NEW DECCAN READERS

BOOK III

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DECCAN READERS

BOOK THREE

Specially prepared for
the Osmania University

BY

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PROSE

1. AN ADVENTURE AT CORK

(From *Goldsmith's Letters*)

My dear Mother,

If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork, and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddleback, into cash, and took my passage in a ship bound for America. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks; and you know, mother, I could not command the elements. My misfortune was that, when the wind served, I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend the captain never inquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing everything curious, and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends, whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast, Fiddleback, and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This, to be sure, was but a scanty allowance for man and horse for a journey of above a hundred

miles; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork. This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with peculiar emphasis. 'We shall,' says he, 'enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.'

However, upon the way, I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store; and pray mother should I not have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her? However, I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, which was guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me, and would have torn me to pieces, but for the assistance of a woman, whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a sickness, came down in his nightcap, nightgown, and

slippers. He embraced me with a most cordial welcome, and after giving me a history of his indisposition, assured me that he considered himself fortunate in having under his roof the man he loved most on earth, whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to his perfect recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him my whole soul; I opened to him all my distresses; I freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket; but that now, like a ship after weathering the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbour. He made no answer, but walked about the room, rubbing his hands as one in a deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and as that increased, I gave the most favourable interpretation to his silence. I construed it as delicacy of sentiment. I thought he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his sympathy in words.

It now approached six o'clock in the evening; and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table.

This, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small cup

of sour milk, and a loaf of stale brown bread. My friend apologized that his illness obliged him to live thus, and that better fare was not in the house. He observed at the same time that a milk diet was certainly the most healthy; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark. My hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

This lenten entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible; accordingly next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. 'To be sure,' said he, 'the longer you stay away from your mother the more you will grieve her and your other friends; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.' Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress and asked him how he thought I could travel about a hundred miles upon one half-crown. I therefore begged him to lend me a single guinea, which I assured him should be returned with thanks. 'And you know, sir,' said I, 'it is no more than I have done for you.' To this he firmly answered: 'Why, look you, Mr Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there; I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has

left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of conveyance for you; sell your horse and I will furnish you a much better one to ride on.' I readily grasped at his proposal and begged him to show me the horse; he led me to his bedchamber, and from under the bed he pulled out a stout oak stick. 'Here he is,' said he, 'take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother's with more safety than such a horse as you ride.' I was in doubt, when I got it into my hand, whether I should not in the first place apply it to his pate; but there was a knocking at the street door and the wretch flew to open it. When I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr Goldsmith, his worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with such rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

After spending an hour, he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my hospitable friend; but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives, one, that I was prejudiced in favour of the looks and manners of the visitor; and the other that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there indeed I found everything that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening, when my

old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbour's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, motioned to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never re-enter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things which my host already knew of his neighbour.

And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies; for here I spent three whole days. My host had two sweet daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord: and it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them; for that was the first time also that either had touched the instrument since their mother's death, and I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavoured to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, my host offered me his purse with a horse and servant to convey me home; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

—OLIVER GOLDSMITH

To Mrs Anne Goldsmith
Ballymahon

NOTES

Oliver Goldsmith (1730-74) was one of the most pleasing writers of the eighteenth century. *The Vicar of*

Wakefield, his only attempt at fiction, is full of humour and pathos. His *Citizen of the World* consists of a series of delightful essays in the form of letters. His letters also show genius. Of his poems *The Deserted Village* and *The Traveller* are the best known.

1. *environs*, (usually plural) the outskirts, the surrounding district of a town.

adieu, (literally) I commend you to God; goodbye.

2. *moiety*, (literally) half of something; but loosely, a part of something.

Cerberus, the three-headed dog that guards the entrance to Hades or Hell according to classical mythology.

3. *bills of humanity*, the demands of humanity.

Compare the expressions ' bill of exchange ', ' bill of sale ', ' bill of health ' and ' bill of fare '. What do these mean ?

delicacy of sentiment, delicate feelings; emotions too intimate or personal to be expressed in words.

4. *lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark*, a proverbial expression meaning to go to bed and to rise early.

lenten entertainment (or ' lenten fare '), simple or poor fare (without meat). Lent is a period of forty days kept as a time of fasting and penitence by Christians in commemoration of Christ's fasting in the wilderness.

neither here nor there, of no account either one way or the other; unimportant. The friend says that the argument is not relevant.

5. *a man of engaging aspect and polite address*, a gentleman of pleasing countenance and courteous manners.

address, bearing in conversation.

abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation, plenty without extravagance and refinement without pride. Such ' balanced constructions', though very common in Goldsmith's day, are not so now.

Exercises

Words

1. Use the following words in sentences of your own : indifferent—indifference ; invite—invitation ; vigilant—vigilance; solicit—solicitation; construe—construction.

2. Give the exact meanings of the following words: environs (what is the meaning of 'environment'?); vicinity; moiety; indisposition; interpretation.

3. Humanity means (*a*) human nature (*b*) the human race. Use the word in the two senses.

Phrases

1. Use the following phrases and idiomatic expressions in sentences of your own: inquire after; bound for; expatiate on; prevail on; grasp at.

(Note the appropriate prepositions to use after each word.)

2. What is the meaning of: to wound the feelings: to be in a deep (brown) study; to form an acquaintance?

3. Use the following in sentences: prejudiced in favour of; prejudiced against.

Grammar

1. Analyse the following sentences:

(*a*) 'However, upon the way, I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support.'

(*b*) 'When I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr Goldsmith, his worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with such rapture.'

2. Turn into indirect speech the conversation between Goldsmith and his friend.

Subject Matter

1. Pick out examples of humour from the letter. (Here is one example : 'I could not command the elements.')
2. Give an account of what happened to the author at Cork.
3. How did his friend receive him? Why was he not more cordial?
4. Explain:

> What is friendship but a name?
> A charm that lulls to sleep—
> A shade that follows wealth or fame,
> And leaves the wretch to weep!
>
> —Goldsmith

2. THE STORY OF KING JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND

(From *Tales of a Grandfather*)

KING Robert the Third of Scotland had a son, called James, about eleven years old, whom he was afraid to entrust to the keeping of the Duke of Albany, his brother, who was crafty, ambitious and cruel. He resolved, therefore, to send the young Prince to France, under pretence that he would receive a better education than Scotland could afford him. An English vessel captured that on board of which the Prince was sailing to France, and James was sent to London. When Henry heard that the Prince of Scotland was in his power, he resolved to detain him a prisoner. This was very unjust, for the countries of England and Scotland were at peace together at the time. The King sent him to prison, however, saying that the Prince would be as well educated at his court as that of France. This was said in mockery, but Henry kept his word in this point; and though the Scottish Prince was confined unjustly, he received an excellent education at the expense of the English monarch.

After many years Murdac, the Regent of Scotland, began to bargain with the English for the restoration of James, who by his father's death had become the King of Scotland.

The English government were not unwilling

to deliver up James, because he had fallen in love with Jane, the Earl of Somerset's daughter, nearly related to the royal family of England. They considered that this alliance would incline the young prince to peace with England; and that the education which he had received, and the friendships which he had formed in that country, would incline him to be a peaceful neighbour. The Scots agreed to pay a considerable ransom; and upon these terms, James, the first of that name, was set at liberty, and he returned to become King in Scotland, after eighteen years' captivity. He and his queen were crowned at Scone on 21 May 1424.

The King James, the first monarch of the name, was also the first of his unfortunate family who showed a high degree of talent. Robert the Second and Robert the Third, his father and grandfather, were both rather amiable as individuals than respected for their endowments. But James had received an excellent education, of which his talents had enabled him to make the best use. He was also prudent and just, consulted the interests of his people, and tried, as far as he could, to repress those evils, which had grown up through the government of his Regents, while he was an exile in England.

The first vengeance of the laws fell upon Murdac, who with his two sons, was tried, and condemned at Stirling for the abuse of the King's authority, committed while Murdac was Regent. They were beheaded at the little eminence in Stirling, which is still shown on the Castle Hill.

James afterwards turned his care to the Highlands, which were in a state of terrible confusion. He marched into those disturbed districts with a strong army, and seized upon more than forty of the chiefs, by whom these broils and quarrels were countenanced, put many of them to death, and obliged others to find security that they would be quiet in future. Alastor Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, after more than a year's captivity, and his mother retained in vain as a hostage for his fidelity, tried to oppose the royal authority; but the measures taken against him by James reduced his power so much, that he was at last obliged to submit to the King's mercy. For this purpose the humbled chief came to Edinburgh secretly, and suddenly appeared in the Cathedral Church, where the King was employed in his devotions upon Easter-day. He appeared without bonnet, armour, or ornaments, with his legs and arms bare, and his body only covered with a plaid. In this condition he delivered himself up to the King's pleasure; and holding a naked sword in his hand by the point, he offered the hilt to the King, in token of unreserved submission. James forgave him his repeated offences, at the intercession of the Queen and nobles present, but he detained him a prisoner in the strong castle of Tantallon, in East Lothian.

Yet, after this submission of their principal chief, the West Highlanders and people of the Isles again revolted, under the command of Donald Balloach, the kinsman of Alastor, who landed on the mainland with a considerable

force, and defeated the King's forces with great slaughter; but when he heard that James himself was coming against him, Donald thought it best to retreat to Ireland. James put to death many of his followers. Donald himself was afterwards killed in Ireland, and his head sent to the King.

There is another story, which will show the cruelty and ferocity of these Highland robbers. Another Macdonald had plundered a poor widow of two of her cows; in her anger, she exclaimed repeatedly that she would never wear shoes again till she had carried her complaint to the King for redress, even if she had to travel as far as Edinburgh to see him. 'It is false,' answered the barbarian; 'I will have you shod myself before you reach the court.' Accordingly he caused a smith to nail shoes to the poor woman's naked feet, as if they had been those of a horse; after which he thrust her forth, wounded and bleeding on the highway. The widow, however, being a woman of high spirit, was determined to keep her word; and as soon as her wounds permitted her to travel, she did actually go on foot to Edinburgh, and, throwing herself before James, acquainted him with the cruelty which had been exercised on her, and in evidence showed her feet, still seamed and scarred. James heard her with that mixture of pity, kindness, and indignation which marked his character, and, in great resentment, caused Macdonald, and twelve of his principal followers, to be seized, and to have their feet shod with iron shoes, in

the same manner as had been done to the widow In this condition they were exhibited to the public for three days, and then executed.

Thus James I restored a considerable degree of tranquillity to the country, which he found in such a distracted state. He made wise laws for regulating the commerce of the nation, both at home and with other states, and strict regulations for the administration of justice betwixt those who had complaints against one another.

But his greatest labour, and that which he found most difficult to accomplish, was to diminish the power of the great nobles, who ruled like so many kings, each in his own territory and estate and made war upon the King, or upon one another, whenever it was their pleasure to do so. These disorders he endeavoured to check, and had several of these great persons brought to trial, and upon their being found guilty, deprived them of their estates. The nobles complained that this was done out of spite against them, and that they were treated with hardship and injustice; and thus discontents were entertained against this good prince.

Another cause of offence was that, to maintain justice and support the authority of the throne, it was found necessary that some taxes for this purpose should be raised from the subjects; and the Scottish people being poor and totally unaccustomed to pay any such contributions, they imputed this odious measure to the King's avarice. And thus, though King James was so well-intentioned a king, and certainly the ablest

who had reigned in Scotland since the days of Robert Bruce, yet both the high and low murmured against him; this encouraged some wicked men amongst the nobility to conspire his death.

The chief person in the plot was Sir Robert Graham. He was bold and ambitious, and highly offended with the King on account of an imprisonment which he had sustained by the royal command. He drew into the plot the Earl of Athol, an old man of little talent, by promising to make his son, Sir Robert Stewart, King of Scotland in place of James. Others were engaged in the conspiracy from different motives. To many of their attendants they pretended they only wished to carry away a lady out of the court. To prepare his scheme, Graham retreated into the remote Highlands, and from thence sent a defiance, renouncing his allegiance to the King, and threatening to put his sovereign to death with his own hand. A price was set upon his head, payable to any one who should deliver him up to justice; but he lay concealed in the wild mountains to prosecute his revenge against James.

The Christmas preceding his murder was appointed by the King for holding a feast at Perth. On his way to that town he was met by a Highland woman, calling herself a prophetess. She stood by the side of the ferry by which he was about to travel to the north, and cried with a loud voice: 'My lord the King, if you pass this water, you will never return again alive.'

The King was struck with this for a moment, because he had read in a book that a king should be slain that year in Scotland; for it often happens, that when a remarkable deed is in agitation, rumours of it get abroad, and are repeated under pretence of prophecies. There was a knight in the court, on whom the King had conferred the name of the King of Love, to whom the King said in jest: 'There is a prophecy that a king shall be killed in Scotland this year; now, Sir Alexander, that must concern either you or me, since we two are the only kings in Scotland.' Other circumstances occurred, which might have prevented the good King's murder, but none of them were attended to. The King, while at Perth, took up his residence in an abbey of Black Friars, there being no castle or palace in the town convenient for his residence; and this made the execution of the conspiracy more easy, as his guards, and the officers of his household, were quartered among the citizens.

The day had been spent by the King in sport and feasting, and by the conspirators in preparing for their enterprise. They had destroyed the locks of the doors of the apartment, so that the keys could not be turned; and they had taken away the bars with which the gates were secured, and had provided planks by way of bridges, on which to cross the ditch which surrounded the monastery. At length, on 20 February 1437, all was prepared for carrying their purpose into execution, and Graham came from his hiding-place in the neighbouring mountains, with a

party of nearly three hundred men, and entered the gardens of the convent.

The King was in his nightgown and slippers. He had passed the evening gaily with the nobles and ladies of his court, in reading romances, and in singing and music, or playing at chess and tables. The Earl of Athol, and his son, Sir Robert Stewart, who expected to succeed James on the throne, were among the last courtiers who retired. At this time James remained standing before the fire, and conversing gaily with the Queen and her ladies before he went to rest. The Highland woman before mentioned again demanded permission to speak with the King, but was refused, on account of the untimeliness of the hour. All now were ordered to withdraw.

At this moment there was a noise and clashing heard, as of men in armour, and the torches in the garden cast up great flashes of light against the windows. The King then recollected his deadly enemy, Sir Robert Graham, and guessed that he was coming to murder him. He called to the ladies who were left in the chamber to keep the door as well as they could, in order to give him time to escape. He first tried to get out at the windows, but they were fast barred and defied his strength. By help of the tongs, which were in the chimney, he raised, however, a plank of the flooring of the apartment, and let himself down into a narrow vault beneath, used as a common sewer. This vault had formerly had an opening into the court of the convent,

by which he might have made his escape. But all things turned against the unfortunate James; for, only three days before, he had caused the opening to be built up, because when he played at ball in the courtyard, the ball used to roll into the vault through that hole.

While the King was in this place of concealment, the conspirators were seeking him from chamber to chamber throughout the convent, and at length, came to the room where the ladies were. The Queen and her women endeavoured, as well as they might, to keep the door shut, and one of them, Catherine Douglas, boldly thrust her own arm across the door, instead of the bar, which had been taken away. But the brave lady's arm was soon broken, and the traitors rushed into the room with swords and daggers drawn, hurting and throwing down such of the women as opposed them. The poor Queen stood half undressed, shrieking aloud; and one of the brutal assassins attacked, wounded, and would have slain her, had it not been for a son of Sir Robert Graham, who said to him: 'What would you do to the Queen? She is but a woman—let us seek the King.'

They accordingly commenced a minute search, but without any success; so they left the apartment, and sought elsewhere about the monastery. In the meanwhile the King turned impatient, and desired the ladies to bring sheets and draw him up out of the inconvenient lurking place. In the attempt Elizabeth Douglas fell down beside the King, and at this unlucky

moment, the conspirators returned. One of them now recollected that there was such a vault, and that they had not searched it. And when they tore up the plank, and saw the King and the lady beneath in the vault, one of them called with savage merriment, to his followers: 'Sirs, I have found the bride for whom we have sought and carolled all night!' Then, first one, and then another of the villains, brethren of the name of Hall, descended into the vault, with daggers drawn, to dispatch the unfortunate King, who was standing there in his shirt, without weapons of any kind. But James, who was an active and strong man, threw them both down beneath his feet, and struggled to wrest the dagger from one or other of them, in which attempt his hands were severely cut and mangled. The murderers also were so vigorously handled that the marks of the King's grasp were visible on their throats for weeks afterwards. Then Sir Robert Graham himself sprang down on the King, who, finding no other defence possible, asked him for mercy, and for leisure to confess his sins to a priest. But Graham replied fiercely: 'Thou never hadst mercy on those of thine own blood, nor any one else, therefore thou shalt find no mercy here; and as for a confessor, thou shalt have none but this sword.' So speaking, he thrust the sword through the King's body. And yet it is said, that when he saw his prince lying bleeding under his feet, he was desirous to have left the enterprise unfinished; but the other conspirators called on Graham to kill the King, otherwise he should

himself die by their hands; upon which Graham, with the two men who had descended into the vault before him, fell on the unhappy prince with their daggers, and slew him with many stabs. There were sixteen wounds in his breast alone.

By this time, but too late, news of this outrage had reached the town, and the household servants of the King, with the people inhabiting the town of Perth, were hastening to the rescue, with torches and weapons. The traitors accordingly caught the alarm, and retreated into the Highlands, losing in their flight only one or two, taken or slain by the pursuers. When they spoke about their enterprise among themselves, they greatly regretted that they had not killed the Queen along with her husband, fearing that she would be active and inexorable in her vengeance.

Indeed their apprehensions were justified by the event, for Queen Joanna made so strict a search after the villainous assassins, that in the course of a month most of them were thrown into prison, and being tried and condemned, they were put to death with tortures.

Sir Robert Graham, who was the person with whom the cruel scheme had origin, spoke in defence of it to the last. He had a right to slay the King, he said, for he had renounced his allegiance, and declared war against him; and he expressed his belief that his memory would be honoured for putting to death so cruel a tyrant. He was tortured in the most dreadful manner before his final execution, and, whilst he was yet living, his son was slain before his eyes.

Notwithstanding the greatness of their crime, it was barbarous cruelty to torture these wretched murderers in the manner we have mentioned, and the historian says justly, that it was a cruel deed cruelly revenged. But the people were much incensed against them; for, although they had murmured against King James while he lived, yet the dismal manner of his death, and the sense that his intentions towards his people were kind and just, caused him to be much regretted. He had also many popular qualities. His face was handsome, and his person strong and active. His mind was well cultivated with ornamental and elegant accomplishments, as well as stored with useful information. He understood music and poetry, and wrote verses both serious and comic. One of these is called 'The King's Quair', that is, 'The King's Book'. It is a love poem, composed when he was a prisoner in England, and addressed to the Princess Jane of Somerset, whom he afterwards married.

On the whole, James the First was much and deservedly lamented. The murderer Graham was so far from being remembered with honour, as he had expected, for the assassination which he had committed, that his memory was cursed in a popular rhyme, then generally current:

'Robert Graham,
That slew our King,
God give him shame!'

—Sir Walter Scott

NOTES

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) began his literary career as a poet. His *Lay of the Last Minstrel* appeared in 1805 and *Marmion* and other poems followed. About 1815 Scott turned to fiction and the long series of Waverley novels appeared. Though his poetry is not without merit, it is as a novelist that Scott has become immortal. His masterpiece of fiction is *Kenilworth* though some critics prefer *The Bride of Lammermoor* or *Old Mortality.*

The Tales of a Grandfather, published in 1827-8, were written for the poet's grandson, John Hugh Lockhart. 'I will make a book that a child will understand, yet a man will feel a temptation to pursue should he chance to take it up.' Scott tells the history of Scotland from the earliest times to the Rebellion of 1745.

In this extract we have the story of King James the First of Scotland. We have a picture of those wild and lawless times when every nobleman was powerful and could even make war on the king with impunity. Scott describes it as:

'A wild world, my masters,
For treason, d'ye see
Was to them a dish of tea
And murder bread and butter!'

10. *King Robert the Third,* note the correct way of writing this: King Robert the Third or King Robert III. Other forms are not permitted.

11. *Scots,* is poetical and archaic. The usual current forms in England are Scotchman—Scotchmen; in Scotland, however, the forms Scotsman—Scotsmen seem to be preferred.

Scone, a town in Scotland where the Scotch kings were crowned on the famous stone now in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey.

consulted the interests of his people, had a consideration for the good of his people; did his best for the welfare of his people.

12. *the Highlands*, the districts in the north of Scotland formerly occupied by the old Celtic clans.

15. *A price was set upon his head*, a reward was offered to any one who would deliver him up to justice or put him to death.

16. *Black Friars*, one of the orders of the school of St Dominic. They were called Black Friars from the colour of their dress. (Hence we find the name Blackfriars still applied to certain streets in London and elsewhere, being a survival of the name of a convent of friars.)

17. *tables*, backgammon or draughts or other games played on a 'board' or 'table'.

18. *Catherine Douglas*, she was afterwards called Kate Barlass (the lass who used her arm for a bar to the door).

19. *to confess his sins*, Catholics 'confess' their sins and obtain 'absolution' or pardon from a priest just before their death.

Thou never hadst mercy on those of thine own blood, referring to the ruthless execution of Regent Murdac and his sons who were kinsmen of the King.

20. *regretted*, lamented, mourned for.

Exercises

Words

1. Show the difference in meaning between: principal—principle; alliance—allegiance; prosecute—persecute; talent—genius.

2. Use the following in sentences of your own: unjust—injustice; defy—defiant—defiance; accomplish—accomplishment; apprehend—apprehension; prophecy—prophesy; intercede—intercession; enterprise—enterprising.

Phrases

1. Use the following in your own sentences: as far as; as soon as; as well as; in order to; in order that.

2. What is the meaning of the following : the high and the low ; out of spite ; put into execution ; justify by the event.

Grammar

1. Note : government is singular or plural according to the sense intended.
2. ' Such men as opposed them ' or 'men who opposed them '.
3. Analyse into clauses :

(*a*) He was also prudent and just, consulted the interests of his people, and tried, as far as he could, to repress those evils which had grown up through the government of his Regents, while he was an exile in England.

