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**DECCAN READERS: BOOK TWO**



# DECCAN READERS

## BOOK TWO

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*PRESCRIBED FOR  
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\* \* These poems should be learnt by heart.

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## PROSE

### I. A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

(From *Tales from Shakespeare*)

THERE was a law in the city of Athens which gave to its citizens the power of compelling their daughters to marry whomsoever they pleased. Upon a daughter's refusing to marry the man her father had chosen to be her husband, the father was empowered by this law to cause her to be put to death ; but as fathers do not often desire the death of their own daughters, even though they do happen to prove a little refractory, this law was seldom or never put in execution, though perhaps the young ladies of that city were not unfrequently threatened by their parents with the terrors of it.

There was one instance, however, of an old man whose name was Egeus, who actually did come before Theseus (at that time the reigning duke of Athens) to complain that his daughter Hermia, whom he had commanded to marry Demetrius a young man of a noble Athenian family, refused to obey him, because she loved another young Athenian named Lysander. Egeus demanded justice of Theseus, and desired that this cruel law might be put in force against his daughter.

Hermia pleaded in excuse for her disobedience that Demetrius had formerly professed love for her dear friend Helena, and that Helena loved Demetrius to distraction; but this honourable reason which Hermia gave for not obeying her father's command, moved not the stern Egeus.

Theseus, though a great and merciful prince, had no power to alter the laws of his country; therefore he could only give Hermia four days to consider of it; and at the end of that time, if she still refused to marry Demetrius, she was to be put to death.

When Hermia was dismissed from the presence of the duke, she went to her lover Lysander and told him the peril she was in, and that she must either give up him and marry Demetrius, or lose her life in four days.

Lysander was in great affliction at hearing these evil tidings; but recollecting that he had an aunt who lived at some distance from Athens, and that at the place where she lived the cruel law could not be put in force against Hermia (this law not extending beyond the boundaries of the city), he proposed to Hermia that she should steal out of her father's house that night, and go with him to his aunt's house, where he would marry her. 'I will meet you,' said Lysander, 'in the wood a few miles without the city; in that delightful wood where we have so often walked with Helena in the pleasant month of May.'

To this proposal Hermia joyfully agreed ; and she told no one of her intended flight but her friend Helena. Helena (as maidens will do foolish things for love) very ungenerously resolved to go and tell this to Demetrius, though she could hope no benefit from betraying her friend's secret but the poor pleasure of following her faithless lover to the wood ; for she well knew that Demetrius would go thither in pursuit of Hermia.

The wood in which Lysander and Hermia proposed to meet, was the favourite haunt of those little beings known by the name of fairies. Oberon the king, and Titania the queen of the fairies, with all their tiny train of followers, in this wood held their midnight revels.

Between this little king and queen of sprites there happened, at this time, a sad disagreement : they never met by moonlight in the shady walks of this pleasant wood but they were quarrelling, till all their fairy elves would creep into acorn-cups and hide themselves for fear.

The cause of this unhappy disagreement was Titania's refusing to give Oberon a little changeling boy, whose mother had been Titania's friend. Upon her death the fairy queen had stolen the child from its nurse, and brought him up in the woods.

The night on which the lovers were to meet in this wood, as Titania was walking with some of her maids of honour, she met Oberon attended by his train of fairy courtiers.

'Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania,' said the fairy king. The queen replied : 'What, jealous Oberon, is it you? Fairies, skip hence ; I have forsworn his company.' 'Tarry, rash fairy,' said Oberon ; 'am not I thy lord? Why does Titania cross her Oberon? Give me your little changeling boy to be my page.'

'Set your heart at rest,' answered the queen ; 'your whole fairy kingdom buys not the boy of me.' She then left her lord in great anger. 'Well, go your way,' said Oberon : 'before the morning dawns I will torment you for this injury.'

Oberon then sent for Puck, his chief favourite and privy counsellor.

