinions on the perennial question of the relations between science and religion; or, as some would insist, between science and theology. Whatever you think of these opinions, your first obligation is to understand them clearly. See exactly what he says before you criticize.

   To whom does he address the essay? Is he arguing, preaching, 'talking down'?
2. What does he mean by religion?
3. Does science furnish ideals, or does it furnish the means of realizing them?
4. 'Nothing less wide than a system of planetary ethics will suffice in so small a world as this' (p. 604). Why?
5. What is his answer to the assertion that science teaches no ideals of values or ethics? (Compare Arnold, pp. 120–37.) What do you think of the answer?
6. Explain: 'animism' (p. 610), 'anthropomorphism' (p. 610), 'euthenics' (p. 612).
7. Some persons might question the logic of the author's answer to Carrel (p. 608). Can you see why?
8. The writer is an authority on evolution. In what ways has the idea of evolution influenced his thought about ethics, society, and religion?

9. 'The faith, ideals and ethics of science constitute a form of natural religion.' The most important word here is 'natural.' Why? Is there any reason for thinking, as some people do think, that 'natural religion' is a contradiction in terms?
10. If your library has a copy of Jefferson's Bible (see p. 615), find out how much of the Gospels was left after Jefferson removed 'ambiguous or misunderstood sayings.'
11. Mr. Conklin's book was published in 1943, in the middle of World War II. Reading his remarks now, with wisdom after the event, what do you think of them? Was he a good prophet?
12. Write two or three paragraphs summarizing the essay.
13. For other reflections on the relations of ethics, religion, and science, see selections by Livingstone (pp. 150–65), Arnold (pp. 120–37), Huxley (pp. 581–602), Zinsser (pp. 561–71), and Sullivan (pp. 572–80).