(*b*) But his greatest labour, and that which he found most difficult to accomplish, was to diminish the power of the great nobles, who ruled like so many kings, each in his own territory and estate and made war upon the King, or upon one another, whenever it was their pleasure to do so.

Subject Matter

1. Sketch the life of James before his restoration to the throne of Scotland.
2. What were the measures taken by James to restore order in his kingdom ?
3. Sketch the character of James the First of Scotland.
4. Why did the nobles and the common people dislike James though he was a wise and good king ?
5. Give an account of the murder of James in the monastery of the Black Friars at Perth.
6. ' It was a cruel deed cruelly revenged.' Explain this remark of the historian.
7. An English poet called Rossetti has written a poem *The King's Tragedy* on the murder of King James at Perth. It is a simple and beautiful poem. Read it.

3. MAID MARIAN

(From *Maid Marian*)

In the Abbey of Rubygill

The abbot stood at the altar in the chapel of Rubygill Abbey to solemnize the nuptials of the beautiful Matilda Fitzwater, daughter of the Baron of Arlingford, with the noble Robert Fitz-Ooth, Earl of Huntingdon. The bride, with her father and attendant maidens, entered the chapel; but the Earl had not arrived. The Baron was amazed, and the bridesmaids were disconcerted. Matilda feared that some evil had befallen her lover, but felt no diminution of her confidence in his honour and love. Through the open gates of the chapel she looked down the narrow road that wound along the side of the hill ; and her ear was the first that heard the distant trampling of horses, and her eye was the first that caught the glitter of snowy plumes, and the light of polished spears. 'It is strange', thought the Baron, ' that the Earl should come in this martial array to his wedding.' But he had not long to meditate, for the foaming steeds swept up the gate like a whirlwind, and the Earl, breathless with speed, and followed by a few of his yeomen, advanced to his smiling bride. It was then no time to ask questions, for the organ was in full peal, and the choristers were in full voice.

The abbot began the ceremony but he had not proceeded far when a noise was heard at the gate, and a party of armed men entered the chapel. The song of the choristers died away. The voice of the abbot subsided into silence. In a few moments all was silence, interrupted only by the iron tread of the armed intruders, as it rang on the marble floor and echoed from the vaulted aisles.

The leader strode up to the altar; and placing himself between the Earl and Matilda, exclaimed: 'In the name of King Henry, I forbid the ceremony, and arrest Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, as a traitor!' Saying this he drew his sword. The Earl drew his own sword instantly and struck down the weapon; then he clasped his left arm round Matilda, who sprang into his embrace, and held his sword before her to defend her. His yeomen ranged themselves at his side, and stood with their swords drawn, still and prepared, like men determined to die in his defence. The soldiers, confident in their superiority of numbers, paused. The abbot took advantage of the pause to introduce a word of exhortation. 'My children,' said he, 'if you are going to cut each other's throats, I entreat you, in the name of peace and charity, to do it out of the chapel.'

'Sweet Matilda,' said the Earl, 'did you give your love to the Earl of Huntingdon, whose lands touch the Ouse and the Trent, or to Robert Fitz-Ooth?'

'Neither to the Earl nor his earldom,' answered

Matilda firmly, 'but to Robert Fitz-Ooth and his love.'

'That I well knew,' said the Earl, 'and though the ceremony be incomplete, we are not the less married in the eye of Heaven. Lord Fitzwater, to your care, for the present, I commit your daughter. Nay, sweet Matilda, we must part for a while; but we will soon meet under brighter skies, and be this the seal of our faith.'

He kissed Matilda's lips and consigned her to the Baron, and with a sign to his followers, made a sudden charge on the soldiers, with the intention of cutting his way through. The soldiers were prepared for such an occurrence, and a desperate skirmish succeeded. Matilda seemed disposed to fly again to her lover, but the Baron forced her from the chapel. At length, through the midst of the confusion, the Earl, by the help of his good sword, fought his way to the chapel-gate vaulted into his saddle and rode away . . .

Matilda and the Baron

Matilda, not dreaming of visitors, tripped into the apartment in a dress of forest green, with a small quiver by her side and a bow and arrow in her hand. Her hair was black and glossy; her black eyes sparkled like sunbeams on a river; her lips were half opened to speak as she entered the apartment; and with a smile of recognition to the friar, and a curtsy to the stranger knight, she approached the Baron and said:

'You are late at your breakfast, father.'

'I am not at breakfast,' said the Baron; 'I have been at supper—my last night's supper, for I had none.'

'I am sorry,' said Matilda, 'you should have gone to bed supperless.'

'I did not go to bed supperless,' said the Baron; 'I did not go to bed at all; and what are you doing with that green dress and that bow and arrow?'

'I am going a-hunting,' said Matilda.

'A-hunting,' said the Baron. 'What, I warrant you, to meet the Earl, and slip your head into the same noose?'

'No,' said Matilda, 'I am not going out of our own woods today.'

'How do I know that?' said the Baron. 'What surety have I of that?'

'Here is the friar,' said Matilda, 'he will be surety.'

'Not he,' said the Baron; 'he will undertake anything; but you shall not go hunting today.'

'Why, father, I must go to the woods.'

'Must you? I say you must not.'

'But I am going,' said Matilda.

'But I will have up the drawbridge,' said the Baron.

'But I will swim the moat,' said Matilda.

'But I will secure the gates,' said the Baron.

'But I will leap from the battlement,' said Matilda.

'But I will lock you in an upper chamber,' said the Baron.

'But I will shred the tapestry and let myself down.'

'But I will lock you in a turret,' said the Baron, 'where you shall only see light through a loophole.'

'But through that loophole,' said Matilda, 'will I take my flight, like a young eagle from its aerie; and, father, while I go out freely, I will return willingly; but if once I slip out through a loophole—' She paused a moment, and then added singing:

The love that follows fain
  Will never its faith betray;
But the faith that is held in a chain
Will never be found again,
  If a single link give way.

The Festival of May

Old Sir Guy of Gamwell, and young William Gamwell, and fair Alice Gamwell, and Sir Ralph Mountfaucon and his squire, rode together next morning to the scene of the feast. They arrived on a village green, surrounded with cottages peeping from among the trees. The whole circle was hung round with a continuous garland of flowers. In the centre of the green was a May-pole hidden in boughs and garlands; and young men and women were dancing round it.

While the knight was delighting his eyes and ears with these pleasant sights and sounds, all eyes were turned in one direction; and Sir Ralph looking round, saw a fair lady in green and gold come riding through the trees accompanied by

a portly friar in grey, and several fair damsels and gallant grooms. On their nearer approach, he recognized the lady Matilda and her ghostly adviser, Brother Michael. A party of foresters arrived from another direction, and then ensued cordial interchanges of greeting. A number of young men and women advanced, some drawing, and others dancing round, a floral car; and having placed a crown of flowers on Matilda's head, they saluted her Queen of the May, and drew her to the place appointed for the rural sports.

The sports commenced and after racing, leaping, wrestling and other trials of strength or skill, the trial of archery ensued. The conqueror was to be rewarded with a golden arrow from the hand of the Queen of the May, who was to be his partner in the dance till the close of the feast. This stimulated the knight's emulation: young Gamwell supplied him with a bow and arrow, and he took his station among the foresters, but had the mortification to be outshot by them all, and to see one of them lodge the point of his arrow in the golden ring of the centre, and receive the prize from the hand of the beautiful Matilda, who smiled on him with particular grace. The jealous knight scrutinized the successful champion with great attention, and thought surely he had seen that face before. In the meantime the forester led the lady to the dance. Sir Ralph gazed on her fascinating motions till the torments of baffled love and jealous rage became unendurable; and approaching

young Gamwell, he asked him if he knew the name of that forester who was leading the dance with the Queen of the May.

'Robin, I believe,' said young Gamwell, carelessly; 'I think they call him Robin.'

'Is that all you know of him?' said Sir Ralph.

'What more should I know of him?' said young Gamwell.

'Then I can tell you,' said Sir Ralph; 'he is the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon, on whose head is set so large a price.'

'Ay, is he?' said young Gamwell, in the same careless manner.

'He would be a prize worth the taking,' said Sir Ralph.

'No doubt,' said young Gamwell.

'How think you?' said Sir Ralph; 'are the foresters his adherents?'

'I cannot say,' said young Gamwell.

'Is your peasantry loyal and well-disposed?' said Sir Ralph.

'Passing loyal,' said Gamwell.

'If I should call on them in the King's name,' said Sir Ralph, 'think you they would aid and assist?'

'Most likely they would,' said young Gamwell; 'one side or the other.'

'Ay, but which side?' said the knight.

'That remains to be tried,' said young Gamwell.

'I have King Henry's commission,' said the knight, 'to apprehend this Earl that was. How

would you advise me to act, being, as you see, without attendant force?'

'I would advise you,' said young Gamwell, 'to take yourself off without delay, unless you would taste the relish of a volley of arrows, a shower of stones, and a hailstorm of cudgel blows, which would not be turned aside by a God save King Henry!'

Sir Ralph's squire no sooner heard this than he clapped spurs to his horse and galloped off. This gave the knight a good excuse to pursue, which he did with great celerity, calling: 'Stop, you rascal.' When the squire fancied himself safe out of the reach of pursuit, he checked his speed, and allowed the knight to come up with him. They rode on several miles in silence, till they discovered the towers and spires of Nottingham, where the knight introduced himself to the sheriff and demanded an armed force to assist in the apprehension of the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon. The sheriff, who was willing to have his share of the prize, determined to accompany the knight in person, and with a stout retinue of fifty men, took the way to Gamwell feast.

They rode on till they came in view of a bridge, when they saw a party approaching from the opposite side, and the knight presently discovered that the party consisted of the lady Matilda and Friar Michael, young Gamwell, cousin Robin, and about half-a-dozen foresters. The knight pointed out the Earl to the sheriff, who exclaimed: 'Here, then, we have him an

easy prey;' and they rode towards the bridge, on which the other party made halt.

'Who are these,' said the friar, 'that come riding so fast this way? Now, as God shall judge me, it is that false knight, Sir Ralph Mountfaucon, and the sheriff of Nottingham, with a posse of men. We must make good our post, and let them dislodge us if they can.'

The two parties were now near enough to parley; and the sheriff and the knight called on the other party to deliver up that false traitor, Robert, formerly Earl of Huntingdon. Robert himself made answer by letting fly an arrow that struck the ground at the feet of the sheriff's horse. The horse reared and lodged the sheriff in the dust; and, at the same time, the fair Matilda favoured the knight with an arrow in his right arm, that compelled him to withdraw from the affray. The friar flourished his staff among the sheriff's men, knocking down one, breaking the ribs of another, dislocating the shoulder of a third, cracking the skull of a fourth, and pitching a fifth into the river, till the few who were lucky enough to escape, clapped spurs to their horses and fled for their lives, under a farewell volley of arrows.

A Rescue

(Young Gamwell is made prisoner, tried and sentenced to death.)

A page had been brought up in Gamwell Hall, who, while he was little, had been called Little John, and continued to be so called after

he had grown to be a foot taller than any other man in the house. He had fought manfully in defence of his young master, took his captivity exceedingly to heart, and fell into bitter grief and boundless rage when he heard that he had been tried in Nottingham and sentenced to death. Alice Gamwell, at Little John's request, wrote three letters of one tenor; and Little John, having attached them to three blunt arrows, rode fast to Arlingford Castle, where he shot one of the three arrows over the battlements; then to Rubygill Abbey, where he shot the second into the Abbey garden; then back past Gamwell Hall to the borders of Sherwood Forest, where he shot the third into the wood. The first of these arrows lighted in the nape of the neck of Lord Fitzwater; the second fell on the shaven head of the Abbot of Rubygill; and the third into the centre of a venison pasty into which Robin Hood was making incision.

Matilda ran up to her father in the court of Arlingford Castle, seized the arrow, drew off the letter, and concealed it in her bosom before the Baron had time to look round.

The Abbot of Rubygill picked up the arrow, and opened the letter, which was addressed to Father Michael and found it to contain an intimation that William Gamwell was to be hanged on Monday morning at Nottingham.

Robin Hood extracted from his venison pasty a similar intimation of the evil destiny of his cousin, whom he determined, if possible to rescue from the jaws of death.

The sheriff of Nottingham, though still sore with his bruises, was so intent on revenge, that he raised himself from his bed to attend the execution of William Gamwell. He rode to the gallows, in all pomp with a retinue of many men.

Young Gamwell was brought forth with his arms pinioned behind him; his sister Alice and his father, Sir Guy, attending him in disconsolate mood. He had rejected the confessor provided by the sheriff, and had insisted on the privilege of choosing his own, whom Little John had promised to bring. Little John, however, had not made his appearance when the fatal procession began its march; but when they reached the place of execution, Little John appeared, accompanied by a ghostly friar.

'Sheriff,' said young Gamwell, 'let me not die with my hands pinioned; give me a sword, and set any odds of your men against me, and let me die the death of a man, like the descendant of a noble house, which has never yet been stained with ignominy.'

'No, no,' said the sheriff; 'I have had enough of setting odds against you. I have sworn you shall be hanged, and hanged you shall be.'

'Then God have mercy on me,' said young Gamwell; 'and now, holy friar, shrive my sinful soul.'

The friar approached.

'Let me see this friar,' said the sheriff; 'if he be the friar of the bridge, I would as lief have

the devil in Nottingham; but he shall find me too much for him here.'

'The friar of the bridge,' said Little John, 'as you very well know, sheriff, was Father Michael of Rubygill Abbey, and you may easily see that this is not the man.'

'I see it,' said the sheriff; 'and God be thanked for his absence.'

Young Gamwell stood at the foot of the ladder. The friar approached him, crossed his hands on his breast, and stood a few moments as if in prayer. A deep silence fell on the crowd, interrupted only by the hollow tone of the death bell at long and dreary intervals. Suddenly the friar threw off his holy robes, and appeared a forester clothed in green, with a sword in his right hand and a horn in his left. With the sword he cut the bonds of William Gamwell, who instantly snatched a sword from one of the sheriff's men; and with the horn he blew a loud blast, which was answered at once by four bugles from the quarters of the four winds, and from each quarter came five-and-twenty bowmen running all on a row.

'Treason! treason!' cried the sheriff. Old Sir Guy sprang to his son's side, and so did Little John; and they kept the sheriff and his men at bay till the bowmen came within shot and let fly their arrows among the sheriff's men, who, after a brief resistance, fled in all directions.

The foresters did not waste time in Nottingham, but were soon at a distance from its walls.

Young Gamwell taking it for granted that his

offence was past remission, determined on joining Robin Hood, and accompanied him to the forest where it was deemed expedient that he should change his name; and he was christened by the immortal name of Scarlet.

Maid Marian in Sherwood

The Baron, with some of his retainers, and all the foresters, halted at daybreak in Sherwood Forest. The foresters quickly erected tents, and prepared an abundant breakfast of venison and ale.

'Now, Lord Fitzwater,' said the chief forester, 'recognize your son-in-law that was to have been, in the outlaw Robin Hood.'

'Ay, ay,' said the Baron, 'I have recognized you long ago.'

'And recognize your young friend Gamwell,' said the second, 'in the outlaw, Scarlet.'

'And Little John, the page,' said the third, 'in Little John the outlaw.'

'And Father Michael of Rubygill Abbey,' said the friar, 'in Friar Tuck of Sherwood Forest.'

'I am in fine company,' said the Baron.

'In the very best of company,' said the friar; 'in the high court of Nature, and in the midst of her own nobility. Robin Hood is king of the forest and he holds dominion over all.'

'Well said, friar,' said Robin Hood; 'yet there is one thing wanting to constitute a court, and that is a queen. And now, lovely Matilda, look round upon these sylvan shades. Shall I take your hand, Matilda, in the presence of this my

court? Shall I crown you with our wildwood coronal, and hail you queen of the forest? Will you be the Queen Matilda of your own true King Robin?'

Matilda smiled assent.

'Not Matilda,' said the friar; 'the rules of our holy alliance require new birth. I sprinkle, not thy forehead with water, but thy lips with wine, and baptize thee Marian.'

'Here is a pretty conspiracy,' exclaimed the Baron. 'Why, you villainous friar, think you to nickname and marry my daughter before my face with impunity?'

'Even so, bold Baron,' said the friar. 'We are the strongest here.'

'Fire and fury!' said the Baron.

'Father,' said Matilda, 'the friar argues well. Right ends with might. May I never again have roof but the blue sky, nor canopy but the green leaves, nor barrier but the forest bounds; with the foresters to my train, Little John to my page, Friar Tuck to my ghostly adviser, and Robin Hood to my liege lord. I am no longer Lady Matilda Fitzwater of Arlingford Castle, but plain Maid Marian, of Sherwood Forest!'

'Long live MAID MARIAN!' echoed the foresters.

'Mawd, sweet Mawd,' said the Baron, 'will you then forsake your poor old father in his distress, with his castle in ashes, and his enemy in power?'

'Not so, father,' said Marian; 'I will always be your true daughter; I will always love, and

serve and watch, and defend you; but neither will I forsake my plighted love, and my own liege lord. Father, when Richard returns from Palestine, he will restore you to your barony, and perhaps, for your sake, your daughter's husband to the earldom of Huntingdon: should that never be, should it be the will of fate that we must live and die in the greenwood, I will live and die MAID MARIAN.'

—THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

(*Adapted*)

NOTES

Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866) was novelist and poet. His poetry is not of very great merit but his satirical romances, like *Headlong Hall* and *Nightmare Abbey*, in which he laughs at the follies of the world, are fairly well-known. *Maid Marian* published in 1822, tells the story of Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest. Peacock assumes that the legendary Robin Hood was the Earl of Huntingdon, who was attainted as a traitor to his sovereign, and that Maid Marian was Matilda, the daughter of Lord Fitzwater. Whether Robin Hood was a real historical personage is doubtful. But he is the hero of many ballads and songs and of many stories of adventure.

25. *nuptials,* (usually in plural) marriage; wedding.

martial, of war and battle. (From Mars, the Roman god of war.)

yeoman, (originally) a servant or attendant in a noble household. The word is used in this sense here. In modern English yeoman means a freeholder; a man who owns and cultivates a small estate.

27. *curtsy* (also *curtsey*), a formal salutation by a lady, made by bending the knees.

As a noun—to drop or make a curtsy.

As a verb—to curtsy.

28. *a-hunting,* *a-* in this and similar contexts is a corruption of the original *on.* Compare expressions like a-bed, a-field; go a-begging; go a-hunting.

surety, (archaic) certainty; assurance. (Compare the expression: of a surety=assuredly.)

Another meaning of the word is a person who offers bail or undertakes a responsibility on behalf of another: 'The friar will be my surety.'

29. *aerie,* (also *aery, eyrie* or *eyry*) the nest of a bird of prey, esp. an eagle that builds high in the air.

Festival of May (May Day or May Revels), the first of May was celebrated with revels and dancing; the young men and women of the village gather on the village green, choose the fairest maiden as the Queen of May, set up a Maypole decked with flowers and ribbons and dance round it.

30. *grooms* (archaic), youths. (Compare bride*groom.*)

ghostly (archaic), spiritual.

the knight, Sir Ralph Mountfaucon, an unworthy rival of Robin Hood for the hand of fair Matilda.

31. *on whose head . . . price,* see p. 23 for a note on the same phrase (p. 15).

Passing loyal, exceeding loyal; surpassingly loyal.

Compare: passing fair, passing rich.

The village parson in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* was 'passing rich with forty pounds a year.'

33. *posse,* (pronounce *possy*) party of police or other persons having legal authority.

35. *odds,* (plural treated as singular) inequalities or difference in favour of one of the parties against the other.

the friar of the bridge, the friar (Brother Michael) who had fought against the sheriff and his men at the bridge.

lief, adv., gladly; willingly; (from original word *leof* meaning *dear*).

After young Gamwell had joined Robin Hood, some time passed. Prince John invested Arlingford Castle and tried to gain the hand of Matilda by force. The Baron fled from the castle and sought refuge with Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest.

37. *sylvan,* of the woods.

39. *Richard,* King Richard the First who had gone to fight in the Crusades in Palestine. In his absence Prince John committed many atrocities.

Exercises

Words

1. Give the noun forms of the following words: diminish; exhort; alter; intrude; advise; pursue; remit.

2. Discover the exact meanings of: chapel; abbey; abbot; aisle.

3. What is the difference between: *few* and *a few: little* and *a little*? Give sentences to show that you have understood the difference in meaning.

4. Use the following words in sentences of your own: treason—traitor—treachery ; alter—altar ; despair—desperate; price—prize; mortification.

Phrases

1. Explain the meaning of the following idioms and phrases and use them: like a whirlwind; taste the relish of; to take for granted; to take to heart; to make good; to keep at bay.

2. 'The abbot began the ceremony but he had not proceeded far when a noise was heard at the gate.'

Express the idea contained in this in three other sentences beginning with:

(*a*) Scarcely . . . when . . .
(*b*) Hardly . . . when . . .
(*c*) No sooner . . . than . . .

Subject matter

1. Explain:

(*a*) ' Most likely they would,' said young Gamwell; ' one side or the other.'

(*b*) 'Neither to the Earl nor his earldom,' answered Matilda firmly, ' but to Robert Fitz-Ooth and his love.'

(*c*) ' I have had enough of setting odds against you.'

2. Describe how the wedding of Robin Hood and Matilda was broken off.

3. Give in your own words the substance of the conversation between Matilda and her father.

4. What is the Festival of May? Describe the festivities in Sherwood Forest.

5. Tell how Sir Ralph Mountfaucon attempted to arrest Robin Hood and with what success.

6. Give an account of how young Gamwell was rescued from the gallows.

7. How did Matilda become Maid Marian?

4. THE EXECUTION OF MONMOUTH

(From *The History of England*)

(The Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles the Second, led an insurrection against James the Second, who had succeeded to the throne of England on the death of his brother. Monmouth was defeated at the battle of Sedgemoor. A terrible vengeance was taken on those who had espoused his cause, and Monmouth was condemned to death.)