Puck (or, as he was sometimes called, Robin Goodfellow) was a shrewd and knavish sprite that used to play comical pranks in the neighbouring villages ; sometimes getting into the dairies and skimming the milk, sometimes plunging his light and airy form into the butter-churn, and while he was dancing his fantastic shape in the churn, in vain the dairy-maid would labour to change her cream into butter ; nor had the village swains any better success ; whenever Puck chose to play his freaks in the brewing-copper, the ale was sure to be spoiled. When a few good neighbours were met to drink some comfortable ale together, Puck would jump into the bowl of ale in the likeness of a roasted crab, and when some old goody was going to drink, he would bob against her lips and spill the ale over her withered chin ; and

presently after, when the same old dame was gravely seating herself to tell her neighbours a sad and melancholy story, Puck would slip her three-legged stool from under her and down toppled the poor old woman, and then the old gossips would hold their sides and laugh at her, and swear they never wasted a merrier hour.

'Come hither, Puck,' said Oberon to this merry little wanderer of the night; 'fetch me the flower which maids call *Love in Idleness*; the juice of that little purple flower laid on the eyelids of those who sleep will make them, when they awake, dote on the first thing they see. Some of the juice of that flower I will drop on the eyelids of my Titania when she is asleep; and the first thing she looks upon when she opens her eyes she will fall in love with, even though it be a lion or a bear, a meddling monkey or a busy ape; and before I will take this charm from off her sight, which I can do with another charm I know of, I will make her give me that boy to be my page.'

Puck, who loved mischief to his heart, was highly diverted with this intended frolic of his master, and ran to seek the flower; and while Oberon was waiting the return of Puck, he observed Demetrius and Helena enter the wood: he overheard Demetrius reproaching Helena for following him, and after many unkind words on his part, and gentle expostulations from Helena reminding him of his former love and professions of true faith to her, he left her (as he said) to

the mercy of the wild beasts, and she ran after him as swiftly as she could. •

The fairy king, who was always friendly to true lovers, felt great compassion for Helena; and perhaps, as Lysander said they used to walk by moonlight in this pleasant wood, Oberon might have seen Helena in those happy times when she was beloved by Demetrius. However that might be, when Puck returned with the little purple flower, Oberon said to his favourite, 'Take a part of this flower: there has been a sweet Athenian lady here who is in love with a disdainful youth; if you find him sleeping, drop some of the love-juice in his eyes, but contrive to do it when she is near him, that the first thing he sees when he awakes may be this despised lady. You will know the man by the Athenian garments which he wears.' Puck promised to manage this matter very dexterously; and then Oberon went, unperceived by Titania, to her bower, where she was preparing to go to rest. Her fairy bower was a bank, where grew wild thyme, cowslips and sweet violets, under a canopy of woodbine, musk-roses and eglantine. There Titania always slept some part of the night, her coverlet the enamelled skin of a snake, which, though a small mantle, was wide enough to wrap a fairy in.

He found Titania giving orders to her fairies, how they were to employ themselves while she slept. 'Some of you,' said her majesty, 'must kill cankers in the musk-rose buds, and some wage

war with the bats for their leathern wings, to make my small elves coats ; and some of you keep watch that the clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, come not near me : but first sing me to sleep.' Then they began this song :

You spotted snakes with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen ;  
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong ;  
Come not near our fairy queen.  
Philomel, with melody,  
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby ; lulla, lulla, lullaby :  
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh ;  
So, good night, with lullaby.

When the fairies had sung their queen asleep with this pretty lullaby, they left her to perform the important services she had enjoined them. Oberon then softly drew nigh his Titania, and dropped some of the love-juice on her eyelids, saying :

What thou seest when thou dost wake,  
Do it for thy true-love take.