As soon as he reached Ringwood he wrote to the King. The letter was that of a man whom a craven fear had made insensible to shame. He professed in vehement terms his remorse for his treason. He begged in piteous terms that he might be admitted to the royal presence.

Monmouth and Grey remained at Ringwood two days. They were then carried up to London, under the guard of a large body of troops and militia. In the coach with the Duke was an officer whose orders were to stab the prisoner if a rescue were attempted. At every town along the road the trainbands of the neighbourhood had been mustered under the command of the principal gentry. The march lasted three days, and terminated at Vauxhall, where a regiment was in readiness to receive the prisoners. They were put on board a state barge and carried down the river to Whitehall Stairs.

Both the demeanour of Monmouth and that

of Grey, during the journey, filled all observers with surprise. Monmouth was altogether unnerved. Grey was not only calm but cheerful, talked pleasantly of horses, dogs, and field sports, and even made jocose allusions to the perilous situation in which he stood.

The King cannot be blamed for determining that Monmouth should suffer death. Every man who heads a rebellion against an established government stakes his life on the event : and rebellion was the smallest part of Monmouth's crime. He had declared against his uncle a war without quarter. In the manifesto put forth at Lyme, James had been held up to execration as an incendiary, as an assassin who had strangled one innocent man and cut the throat of another, and, lastly, as the poisoner of his own brother. To spare an enemy who had not scrupled to resort to such extremities would have been an act of rare generosity. But to see him and not to spare him was an outrage on humanity and decency. This outrage the King resolved to commit. The arms of the prisoner were bound behind him with a silken cord ; and, thus secured, he was ushered into the presence of the implacable kinsman whom he had wronged.

Then Monmouth threw himself on the ground, and crawled to the King's feet. He wept. He tried to embrace his uncle's knees with his arms. He begged for life, only life, life at any price. He owned that he had been guilty of a great crime, but tried to throw the blame on others. By the ties of kindred, by the memory of the late

King, who had been the best and truest of brothers, the unhappy man adjured James to show some mercy. James gravely replied that his repentance was too late, that he was sorry for the misery which the prisoner had brought on himself, but that the case was not one for lenity. A Declaration, filled with atrocious calumnies, had been put forth. The regal title had been assumed. For treasons so grave there could be no pardon. The poor terrified Duke vowed that he had never wished to take the crown, but had been led into that fatal error by others. As to the Declaration he had not written it: he had not read it; he had signed it without looking at it; it was all the work of others. 'Do you expect me to believe,' said James with contempt, 'that you set your hand to a paper of such moment without knowing what it contained?' One depth of infamy only remained; and even to that the prisoner descended. He was pre-eminently the champion of the Protestant religion. The interest of that religion had been his plea for conspiring against the government of his father, and for bringing on his country the miseries of civil war; yet he was not ashamed to hint that he was inclined to be reconciled to the Church of Rome. The King eagerly offered him spiritual assistance, but said nothing of pardon or respite. 'Is there no hope?' asked Monmouth. James turned away in silence. Then Monmouth strove to rally his courage, rose from his knees, and retired with a firmness which he had not shown since his overthrow.

It was Monday night. On Wednesday morning Monmouth was to die.

He was greatly agitated. The blood left his cheeks; and it was some time before he could speak. Most of the short time which remained to him he wasted in vain attempts to obtain, if not a pardon, at least a respite. He wrote piteous letters to the King and to several courtiers, but in vain.

The hour drew near: all hope was over; and Monmouth had passed from fear to despair. His children were brought to his room that he might take leave of them, and were followed by his wife. He spoke to her kindly, but without emotion. Though she was a woman of great strength of mind, and had little cause to love him, her misery was such that none of the bystanders could refrain from weeping. He alone was unmoved.

It was ten o'clock. The coach was ready. Monmouth requested his spiritual advisers to accompany him to the place of execution; and they consented. As he passed along the ranks of the guards he saluted them with a smile, and he mounted the scaffold with a firm tread. Tower Hill was covered up to the chimney tops with an innumerable multitude of gazers, who, in awful silence, broken only by sighs and the noise of weeping, listened for the last accents of the darling of the people. 'I shall say little,' he began. 'I come here, not to speak, but to die. I die a Protestant of the Church of England.'

The Bishops prayed with him long and fervently; and he joined in their petitions till they invoked a blessing on the King. He remained silent. 'Sir,' said one of the Bishops, 'do you not pray for the King with us?' Monmouth paused some time, and after an internal struggle, exclaimed, 'Amen.' But it was in vain that they implored him to address to the soldiers and to the people a few words on the duty of obedience to the government. 'I will make no speeches,' he exclaimed. 'Only ten words, my Lord.' He turned away, called his servant, and put into the man's hand a tooth-pick-case. 'Give it,' he said, 'to that person.' He then accosted Jack Ketch the executioner. 'Here,' said the Duke, 'are six guineas for you. Do not hack me as you did my Lord Russell. I have heard that you struck him three or four times. My servant will give you some more gold if you do the work well.' He then undressed, felt the edge of the axe, expressed some fear that it was not sharp enough, and laid his head on the block. The divines in the meantime continued to ejaculate with great energy: 'God accept your repentance! God accept your imperfect repentance!'

The hangman addressed himself to his office. But he had been disconcerted by what the Duke had said. The first blow inflicted only a slight wound. The Duke struggled, rose from the block, and looked reproachfully at the executioner. The head sank down once more. The stroke was repeated again and again; but still the neck

was not severed, and the body continued to move. Yells of rage and horror rose from the crowd. Ketch flung down the axe with a curse. 'I cannot do it,' he said; 'my heart fails me.' 'Take up the axe, man,' cried the sheriff. 'Fling him over the rails,' roared the mob. At length the axe was taken up. Two more blows extinguished the last remains of life; but a knife was used to separate the head from the shoulders. The crowd was wrought up to such an ecstasy of rage that the executioner was in danger of being torn in pieces, and was conveyed away under a strong guard.

In the meantime many handkerchiefs were dipped in the Duke's blood; for by a large part of the multitude he was regarded as a martyr who had died for the Protestant religion. The head and body were placed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and were laid privately under the communion table of St Peter's chapel in the Tower. Within four years the pavement of the chancel was again disturbed, and hard by the remains of Monmouth were laid the remains of Jeffreys.

In truth there is no sadder spot on the earth than that little cemetery. Death is there associated, not, as in Westminster Abbey and St Paul's, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and imperishable renown; not as in our humblest churchyards, with everything that is most endearing in social and domestic charities; but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny—with the savage

triumph of implacable enemies, with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame.

—THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

NOTES

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59) started his literary career as a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. His essays were remarkable for their style and brought him great fame. He entered Parliament in 1830 and was a Member of the Supreme Council of India from 1834 to 1838. He published *The Lays of Ancient Rome* in 1842 and *The History of England,* his most ambitious work, appeared between 1848 and 1855.

Macaulay's *History of England* (from which this extract is taken) is a great work both for its style and its treatment. There are many passages of the *History* which have become famous: the Trial of the Seven Bishops, the Battle of Killiecrankie, the Massacre of Glencoe and the Execution of Monmouth.

Macaulay's style is vivid and descriptive.

43. *militia,* (singular or plural) 'a branch of the British military service forming a part of the auxiliary forces as distinct from the regular troops; citizen soldiers.'

trainbands, (trained bands of soldiers) a trained company of citizen soldiers of London or other parts of England in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

Cf. Cowper's 'John Gilpin':

'A trainband captain eke was he
Of famous London town.'

44. *jocose,* here playful, sportive.

quarter, clemency; mercy shown in sparing the life of one who surrenders. Note the phrases: *to give* or *receive* quarter; to *ask for* (or *cry*) quarter.

his own brother, Charles the Second was the brother

of James, who succeeded him on the throne of England.

45. *champion of the Protestant religion,* James was a Roman Catholic and was therefore hated by a large majority of the people of England who were Protestants. Monmouth had set himself up as their champion; yet, to save his life, he was now willing to renounce his faith and become a convert to Catholicism.

46. *the darling of the people,* Monmouth was young and handsome; many people believed him to be the lawful heir to the throne of England; and he was the champion of their faith. Therefore they loved him.

47. *Jack Ketch,* the executioner was notorious for his brutality in dispatching his victims.

48. *Jeffreys,* Judge Jeffreys was notorious for his cruelty in the Bloody Assizes—the trial of the supporters of Monmouth in 1685 after he had been defeated and executed. Eight hundred were condemned to death and a thousand were sent to the plantations. He was himself arrested in 1688 and was imprisoned in the Tower where he died.

Study the structure of Macaulay's paragraphs carefully. A paragraph should have a beginning, a middle and an end. Usually the first or second sentence in a paragraph gives us the main idea of the subject of the whole paragraph. Thus, note that in paragraph 1 'He wrote to the King' gives the substance of it. (Note also the variety in the construction of the sentences and the variation in diction: 'He professed'—'He begged'; 'in vehement terms'—'in piteous terms'. In paragraph 2 'They were carried up to London' is the subject of the whole paragraph. How they travelled and how they were guarded on the way and how they reached London is described in the sentences that follow. Again, in paragraph 4 'The King cannot be blamed for determining that Monmouth should die' is the main idea. In the following sentences Macaulay

defends the attitude of the King. Thus it would be fruitful to study the structure of Macaulay's paragraphs as models of construction.

Another fact to be noticed in the style of Macaulay is his effective use of the short sentence. 'He wept. He tried to embrace his uncle's knees. He begged for life, only life, life at any price . . . It was Monday night. On Wednesday morning Monmouth was to die . . . It was ten o'clock. The coach was ready . . .' By such effects Macaulay actually brings the scene before our eyes. It is no exaggeration to say that vividness, clearness and emphasis are the qualities of Macaulay's style.

The last paragraph is an example of the rhetorical style. It should be learned by heart.

EXERCISES

Words and Phrases

1. Give in simple words the meaning of the following and use them in your own sentences:

(*a*) demeanour; incendiary; implacable (enemy); atrocious (calumny or falsehood); allusion; principle—principal; assassin.

(*b*) insensible to shame; a thing of moment; of no moment; without quarter; to hold up to scorn (or execration or contempt); resort to (crime, force, or villiany); to stake one's life (or fortune or honour).

2. Express in as many different ways as possible the idea in the following sentence: 'In the coach with the Duke was an officer whose orders were to stab the prisoner if a rescue were attempted.'

Subject Matter

1. Sketch the character of Monmouth as he is described by Macaulay.

2. Give in direct speech the appeal of Monmouth for mercy and the answer of James.

3. Give an account of the execution of Monmouth.

5. BARDELL VERSUS PICKWICK

(From *The Pickwick Papers*)

MR JUSTICE STARELEIGH was a most particularly short man, and so fat, that he seemed to be all face and waistcoat. He rolled in, upon two little turned legs, and having bobbed gravely to the bar, who bobbed gravely to him, put his little legs underneath his table, and his little three-cornered hat upon it. All you could see of him was two queer little eyes, one broad pink face, and a very comical-looking wig.

'Bardell and Pickwick,' cried the gentleman in black, calling on the case, which stood first on the list.

'I am for the plaintiff, my Lord,' said Serjeant Buzfuz.

'Who is with you, brother Buzfuz?' said the judge. Mr Skimpin bowed.

'I appear for the defendant, my Lord,' said Mr Serjeant Snubbin.

'Anybody with you, brother Snubbin?' inquired the court.

'Mr Phunky, my Lord,' replied Serjeant Snubbin.

'Serjeant Buzfuz and Mr Skimpin for the plaintiff,' said the judge, writing down the names in his note-book, and reading as he wrote: 'for the defendant, Serjeant Snubbin and Mr Monkey.'

'Beg your Lordship's pardon, Phunky.'

Oh, very good,' said the judge; 'I never had the pleasure of hearing the gentleman's name before.' Here Mr Phunky bowed and smiled and the judge bowed and smiled too.

'Go on,' said the judge.

The ushers again called silence, and Mr Skimpin proceeded to open the case. He sat down after a lapse of three minutes, leaving the jury in precisely the same advanced stage of wisdom as they were in before.

Serjeant Buzfuz then rose with all the majesty and dignity which the grave nature of the proceedings demanded, pulled his gown over his shoulders, and settled his wig, and addressed the jury.

Serjeant Buzfuz began by saying that never in the whole course of his professional experience—never, from the very first moment of his applying himself to the study and practice of the law—had he approached a case with feelings of such deep emotion, or with such a heavy sense of responsibility imposed upon him.

A visible effect was produced immediately; several jurymen beginning to take voluminous notes with the utmost eagerness.

"You have heard from my learned friend, gentlemen, that this is an action for a breach of promise of marriage, in which the damages are laid at £1,500. But you have not heard the facts and circumstances of the case. Those facts and circumstances, gentlemen, you shall hear detailed by me.

'The plaintiff, gentlemen,' continued Serjeant

Buzfuz, in a soft and melancholy voice, 'the plaintiff is a widow: yes, gentlemen, a widow. The late Mr Bardell, after enjoying for many years the esteem and confidence of his sovereign, as one of the guardians of his royal revenues, glided almost imperceptibly from the world, to seek elsewhere for that repose and peace which a custom-house can never afford.'

At this pathetic description of the decease of Mr Bardell, who had been knocked on the head in a public-house, the learned serjeant's voice faltered, and he proceeded with great emotion:

'Some time before his death, he had stamped his likeness upon a little boy. With this little boy, Mrs Bardell shrunk from the world, and courted the retirement and tranquillity of Goswell Street; and here she placed in her front parlour window a written placard bearing this inscription: "Apartments furnished for a single gentleman. Inquire within." I entreat the attention of the jury to the wording of this document. She had no fear—she had no distrust—she had no suspicion—all was confidence and reliance. "Mr Bardell," said the widow, "Mr Bardell was a man of honour—Mr Bardell was a man of his word—Mr Bardell was no deceiver—Mr Bardell was once a single gentleman himself; to single gentlemen I look for protection, for assistance, for comfort and for consolation; to single gentlemen shall my lodgings be let!" Actuated by this beautiful and touching impulse the lonely and desolate widow dried her tears, furnished her first floor, and put the bill up

in her parlour-window. Did it remain there long? No! The serpent was on the watch, the train was laid, the mine was preparing. Before the bill had been in the parlour-window three days—three days, gentlemen—a Being, erect upon two legs, and bearing all the outward semblance of a man, and not of a monster, knocked at the door of Mrs Bardell's house. He inquired within; he took the lodgings; and on the very next day he entered into possession of them. This man was Pickwick—Pickwick, the defendant!'

Serjeant Buzfuz, who had proceeded with such volubility that his face was perfectly crimson, here paused for breath. The silence awoke Mr Justice Stareleigh, who immediately wrote down something with a pen without any ink in it, and looked unusually profound, to impress the jury with belief that he always thought most deeply with his eyes shut! Serjeant Buzfuz proceeded:

'Of this man Pickwick I will say little; the subject presents but few attractions; and I, gentlemen, am not the man, nor are you, gentlemen, the men, to delight in the contemplation of revolting heartlessness, and of systematic villainy.

'I shall show you, gentlemen, that for two years, Pickwick continued to reside constantly, without interruption or intermission, at Mrs Bardell's house. During the whole of that time, Mrs Bardell waited on him, attended to his comforts, and in short, enjoyed his fullest trust and confidence. I shall show you that on many

occasions, he gave halfpence, and on some occasions even sixpences, to her little boy. On one occasion he patted the boy on the head and asked: "How should you like to have another father?" On one occasion, when he returned from the country, he distinctly, and in terms, offered her marriage; previously taking care that there should be no witnesses to their solemn contract; and I am in a situation to prove to you that on that morning he was discovered holding the plaintiff in his arms, and soothing her agitation by his caresses and endearments.

'My client's hopes and prospects are ruined; and it is no figure of speech to say that her occupation is gone indeed. The bill is down—but there is no tenant. All is gloom and silence in the house; even the voice of the child is hushed; his infant sports are disregarded when his mother weeps. But Pickwick, gentlemen, Pickwick, the ruthless destroyer of this domestic oasis in the desert of Goswell Street, Pickwick still rears his head and gazes without a sigh upon the ruin he has made. Damages, gentlemen, heavy damages, is the only punishment with which you can visit him; the only recompense you can award to my client. And for those damages she now appeals to an enlightened, high-minded, right-feeling, dispassionate, sympathizing and contemplative jury of her civilized countrymen!' With this beautiful peroration, Mr Serjeant Buzfuz sat down, and Mr Justice Stareleigh woke up.

(The examination of several witnesses now followed, and Mr Winkle was called to give evidence.)

'Nathaniel Winkle!' said Mr Skimpin.

'Here!' replied a feeble voice. Mr Winkle entered the witness box, and having been duly sworn, bowed to the judge with considerable deference.

'Don't look at me, sir,' said the judge, sharply, in acknowledgement of the salute: 'look at the jury!'

Mr Winkle obeyed the mandate. Mr Winkle was then examined by Mr Skimpin, who was anxious to confuse the witness as much as he could.

'Now, sir,' said Mr Skimpin, 'have the goodness to let his Lordship and the jury know what your name is, will you?'

'Winkle,' replied the witness.

'What's your Christian name, sir?' angrily inquired the little judge.

'Nathaniel, sir.'

'Daniel—any other name?'

'Nathaniel, sir—my Lord, I mean.'

'Nathaniel Daniel or Daniel Nathaniel?'

'No, my Lord, only Nathaniel; not Daniel at all.'

'What did you tell me it was Daniel for, then, sir?' inquired the little judge.

'I didn't, my Lord,' replied Mr Winkle.

'You did, sir,' replied the judge, with a severe frown. 'How could I have got Daniel on my notes, unless you told me so, sir?'

This argument was, of course, unanswerable.

'You had better be careful, sir,' said the judge, with a sinister look at the witness. Poor Mr Winkle bowed, and endeavoured to feign an easiness of manner, which, in his then state of confusion, gave him rather the air of a disconcerted pickpocket.

'Now, Mr Winkle, I believe you are a particular friend of Pickwick the defendant, are you not?'

'I have known Mr Pickwick now, sir, as well as I can recollect at this moment, nearly—'

'Pray, Mr Winkle, do not evade the question. Are you, or are you not, a particular friend of the defendant's?'

'I was just about to say that—'

'Will you, or will you not, answer my question, sir?'

'If you don't answer the question, you'll be committed, sir,' interposed the little judge, looking over his note-book.

'Come, sir,' said Mr Skimpin, 'yes or no, if you please.'

'Yes, I am,' replied Mr Winkle.

'Yes, you are. And why couldn't you say that at once, sir? Perhaps you know the plaintiff, too? Eh, Mr Winkle?'

'I don't know her; I have seen her.'

'How often have you seen her, sir?'

'How often?'

'Yes, Mr Winkle, how often? I'll repeat the question for you a dozen times if you require it, sir.' On this question there arose the browbeating, customary on such points. First of all

Mr Winkle said it was quite impossible for him to say how many times he had seen Mrs Bardell. Then he was asked if he had seen her twenty times, to which he replied, 'Certainly—more than that.' Then he was asked if he had seen her a hundred times—whether he could swear that he had seen her more than fifty times—whether he didn't know that he had seen her at least seventy-five times—and so forth.

'Pray, Mr Winkle, do you remember calling on the defendant Pickwick at these apartments in the plaintiff's house in Goswell Street, one particular morning, in the month of July last?'

'Yes, I do.'

'Were you accompanied on that occasion by a friend of the name of Tupman, and another of the name of Snodgrass?'

'Yes, I was.'

'Now, sir, tell the gentlemen of the jury what you saw on entering the defendant's room, on this particular morning. Come; out with it, sir; we must have it, sooner or later.'

'The defendant, Mr Pickwick, was holding the plaintiff in his arms, with his hands clasping her waist,' replied Mr Winkle with natural hesitation, 'and the plaintiff appeared to have fainted away.'

'Did you hear the defendant say anything?'

'I heard him call Mrs Bardell a good creature, and I heard him ask her to compose herself, for what a situation it was, if anybody should come, or words to that effect.'

'Now, Mr Winkle, I have only one more question to ask you, and I beg you to bear in mind his Lordship's caution. Will you undertake to swear that Pickwick the defendant, did not say on this occasion: "My dear Mrs Bardell, you are a good creature; compose yourself to this situation, for to this situation you must come," or words to that effect?'

'I—I didn't understand him so, certainly,' said Mr Winkle, astounded. 'I was on the staircase, and couldn't hear distinctly; the impression on my mind is—'

'The gentlemen of the jury want none of your impressions, sir, you were on the staircase, and didn't distinctly hear; but you will not swear that Pickwick did not make use of the expressions I have quoted? Do I understand that?'

'No, I will not,' replied Mr Winkle; and down sat Mr Skimpin with a triumphant countenance.

'You may leave the box, sir,' said Serjeant Snubbin. Mr Winkle did leave the box, and rushed with haste to the George and Vulture, where he was discovered some hours after, by the waiter, groaning in a hollow and dismal manner with his head buried beneath the sofa cushions.

Tracy Tupman, and Augustus Snodgrass, were severally called into the box; both corroborated the testimony of their unhappy friend; and each was driven to the verge of desperation by excessive badgering.

Serjeant Buzfuz now rose with great importance and shouted: 'Call Samuel Weller.'

It was unnecessary to call Samuel Weller;

for Samuel Weller stepped briskly into the box the instant his name was pronounced, with a cheerful and lively aspect.

'What's your name, sir?' inquired the judge.

'Sam Weller, my Lord,' replied that gentleman.

'Do you spell it with a V or a W?' inquired the judge.

'That depends on the taste and fancy of the speller, my Lord,' replied Sam; 'I never had occasion to spell it more than once or twice in my life, but I spell it with a "V".'

Here a voice in the gallery exlaimed aloud, 'Quite right too, Samivel, quite right. Put it down a "V" my Lord, put it down a "V".'

'Who is that, who dares to address the court?' said the little judge, looking up. 'Usher!'

'Yes, my Lord.'

'Bring that person here instantly.'

'Yes, my Lord.'

But as the usher didn't find the person, he didn't bring him. The little judge turned to the witness as soon as his indignation would allow him to speak, and said: 'Do you know who that was, sir?'

'I rather suspect it was my father, my Lord,' replied Sam.

'Do you see him here now?' said the judge.

'No, I don't, my Lord,' replied Sam, staring right up into the lantern in the roof of the court.

'If you could have pointed him out, I would have committed him instantly,' said the judge.

'Now, Mr Weller,' said Serjeant Buzfuz.

'Now, sir,' replied Sam.

'I believe you are in the service of Mr Pickwick, the defendant in this case. Speak up, if you please, Mr Weller.'

'I mean to speak up, sir,' replied Sam; 'I am in the service of that gentleman, and a very good service it is, sir.'

'Little to do, and plenty to get, I suppose?' said Serjeant Buzfuz, with jocularity.

'Oh quite enough to get, sir, as the soldier said when they ordered him three hundred and fifty lashes,' replied Sam.

'You must not tell us what the soldier, or any other man said, sir,' interposed the judge; 'it is not evidence.'

'Very good, my Lord.'

'Do you recollect anything particular happening on the morning when you were first engaged by the defendant; eh, Mr Weller?' said Buzfuz.

'Yes, I do, sir,' replied Sam.

'Have the goodness to tell the jury what it was.'

'I had a regular new fit out of clothes that morning, gentlemen of the jury,' said Sam, 'and that was a very particular and uncommon circumstance with me in those days.'

Hereupon there was a general laugh; and the little judge, looking with an angry countenance over his desk, said: 'You had better be careful, sir.'

'So Mr Pickwick said at the time, my Lord,' replied Sam; 'and I was very careful of that suit of clothes; very careful indeed, my Lord.'

The judge looked sternly at Sam for full two minutes, but Sam's features were so perfectly calm and serene that the judge said nothing and motioned Serjeant Buzfuz to proceed.

'Do you mean to tell me, Mr Weller,' said Serjeant Buzfuz, 'do you mean to tell me that you saw nothing of this fainting of the plaintiff in the arms of the defendant?'

'Certainly not,' replied Sam; 'I was in the passage till they called me up, and then the old lady was not there.'

'Now attend, Mr Weller,' said Serjeant Buzfuz, 'you were in the passage, and yet saw nothing of what was going forward. Have you a pair of eyes, Mr Weller?'

'Yes, I have a pair of eyes,' replied Sam, 'and that's just it. If it was a pair of patent double million magnifying gas microscopes of extra power, perhaps I might be able to see through a flight of stairs and a deal door; but being only eyes, you see, my vision is limited.'

At this answer, which was delivered without the slightest appearance of irritation, and with the most complete simplicity and equanimity of manner, the spectators tittered, the little judge smiled, and Serjeant Buzfuz looked particularly foolish.

'You are quite right,' said Serjeant Buzfuz aloud, with affected composure. 'It's perfectly useless, my Lord, attempting to get at any evidence through the impenetrable stupidity of this witness. I will not trouble the court by asking him any more questions. Stand down, sir.'

Serjeant Snubbin then addressed the jury on behalf of the defendant.

Mr Justice Stareleigh summed up, in the old established and most approved form. He read his notes and made running comments on the evidence as he went along. If Mrs Bardell were right, it was perfectly clear that Mr Pickwick was wrong. If a breach of promise had been committed, they would find for the plaintiff with such damages as they thought proper; if, on the other hand, it appeared to them that no promise of marriage had ever been given, they would find for the defendant with no damages at all.

The jury then retired.

An anxious quarter of an hour elapsed; the jury came back; the judge was fetched in. Mr Pickwick put on his spectacles, and gazed at the foreman with an agitated countenance and a quickly beating heart.

'Gentlemen,' said the individual in black, 'are you all agreed upon your verdict?'

'We are,' replied the foreman.

'Do you find for the plaintiff, gentlemen, or for the defendant?'

'For the plaintiff.'

'With what damages, gentlemen?'

'Seven hundred and fifty pounds.'

Every one left the courtroom and Mr Pickwick stopped in a side room, where he was joined by his friends. Here he encountered the solicitors for the plaintiff, Messrs Dodson and Fogg.

'Well, gentlemen,' said Mr Pickwick.

'Well, sir,' said Dodson.

'You imagine you'll get your costs, don't you gentlemen?' said Mr Pickwick.

Fogg said they thought it rather probable. Dodson smiled, and said they would try.

'You may try, and try, and try again, Messrs Dodson and Fogg,' said Mr Pickwick vehemently, 'but not one farthing of costs or damages do you ever get from me, if I spend the rest of my existence in a debtor's prison!'

—CHARLES DICKENS
(*Abridged*)

NOTES

Charles Dickens (1812-70) the great novelist, began his literary career with *Sketches by Boz. The Pickwick Papers,* one of his best works, was published in parts and was at first only intended to accompany and illustrate some caricatures by an artist called Seymour. The popularity of this work brought him wealth and fame. Other great novels by Dickens are *Oliver Twist, David Copperfield* (which is in part autobiographical), and *A Tale of Two Cities.*

Pickwick Papers is not a continuous story. It consists of a series of humorous sketches. Mr Samuel Pickwick, an eccentric but benevolent old gentleman, is the central figure as the President of the Club named after him. His friends are Mr Tupman, who easily falls in love, Mr Winkle, who pretends to be a sportsman, and Mr Snodgrass, the poet who has never written a line of poetry. His servant, Sam Weller is 'a cheerful, facetious and resourceful character!—the greatest character that Dickens ever drew'.

Perhaps the most delightful episode in the novel is the trial for breach of promise of marriage brought by Mrs Bardell, Mr Pickwick's landlady, against him.

52. *put his little legs underneath the table, and his little three-cornered hat upon it,* a kind of humour of which Dickens was very fond. Compare: 'She went home in a flood of tears and a sedan-chair.'

three-cornered hat, a hat having three corners or angles.

the gentleman in black, the officer of the court.

Serjeant, 'A member of a superior order of barristers from which formerly the judges were always chosen—hence a Serjeant was always called by a judge "My Brother So-and-So".'

53. *in the same advanced stage of wisdom as they were in before,* i.e. even after they had heard Mr Skimpin's speech, they knew nothing at all of the facts of the case!

54. *The late Mr Bardell . . . afford,* Mr Bardell, here represented as a heroic figure, was an exciseman, who had been killed in a tavern brawl!

Note that the speech of Serjeant Buzfuz is in rhetorical style: 'the facts and circumstances of the case', 'the esteem and confidence of his sovereign', 'a beautiful and touching impulse', 'the lonely and desolate widow' and other repetitions. Note also the rhetorical question: 'Did it remain there long? No!' etc.

[Note the absurd and silly names that Dickens has given to his characters here: Mr Buzfuz; Mr Phunky (mistaken by the Judge for Mr Monkey!); Mr Snubbin, etc.]

56. *'He gave halfpence . . . He asked the boy: "How should you like to have another father?"'* These trivial circumstances which show only Mr Pickwick's benevolence and sympathy were misunderstood. Mrs Bardell thought that Mr Pickwick was in love with her and therefore showed some kindness to her child.

Notice how Serjeant Buzfuz flatters the self-importance of the jurymen.

Mr Winkle was nervous and agitated; Mr Skimpin taking advantage of this, tried to bully him into giving evidence against Mr Pickwick.

you'll be committed, you will be given into custody; put in prison.

59. *The plaintiff appeared to have fainted away,* see *Pickwick Papers,* Chapter XXIV.

60. *compose yourself . . . to this situation you must come,* Mr Pickwick's words are misquoted and his intentions misrepresented.

the George and Vulture, a tavern in the neighbourhood. Inns and taverns take their names from the sign at the door; e.g. The Three Bells, The Swan, The Mermaid, etc.

badgering, the badger is an animal which defends its burrow fiercely against its enemies. Badger-baiting, i.e. baiting badgers with dogs, was a common sport. So 'to badger' means to subject one to persecution (from which he cannot escape).

61. *a voice in the gallery,* the voice of Mr Weller senior, a coachman, the father of Sam.

62. *as the soldier said when they ordered him a hundred and fifty lashes,* this is typical of Sam's humour. He is full of such illustrations.

63. *magnifying gas microscopes of extra power,* we need not curiously inquire what this instrument is!

65. *if I spend the rest of my existence in a debtors' prison,* Mr Pickwick did go to Fleet prison for refusing to pay the damages awarded to the plaintiff by the court. His adventures in prison are described in Chapters XXIX-XXXIV of the novel.

Exercises

Words and Phrases

1. Find out the difference in meaning between the following pairs of words: deference—difference; disease—decease; cares—caress.

2. Give the noun forms of the following words: proceed; voluble; evade; voluminous; corroborate; customary.

3. Use the following in sentences of your own: facts and circumstances; esteem and confidence (or 'trust and confidence'); hopes and prospects; a beautiful and touching impulse; calm and serene; lonely and desolate; a solemn contract; a simplicity of manner; the verge of desperation; revolting heartlessness.

(These are useful phrases of which you should know the meaning.)

Subject Matter

1. What was the action brought by Mrs Bardell against Mr Pickwick? How did she support her claim for damages?

2. Turn the speech of Serjeant Buzfuz (which is partly in the direct and partly in the indirect form in the text) into a Direct Address to the Jury in simple language.

3. Give the evidence of Mr Winkle. What light does this part of the episode throw on the practice of lawyers in those days?

4. Give in your own words the evidence of Sam Weller.

5. Make a list of all the legal words used in this selection. What does each word mean? (e.g. plaintiff, defendant, costs).

6. THE ARGONAUTS

(From *The Heroes*)

At day-dawn they looked eastward, and midway between the sea and the sky they saw white snowpeaks hanging, glittering sharp and bright above the clouds. And they knew that they had come to Caucasus, the highest of all mountains, the father of the rivers of the East. At his feet are dark forests round the magic Colchian land.

And they rowed three days to the eastward, till they saw the dark stream of Phasis rushing headlong to the sea, and, shining above the tree-tops, the golden roofs of the palace of King Aeetes.

Then out spoke Ancaios the helmsman: 'We have come to our goal at last; for there are the roofs of Aeetes, and the woods where all poisons grow; but who can tell us where among them is hidden the golden fleece? Many a toil must we bear ere we find it, and bring it home to Greece.'

But Jason cheered the heroes, for his heart was high and bold; and he said: 'I will go alone up to Aeetes and win him with soft words. It is better than to go all together, and to come to blows at once.' But the Argonauts would not stay behind, so they rowed boldly up the stream.

And a dream came to Aeetes, and filled his heart with fear. He thought he saw a shining star, which fell into his daughter's lap; and that Medea his daughter took it gladly, and carried it to the riverside, and cast it in, and there the whirling river bore it down to the sea.

Then he leapt up in fear, and bade his servants bring his chariot, that he might go down to the riverside and appease the nymphs, and the heroes whose spirits haunt the banks. So he went down in his golden chariot, with his daughters by his side, Medea the fair witch, and Chalciope, who had been Phrixus' wife, and behind him a crowd of servants and soldiers.

As he drove down by the river he saw the *Argo* sliding up beneath the bank, and many a hero in her, like the Gods for beauty and for strength. But Jason was the noblest of all; for Hera, who loved him, gave him beauty and tallness and terrible manhood.

When they came near, the heroes were awed at the sight of Aeetes, as he shone in his chariot. His robes were of rich gold tissue, and the rays of his diadem flashed fire; in his hand he bore a jewelled sceptre, which glittered like stars. He sternly looked at them and said: 'Who are you, and what do you want here? Do you take no account of my rule, nor of my people the Colchians who serve me, who know well how to face an invader?'

The heroes sat silent awhile before the face of that ancient King. But Hera the Goddess put courage into Jason's heart, and he rose and

shouted loudly in answer: 'We are neither pirates nor lawless men. We do not come to plunder and to ravage, or carry away slaves from your land; but my uncle Pelias has sent me on a quest to bring home the golden fleece. These my comrades are not unknown men; for some are the sons of the Gods, and some of heroes far renowned. We too know how to take and give blows in battle; yet we wish to be guests at your table: it will be better for both.'

Then Aeetes's rage rushed up like a whirlwind, and his eyes flashed fire as he heard this; but he spoke mildly and cunningly: 'If you will fight for the fleece with my Colchians, then many a man must die. But do you indeed expect to win from me the fleece in fight? So few are you that if you are defeated I can load your ship with your corpses. But if you will be ruled by me, you will find it better to choose the best man among you, and let him fulfil the tasks which I set him. Then I will give him the golden fleece for a prize and a glory to you all.'

So saying, he turned his horses and drove back in silence to the town. The Argonauts sat silent with sorrow, and longed for Hercules and his strength; for they could not face the thousands of the Colchians and the fearful chance of war.

But Chalciope, the widow of Phrixus, went weeping to the town. She remembered her husband, and all the pleasures of her youth, while she watched the fair faces of his kinsmen,

and their long locks of golden hair. She whispered to Medea her sister: 'Why should all these brave men die? Why does not my father give them the fleece, that my husband's spirit may have rest?'

Medea also pitied the heroes and Jason most of all; and she answered: 'Our father is stern and terrible. Who can win the golden fleece?' but Chalciope said: 'These men are not like our men; there is nothing which they cannot dare or do.'

Medea thought of Jason and said: "If there was one among them who knew no fear, I could show him how to win the golden fleece.'

So in the dusk of evening they went down to the riverside, Chalciope and Medea and Argus, the son of Phrixus. Argus crept forward among the bed of reeds, till he came where the heroes were sleeping, while Jason kept watch on the shore. The boy came to Jason and said: 'I am the son of Phrixus, your cousin; and Chalciope my mother waits for you, to talk about the golden fleece.'

Then Jason went with the boy, and found the two princesses standing; when Chalciope saw him she wept, and cried: 'O cousin of my beloved, go home before you die!'

'It would be base to go home now, fair princess, and to have sailed all these seas in vain.' Then both the princesses begged him to go, but Jason said: 'It is too late.'

'But you do not know,' said Medea, 'what he must do who would win the golden fleece.

He must tame the two brazen-footed bulls, who breathe devouring flame; and with them he must plough ere nightfall four acres in the field of Ares; and he must sow them with serpents' teeth, of which each tooth springs up an armed man. Then he must fight with all those warriors; and little will it profit him to conquer them, for the fleece is guarded by a serpent, more huge than a mountain pine; and over his body you must step if you would reach the golden fleece.'

Then Jason laughed bitterly. 'Unjustly is that fleece kept here, and by an unjust and lawless King; and unjustly shall I die in my youth, for I will attempt it ere another sun shall set.'

Then Medea trembled and said: 'No mortal man can reach that fleece unless I guide him through. Round it, beyond the river, is a wall full nine ells high, with lofty towers and gates of brass; and over the gateway sits Brimo, the wild witch of the woods, brandishing a pine-torch in her hands, while her mad hounds howl around. No man dare meet her or even look on her, but only I, her priestess, and she watches far and wide lest any stranger should come near.'

'No wall so high but it may be climbed at last, and no wood so thick but it may be crawled through; no serpent so wary but he may be charmed, or witch so fierce but spells may soothe her; and I may yet win the golden fleece, if a wise maiden help bold men.'

And he looked at Medea cunningly, and held her with his glittering eye, till she blushed and trembled, and said: 'Who can face the fire of

the bulls' breath, and fight ten thousand armed men?'

'He whom you help,' said Jason, flattering her, 'for your fame has spread over all the earth. Are you not the queen of all enchantresses, wiser even than your sister Circe, in her fairy island in the West?'

'Would that I were with my sister Circe in her fairy island in the West, far away from sore temptation and thoughts that tear the heart! But if it must be so, I have an ointment here; anoint yourself with that, and you shall have in you seven men's strength; and anoint your shield with it, and neither fire nor sword can harm you. But what you begin you must end before sunset, for its virtue lasts only one day. And anoint your helmet with it before you sow the serpent's teeth; and when the sons of the earth spring up, cast your helmet among their ranks, and the deadly crop of the War-god's field will mow itself, and perish.'

Then Jason fell on his knees before her, and thanked her and kissed her hands; and she gave him the ointment, and fled trembling through the reeds. And Jason told his comrades what had happened, and showed them the box of ointment, and all rejoiced.

At sunrise Jason went and bathed, and anointed himself from head to foot, and his shield, and his helmet, and his weapons, and bade his comrades try the spell. So they tried to bend his lance, but it stood like an iron bar. Then they hurled their lances at his shield, but the

spear-points turned like lead. They tried to throw him but he never stirred a foot. One struck him a blow that would have killed an ox, but Jason only smiled, and the heroes danced about him with delight; and he leapt, and ran, and shouted in joy, till the sun rose and it was time to go and to claim Aeetes's promise.

So he sent two of his men to tell Aeetes that he was ready for the fight; and they went up among the marble walls, and beneath the roofs of gold, and stood in Aeetes's hall, while he grew pale with rage.

'Fulfil your promise to us, O King. Give us the serpents' teeth, and let loose the fiery bulls; for we have found a champion among us who can win the golden fleece.'

Aeetes bit his lips, for he fancied that they had fled away by night; but he could not go back on his promise; so he gave them the serpents' teeth.

Then he called for his chariot and horses, and sent heralds through all the town; and all the people went out with him to the dreadful War-god's field.

There Aeetes sat upon his throne, with his warriors on each hand, thousands and tens of thousands, clothed in steel. The men and the women crowded to every window and bank and wall, while the Argonauts stood together, a mere handful in the midst of that great host.

Chalciope was there, and Argus, trembling, and Medea, wrapped closely in her veil; but

Aeetes did not know that she was muttering cunning spells between her lips.

Then Jason cried: 'Fulfil your promise, and let your fiery bulls come forth.'

Then Aeetes bade them open the gates, and the magic bulls leapt out. Their brazen hoofs rang upon the ground, and their nostrils sent out tongues of flame, as they rushed with lowered heads upon Jason; but he never flinched a step. The flame of their breath swept round him, but it singed not a hair of his head; and the bulls stopped short and trembled when Medea began her spell.

Then Jason sprang upon the nearest and seized him by the horn; and they wrestled till the bull fell grovelling on his knees; for the heart of the brute died within him, and his mighty limbs were loosed, beneath the steadfast eyes of that dark witch and the magic whisper of her lips.

So both the bulls were tamed and yoked. Jason bound them to the plough, and goaded them onward with his lance till he had ploughed the sacred field.

All the Argonauts shouted with joy; but Aeetes bit his lips with rage, for half of Jason's work was over, and the sun was yet high in heaven.

Then he took the serpents' teeth and sowed them, and waited what would befall. But Medea looked at him and at his helmet, lest he should forget the lesson she had taught him.

And every furrow heaved and bubbled, and out of every clod arose a man. Out of the earth

they rose by thousands, each clad from head to foot in steel, and drew their swords and rushed on Jason, where he stood in the midst alone.

But Jason snatched off his helmet, and hurled it into the thickest of the throng. Blind madness came upon them, suspicion, hate, and fear; and one cried to his fellow: 'Thou didst strike me!' and another: 'Thou art Jason; thou shalt die!' So fury seized these phantoms, and each turned his hand against the rest; and they fought and were never weary, till they all lay dead upon the ground. Then the magic furrows opened, and the kind earth took them home into her breast; and the grass grew up all green again above them, and Jason's work was done.

Then the Argonauts rose and shouted in joy. And Jason cried: 'Lead me to the fleece this moment, before the sun goes down.'

Aeetes thought: 'He has conquered the bulls, and sown and reaped the deadly crop. Who is this who is proof against all magic? He may kill the serpent yet.' So he delayed, and sat taking counsel with his princes till the sun went down and all was dark. Then he bade a herald cry: 'Every man to his home tonight. To-morrow we will meet these heroes, and speak about the golden fleece.'

Then he turned and looked at Medea. 'This is your doing, false witch! You have helped these yellow-haired strangers, and brought shame upon your father and yourself!'

Medea shrank and trembled, and her face grew

pale with fear; and Aeetes knew that she was guilty, and whispered: 'If they win the fleece, you die!'

But the Argonauts marched towards their ship, growling like lions cheated of their prey; for they saw that Aeetes meant to mock them, and to cheat them of the prize of all their toil. One said: 'Let us go to the grove together, and take the fleece by force!'

Another cried: 'Let us draw lots who shall go in first; for while the dragon is devouring one, the rest can slay him and carry off the fleece!'

But Jason held them back, though he praised them; for he hoped for Medea's help.

After a while Medea came trembling, and wept a long while before she spoke. At last she said: 'My end is come, and I must die; for my father has found out that I have helped you. He would kill you if he dared; but he will not harm you, because you have been his guests. Go, then, go, and remember poor Medea when you are far away across the sea!'

But all the heroes cried: 'If you die, we die with you; for without you we cannot win the fleece, and home we will not go without it, but fall here fighting to the last man.'

'You need not die,' said Jason. 'Flee home with us across the sea. Show us first how to win the golden fleece, for you can do it. Show us but how to win the fleece, and come with us, and you shall be my queen, and rule over the people of Iolchos by the sea!'

All the heroes pressed round, and vowed to her that she should be their queen.

Medea wept, and shuddered, and hid her face in her hands; for her heart yearned after her sisters and playfellows, and the home where she was brought up as a child. But at last she looked up at Jason, and spoke between her sobs: 'Must I leave my home and my people, to wander with strangers across the sea? The lot is cast, and I must endure it. I will show you how to win the golden fleece. Bring your ship to the side of the wood, and moor her there against the bank. Let Jason come up at midnight, and one brave comrade with him, and meet me beneath the wall.'

Then all the heroes cried together: 'I will go!' 'And I!' 'And I!' But Medea calmed them, and said: 'Orpheus shall go with Jason, and bring his magic harp; for I hear he is the king of minstrels, and can charm all things on earth.'

And Orpheus laughed for joy, and clapped his hands, because the choice had fallen on him.

So at midnight they went up the bank, and found Medea; with her came Absyrtus her young brother, leading a yearling lamb.

Then Medea brought them to a thicket beside the War-god's gate; and there she bade Jason dig a ditch, and kill the lamb, and leave it there, and strew on it magic herbs and honey.