But to return to Hermia, who made her escape out of her father's house that night to avoid the death she was doomed to for refusing to marry Demetrius. When she entered the wood, she found her dear Lysander waiting for her, to conduct her to his aunt's house ; but before they had passed half through the wood, Hermia was so

much fatigued, that Lysander, who was very careful of this dear lady who had proved her affection for him even by hazarding her life for his sake, persuaded her to rest till morning on a bank of soft moss, and lying down himself on the ground at some little distance, they soon fell fast asleep. Here they were found by Puck, who seeing a handsome young man asleep, and perceiving that his clothes were made in the Athenian fashion, and that a pretty lady was sleeping near him, concluded that this must be the Athenian maid and her disdainful lover whom Oberon had sent him to seek ; and he naturally enough conjectured that, as they were alone together, she must be the first thing he would see when he awoke ; so without more ado, he proceeded to pour some of the juice of the little purple flower into his eyes. But it so fell out that Helena came that way, and instead of Hermia, was the first object Lysander beheld when he opened his eyes ; and strange to relate, so powerful was the love-charm, all his love for Hermia vanished away, and Lysander fell in love with Helena.

Had he first seen Hermia when he awoke, the blunder Puck committed would have been of no consequence, for he could not love that faithful lady too well ; but for poor Lysander to be forced by a fairy love-charm to forget his own true Hermia, and to run after another lady and leave Hermia asleep quite alone in a wood at midnight, was a sad chance indeed.

Thus this misfortune happened. Helena, as has been before related, endeavoured to keep pace with Demetrius when he ran away so rudely from her ; but she could not continue this unequal race long, men being always better runners in a long race than ladies. Helena soon lost sight of Demetrius ; and as she was wandering about dejected and forlorn, she arrived at the place where Lysander was sleeping. 'Ah !' said she, 'this is Lysander lying on the ground : is he dead or asleep ?' Then gently touching him, she said, 'Good sir, if you are alive, awake.' Upon this Lysander opened his eyes, and (the love-charm beginning to work) immediately addressed her in terms of extravagant love and admiration ; telling her she as much excelled Hermia in beauty as a dove does a raven, and that he would run through fire for her sweet sake ; and many more such lover-like speeches. Helena, knowing Lysander was her friend Hermia's lover and that he was solemnly engaged to marry her, was in the utmost rage when she heard herself addressed in this manner ; for she thought (as well she might) that Lysander was making a jest of her. 'O !' said she, 'why was I born to be mocked and scorned by every one ? Is it not enough, is it not enough, young man, that I can never get a sweet look or a kind word from Demetrius ; but you, sir, must pretend in this disdainful manner to court me ? I thought, Lysander, you were a lord of more true gentleness.' Saying these words in great anger,

she ran away ; and Lysander followed her, quite forgetful of his own Hermia who was still asleep.

When Hermia awoke, she was in a sad fright at finding herself alone. She wandered about the wood, not knowing what had become of Lysander, or which way to go to seek for him. In the meantime, Demetrius, not being able to find Hermia and his rival Lysander, and fatigued with his fruitless search, was observed by Oberon fast asleep. Oberon had learnt by some questions he had asked of Puck, that he had applied the love-charm to the wrong person's eyes ; and now having found the person first intended, he touched the eyelids of the sleeping Demetrius with the love-juice, and he instantly awoke ; and the first thing he saw being Helena, he, as Lysander had done before, began to address love-speeches to her : and just at that moment Lysander, followed by Hermia (for through Puck's unlucky mistake it had now become Hermia's turn to run after her lover), made his appearance ; and then Lysander and Demetrius, both speaking together, made love to Helena, they being each one under the influence of the same potent charm.

The astonished Helena thought that Demetrius, Lysander, and her once dear friend Hermia, were all in a plot together to make a jest of her.

Hermia was as much surprised as Helena ; she knew not why Lysander, and Demetrius, who both before loved her, were now become the lovers

of Helena ; and to Hermia the matter seemed to be no jest.

The ladies, who before had always been the dearest friends, now fell to high words together.

'Unkind Hermia,' said Helena, 'it is you have set Lysander on to vex me with mock praises ; and your other lover Demetrius who used almost to spurn me with his foot, have you not bid him call me goddess, nymph, rare, precious, and celestial? He would not speak thus to me whom he hates, if you did not set him on to make a jest of me. Unkind Hermia, to join with men in scorning your poor friend. Have you forgotten our school-day friendship? How often, Hermia, have we two, sitting on one cushion, both singing one song, with our needles working the same flower, both on the same sampler wrought ; growing up together in fashion of a double cherry, scarcely seeming parted? Hermia, it is not friendly of you, it is not maidenly, to join with men in scorning your poor friend.'

'I am amazed at your passionate words,' said Hermia ; 'I scorn you not ; it seems you scorn me.' 'Aye, do,' returned Helena, 'persevere, counterfeit serious looks, and make mouths at me when I turn my back ; then wink at each other, and hold the sweet jest up. If you had any pity, grace, or manners, you would not use me thus.'

While Helena and Hermia were speaking these

angry words to each other, Demetrius and Lysander left them, to fight together in the wood for the love of Helena.

When they found the gentlemen had left them, they departed, and once more wandered weary in the wood in search of their lovers.

As soon as they were gone, the fairy king, who with little Puck had been listening to their quarrels, said to him : 'This is your negligence, Puck ; or did you do this wilfully?' 'Believe me, king of shadows,' answered Puck, 'it was a mistake : did not you tell me I should know the man by his Athenian garments? However, I am not sorry this has happened, for I think their jangling makes excellent sport.' 'You heard,' said Oberon, 'that Demetrius and Lysander are gone to seek a convenient place to fight in. I command you to overhang the night with a thick fog, and lead these quarrelsome lovers so astray in the dark, that they shall not be able to find each other, and with bitter taunts provoke them to follow you, while they think it is their rival's tongue they hear. See you do this, till they are so weary they can go no farther ; and when you find they are asleep, drop the juice of this other flower into Lysander's eyes, and when he awakes he will forget his new love for Helena, and return to his old passion for Hermia ; and then the two fair ladies may each one be happy with the man she loves and they will think all that has passed a vexatious dream. About this quickly, Puck ; and

I will go and see what sweet love my Titania has found.'

Titania was still sleeping, and Oberon seeing a clown near her, who had lost his way in the wood, and was likewise asleep: 'This fellow,' said he, 'shall be my Titania's true love.' He clapped an ass's head over the clown's. It seemed to fit him as well as if it had grown upon his shoulders. Though Oberon fixed the ass's head on very gently, it awakened him, and rising up, unconscious of what Oberon had done to him, he went towards the bower where the fairy queen slept.

'Ah! what angel is that I see?' said Titania opening her eyes, and the juice of the little purple flower beginning to take effect; 'Are you as wise as you are beautiful?'

'Why, mistress,' said the foolish clown, 'if I have wit enough to find the way out of this wood, I have enough to serve my turn.'

'Out of the wood do not desire to go,' said the enamoured queen. 'I am a spirit of no common rate. I love you. Go with me, and I will give you fairies to attend upon you.'

She then called four of her fairies; their names were, Pease-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed.

'Attend,' said the queen, 'upon this sweet gentleman; hop in his walks, and gambol in his sight; feed him with grapes and apricots, and steal for him the honey-bags from the bees. •Come, sit with me,' said she to the clown, 'and let me

play with your amiable hairy cheeks, my beautiful ass ! and kiss your fair large ears, my gentle joy.'

'Where is Pease-blossom?' said the ass-headed clown ; not much regarding the fairy queen's courtship, but very proud of his new attendants.

'Here, sir,' said little Pease-blossom.

'Scratch my head,' said the clown. 'Where is Cobweb?'

'Here, sir,' said Cobweb.

'Good Mr. Cobweb,' said the foolish clown, 'kill me the red humble-bee on the top of that thistle yonder ; and, good Mr. Cobweb, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, Mr. Cobweb, and take care the honey-bag break not ; I should be sorry to have you drowned in honey. Where is Mustard-seed?'