Then sprang up through the earth, with the red fire flashing before her, Brimo the wild witch, while her mad hounds howled around. She had one head like a horse's, another like a hound's,

another like a hissing snake's, and held a sword in her hand. She leapt into the ditch with her hounds, and they ate and drank their fill, while Jason and Orpheus trembled, and Medea hid her eyes. At last she vanished, and fled with her hounds into the woods; and the bars of the gates fell down, and the brazen doors flew wide, and Medea and the heroes ran forward and hurried through the wood, among the dark stems of the mighty beeches, guided by the gleams of the golden fleece, until they saw it hanging on one vast tree in the midst. Jason would have sprung to seize it; but Medea held him back, and pointed, shuddering, to the foot of the tree, where a mighty serpent lay, coiled among the roots, with a body like a mountain-pine. His coils stretched many a mile, spangled with bronze and gold; only half of him could they see, for the rest lay in darkness far beyond.

When he saw them coming, he lifted his head, and watched them with his small bright eyes, and flashed his forked tongue, and roared like the fire among the woodlands, till the forest tossed and groaned. His cries shook the trees from leaf to root, and swept over the river, and over the hall of Aeetes, and it woke the sleepers in the city, till mothers clasped their children in their fear.

But Medea called gently to him, and he stretched out his long spotted neck, and licked her hand, and looked up in her face, as if to ask for food. Then she made a sign to Orpheus, and he began his magic song.

As he sung, the forest grew calm again, and the leaves on every tree hung still; and the serpent's head sank down, and his brazen coils grew limp, and his glittering eyes closed lazily, till he breathed as gently as a child.

Then Jason leapt forward warily, and stepped across that mighty snake, and tore the fleece from the trunk of the tree. Then the four rushed down the garden, to the bank where the *Argo* lay.

There was silence for a moment, while Jason held the golden fleece on high. Then he cried: 'Go now, good *Argo,* swift and steady.'

She went as the heroes rowed her, grim and silent all, with muffled oars, till the pine-wood bent like willow in their hands, and stout *Argo* groaned beneath their strokes.

On and on, beneath the dewy darkness, they fled swiftly down the stream; underneath black walls, and temples, and the castles of the princes of the East; past gardens, and groves of all strange fruits; past marshes where fat kine lay sleeping, and long beds of whispering reeds; till they heard the merry music of the surge upon the bar, as it tumbled in the moonlight all alone.

Into the surge they rushed, and *Argo* leapt the breakers like a horse; for she knew the time had come to show her mettle, and win honour for the heroes and herself.

Into the surge they rushed, and *Argo* leapt the breakers like a horse, till the heroes stopped all panting, each man upon his oar, as she slid into the still broad sea.

Then Orpheus took his harp and sang, till the heroes' hearts rose high again; and they rowed on stoutly and steadfastly, away into the darkness of the West.

—CHARLES KINGSLEY

NOTES

Charles Kingsley (1819-75) wrote poems, plays and novels. In *The Heroes,* his most popular work, he tells the old classical stories of Perseus, Theseus and the Argonauts. His *Water Babies* and *Hereward the Wake* are also intended for young readers and are full of humour and adventure. Of his more ambitious novels *Westward Ho!* and *Hypatia* are the best known.

Note the difference in style between this extract and others in this book. The style is poetic as suited to the subject and we find frequent inversions as in the following examples: 'At his feet are dark forests'; 'Then out spoke Ancaios the helmsman'; 'And a dream came to Aeetes', etc.

The golden fleece was the fleece of a ram on the back of which Phrixus and Helle fled from Thebes. Helle fell into the sea; Phrixus arrived safely, sacrificed the ram to Zeus and dedicated the golden fleece. Aeetes murdered Phrixus and took the fleece. He kept it carefully guarded and no one could hope to gain it. Jason embarked on *Argo* with the bravest of the Greek heroes and came to Colchis to recover the fleece. How he obtained it is related here.

69. *Caucasus,* a mountain range between the Black Sea and the Caspian.

Colchian land, from Colchis, the capital.

70. *the whirling river,* the river rushing impetuously.

'There the river eddy *whirls*'—Tennyson: *The Lady of Shalott.*

leaped and *leapt* are both right, but *leaped* is to be preferred.

and appease the nymphs, nymphs were beautiful, half-divine maidens who, if they were angered, had to be appeased by sacrifices.

the heroes whose spirits haunt the banks, the spirits of the dead which had to be appeased by sacrifices.

Hera (called by the Romans Juno) was the wife of Jupiter and the Queen of the Heavens, the goddess of all power, empire and wealth.

71. *my comrades are not unknown men,* they are well-known or famous men. (A figure of speech called *litotes* or understatement.)

Hercules, the strongest hero among the Greeks and one who achieved impossible deeds.

72. *that my husband's spirit may have rest,* Chalciope was the widow of Phrixus who had been murdered by Aeetes for the golden fleece. If the fleece were restored, her husband's soul would have peace.

73. *the field of Ares,* Ares, the son of Zeus, was the Greek God of War (he was called Mars by the Romans).

74. *Circe,* was famous for her magic power. She turned all the followers of Ulysses into swine.

her fairy island in the West, Circe inhabited an island called Aeaea, in the western ocean.

temptation and thoughts that tear the heart, Medea had fallen in love with Jason.

76. *grovelling on his knees,* bending low; compare the phrase: grovel in the dust.

78. *Iolchos by the sea,* the island of Iolchos, of which Jason was the rightful king.

79. *Orpheus . . . and his magic harp,* 'Orpheus, the son of one of the Muses, received from the God Apollo a lyre on which he played with such skill that the wild beasts, and also rocks and trees, came to listen to his song.'

80. *spangled with bronze and gold,* set with gold; here figuratively.

81. *muffled oars,* oars wrapped up to deaden the sound. Compare: muffled drums.

Exercises

Grammar

1. Many a toil: many toils. Note that *many a* is a singular construction with plural meaning.

2. Note the use of *lest: 'lest* any stranger *should* come near.'

'Medea looked at him, *lest* he *should* forget the lesson she had taught him.'

3. *But* in the sense of *that not: 'No* wall so high *but* it may be climbed'='No wall is so high that it cannot be climbed.'

4. Possessive forms: Formerly for nouns ending in -s, the possessive was written thus: Charles', Jones' children, James' house; but now the usual way is to write and pronounce Charles's, Jones's, and James's.

5. Note that *bid, let, dare,* and *make* do not take the sign of the infinitive ('to') after them. E.g. He bid me do it. He dare not say so. He let me go home.

Words and Phrases

1. What is the difference between *few* and *a few; little* and *a little?* Use them in sentences.

2. Distinguish between: lose—loose; counsel—council; breath—breadth; price—prize; lie—lay (use all the forms: lie—lay—lain; lie—lied; lay—laid—laid).

3. Use in sentences and give the meaning of the following: come to blows; take no account of; go back on a promise; take counsel; sit in council; take by force; hold back; like a whirlwind; from head to foot.

Subject Matter

1. Tell how Jason met Aeetes and demanded the golden fleece and what answer the King gave him.
2. Tell how Medea helped Jason.
3. How did Jason tame the brazen bulls and sow and reap the field of Ares?
4. How did Jason win the golden fleece?

7. CRICKET AT RUGBY

(From *Tom Brown's Schooldays*)

THE morning had dawned bright and warm, to the intense relief of many an anxious youngster, up betimes to mark the signs of the weather. The eleven went down in a body before breakfast, for a plunge in the cold bath in a corner of the close. The ground was in splendid order, and soon after ten o'clock, before spectators had arrived, all was ready, and two of the Lord's men took their places at the wickets; the School, with the usual liberality of young hands, having put their adversaries in first. Old Bailey stepped up to the wicket, and called play, and the match had begun.

'Oh, well bowled! well bowled, Johnson!' cries the Captain, catching up the ball and sending it high above the rook trees, while the third Marylebone man walks away from the wicket, and old Bailey gravely sets up the middle stump again and puts the bails on.

'How many runs?' Away scamper three boys to the scoring table, and are back again in a minute amongst the rest of the eleven, who are collected together in a knot between the wickets. 'Only eighteen runs, and three wickets down!' 'Huzza, for old Rugby!' sings out Jack Raggles, the long-stop, toughest and burliest of boys, commonly called 'Swiper Jack'; and forthwith

stands on his head, and brandishes his legs in the air in triumph, till the next boy catches hold of his heels and throws him over on to his back.

'Steady there, don't be such an ass, Jack,' says the Captain, 'we haven't got the best wicket yet. Ah, look out now at cover-point,' adds he, as he sees a long-armed, bareheaded, slashing-looking player coming to the wicket. 'And, Jack, mind your hits; he steals more runs than any man in England.'

And they all find that they have got their work to do now; the newcomer's off-hitting is tremendous, and his running like a flash of lightning. He is never in his ground except when his wicket is down. Nothing in the whole game is so trying to the boys; he has stolen three byes in the first ten minutes, and Jack Raggles is furious and begins throwing over-savagely to the further wicket, until he is sternly stopped by the Captain. It is all that young gentleman can do to keep his team steady, but he knows that everything depends on it, and faces his work bravely. The score creeps up to fifty, the boys begin to look blank, and the spectators, who are now mustering strong, are very silent. The ball flies off his bat to all parts of the field, and he gives no rest and no catches to any one. But cricket is full of glorious chances, and the goddess who presides over it loves to bring down the most skilful players. Johnson, the young bowler, is getting wild, and bowls a ball almost wide to the off; the batter steps out and cuts it beautifully

to where cover-point is standing very deep, in fact, almost off the ground. The ball comes skimming and twisting along about three feet from the ground; he rushes at it, and it sticks somehow or other in the fingers of his left hand, to the utter astonishment of himself and the whole field. Such a catch hasn't been made in the close for years, and the cheering is maddening. 'Pretty cricket', says the Captain, throwing himself on the ground by the deserted wicket with a long breath; he feels that a crisis has passed.

I wish I had space to describe the match; how the Captain stumped the next man, and bowled slow lobs to old Mr Aislabie, who came in for the last wicket; how the Lord's men were out by half-past twelve o'clock for ninety-eight runs; how the Captain of the School eleven went in first to give his men pluck, and scored twenty-five in beautiful style; and how Rugby was only four behind in the first innings; what a glorious dinner they had in the fourth-form School, and how the cover-point hitter sang the most topping comic songs, and old Mr Aislabie made the best speeches that ever were heard, afterwards. But I haven't space, and so you must fancy it all, and carry yourselves on to halfpast seven o'clock, when the School are again in, with five wickets down, and only thirty-two runs to make to win. The Marylebone men played carelessly in their second innings, but they are working like horses now to save the match.

There is much healthy, hearty, happy life scattered up and down the close; but the group

to which I beg to call your especial attention is there, on the slope of the island, which looks towards the cricket-ground. It consists of three figures: two are seated on a bench, and one on the ground at their feet. The first, a tall, slight, and rather gaunt man, with a bushy eyebrow, and a dry humorous smile, is evidently a clergyman. And by his side, in white flannel shirt and trousers, straw hat, the captain's belt, and cricket shoes sits a strapping figure, near six feet high, with ruddy, tanned face and whiskers, curly brown hair, and a laughing, dancing eye. It is Tom Brown, grown into a young man nineteen years old, a praepostor and Captain of the eleven spending his last day as a Rugby boy. And at their feet similarly dressed, sits Arthur, Turkish fashion, with his bat across his knees. He too is no longer a boy; his figure; though slight, is well-knit and active, and all his old timidity has disappeared, and is replaced by silent, quaint fun with which his face twinkles all over, as he listens to the broken talk between the other two, in which he joins every now and then.

All three are watching the game eagerly, and joining in the cheering which follows every good hit. It is pleasing to see the easy, friendly footing which the pupils are on with their master, perfectly respectful, yet with no reserve and nothing forced in their intercourse.

'Oh, well played—bravo, Johnson!' shouted Arthur, dropping his bat and clapping furiously, and Tom joined in with a 'Bravo, Johnson!' which might have been heard at the chapel.

'Eh! what was it? I didn't see,' inquired the master; 'they only got one run, I thought?'

'No, but such a ball, three-quarters length and coming straight for his leg bail. Nothing but that turn of the wrist could have saved him, and he drew it away to leg for a safe one. Bravo Johnson!'

'How well they are bowling, though,' said Arthur; 'they don't mean to be beat, I can see.'

'There, now,' struck in the master, 'you see that's just what I have been preaching this half-hour. The delicate play is the true thing. I don't understand cricket, so I don't enjoy those fine draws which you tell me are the best play, though when you or Raggles hit a ball hard away for six I am as delighted as any one. Don't you see the analogy?'

'Yes, sir,' answered Tom, looking up roguishly. 'I see; only the question remains whether I should have got most good by understanding Greek or cricket thoroughly. I am such a thick, I never should have had time for both.'

'Out! Bailey has given him out—do you see, Tom?' cries Arthur. 'How foolish of them to run so hard.'

'Well, it can't be helped, he has played very well. Whose turn is it to go in?'

'I don't know; they have got your list in the tent.'

'Let's go and see,' said Tom rising; but at this moment Jack Raggles and two or three more come running to the island moat.

'Oh, Brown, mayn't I go in next?' shouts Swiper.

'Whose name is next on the list?' says the Captain.

'Winter's and then Arthur's,' answers the boy who carries it; 'but there are only twenty-six runs to get, and no time to lose. I heard Mr Aislabie say that the stumps must be drawn at a quarter-past eight exactly.'

'Oh, do let the Swiper go in,' chorus the boys; so Tom yields against his better judgement.

'I daresay now I've lost the match by this nonsense,' he says, as he sits down again; 'they'll be sure to get Jack's wicket in three or four minutes; however, you'll have the chance, sir, of seeing a hard hit or two,' adds he, smiling, and turning to the master.

'Come, none of your irony, Brown,' answers the master. 'I'm beginning to understand the game scientifically. What a noble game it is, too!'

'Isn't it?' said Tom.

'The discipline and reliance on one another which it teaches is so valuable, I think,' went on the master, 'it ought to be such an unselfish game. It merges the individual in the eleven; he doesn't play that he may win, but that his side may.'

'That's very true,' said Tom, 'and that's why football and cricket are so much better games than others where the object is to come in first or to win for oneself, and not that one's side may win.'

Meantime Jack Raggles, with his sleeves tucked up above his great brown elbows, scorning pads and gloves, has presented himself at the wicket; and having run one for a forward drive of Johnson's, is about to receive his first ball. There are only twenty-four runs to make, and four wickets to go down, a winning match if they play decently steady. As Jack hits the ball there are shouts from his many admirers. And now there are only seventeen runs to make with four wickets—the game is all but ours!

It is over now, and Jack walks swaggering about his wicket, with the bat over his shoulder. while Mr Aislabie holds a short parley with his men. Then the cover-point hitter, that cunning man, goes on to bowl slow twisters. Jack waves his hand triumphantly towards the tent. as much as to say: 'See if I don't finish it all off now in three hits!'

Alas, my son Jack! the enemy is too old for thee! The first ball of the over Jacks steps out and meets, swiping with all his force. If he had only allowed for the twist! but he hasn't, and so the ball goes spinning up straight into the air, as if it would never come down again. Away runs Jack, shouting and trusting to the chapter of accidents, but the bowler runs steadily under it, judging every spin, and calling out: 'I have it', catches it, and playfully pitches it on to the back of the stalwart Jack, who is departing with a rueful countenance.

'I knew how it would be,' says Tom, rising. 'Come along, the game is getting very serious.'

So they leave the island and go to the tent, and after deep consultation, Arthur is sent in, and goes off to the wicket with a last exhortation from Tom to play steady and keep his bat straight.

The dense crowd now begins to close in round the ground.

The clock strikes eight, and the whole field becomes fevered with excitement. Arthur, after two narrow escapes, scores one; and Johnson gets the ball. The bowling and fielding are superb, and Johnson's batting worthy of the occasion. He makes here a two, and there a one, managing to keep the ball to himself, and Arthur backs up and runs perfectly: only eleven runs to make now, and the crowd scarcely breathe. At last Arthur gets the ball again, and actually drives it forward for two, and feels prouder than when he got three best prizes, at hearing Tom's shout of joy: 'Well played, well played, young 'un!'

But the next ball is too much for a young hand, and his bails fly different ways. Nine runs to make, and two wickets to go down—it is too much for human nerves.

Before Winter can get in, the omnibus which is to take the Lord's men to the train, pulls up at the side of the close, and Mr Aislabie and Tom consult, and give out that the stumps will be drawn after the next over. And so ends the great match. Winter and Johnson carry out their bats, and, it being a one day's match, the Lord's men are declared the winners, they having scored the most in the first innings.

But such a defeat is a victory: so think Tom and all the School eleven, as they accompany their conquerors to the omnibus, and send them off with three ringing cheers, after Mr Aislabie has shaken hands all round, saying to Tom: 'I must compliment you, sir, on your eleven, and I hope we shall have you for a member if you come up to town.'

—THOMAS HUGHES

NOTES

Thomas Hughes (1822-96) has become famous on account of his great work, *Tom Brown's Schooldays.* This was published in 1857 over the signature of An Old Boy. Hughes himself had been at Rugby and in the story of Tom Brown he gives us a very vivid picture of life at Rugby when Dr Arnold was Headmaster there. He wrote other works, such as biographies but they are not so well known as this.

Tom Brown is sent to Rugby. He makes friendships there and tries to put down 'fagging' and ill-treatment of the smaller boys by the senior ones. He enters the School eleven and is now Captain of the team. 'Four years have passed, and it is again the end of summer half-year at Rugby.' The examinations are over and many of the boys have left for their homes. But the greatest sporting event of the year—the match with the players of the Marylebone Cricket Club (usually known as the M.C.C.) still remains.

The match is here described.

86. *the close,* an 'enclosed place' such as the playground of a school.

the Lord's men, Lord's Cricket Ground in London is the headquarters of the Marylebone Cricket Club, so named from Thomas Lord who opened it. So Lord's men are members of the M.C.C.

Old Bailey, the umpire.

Huzza, a shout of encouragement or applause. The current form today is *hurrah* in literary and dignified contexts and *hooray* in popular use.

the long-stop, a fieldsman (or fielder) who stands behind the wicket-keeper to stop the balls that pass him.

Swiper, one who swipes the ball or hits it very hard; a hitter; (*swipe* is probably from *sweep*).

87. *cover-point,* a fieldsman who stands behind point, i.e. that fieldsman who stands in a line with the crease.

off-hitting, hitting the ball to the off-side.

byes, runs scored for a ball which passes the wicket-keeper as well as the man behind him, i.e. the long-stop.

88. *a crisis has passed,* because the best player had been dismissed.

lobs, slow underhand balls.

innings, always used in the plural form whether in singular or plural sense, e.g. first innings, second innings, in both the innings. Literally it means the time or part of the game during which one side or the other is *in* or at the bat. See below: 'the School are again *in.*'

to save the match, not to lose it; to avoid defeat.

89. *a strapping figure,* vigorous, lusty young man. (Formerly the word *strapping* was only used of women but is now applied to either sex).

præpostor (or prepostor), a senior pupil, also called in some schools *prefect* or *monitor.*

Turkish fashion, with his legs crossed, on the ground.

90. *draws,* hits or pulls. Compare the expression: 'He pulled it to leg.' A hit which brings the ball pitched to the off-side round to leg.

hit a ball . . . for six, hit the ball full toss over the boundary and gain six runs. A hitter (like our own

Amar Singh) is the favourite of the crowd, who do not or cannot enjoy the finer points of the game.

Don't you see the analogy?, as in cricket, so in literature it requires training and cultivation of taste to appreciate the delicate beauties.

the question remains....thoroughly, which is better?—a taste for literature or skill in cricket?

thick (school slang), 'thick-headed or stupid boy.'

92. *twisters*, 'a delivery in which the ball twists or breaks; a break.'

93. *Arthur backs up and runs perfectly*, Arthur supports him at the other end; helps him to make runs.

young 'un, colloquial for 'young one'.

omnibus (our modern word *bus* is an abbreviation of this), a public vehicle; literally it means 'for all'.

EXERCISES

Words and Phrases

1. Besides those explained in the Notes, there are several other terms used in cricket which occur in this selection. Wicket, stumps, bails, an over, to bowl, to cut, etc. Explain these terms.

2. Give the meanings of the following words and use them in sentences: superb; stalwart; exhortation; reserve (of manner); intercourse; liberality—liberty; lightning—lightening (of a load); parley.

3. Use the following phrases and idioms in sentences: to look blank; to be feverish with excitement; to muster strong; to gather in a knot (or a group); to allow for (something); with a rueful countenance; to one's intense relief; to be up betimes.

Subject Matter

1. Give a general account of the game of cricket (so that it may be understood by some one who does not know anything of the game).

2. Have you watched a cricket match? Can you give an interesting account of it?

3. Give an account of the Rugby match against the members of the M.C.C.

4. In what way is football or cricket better than other games?

5. Write a short essay on the importance of games in school life.

6. How are games more important than mere physical exercise, e.g. drill?

8. THE KEYS OF CALAIS

(From *A Book of Golden Deeds*)

1347

WHEN English sovereigns were full of the vain hope of obtaining the crown of France, or at least of regaining the great possessions that their forefathers had owned as French nobles, there was no spot so coveted by them as the fortress of Calais, the possession of which gave an entrance into France.

Thus it was that when, in 1346, Edward the Third had beaten Philippe the Sixth at the battle of Crecy, the first use he made of his victory was to march upon Calais, and lay siege to it. The walls were exceedingly strong and solid, mighty defences of masonry, of huge thickness and like rocks for solidity, guarded it, and the King knew that it would be useless to attempt a direct assault.

King Edward arrived before the place with all his victorious army early in August, his good knights and squires arrayed in glittering steel armour; his stout men-at-arms, each of whom was attended by three bold followers; and his archers, with their cross-bows. Of these it used to be said that each went into battle with three men's lives under his girdle, namely the three arrows he kept ready to his hand. With the

King was his son, Edward, Prince of Wales, who had just won the golden spurs of knighthood so gallantly at Crecy, when only in his seventeenth year; and likewise the famous knight, Sir Walter Mauny, and all those who were noblest and bravest in England.

This whole glittering army, at their head the King's great royal standard bearing the golden lilies of France quartered with the lions of England, came marching to the gates of Calais, above which floated the blue standard of France with its golden flowers, and with it the banner of the governor, Sir Jean de Vienne. A herald, in a rich long robe embroidered with the arms of England, rode up to the gate, a trumpet sounding before him, and called upon Sir Jean de Vienne to give up the place to Edward, King of England, and of France, as he claimed to be. Sir Jean made answer that he held the town for Philippe, King of France, and that he would defend it to the last; the herald rode back again and the English began the siege of the city.

At first they only encamped, and the people of Calais must have seen the whole plain covered with the white canvas tents, marshalled round the ensigns of the leaders, and here and there a more gorgeous one displaying the colours of the owner. Still there was no attack upon the walls. The warriors were to be seen walking about in the leathern suits they wore under their armour; or if a party was to be seen with their coats of mail on, helmet on head, and lance in hand, it was not against Calais that they came.

They rode out into the country, and by and by might be seen driving back before them herds of cattle and flocks of sheep or pigs that they had seized and taken away from the poor peasants; and at night the sky would show red lights where farms and homesteads had been set on fire. After a time, in front of the tents, the English were to be seen hard at work with beams and boards, setting up huts for themselves, and thatching them over with straw or broom. These wooden houses were all ranged in regular streets, and there was a market-place in the midst, whither every Saturday came farmers and butchers to sell corn and meat, and hay for the horses; and the English merchants and Flemish weavers would come by sea and by land to bring cloth, bread, weapons, and everything that could be needed to be sold in this market.

The governor, Sir Jean de Vienne, began to perceive that the King did not mean to waste his men by making vain attacks on the strong walls of Calais, but to shut up the entrance by land, and watch the coast by sea so as to prevent any provisions from being taken in, and so to starve him into surrendering. Sir Jean de Vienne, however, hoped that before he should be entirely reduced by famine, the King of France would be able to get together another army and come to his relief. At any rate he was determined to do his duty, and hold out for his master to the last. But as food was already beginning to grow scarce, he was obliged to turn out such persons as could not fight and had no stores of

their own. So one Wednesday morning he caused all the poor to be brought together, men, women and children, and sent them all out of the town, to the number of 1,700. It was probably the truest mercy, for he had no food to give them, and they could only have starved miserably within the town, or have hindered him from saving it. To them, however, it was dreadful to be driven out of house and home, straight down upon the enemy, and they went along weeping and wailing, till the English soldiers met them and asked them why they had come out. They answered that they had been cast out because they had nothing to eat, and their sorrowful, famished looks gained pity for them. King Edward sent orders that not only should they go safely through his camp, but that they should all rest, and have the first hearty dinner that they had eaten for many a day, and he sent every one a small sum of money before they left the camp, so that many of them went on their way praying aloud for the enemy who had been so kind to them.

A great deal happened whilst King Edward kept watch in his wooden town and the citizens of Calais guarded their walls. England was invaded by King David the Second of Scotland, with a great army, and the good Queen Philippa, who was left to govern at home, assembled all the forces that were available, and sent them to meet him. And one autumn day, a ship crossed the Straits of Dover, and a messenger brought King Edward letters from his Queen to say that the Scotch army had been entirely defeated at

Neville's Cross, near Durham, and that their King was a prisoner. He had been taken by a squire named John Copeland, who would not give him up to her.

King Edward sent letters to John Copeland to come to him at Calais, and when the squire had made his journey, the King took him by the hand saying: 'Ha! welcome, my squire, who by his valour has captured our adversary the King of Scotland!'

Copeland falling on one knee, replied: 'If God, out of His great kindness, has given me the King of Scotland, no one ought to be jealous of it, for God can, when He pleases, send His grace to a poor squire as well as to a great lord. Sire, do not take it amiss if I did not surrender him to the orders of my lady the Queen, for I hold my lands of you, and my oath is to you, not to her.'

The King was not displeased with his squire's stubbornness, but made him a knight, gave him a pension of five hundred pounds a year, and desired him to surrender his prisoner to the Queen, as his own representative. This was accordingly done, and King David was lodged in the Tower of London. Soon after, three days before All Saints' Day, there was a large and gay fleet to be seen crossing from the white cliffs of Dover, and the King, his son, and his knights rode down to the landing-place to welcome plump, fair-haired Queen Philippa, and all her train of ladies, who had come in great numbers to visit their relations in the wooden town. Then

there was a great court, and numerous feasts and dances, and the knights and squires were constantly striving who could do the bravest deeds of prowess to please the ladies. The King of France had placed numerous knights and men-at-arms in the neighbouring towns and castles, and there were constant fights whenever the English went out foraging, and many bold deeds were done. The great point was to keep provisions out of the town, and there was much fighting between the French who tried to bring in supplies, and the English who intercepted them. Very little was brought in by land, and Sir Jean de Vienne and his garrison would have been quite starved but for two sailors of Abbeville, named Marant and Mestriel, who knew the coast thoroughly, and often, in the dark autumn evenings, would guide in a whole fleet of boats, laden with bread and meat for the starving men within the city. They were often chased by King Edward's vessels, and were sometimes very nearly taken, but they always managed to escape, and thus they still enabled the garrison to hold out.

So all the winter passed: Christmas was kept with brilliant feasting and high merriment by the King and his Queen in their wooden palace outside, and with lean cheeks and scanty fare by the besieged within.

Easter brought a betrothal in the English camp; a very unwilling one on the part of the bridegroom, the young Count of Flanders, who had been forced to give his consent to marry Isabel, the beautiful, fair-haired, fifteen-year-old

daughter of King Edward. The young Count would scarcely look at her; and in the last week before the marriage day, while her robes and jewels were being prepared, and her father and mother were arranging the presents they should make to all their court on the wedding-day, the bridegroom, when out hawking, gave his attendants the slip, and galloped off to Paris, where he was welcomed by King Philippe.

This made Edward very wrathful, and more than ever determined to take Calais. About Whitsuntide he completed a great wooden castle upon the seashore, and placed in it numerous engines, with forty men-at-arms and two hundred archers. They kept such a close watch upon the harbour that not even the two Abbeville sailors could enter it, without having their boats crushed and sunk by the great stones that the engines launched upon them. The townspeople began to feel what hunger really was, but their spirits were kept up by the hope that their King was at last collecting an army for their rescue.

And Philippe did collect all his forces, a great and noble army, and came one night to the hill of Sangate, just behind the English army. Still there were but two roads by which the French could reach their friends in the town—one along the sea-coast, the other by a marshy road higher up the country, and there was but one bridge by which the river could be crossed. The English fleet could prevent any troops from passing along the coast road, the Earl of Derby guarded the bridge, and there was a great tower, strongly

fortified, close upon Calais. There were a few skirmishes, but the French King, finding it difficult to force his way to relieve the town, sent a party of knights with a challenge to King Edward to come out of his camp and do battle upon a fair field.

To this Edward made answer, that he had been nearly a year before Calais, and had spent large sums of money on the siege, and that he had nearly become master of the place; he had no intention of coming out only to gratify his adversary, who must try some other road if he could not make his way in by that before him.

Three days were spent in parleys, and then, without the slightest effort to rescue the brave, patient men within the town, away went King Philippe of France, with all his men, and the garrison saw the host that had crowded the hill of Sangate melt away like a summer cloud.

August came again, and they had suffered privation for a whole year for the sake of the King who deserted them at their utmost need. They were in so grievous a state of hunger and distress that the hardiest could endure no more, for ever since Whitsuntide no fresh provisions had reached them. The Governor, therefore, went to the battlements and made signs that he wished to hold a parley, and the King appointed Lord Basset and Sir Walter Mauny to meet him, and appoint the terms of surrender.

The Governor owned that the garrison was reduced to the greatest extremity of distress, and requested that the King would be contented

with obtaining the city and fortress, leaving the soldiers and inhabitants to depart in peace.

But Sir Walter Mauny was forced to make answer that the King, his lord, was so much enraged at the delay and expense that Calais had cost him, that he would only consent to receive the whole on unconditional terms, leaving him free to slay, or to ransom, or make prisoners whomsoever he pleased. He said there was a heavy reckoning to pay, both for the trouble the siege had cost him and the damage the people of Calais had previously done to the English ships.

The brave answer was: 'These conditions are too hard for us. We are but a small number of knights and squires, who have loyally served our lord and master as you would have done, and have suffered trouble. But we will endure far more before we consent that the meanest in the city shall fare worse than ourselves. I therefore entreat you, for pity's sake, to return to the King and beg him to have compassion, for I have such an opinion of his gallantry that I think he will alter his mind.'

The King's mind seemed, however, sternly made up; and all that Sir Walter Mauny and the barons of the council could obtain from him was that he would pardon the garrison and townsmen on condition that six of the chief citizens should present themselves to him, coming forth with bare feet and hands, with halters round their necks, carrying the keys of the town, and becoming absolutely his own to punish for their obstinacy as he should think fit.

On hearing this reply, Sir Jean de Vienne begged Sir Walter Mauny to wait till he could consult the citizens, and, repairing to the market-place, he caused a great bell to be rung, at the sound of which all the inhabitants came together in the town hall. When he told them of these hard terms he could not refrain from weeping bitterly, and wailing and lamentation arose all round him. Should all starve together, or sacrifice their best and most honoured after all suffering in common so long?

Then a voice was heard: it was that of the richest burgher in the town, Eustace de St Pierre. 'Messieurs, high and low,' he said, 'it would be a pity to suffer so many people to die through hunger, if it could be prevented; and to hinder it would be meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God, if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself as first of the six.'

As the burgher ceased, his fellow-townsmen wept aloud, and many amid tears and groans, threw themselves at his feet in a transport of grief and gratitude. Another citizen, very rich and respected, rose up and said: 'I will be second to my comrade, Eustace.' His name was Jean Daire. After him, Jacques Wissant, another very rich man, offered himself as companion to these, who were both his cousins; and his brother Pierre would not be left behind; and two more, unnamed, made up this gallant band of men willing to offer their lives for the rescue of their fellow-townsmen.

Sir Jean de Vienne mounted a horse—for he had been wounded, and was still lame—and came to the gate with them, followed by all the people of the town, weeping and wailing, yet, for their own sakes and their children's, not daring to prevent the sacrifice. The gates were opened, the Governor and the six passed out, and the gates were again shut behind them. Sir Jean then rode up to Sir Walter Mauny, and told him how these burghers had voluntarily offered themselves, begging him to do all in his power to save them; and Sir Walter promised with all his heart to plead their cause. De Vienne then went back into the town, full of heaviness and anxiety; and the six citizens were led by Sir Walter to the presence of the King, in his full court. They all knelt down, and the foremost said: 'Most gallant King, you see before you six burghers of Calais, who have all been rich merchants, and who bring you the keys of the castle and town. We yield ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered much distress and misery. Condescend, therefore, out of your nobleness of mind, to have pity on us.'

Strong emotion was excited among all the barons and knights who stood around, as they saw the resigned countenances, pale and thin with hunger patiently endured, of these venerable men, offering themselves in the cause of their fellow-townsmen. Tears of pity were shed; but the King still showed himself implacable, and commanded that they should be led away,

and their heads cut off. Sir Walter Mauny interceded for them with all his might; and all the nobles joined in entreating pardon for the citizens, but still without effect; and the headsman had been actually sent for, when Queen Philippa, her eyes streaming with tears, threw herself on her knees amongst the captives, and said: 'Ah, gentle Sir, since I have crossed the sea, with much danger, to see you, I have never asked you one favour. Now I beg as a boon to myself, for the sake of the Son of the Blessed Mary, and for your love to me, that you will be merciful to these men!'

For some time the King looked at her in silence; then he exclaimed: 'Dame, dame, would that you had been anywhere but here! You have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you; I therefore give these men to you, to do as you please with.'

Joyfully did Queen Philippa conduct the six citizens to her own apartments, where she made them welcome, entertained them with a plentiful dinner, and dismissed them each with a gift of six nobles. After this Sir Walter Mauny entered the city, and took possession of it.

The King and Queen took up their abode in the city; and the houses of Jean Daire were granted to the Queen, and her daughter Margaret was shortly after born in one of the houses. Eustace de St Pierre was taken into high favour, and was placed in charge of the new citizens whom the King placed in the city.

Indeed, as this story is told by no chronicler

but Froissart, some have doubted of it, and thought the violent resentment thus imputed to Edward the Third inconsistent with his general character; but it is evident that the men of Calais had given him strong provocation, and that he considered that he had a right to make an example of them. It is not unlikely that he might, after all, have intended to forgive them, and have given the Queen the grace of obtaining their pardon, so as to excuse himself from the fulfilment of an over-hasty threat. But, however this may have been, nothing can lessen the glory of the six grave and patient men who went forth, by their own free will, to meet what might be a cruel and disgraceful death, in order to obtain the safety of their fellow-townsmen.

—CHARLOTTE M. YONGE

(*Slightly abridged*)

NOTES

Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901) was a novelist and writer of children's books. Of her novels the best known are *The Lances of Lynwood* and *The Dove in the Eagle's Nest*. Of her books for young readers the most famous is *A Book of Golden Deeds* published in 1864. She wrote many other works which are now completely forgotten and neglected.

'The Keys of Calais' is one of the tales of heroic self-sacrifice told in *A Book of Golden Deeds*.

In a Preface to her work, Miss Yonge describes what a golden deed is. 'It is the spirit that gives itself for others—the temper that for the sake of religion, of

country, of duty, of kindred, nay, of pity even to a stranger, will dare all things, risk all things, endure all things.'

98. *men-at-arms* (original form also *man of arms*), a heavily armed soldier on horseback. The word is now going out of use. (What is a man-of-war?)

his archers, the archers of England boasted that with their bows and arrows they could kill the enemy—their aim was so deadly. Scott in *The Lord of the Isles* writes:

> 'Each braggart churl could boast before,
> Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore.'

There was a Scottish proverb that 'every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scots'.

99. *who had just won the golden spurs of knighthood,* when any one gained the honour of knighthood he was awarded a pair of gilt spurs.

the golden lilies of France, the heraldic fleur-de-lis which belonged to the coat-of-arms of the old French monarchy. The English Kings claimed the throne of France and therefore had assumed the title of King of France and adopted the French coat-of-arms.

102. *my oath,* the oath of allegiance taken by a feudal lord to his sovereign.

the Tower of London, the ancient fortress on the bank of the Thames used as a prison for royal or eminent persons.

All Saints' Day, 1 November.

104. *hawking,* to chase or hunt game with a trained hawk. This was a common sport in the Middle Ages.

Whitsuntide, the season of Whit Sunday and the days immediately following.

107. *Messieurs,* plural of 'monsieur', the French form of address.

109. *noble,* a gold coin (now out of use) first minted by Edward the Third, of the value of Rs. 4|8|-.

110. *Froissart,* Jean Froissart (1337-1410) was a French chronicler. His works were translated into English soon after they were published.

EXERCISES

Words and Phrases

1. Distinguish between the following groups or pairs of words: lose—loose; rain—rein—reign; steal—steel; interrupt—intercept; house—home; squire—square.

2. Use these phrases in your own sentences: to besiege *or* to lay siege to; to give up; to hold out; to make an example of; by and by; a vain hope; a direct assault.

3. Pick out all the words (*like* battlements *or* garrison) which are used in this selection in describing a siege or a battle.

4. Analyse the following sentences into clauses:

(*a*) 'King Edward sent orders that not only should they go safely through his camp, but that they should all rest, and have the first hearty dinner that they had eaten for many a day, and he sent every one a small sum of money before they left the camp, so that many of them went on their way praying aloud for the enemy who had been so kind to them.'

(*b*) 'The young Count would scarcely look at her; and in the last week before the marriage day, while her robes and jewels were being prepared, and her father and mother were arranging the presents they should make to all their court on the wedding-day, the bridegroom, when out hawking, gave his attendants the slip, and galloped off to Paris, where he was welcomed by King Philippe.'

Subject Matter

1. Give an account of the siege of Calais.

2. Describe how Philippe of France failed to rescue Calais from its fate.

3. On what conditions did Edward accept the surrender of Calais? Why was he so hardhearted and cruel?

4. What was the fate of the citizens of Calais who delivered themselves up to the mercy of the King of England?

5. How is this a Golden Deed?

9. THE MONEY-LENDERS

It is, I suppose, a fact that far more people have suffered at the hands of money-borrowers than of money-lenders. Yet it is the money-lender and not the money-borrower whose activities we are always denouncing and trying to curb. I doubt if there is a single law in existence against borrowing money. If there is, I have never heard of its being enforced. I have borrowed money so often myself that I do not complain of this, but I should like to see it made an offence against the law to borrow money from a person you have never seen before. When I was younger, it was a common enough thing for a perfect stranger who had somehow or other got hold of one's name to call in at the office and announce that he had just been given an excellent job in a town in the far north of England, and that, if one lent him his railway-fare, he would be a made man for life. In youth one had an ardent faith in people with good jobs waiting for them in northern towns who are so friendless that they have to borrow the railway-fare from someone whom they have never met before. I have long since lost that faith, for never once did I receive so much as a post-card from the north of England explaining that, though the job was a good one, it would take years to save enough money to repay the price

of the railway ticket. That indeed was all I hoped for. I wanted to be sure that the man had really gone to the north of England. One does not feel foolish for having lent money that will never be paid back, but one does feel foolish if one has lent it for one purpose and if it is spent on another. Is there not a story of Addison's lending Steele some money to pay the rent, and of his anger on finding that Steele had laid it out on a drinking-party? So far as I can remember the story, Addison, in his wrath at being fooled, had Steele put under arrest. I should not like to proceed so far against the men who borrow the fare for imaginary railway journeys. But I resent the fraud on my sentimentality. Yet I must in honesty confess that, if they had not told the story of the job in the distant town, they would not have got so much money from me. If a borrower tries to borrow money with no better excuse than that he is penniless, it is our instinct to put him off with five shillings or half-crown. A man, we feel, cannot in decency expect a perfect stranger to give him a pound or anything substantial merely because he is starving. On the other hand, if he can persuade us that he has just been appointed Assistant Manager of the *Orkney and Shetland Tailors' and Cutters' Standard,* and that, if he does not set off by the next train, he will lose the job, he can with reasonable confidence ask for a sum large enough to pay not only for his railway ticket but for his meals on the train. And, if he approaches the young and innocent,

he will get it. Thus we positively encourage borrowers to be dishonest. We are likely to give more to a borrower who tells us a lie than to a borrower who tells us the truth. I do not know how guileless youth can be protected against the machinations of people who want money for railway fares. The only thing to do is to let them learn by experience that most people who borrow money from strangers are frauds. On the other hand, I know a man who, on finding himself without a penny in his pocket at Charing Cross, and yet under the necessity of getting to Hampstead within twenty minutes, went up to the first policeman he saw and asked him for a loan of his tube-fare. And the policeman gave it to him. That, I think, is one of the noblest incidents in the history of the London police force. It should also be counted to the credit of the borrower that he paid the money back.

Few money-lenders, unfortunately, lend their money in the spirit of the policeman. It is in vain that you will go into a money-lender's office and tell a specious story about your being in want of the fare to Hampstead or to Hawick. The money-lender is not really interested in your needs, but in your possessions. In order to get at his money you must appeal not to his heart but to his greed of gain. I should not mind his doing this if he took any risks in his business. But he will not lend you money if he thinks there is any risk in it. He will not lend you a pound unless he is sure that, if you do not pay him back he will get not only his pound, but

considerably more. Do not be misled by his offers of £50,000 on your note of hand. I am not sure what a note of hand is, but the only money-lender whom I ever took at his word assured me that it meant my furniture. I will say this for him, that I never saw a more attractive advertisement. It had an air of generosity, of devil-may-care philanthropy, that went straight to my heart. I was myself young and generous at the time, and deciding that it would be unfair to shear so obvious a lamb, I wrote to him, asking not for £150,000, but for £50. Frankly, I thought my letter was a note of hand, and I looked forward to receiving a cheque by return of post. But, instead of this, a man whom I thought, and whom most people would think, an odious little wretch, called at my flat, and made such outrageous proposals that I got rid of him as quickly as possible. It was quite clear that he was thinking, not of how much I wanted, but of how much he could get out of me. So far as I could see money-lending was a mere business with him, and he had no intention of parting with a penny, unless he could be sure either of his right to seize all I had or of coming down for his money on some of my dearest friends. I was so astounded by his change of front that I had not the heart even to remind him of the terms of his advertisement. His face was simply an ill-shaven sneer. He was the sort of man whom you would not have asked for a crust of bread if you were starving. To tell the truth, he not only destroyed my faith in

money-lenders, but he very nearly destroyed my faith in human nature.

The only other dealings I ever had with money-lenders occurred about the same time, and they also were of a kind rather disturbing to the rosy optimism of youth. A poor woman called on me one day and reminded me that I had once known one of her second cousins. Having established this sentimental link between us, she told me that she had been behaving rather foolishly and, in order to pay her debts, had had to borrow £20. She asked me if I would mind signing a bill for it as a matter of form. I assured her that I hadn't twenty pounds in the world. 'It doesn't matter,' she told me. 'It's only a question of writing your signature. You'll never hear of it again.' I accordingly put on my hat and went out with her to a money-lender's, where we both wrote our signatures, and she got the £20.