'Here, sir,' said Mustard-seed ; 'what is your will?'

'Nothing,' said the clown, 'good Mr. Mustard-seed, but to help Mr. Pease-blossom to scratch : I must go to a barber's, Mr. Mustard-seed, for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face.'

'My sweet love,' said the queen, 'what will you have to eat? I have a venturous fairy shall seek the squirrel's hoard, and fetch you some new nuts.'

'I had rather have a handful of dried peas,' said the clown, who with his ass's head had got an ass's appetite. 'But, I pray, let none of your people disturb me, for I have a mind to sleep.'

'Sleep, then,' said the queen, 'and I will wind you in my arms. O how I love you! how I dote upon you!'

When the fairy king saw the clown sleeping in the arms of his queen, he advanced within her sight, and reproached her with having lavished her favours upon an ass.

This she could not deny, as the clown was then sleeping within her arms with his ass's head crowned by her with flowers.

When Oberon had teased her for some time, he again demanded the changeling boy; which she, ashamed of being discovered by her lord with her new favourite, did not dare to refuse him.

Oberon, having thus obtained the little boy he had so long wished for to be his page, took pity on the disgraceful situation into which, by his merry contrivance, he had brought his Titania, and threw some of the juice of the other flower into her eyes; and the fairy queen immediately recovered her senses, and wondered at her late dotage, saying how she now loathed the sight of the strange monster.

Oberon likewise took the ass's head from off the clown, and left him to finish his nap with his own fool's head upon his shoulders.

Oberon and his Titania being now perfectly reconciled, he related to her the history of the lovers and their midnight quarrels; and she agreed to go with him and see the end of their adventures.

The fairy king and queen found the lovers and

their fair ladies, at no great distance from each other, sleeping on a grass-plot ; for Puck, to make amends for his former mistake, had contrived with the utmost diligence to bring them all to the same spot, unknown to each other ; and he had carefully removed the charm from off the eyes of Lysander with the antidote the fairy king gave to him.

Hermia first awoke, and finding her lost Lysander asleep so near her, was looking at him and wondering at his strange inconstancy. Lysander presently opening his eyes and seeing his dear Hermia, recovered his reason which the fairy charm had before clouded, and with his reason his love for Hermia ; and they began to talk over the adventures of the night, doubting if these things had really happened, or if they had both been dreaming the same bewildering dream.

Helena and Demetrius were by this time awake ; and a sweet sleep having quieted Helena's disturbed and angry spirits, she listened with delight to the professions of love which Demetrius still made to her, and which to her surprise as well as pleasure she began to perceive were sincere.

These fair night-wandering ladies, now no longer rivals, became once more true friends ; all the unkind words which had passed were forgiven, and they calmly consulted together what was best to be done in their present situation. It was soon agreed that, as Demetrius had given up his pretensions to Hermia, he should endeavour to prevail upon her father to revoke the cruel

sentence of death which had been passed against her. Demetrius was preparing to return to Athens for this friendly purpose, when they were surprised at the sight of Egeus, Hermia's father, who came to the wood in pursuit of his runaway daughter.

When Egeus understood that Demetrius would not now marry his daughter, he no longer opposed her marriage with Lysander, but gave his consent that they should be wedded on the fourth day from that time, being the same day on which Hermia had been condemned to lose her life ; and on that same day Helena joyfully agreed to marry her beloved and now faithful Demetrius.

The fairy king and queen, who were invisible spectators of this reconciliation, and now saw the happy ending of the lovers' history brought about through the good offices of Oberon, received so much pleasure, that these kind spirits resolved to celebrate the approaching nuptials with sports and revels throughout their fairy kingdom.

And now, if any are offended with this story of fairies and their pranks, as judging it incredible and strange, they have only to think that they have been asleep and dreaming, and that all these adventures were visions which they saw in their sleep : and I hope none of my readers will be so unreasonable as to be offended with a pretty harmless Midsummer Night's Dream.