Everything went swimmingly for the first three or four weeks. I had an enthusiastic letter from her, in which she told me that she was paying off the debt in instalments and offered me a four-leaved shamrock. I wrote back, still more enthusiastically, for I was deeply moved by the offer of the four-leaved shamrock, but I said that I couldn't dream of taking such a precious mascot from her. She replied ecstatically, saying that she was still paying the instalments and that, if at any time she failed to do so, I was at liberty to tell her second cousin. I wrote back, almost on the verge of tears, assuring her that I

had the utmost confidence in her, and telling her that I wouldn't dream of saying anything about the matter to her second cousin. A month later I had a letter from the money-lender, saying that the lady whose bill I had backed had fallen into arrears with her payments and asking what I thought of doing about it. I wrote back urging him to write to her. I even wrote to her myself, expressing the hope that she was well, and explaining that the money-lender seemed to be getting anxious about his money. Some days later the letter came back marked, 'Not known'. I wrote again to the address that she had given me, and learned that she had gone away, leaving no address. Meanwhile the money-lender kept sending me letters and calling round on me, and, indeed, harassing me to such an extent that in the end I saw I should have no peace till I paid the money myself. In the result, I borrowed three weeks' salary in advance from the office in which I worked and went round to the money-lender and bought back my signature. It was the highest price, I may say, that has ever been paid for anything I have written. Mr Arnold Bennett, I believe, gets something between a shilling and a guinea a word. But those two words that I wrote were, even in the illiterate eyes of a money-lender, reckoned to be worth between six and seven pounds each.

In spite of my experiences, however, I am not in entire sympathy with Lord Carson's campaign against money-lenders. At least, I dislike some of the arguments that are being used

against them. Some people seem to want to suppress money-lenders merely because they send them circulars through the post. I have seen a man raging when, on opening what looked like an interesting letter, he found that it was only a note from somebody in Bond Street, offering to lend him £50,000. I admit that, after one has passed the first flush of youth, it is a dullish sort of letter to receive, but I had much rather find a money-lender's circular in an envelope than a bill. If you want to purify the post, you should begin by prohibiting the transmission of bills. Money-lenders' circulars have the one shining merit that they are almost the only sort of letters that there is no need to answer. Apart from this, I am not sure that it is wise to discourage such model members of the community as the majority of money-lenders are. What other profession can show the same immunity from crime? Rarely do you hear of a money-lender committing murder. I do not think any respectable money-lender has ever been convicted of burglary. I doubt even if money-lenders run off with other people's wives as often as other people do. Most of them devote themselves quietly to their business, and are careful never to injure a fellow-creature except for purposes of gain and within the four corners of the law. I see that Lord Haldane was courageous enough to say in the House of Lords that 'the money-lender is not always the ruffianly person he is supposed to be'. That is a tribute of a kind of which any profession may well be

proud. Has Lord Haldane ever paid a similar tribute to the clergy or to the medical or legal profession?

The money-lender, indeed, is a perfectly harmless person if you do not do business with him. And no one but a fool would do business with him. The wise man, if he finds that his debts are beyond his means, will go into the bankruptcy court or to jail or to South America rather than into the office of a money-lender. He knows that, if he cannot afford to pay his debts, he can afford much less to borrow the necessary money from a money-lender. One cannot pay one's debts by doubling them except, perhaps, in fairyland. No one, indeed, but a millionaire can afford to borrow money from a money-lender. And in the end I should back the money-lender to beat the millionaire. The money-lender combines the genius of the bulldog with that of a boa-constrictor. He is one of the most fascinating of the lower animals.

—Robert Lynd

NOTES

Robert Lynd (born in 1879) is a delightful essayist of our own time. He was editor of *The Daily News* for many years and contributes also to *The New Statesman.* His essays are full of humour. His style is easy and graceful. His volumes of essays are *The Pleasures of Ignorance, The Book of This and That, A Peal of Bells,* etc.

In this essay he gives us his experiences of money-lenders and money-borrowers.

The first story he tells is of a stranger who borrowed money from him for an imaginary railway journey.

114. *a made man,* one whose success in life is assured.

never once . . . as a postcard, he never wrote or approached the author again!

115. *Addison and Steele* were great essayists of the early eighteenth century. Addison was prudent; Steele was extravagant and reckless and was always in debt. (A similar story is told of how Dr Johnson sent Goldsmith a guinea to relieve him and how Goldsmith exchanged it for a bottle of madeira wine, while the bailiff was still in the room to arrest him!)

116. *Charing Cross,* a railway station in London. (The name of the place originally was Charing but Edward the First planted a cross there in memory of his Queen, Eleanor, and afterwards the place came to be known as Charing Cross.)

tube (colloquial), tube-railway; an underground electric railway.

117. *note of hand,* a written promise to pay a certain sum at a fixed time. (It also means ' a short, informal letter '. The author puns on this meaning of the word a little later in the essay.)

it meant my furniture, he would not lend me money on a mere written promise to pay, but wanted the security or mortgage of all my furniture.

to shear so obvious a lamb, he seemed so innocent and so artless (and warm-hearted) that I could not take him at his word and demand the full sum of £50,000 which he offered.

change of front, [originally (military use) to face in another direction] here used figuratively. His manner had suddenly changed.

His face was simply an ill-shaven sneer, he sneered at me with his ugly, ill-shaven face.

The next story is of one who involved him in difficulties with a money-lender.

118. *second cousin,* child of a first cousin, the first cousin being a child of an uncle. *Compare* distant cousin: a relation many times removed. Note: It is a mistake to say *cousin-brother* or *cousin-sister.* Simply say *cousin:* ' He is my cousin ' or ' She is my cousin '.

swimmingly, smoothly; with success or prosperity.

shamrock, a plant with trifoliate leaves. A four-leaved shamrock would be a curiosity and is considered a talisman.

119. *Arnold Bennett,* a popular novelist and writer of short stories and essays (1867-1931).

120. *Bond Street,* in London, is famous for its shops.

In the last paragraph he discusses whether money-lenders, as a class, are useful or dangerous members of the community.

within the four corners of the law, quite lawfully.

121. *go into the bankruptcy court,* declare himself bankrupt or destitute of means to pay his debts and obtain from the Court protection from arrest by his creditors.

the genius of a bulldog, to fasten on his victims.

of a boa-constrictor, to crush his victim.

EXERCISES

Words and Phrases

1. Find out the exact meanings of these words: ardent; guileless; sentimental; specious; enthusiastic; ecstatic.

2. Use the following in sentences: to lay out; to put under arrest (or in prison); to take one at one's word; an air of triumph (kindness, pity); rosy optimism.

3. *Furniture* is plural. Do you know any other word or words like this which cannot take a plural (e.g. scenery)?

Subject Matter

1. What were the author's experiences of those who borrow money?

2. Relate his experiences with money-lenders?

3. How does he describe the character of a money-lender?

4. Does the money-lender deserve our sympathy?

5. 'He is one of the most fascinating of the lower animals.' What does this mean?

6. Charles Lamb has written a humorous essay on *The Two Races of Men*—the men who borrow (who are generous, warm-hearted, open), and the men who lend (who are shrewd, calculating, suspicious and mean-minded). Read the essay and though it is difficult, you will still understand the main ideas.

VERSE

1. LUCY

THREE years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

'Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

'She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

'The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

'And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.'

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

NOTES

William Wordsworth (1770-1850), one of the greatest poets of England, was born in the beautiful Lake District in the north of England. Most of his life was passed amidst those beautiful scenes. He graduated from Cambridge, married and settled down to a quiet life at Grasmere. The *Lyrical Ballads* published in 1798 made him famous. He was made Poet Laureate a few years before his death.

Wordsworth's poetry is marked by an intense and passionate love of nature. He conceived of nature as a living presence, that moulds and forms our life and

being. Nature in all her aspects, lovely as well as terrible, teaches us the highest lessons of truth and virtue. Wordsworth wrote:

> ' One impulse from the vernal wood
> May teach you more of Man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can! '

In this poem Wordsworth describes how nature is a moral law and an inspiration to the child Lucy, who died at the age of three, and was taken by Nature to her own bosom.

The poem was composed in ' the Hartz Forest in 1799 '.

6. *A lady of my own,* ' her refinement shall be natural to her.'

8. *Both law and impulse,* the child shall obey ' the laws of Nature '—the laws which will lead her to health and happiness. All her instincts and impulses shall be natural, not forced or unnatural and artificial.

11. *an overseeing power,* a living presence in nature to inspire virtuous thoughts and restrain evil ones.

16. *the breathing balm,* the sweetness or soothing influence of the objects of nature.

18. *Of mute insensate things,* the material objects of nature.

insensate means here inanimate, senseless.

19. *The floating clouds . . . her,* the child will learn stateliness or majesty (of gait, of bearing) from the clouds.

20. *for her the willow bend,* she shall learn grace from the bending willow.

24. *By silent sympathy,* the influence of nature is slowly and silently exercised. ' It is felt in the blood and felt along the heart.'

28. *Where rivulets . . . round,* where little streams flow over pebbles forming little whirlpools. Note the poetic use of the word ' dance '.

Compare Wordsworth's ' Daffodils ' :

> ' Ten thousand saw I at a glance
> Tossing their heads in sprightly *dance.*
> The waves beside them *danced,* but they
> Outdid the sparkling waves in glee ! '

29-30. *And beauty . . . face,* the harmony of nature shall make her beautiful. (The poem, as a whole, is mystic and it would be futile to analyse exactly what the poet means in this or other lines. The main idea is, however, clear. A strained interpretation of every word or line was perhaps not intended by the poet himself.)

31. *vital feelings of delight,* Ruskin, the great writer, explains thus : ' Natural feelings that are vital, necessary to very life.' See his Lecture on ' Queens' Gardens ' in *Sesame and Lilies.*

36. *dell,* a poetic word for valley.

38. *How soon . . . run !,* Lucy died at the age of three.

Exercises

1. Write a short note on Wordsworth's attitude to nature.
2. How will the various objects of nature help Lucy to grow to perfect womanhood (of beauty and virtue).
3. What is meant by ' the education of nature ' ?
4. How far do you think the ideas of the poet merely fanciful or ideal?
5. How do scenes of nature affect you? Have you felt anything in the midst of rocks and valleys, rivers or other objects of nature?

2. THE LAST MINSTREL

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses grey,
Seem'd to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, welladay! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppress'd,
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.
No more on prancing palfrey borne,
He caroll'd light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caress'd,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger fill'd the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorn'd and poor,
He begg'd his bread from door to door,
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.

He pass'd where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:
The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—

No humbler resting-place was nigh:
With hesitating step at last,
The embattled portal arch he pass'd,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and the poor.
The Duchess mark'd his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell
That they should tend the old man well.

* * * *

When kindness had his wants supplied,
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his minstrel pride;
And he began to talk anon,
Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
And of Earl Walter, rest him, God!
A braver ne'er to battle rode;
And how full many a tale he knew
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch;
And, would the noble Duchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain,
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
That, if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtain'd;
The aged Minstrel audience gain'd.
But, when he reach'd the room of state,
Where she with all her ladies sate,
Perchance he wish'd his boon denied:
For, when to tune his harp he tried,

His trembling hand had lost the ease
Which marks security to please;
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain!
The pitying Duchess prais'd its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain
He could recall an ancient strain,
He never thought to sing again.
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls;
He had play'd it to King Charles the Good,
When he kept court in Holyrood;
And much he wish'd, yet fear'd to try
The long forgotten melody.

Amid the strings his finger stray'd,
And an uncertain warbling made,
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face, and smil'd;
And lighten'd up his faded eye,
With all a poet's ecstasy!
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along:
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot;
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost;
Each blank in faithless memory void,

The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the Latest Minstrel sung.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT

NOTES

A biographical note on Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) is given under the prose selection: 'The Story of King James the First of Scotland'.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel (from which this selection is taken), was published in 1805. It is a metrical romance in the style of the old Border poems. The story itself is supposed to be sung by an old minstrel, the last of his kind. This extract forms the introduction to the poem.

Lay, a short poem intended to be sung; a short narrative poem.

2. *Minstrel,* in medieval times the minstrel was an honoured guest at every noble household. He entertained his patrons with music or story-telling.

3. *tresses,* (usually in plural) long and flowing locks of hair (usually of women).

8. *Border,* the district adjoining the boundary between England and Scotland. In the Middle Ages the Border was the scene of frequent fights.

10. *tuneful,* musical (of a person, or more often, of an instrument).

16. *High placed in hall,* seated in a position of honour at the table of a nobleman.

20. *A stranger . . . Stuarts' throne,* William the Third was now King of England.

21. *The bigots . . . crime,* the Puritans of the days of the Commonwealth had no love of music or plays. They persecuted those who practised these arts.

iron time, stern days of repression.

26. *a king had loved to hear,* see line 76 below.

'He had play'd it to King Charles the Good.'

27. *Newark's stately tower,* Newark Castle was the occasional seat of the Duchess of Buccleuch (pronounced Bucklew).

32. *embattled* (archaic), furnished with battlements or towers.

portal (poetic), gateway. Portal arch: the arched roof of the gate.

34. *the tide of war,* compare *tide of the sea,* i.e. rising and falling; the tide of battle, now promising victory to one side, now to the other.

37. *The Duchess* (of Buccleuch), the widow of Monmouth. (See the story of Monmouth on p. 43 of this book.)

45. *good Earl Francis,* father of the Duchess; Earl Walter was her grandfather.

46. *rest him, God,* may God give peace to his soul!

60. *Perchance . . . denied,* perhaps he wished the Duchess had refused his boon. He was unable at first to produce harmony on his lyre.

76. *King Charles the Good,* Charles the First visited Scotland in 1633 and stayed at the palace of Holyrood in Edinburgh. The minstrel claims to have entertained him there with the same song.

85-86. *And lighten'd . . . ecstasy,* these lines are often praised as the finest and most vivid in the whole poem.

ecstasy, poetic frenzy or rapture.

92. *tide of song,* flow of song. (See note on *l.* 34 above.)

93-94. *Each blank . . . supplied,* where he had forgotten a rhyme, he supplied it from his own imagination. The minstrels could not only recite the poems of others, they could compose poems themselves.

EXERCISES

1. Find examples in the poem of:
   (*a*) alliteration (e.g. *prancing palfrey*)
   (*b*) poetic and archaic words
   (*c*) inversion or poetic order (e.g. on palfrey borne)
   (*d*) metaphors and similes.

2. What are political (or historical) allusions in this poem?

3. Describe the manner and conduct of the aged minstrel in the presence of the Duchess.

4. Describe the appearance of the minstrel. 'He had known a better day.' What is the meaning of this? Why was he now 'neglected and oppressed'?

3. IPHIGENEIA

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom
At Aulis, and when all beside the King
Had gone away, took his right hand, and said:
'O father! I am young and very happy.
I do not think the pious Calchas heard
Distinctly what the Goddess spake. Old age
Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who knew
My voice so well, sometimes misunderstood
While I was resting on her knee both arms
And hitting it to make her mind my words,
And looking in her face, and she in mine,
Might not he also hear one word amiss,
Spoken from so far off, even from Olympus?'
The father placed his cheek upon her head,
And tears dropt down it, but the King of men
Replied not. Then the maiden spake once more:
'O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st thou not
Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,
Listen'd to fondly, and awaken'd me
To hear my voice amid the voice of birds,
When it was inarticulate as theirs,
And the down deadened it within the nest?'
He moved her gently from him, silent still,
And this, and this alone, brought tears from her,
Although she saw fate nearer: then with sighs,
'I thought to have laid down my hair before

Benignant Artemis, and not have dimm'd
Her polisht altar with my virgin blood;
I thought to have selected the white flowers
To please the nymphs, and to have asked of each
By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
Whether, since both my parents willed the change,
I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipt brow;
And (after those who mind us girls the most)
Adore our own Athena, that she would
Regard me mildly with her azure eyes.
But, father! to see you no more, and see
Your love, O father! go ere I am gone.'
Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,
Bending his lofty head far over hers,
And the dark depths of nature heaved and burst.
He turn'd away; not far, but silent still.
She now first shudder'd; for in him, so nigh,
So long a silence seem'd the approach of death,
And like it. Once again she rais'd her voice;
'O father! if the ships are now detained,
And all your vows move not the Gods above,
When the knife strikes me there will be one prayer
The less to them: and purer can there be
Any, or more fervent than the daughter's prayer
For her dear father's safety and success?'
A groan that shook him shook not his resolve.
An aged man now entered, and without
One word, stept slowly on, and took the wrist
Of the pale maiden. She looked up, and saw

The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes.
Then turn'd she where her parent stood, and cried:
O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail!'

—WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

NOTES

Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) wrote prose as well as verse. *Imaginary Conversations* is his most important work in prose. His verse is not of so outstanding a quality, but in *The Hellenics* (short stories in verse from Greek mythology) he has left us some very fine poems.

Agamemnon, King of Argos, was the leader of the Greek expedition that went to make war on Troy for the abduction of Helen. When the fleet was ready at Aulis, the winds were unfavourable for many days. The priest, Calchas, said that the winds would be fair only if Iphigeneia, Agamemnon's daughter, was sacrificed to appease the wrath of Artemis (whose sacred stag he had killed). Agamemnon reluctantly consented to this sacrifice, but as the knife descended on the victim, she disappeared and a stag took her place. The goddess had carried her away to Tauris where she became the priestess of the temple.

In this beautiful poem, Landor represents Iphigeneia as pleading for her life in all her childish innocence. At the end she is ready to meet her fate.

2. *Aulis,* the port of Aulis, where the Greek host gathered before setting sail for Troy.

5. *Calchas,* the aged priest, who foretold that the sacrifice of Iphigeneia would alone appease the wrath of Artemis.

13. *Olympus,* Mount Olympus was regarded by the Greeks as the abode of the Gods.

22. *And the down . . . nest,* the soft, woolly feathers on the young birds would deaden their sounds within the nest.

24. *And this . . . tears,* she was not unhappy or frightened at the prospect of death, but she was unhappy that her father seemed to love her no more.

27. *Artemis* (called in Roman mythology by the name of Diana) was the daughter of Zeus and was worshipped by virgins. She was the virgin goddess of the chase.

33. *at Hymen's feet,* Hymen was the Greek god of marriage.

35. *Athena* (or Pallas, as she was sometimes called) was the goddess of wisdom.

41. *And the dark . . . burst,* his bosom heaved with a great sigh and his heart was filled with grief (burst with grief).

46-51. Her last argument is that, if she dies and if the winds continued unfavourable, no one could pray for her father's success with the same sincerity and passion as she could.

56. *The fillet,* the head-band or ribbon round the head.

EXERCISES

1. What was the doom pronounced on Iphigeneia? Do you think this just?
2. How did Iphigeneia plead with her father?
3. What answer did Agamemnon give her? Why was he silent?
4. Why did she resign herself to her fate in the end?
5. What happened to Iphigeneia after this?
6. Explain all the allusions to Greek mythology in this poem.
7. How does the poem affect you? Are you moved with pity for Iphigeneia or for Agamemnon?
8. Of all the arguments of Iphigeneia which seems to you (*a*) the most natural (*b*) the most childlike and innocent (*c*) the most pathetic or moving?

4. ODE ON THE POETS

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double lived in regions new?
—Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wond'rous
And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, tranced thing,
But divine melodious truth;
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you,
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumber'd, never cloying.

Here your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim.
Thus ye teach us, everyday,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new!

—JOHN KEATS

NOTES

John Keats (1795-1821) was a great poet of the Romantic Revival. He died young and accomplished little, but the small volume of his verse should be bound in pure gold. Besides his longer poems, *Endymion, Isabella or the Pot of Basil* and *The Eve of St Agnes,* Keats wrote many odes and lyrics. The ' Ode to a Nightingale ' and the ' Ode to a Grecian Urn ' are two of his best poems.

The ' Ode on the Poets ' was written on a blank page of a drama by John Fletcher. Beaumont and Fletcher were dramatists of the age of Shakespeare. They wrote many plays in collaboration.

Ode is literally a song in rhyme addressed to somebody or something, and is dignified in style and elevated in feeling. The ode is usually in an irregular measure.

1. *Bards of Passion . . . Mirth,* poets of passion (or pathos) and of mirth. They wrote tragedies (plays of passion) and comedies (plays of humour and fun).

2-3. *Have ye . . . too,* poets enjoy immortality in two ways: their works keep their names (or souls) alive on earth; their souls also live in heaven.

5. *those of heaven commune,* your immortal souls in heaven move in the same exalted spheres as the sun and moon.

to commune is literally to hold intimate converse with another.

7. *wond'rous,* wonderful; wondrous.

8. *parle* (archaic), speech; conversation.

voices thund'rous, voices resembling the sound of thunder.

11. *Elysian,* an adjective formed from Elysium, 'a place or island in the western ocean, where, according to Greek mythology, the souls of the virtuous enjoy complete happiness and innocent pleasures.' It means, literally, the Abode of the Blest.

12. *Dian's fawns,* Diana or Phoebe was the Roman goddess of hunting. Deer were sacred to Diana as peacocks were to Juno. Her chariot was drawn by stags. Diana's sacred deer are said to graze in the Elysian fields.

13. *the blue-bell,* a flower (also called hair-bell).

tented, in the shade (as under a tent).

18. *Not a senseless . . . thing,* the song of heavenly nightingales is not a mere enraptured harmony without sense or meaning but something more than that—it is 'divine melodious truth'.

25. *And the souls . . . you,* your soul or spirit enshrined in your books teaches us how we may reach heaven, where your other (heavenly) soul is in bliss.

(Compare what Milton said of a good book: 'A good book is the precious life-blood of a Master-spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose for a life beyond life.')

28. *slumber'd,* overcome with drowsiness.

cloying, satiated or satisfied.

30. *of their little week,* of their brief and hapless lives on earth.

34. *What doth . . . maim,* of that which gives strength and that which weakens the spirit of man—the subject matter of poetry. (Compare what Sarojini Naidu says of the subject matter of poetry in her poem 'The Bird of Time,' p. 169.)

EXERCISES

1. Give in your own words the poet's description of Elysium.
2. What is the subject matter of poetry according to Keats?
3. How do poets enjoy a double immortality?
4. Write an appreciation of this poem.
5. 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.' What is the meaning of this?
6. Read Keats's 'Lines on the Mermaid Tavern', which is also addressed to the 'souls of poets dead and gone'. Which of the two poems do you think more beautiful?

5. HORATIUS

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
'Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?'

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
'To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods?

'Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In you strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three;
Now, who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?'

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
'Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.'

And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
'I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.'

'Horatius,' quoth the Consul,
'As thou sayest, so let it be.'
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons
Seized hatchet, bar and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As the great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way.

(Horatius and his comrades met the enemies as they came and laid them low in the dust and the scorn and laughter of the foes were soon changed to wrath and curses.)

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamour
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' length from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

(He advanced with a smile of contempt asking his men to follow. He rushed against the brave

Horatius and wounded him. Horatius, however, with his sword gave him a fatal blow and the proud Lord of Luna fell.)

On Astur's throat Horatius
  Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
  Ere he wrenched out the steel.
'And see,' he cried, 'the welcome,
  Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
  To taste our Roman cheer?'

But at his haughty challenge
  A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
  Along the glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
  Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
  Were round the fatal place.

Was none who would be foremost
  To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried: 'Forward!'
  And those before cried: 'Back!'
And backward now and forward
  Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel
  To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
  Dies fitfully away.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
'Come back, come back, Horatius!'
Loud cried the Fathers all.
'Back, Lartius! Back, Herminius!
Back ere the ruin fall!'

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

(The bridge fell with a crash like thunder.)

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
And he spake to the noble River
That rolls by the towers of Rome:

'Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!'
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

(He was rewarded with gifts of land by the grateful people of Rome, who also set up a statue to him in the public-place and wrote under it in letters of gold 'How valiantly he kept the bridge in the brave days of old'.)

And in the nights of winter
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

When the goodman mends his armour,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

—THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY

NOTES

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59) was historian and essayist. An extract from his *History of England* is given on p. 43 (' The Execution of Monmouth '). He was not a great poet but his *Lays of Ancient Rome* come very near to the qualities of great poetry.

Of all the *Lays of Ancient Rome* (published in 1842), *Horatius* is the best. As the poem is too long to be included here, an abridgement is attempted.

Tarquin the Proud, the last King of Rome, was driven from the city for his cruelty and tyranny and a republic was set up. Porsena of Clusium promised him assistance and gathered a mighty army. The army marched on

Rome plundering and ravaging the villages on the way, while the people fled for refuge to the capital. The Fathers of the City were filled with dismay as they heard the news, and they held a council. The Consul declared that there was no hope of saving the city unless they cut down the bridge over the Tiber. Scarcely had he said these words, when he turned and saw.

> 'The long array of helmets bright,
> The long array of spears!'

The enemy were already at the gates! Here our selection begins.

1. *Consul,* one of the two officers elected annually by the Roman people to wield the highest authority in the state.

10. *The Captain of the Gate,* the warden of the City Gates was also in charge of the bridge over the river Tiber.

15. *For the ashes . . . fathers,* the Romans worshipped the *manes* (or deified souls) of their dead ancestors. Therefore they would naturally desire to protect their remains from insult or shame.

21. *strait* (archaic), narrow (passage).

26. *A Ramnian proud was he,* the Ramnians (or Ramnes) and the Titians (or Tities as the Romans called them) were noble and patrician families of Rome. Spurius Lartius was a proud, aristocratic Ramnian; Herminius was a noble Titian.

42. *harness* (poetic), armour.

45. *Fathers,* the leading men or the Elders who governed the city.

Commons, the common people, the plebians or lower orders.

46. *crow,* a crow-bar (used as a lever).

49. *Tuscan* (or Etruscan from Etruria), the Tuscan army is the invading army under Lars Porsena of Clusium.

58. *bridge's head,* the narrow end of the bridge (archaic).

63. *vanguard* (or simply *van*), the front of an advancing army; the advance guard. (Now only rhetorical or literary.)

78. *the ranks divide,* the ranks divided to let the Lord of Astur pass, as he advanced towards the bridge.

79. *Luna,* one of the Etruscan towns, of which Astur was the chief.

81. *ample,* broad.

82. *fourfold shield,* a shield made of four plates of iron or steel.

83. *brand* (poetic), sword.

87. *tugged amain,* pulled with force.

amain (archaic), with force or in haste.

88. The sword had pierced the helmet and planted itself there.

> 'Through teeth, and skull and helmet
> So fierce a thrust he sped,
> The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
> Behind the Tuscan's head!'

91. *Lucumo* (or Lucumon), one of the Etruscan nobles, who were also the priests of the community.

92. *cheer,* fare; entertainment.

99. *Etruria's noblest,* all the Etruscan nobles.

114. *the boiling tide,* the bubbling, seething waves.

> 'Billows on billows burst and boil.'
>
> —Scott: *Lord of the Isles*

129. *Thrice thirty thousand foes before,*

> 'The foot are fourscore thousand,
> The horse are thousands ten!'

134. *To whom the Romans pray,* the river Tiber was worshipped as a God by the Roman people.

149. *Tuscany,* Etruria.

159-182. A scene of domestic felicity and happiness vividly painted. These stanzas are said to be the finest in the whole poem.

165. *Algidus,* a hill in Latium. The logs of wood came from the hill of Algidus.

167. *the oldest cask,* old wine, like old friends, is the best.

175 & 7. *the goodman* and *goodwife*, the master and mistress of the house.

EXERCISES

1. Why is the poem, Horatius, considered a fine poem? Write a short appreciation of the poem (with special reference to the metre, the qualities of description, etc.).
2. What were the historical incidents that led to the defence of the bridge?
3. What was the plan of Horatius for the defence of the city? Who supported him?
4. Describe how the bridge was cut down and how Horatius saved himself. How was he rewarded by the Roman people?
5. How is his name remembered to this day in Rome?
6. Do you know any other instance of such stirring patriotism?

6. ISRAFEL

'And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.'—*Koran.*

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
  Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
  Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
  In her highest noon,
  The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
  While, to listen, the red levin
  (With the rapid Pleiads even,
  Which were seven,)
  Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
  And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
  Is owing to that lyre
  By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
  Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
  Where deep thoughts are a duty—

Where Love's a grown up God,
  Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
  Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,
  Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
  Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
  With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
  With the fervour of thy lute—
  Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
  Is a world of sweets and sours;
  Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
  Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
  Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
  A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
  From my lyre within the sky.

—Edgar Allan Poe

NOTES

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) was a popular American writer who died prematurely. He wrote short stories, poems and critical essays. As the author of *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* the name of Edgar Allan Poe has become famous. He is not one of the greatest poets but some of his poems are very beautiful. 'The Raven', 'Annabel Lee', and 'Israfel' are some of his best poems.

'Israfel is a lyric of rare power and rapture—perhaps the best that he ever wrote.'

'Israfel is the angel of music (in the Mohammedan theology) who is to sound the trumpet at the Resurrection.'

'And the angel . . . creatures.' This quotation has been taken from Sales' *Preliminary Discourse to the Quran.*

2. *heart-strings* (original sense), the nerves, etc. that brace up the heart. (The current sense is 'one's affections and feelings' as in: 'He played on his heart-strings;' i.e. he moved his feelings.)

5. *giddy stars,* the stars moving with great rapidity in their orbits; *giddy* is archaic in this sense.

6. *Ceasing their hymns,* the stars were supposed to make a harmony as they moved in their orbits. Compare Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*:

'There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest
But in his motion like an angel sings.'

9. *noon,* here midnight (as it corresponds to *noon* during the day).

The place of the moon at midnight. Compare Milton's lines:

'To behold the wandering moon
Riding near her highest *noon.*'

12. *the red levin,* lightning; a flash of lightning.

13. *Pleiads* (or Pleiades), a group of stars which are really seven, though only six are visible to the naked

eye. (According to Greek mythology the Pleiads were the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione.)

18. *fire* (figurative), rapture; ardour.

23. *But the skies . . . trod,* 'But that angel trod the skies where . . . ' is the prose order.

26. *Houri* (from Arabic *huri*—i.e. black-eyed like a gazelle), the beautiful nymphs of the Mohammedan Paradise who are to be companions of the pious and virtuous.

30. The angel Israfel despises the songs of men because these are without truth and without heavenly rapture.

35. *ecstasies above,* the feelings of rapture felt by the souls in the contemplation of heavenly objects.

41. *a world of sweets and sours,* of joy and pain. Compare Shakespeare's lines:

> 'The web of our life is of a mingled yarn;
> Good and ill together.'

50. *a bolder note,* a harmony more full: a tune more delightful.

Exercises

1. Write a short appreciation of this beautiful lyric.
2. What are the heavenly objects that pause to listen to Israfel's music?
3. What is the real source of Israfel's harmony?
4. How does the poet compare the songs of men with those of Israfel?
5. Explain the following allusions: levin; Pleiades; Houris.

7. THE LOTUS

LOVE came to Flora asking for a flower
That would of flowers be undisputed queen,
The lily and the rose long, long had been
Rivals for that high honour. Bards of power
Had sung their claims. 'The rose can never tower
Like the pale lily with her Juno mien'—
'But is the lily lovelier?' Thus between
Flower-factions rang the strife in Psyche's bower.
'Give me a flower delicious as the rose
And stately as the lily in her pride.'—
'But of what colour?'—'Rose-red,' Love first chose,
Then prayed,—'No, lily-white,—or, both provide;'
And Flora gave the LOTUS, rose-red dyed,
And lily-white,—the queenliest flower that blows!

—TORU DUTT

NOTES

Toru Dutt (1856-77) of Bengal, dying prematurely, has left us some translations from the French and a few poetic renderings of old Hindu myths like the stories of Savitri, Dhruva and Prahlad. 'No sooner did she die than she began to be famous' said Edmund Gosse, who felt that if she had lived to the full maturity of her powers she might have been one of the greatest of Indian poets writing in English. Two of her best-known poems are 'The Lotus' and 'The Casuarina Tree.'

The lotus is here exalted above the rose and the lily. In Hindu mythology the lotus is the seat of Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth and it is said that Brahma, the Creator, sprang from the lotus. It is the symbol of beauty and truth.

1. *Love,* the God of Love (called Manmada or Madana in Hindu myth) was known to the Greeks by the name of Cupid, the child of Venus.

Flora, the Goddess of Flowers and Spring (in Roman mythology).

6. *Juno* (also known as Hera), in Roman mythology, the wife of Jupiter, the goddess of all power and empire. Juno is usually represented as stately, as ' divinely tall and most divinely fair '.

8. *Psyche,* the beloved of Cupid, the God of Love.

Exercises

1. Give the substance of the sonnet in your own words.

2. What is a sonnet? Study the structure of this poem.

8. THE BEST SCHOOL OF ALL

It's good to see the School we knew,
The land of youth and dream,
To greet again the rule we knew
Before we took the stream:
Though long we've missed the sight of her,
Our hearts may not forget;
We've lost the old delight of her,
We keep her honour yet.

We'll honour yet the School we knew,
The best School of all:
We'll honour yet the rule we knew,
Till the last bell call.
For, working days or holidays,
And glad or melancholy days,
They were great days and jolly days
At the best School of all.

The stars and sounding vanities
That half the crowd bewitch,
What are they but inanities
To him that treads the pitch?
And where's the wealth, I'm wondering,
Could buy the cheers that roll
When the last charge goes thundering
Beneath the twilight goal?

The men that tanned the hide of us,
Our daily foes and friends,
They shall not lose their pride of us,
Howe'er the journey ends.

Their voice to us who sing of it,
No more its message bears,
But the round world shall ring of it
And all we are be theirs.

To speak of Fame a venture is,
There's little here can bide,
But we may face the centuries,
And dare the deepening tide:
For though the dust that's part of us
To dust again be gone,
Yet here shall beat the heart of us—
The School we handed on!

We'll honour yet the School we knew,
The best School of all:
We'll honour yet the rule we knew,
Till the last bell call.
For, working days or holidays,
And glad or melancholy days,
They were great days and jolly days
At the best School of all!

—SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

NOTES

Sir Henry Newbolt (born in 1862) is a contemporary poet. His poems in *Admirals All* are very popular. He loved the sea, as all Englishmen do. He also wrote some critical works such as *A new Study of English Poetry.* He died in April 1938.

4. *Before we took the stream,* before we entered the busy world to play our part in it.

12. *the last bell,* till death.

17. *The stars and sounding vanities,* the stars are ornaments representing a star, worn as part of the

insignia of knighthood or as a military decoration Here it refers generally to all honours and decorations.

sounding, high-sounding; pompous.

20. *treads the pitch,* walks (or makes runs) on the cricket-pitch. The rewards of the world are nothing to the cricketer who finds his reward in the delight of the game or in the applause of his captain.

23-24. *When the last charge . . . goal,* the cheers of the crowd when a player scores a goal at the very last moment (in football).

25. *tan the hide* (colloquial school slang), to thrash or cane soundly.

28. *the journey,* of life.

29-30. *Their voice . . . message bears,* their messages of truth or virtue are no longer given to us.

32. *all we are be theirs,* they have made us what we are. And all ours is theirs.

36. *and dare . . . tide,* face the sorrows of the world.

37. *the dust that's part of us,* man was made of the dust of the earth.

> 'Dust thou art
> To dust returnest.'

39. *Yet here shall . . . us,* though we die, the school will still remain and our heart (or soul or spirit) lives still with it for ever.

EXERCISES

1. What are the precious memories of the poet of his own school?
2. What lesson has the poet learnt at school that gives him courage to 'face the centuries and dare the deepening tide'?
3. Read the poem 'Play up, play up and play the game' and give the substance of it in your own words.
4. What are your recollections of your last school—both of the classroom and of the playground?

9. FOR THE FALLEN

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation,
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted.
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known in the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

—LAURENCE BINYON

NOTES

Laurence Binyon (born in 1869) is poet, dramatist and anthologist. He is employed in the British Museum and has written some works on art. (He has written very appreciatively of the frescoes in the Ajanta Caves.) Besides contributing a Fifth Book to Palgrave's splendid anthology called *The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics,* Mr Binyon has made an anthology of the best modern poetry called *A Golden Treasury of Modern Lyrics.*

In this poem Binyon pays a tribute to those who fell fighting for England beyond her shores. Alice Meynell writes of this poem: ' These grave lines sound as though they had cost tears, and our tears answer them. Nothing simpler could be written and nothing nobler.' (The poem should be read with other poems like Rupert Brooke's sonnets ' The Soldier ' and ' The Dead '.)

3. *Flesh . . . spirit,* they were true Englishmen proud of their country and their country is proud of them.

4. *Fallen . . . free,* the Great War of 1914-18 (so it was said) was fought ' to make the world safe for democracy '.

5-6. *Death . . . spheres,* drums and funeral notes rise up to heaven in lamentation for the dead.

10. *aglow,* in a glow of warmth or enthusiasm.

Compare Rupert Brooke's 'The Dead':

'These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of Youth . . .'

13. *They shall not . . . old,* they have become immortal; they have made their youth eternal.

21. *But where . . . profound,* our hopes (the hopes of England and her people) are now mingled with memories of their sacrifice. Their heroism will be remembered with gratitude by Englishmen for ever.

24. *As the stars are . . . Night,* familiarly, intimately.

28. *To the end . . . remain,* i.e. to the end of Time, eternally.

Exercises

1. What feelings does the poem evoke in you? Are you filled with admiration for their heroism or pity for their untimely end?

2. What immortality is promised to those who 'sleep beyond England's foam'?

3. What sacrifices did they make 'in the cause of the free'? Why is it called 'the cause of the free'?

4. What consolation do we have in the midst of our desolation?

5. Explain:

As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness.

To the end, to the end, they remain.

10. THE RIDER AT THE GATE

A WINDY night was blowing on Rome,
The cressets guttered on Cæsar's home,
The fish-boats, moored at the bridge, were breaking
The rush of the river to yellow foam.

The hinges whined to the shutters shaking,
When clip-clop-clep came a horse-hoof raking
The stones of the road at Cæsar's gate;
The spear-butts jarred at the guard's awakening.

'Who goes there?' said the guard at the gate.
'What is the news that you ride so late?'
'News most pressing, that must be spoken
To Cæsar alone, and that cannot wait.'

'The Cæsar sleeps; you must show a token
That the news suffice that he be awoken.
What is the news, and whence do you come?
For no light cause may his sleep be broken.'

'Out of the dark of the sands I come,
From the dark of the death, with news for Rome.
A word so fell that it must be uttered
Though it strikes the soul of the Cæsar dumb.'

Cæsar turned in his bed and muttered,
With a struggle for breath the lamp-flame guttered;
Calpurnia heard her husband moan: 'The house is falling.
The beaten men come into their own.'

'Speak your word,' said the guard at the gate;
'Yes, but bear it to Cæsar straight,
Say: "Your murderers' knives are honing,
Your killers' gang is lying in wait!"

'Out of the wind that is blowing and moaning,
Through the city palace and the country loaning,
I cry: "For the world's sake, Cæsar beware!
And take this warning as my atoning.

"Beware of the Court, of the palace stair,
Of the downcast friend who speaks so fair,
Keep from the Senate, for Death is going
On many men's feet to meet you there."

'I, who am dead, have ways of knowing
Of the crop of death that the quick are sowing,
I who was Pompey, cry it aloud
From the dark of death, from the wind blowing.

'I, who was Pompey, once was proud,
Now I lie in the sand without a shroud;
I cry to Cæsar out of my pain,
"Cæsar, beware! Your death is vowed."'

The light grew grey on the window-pane,
The windcocks swung in a burst of rain,
The window of Cæsar flung unshuttered,
The horse-hoofs died into wind again.

Cæsar turned in his bed and muttered,
With a struggle for breath the lamp-flame guttered;
Calpurnia heard her husband moan: 'The house is falling,
The beaten men come into their own!'

—JOHN MASEFIELD

NOTES

John Masefield, the present Poet Laureate, was born in 1871. He has written poems, plays, novels and short stories. In boyhood he ran away from home and sailed for America. He returned to England in 1897 and became a journalist. His *Salt-water Ballads* made him famous. *The Tragedy of Nan* is considered his best play.

Julius Cæsar and Pompey the Great were rivals for power in the Roman state. Pompey and his friends were defeated at Pharsalus in 48 B.C. Pompey fled to Egypt where he was murdered by one of his own soldiers. Cæsar became the most powerful man in Rome. A conspiracy was formed against him by Brutus, Cassius and others and the Ides of March (15 March) was fixed as the date on which Cæsar was to be murdered in the Senate House. The night before the Ides, there was a great storm in Rome and many evil omens were observed. Cæsar's wife, Calpurnia, dreamt that her husband was murdered. In spite of these warnings Cæsar went to the Senate and was murdered.

In this poem, Masefield imagines the ghost of Pompey coming to warn Cæsar. The ghost of Pompey is the Rider at the Gate who is refused admission by the guards.

2. *cresset,* a vessel of iron made to hold grease or oil, usually mounted on the building or suspended from the roof to give light.

gutter, melt away.

6. *clip-clop-clep,* sounds imitative of the horse's hoofs on the pavement.

13. *The Cæsar,* Cæsar was the family name; Caius Julius was his real name. The title of Cæsar was later adopted by all the Roman Emperors.

14. *awoken* (archaic), awaked.

24. *The beaten men come into their own,* the friends of Pompey who had been defeated at Pharsalus were now gaining strength against Cæsar.

30. *the country loaning,* a loaning is 'an open, uncultivated piece of ground near a farm-house or village, on which the cows are milked'.

31. *For the world's sake,* Cæsar's death was the signal for another civil war in Rome.

38. *the quick,* the living. (Compare the phrase: the quick and the dead.)

46. *windcocks* (or weathercock), a vane in the form of a cock, which turns with its head to the wind.

47. *flung unshuttered,* flung open.

48. *The horse-hoofs . . . wind,* the sound of hoofs died in the wind, was lost in the wind.

Exercises

1. Use the following phrases in your own sentences: to strike dumb; to lie in wait; to come into one's own; to atone for; to speak fair.

2. Write a note on the historical background of the poem.

3. Who was the Rider at the Gate? What message did he bring to Cæsar?

4. Give a description of the unnatural state of the elements that night.

5. How does the poem affect you?

11. THE BIRD OF TIME

O Bird of Time on your fruitful bough
What are the songs you sing? . . .
Songs of the glory and gladness of life,
Of poignant sorrow and passionate strife,
And the lilting joy of the spring;
Of hope that sows for the years unborn,
And faith that dreams of a tarrying morn,
The fragrant peace of the twilight's breath,
And the mystic silence that men call death.

O Bird of Time, say where did you learn
The changing measures you sing? . . .
In blowing forests and breaking tides,
In the happy laughter of new-made brides,
And the nests of the new-born spring;
In the dawn that thrills to a mother's prayer,
And the night that shelters a heart's despair,
In the sigh of pity, the sob of hate,
And the pride of a soul that has conquered fate!

—Sarojini Naidu

NOTES

Mrs Sarojini Naidu was born at Hyderabad in 1879. As a child, it is said, she was of a dreamy and fanciful nature. She tells us how she wrote her first poem: 'One day when I was eleven, I was sighing over a sum in algebra; it wouldn't come right; but instead a whole poem came to me suddenly.' (Quoted by H. G. D. Turnbull in an edition of Sarojini Naidu's

poems.) She visited England in 1895 and made many friends. In 1905 *The Golden Threshold,* her first volume of poems, appeared. This was followed by *The Bird of Time* and *The Broken Wing.* Gosse says: ' She is the most brilliant, the most original and the most correct of all Indians who have written English verse.' For many years now she has not composed any poems having turned her attention from poetry to politics.

Hyderabad takes a pride in the achievements of Sarojini Naidu.

' The Bird of Time is symbolical of the poet herself.'

6. *Of hope . . . unborn,* hope sows the seed that will bear flower and fruit in the coming years; hope looks forward to the future.

7. *And faith . . . morn,* faith trusts that the glory and brightness of dawn will never fade away.

8. *The fragrant peace . . . breath,* all Nature is calm and peaceful in the first hour of dawn. (The mind of man is also calm and serene at that hour. So it is the best time for prayer).

11. *changing* (*not* inconstant), varying.

12. *blowing forests,* forests over which the storm sweeps.

15. *In the dawn . . . prayer,* as the mother whispers a prayer, the dawn breaks tremulously in the east.

18. *And the pride . . . fate,* the man that is master of his destiny is proud and happy. He has triumphed over it and is indifferent to the ' storms of circumstance '.

(This last idea is the subject of a poem by W. E. Henley called ' Invictus ' or ' Unconquerable '.)

Exercises

1. What is the subject of a poet's songs?

2. Where does a poet learn his ' measures ' or harmony?

THE LITTLE OXFORD DICTIONARY

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