## NOTES

Mary Lamb (1764-1847), the sister of Charles Lamb, was eleven years his senior. In 1796, she suddenly became insane and killed her mother. This terrible tragedy cast a shadow on the life of Charles Lamb. He undertook the charge of his sister, and, for her sake, remained a bachelor for life. She recovered from this attack, but throughout the rest of her life, she was subject to occasional fits, and several times she had to go into an asylum. In her sane moments she had a love for literature. She wrote stories for children in a volume called *Mrs. Leicester's School*, and collaborated with Charles in the production of the *Tales from Shakespeare*. She made prose versions of the comedies, Charles of the tragedies. The work was published in 1807.

1. *unfrequently*, 'infrequently' is more common in modern English.

3. *sprite*, (archaic) spirit.

*changeling*, a child supposed to be left by fairies, but here used for a child taken away by them.

4. *comical*, funny; *comic* and *comical* are distinct; *comic* is the adjective of *comedy*, and *comical* means funny, amusing.

*airy form*, invisible form; Puck, like all fairies, was invisible.

*roasted crab*, a roasted crab-apple; a wild apple is called a crab.

*goody*, abbr. from good-wife or good-woman; this was a term of civility formerly applied to married women in humble life, e.g. goody Blake.

For the form 'goody' from good-wife, we may compare 'hussy' from house-wife.

• 5. *gossips*, 'Originally, sponsors or godparents. From signifying those who were associated at the festivities of a christening, it came to mean generally those who were accustomed to make merry together'—Wright. Here it means familiar acquaintances or friends.

*waste*, spend; one of the old senses of the word.

*Love in Idleness*, the pansy or heart's-ease.

*to his heart*, heartily.

6. *canker*, formerly the same as cancer, i.e. a spreading sore or ulcer, then a disease of plants or fruit trees. Here it is used of the insects or caterpillars that cause diseases in plants.

7. *newts*, an interesting history attaches to this word. Originally, it was 'an efete' in Old English and 'an ewt' in Middle English. By mistake the article became part of the word, and hence we have *newt*. Cf. 'nickname' from original 'an eke name'.

*Philomel*, a poetic name for the nightingale; an allusion to the story of Procne, her son Itys and her sister Philomela in Greek mythology. According to the story Procne was changed into a swallow, Philomela into a nightingale and Itys into a pheasant.

9. *run through fire for her sake*, do anything to gain her love.

11. *spurn with his foot*, 'spurn' originally meant to kick with the foot; it is used here in this sense, though in modern English it is often used in the figurative sense of 'to despise'.

*working the same flower*, embroidering flowers on cloth or silk.

*sampler*, (archaic) a piece of embroidery serving as a pattern to be copied.

12. *About this quickly*, go about this quickly; in Shakespeare, from whom this is quoted, the verb of motion is often understood.

13. *a clown near her*, this is 'sweet bully Bottom' who, with his friends, comes to rehearse a play in the wood. In Shakespeare's play it is Puck who sets the ass's head on Bottom.

*clown*, a boor or peasant.

*to serve my turn*, to serve my purpose.

15. *their midnight quarrels*, an explanation of the title of the story.

### EXERCISES

1. What were the mischievous pranks played by Puck on the villagers?

2. What was the quarrel between the king and the queen of the fairies?

3. Describe the strange adventures of the Athenian lovers in the wood.

4. How did the clown with the ass's head behave among the fairies?

5. What is the meaning of the title of the story?

6. Explain :

(a) Puck would jump into the bowl of ale in the likeness of a roasted crab.

(b) However, I am not sorry this has happened, for I think their jangling makes excellent sport.

(c) Are you as wise as you are beautiful?

(d) I am a spirit of no common rate.

(e) I hope none of my readers will be so unreasonable as to be offended with a pretty harmless Midsummer Night's Dream.

7. Use in sentences of your own: *to put to death*; *to put into effect (or force, execution)*; *to lose sight of*; *to keep pace with*; *to serve the turn*; *to fall to high words*.

8. Explain the following words: *Refractory*, *for-sworn*, *acorn-cups*, *brewing-copper*, *dexterously*, *canopy*, *hazarding*, *conjectured*, *dotage*, *antidote*, *good offices*.

9. Put into Indirect Speech the paragraph on p. 11 beginning: 'Unkind Hermia'.

10. Write sentences beginning with: *although*, *whenever*, *however*, *not only*, *hardly*, *since*.

11. Analyse the sentence beginning 'There was one instance' on p. 1.

12. Put into Indirect Speech the conversation between Oberon and Puck on pp. 12-13.

## 2. ELIAS

(From *Twenty-three Tales*)

THERE once lived, in the Government of Ufá, a Bashkír named Elias. His father, who died a year after he had found his son a wife, did not leave him much property. Elias then had only seven mares, two cows, and about a score of sheep. He was a good manager, however, and soon began to acquire more. He and his wife worked from morn till night ; rising earlier than others and going later to bed ; and his possessions increased year by year. Living in this way, Elias little by little acquired great wealth. At the end of thirty-five years he had 200 horses, 150 head of cattle, and 1,200 sheep. Hired labourers tended his flocks and herds, and hired women milked his mares and cows, and made kumiss, butter, and cheese. Elias had abundance of everything, and every one in the district envied him. They said of him : 'Elias is a fortunate man : he has plenty of everything. This world must be a pleasant place for him.'

People of position heard of Elias and sought his acquaintance. Visitors came to him from afar ; and he welcomed every one, and gave them food and drink. Whoever might come, there was always kumiss, tea, sherbet, and mutton to set before them. Whenever visitors arrived a sheep

would be killed, or sometimes two; and if many guests came he would slaughter a mare for them.

Elias had three children; two sons and a daughter; and he married them all off. While he was poor, his sons worked with him, and looked after the flocks and herds themselves; but when he grew rich they got spoiled, and one of them took to drink. The elder was killed in a brawl; and the younger, who had married a self-willed woman, ceased to obey his father, and they could not live together any more.

So they parted, and Elias gave his son a house and some of the cattle; and that diminished his wealth. Soon after that, a disease broke out among Elias's sheep, and many died. Then followed a bad harvest, and the hay crop failed; and many cattle died that winter. Then the Kirghíz captured his best herd of horses; and Elias's property dwindled away. It became smaller and smaller, while at the same time his strength grew less; till, by the time he was seventy years old, he had begun to sell his furs, carpets, saddles and tents. At last he had to part with his remaining cattle, and found himself face to face with want. Before he knew how it had happened, he had lost everything, and in their old age he and his wife had to go into service. Elias had nothing left, except the clothes on his back, a fur cloak, a cup, his indoor shoes and over-shoes, and his wife, Sham-Shemagi, who also by this time was old.

The son who had parted from him had gone into a far country, and his daughter was dead, so that there was no one to help the old couple.

Their neighbour, Muhammad-Shah, took pity on them. Muhammad-Shah was neither rich nor poor, but lived comfortably, and was a good man. He remembered Elias's hospitality, and pitying him, said : 'Come and live with me, Elias, you and your old woman. In summer you can work in my melon-garden as much as your strength allows, and in winter feed my cattle ; and Sham-Shemagi shall milk my mares and make kumiss. I will feed and clothe you both. When you need anything tell me, and you shall have it.'

Elias thanked his neighbour, and he and his wife took service with Muhammad-Shah as labourers. At first the position seemed hard to them but they got used to it, and lived on, working as much as their strength allowed.

Muhammad-Shah found it was to his advantage to keep such people, because, having been masters themselves, they knew how to manage and were not lazy, but did all the work they could. Yet it grieved Muhammad-Shah to see people brought so low who had been of such high standing.

It happened once that some of Muhammad-Shah's relatives came from a great distance to visit him, and a Mullah came too. Muhammad-Shah told Elias to catch a sheep and kill it. Elias skinned the sheep, and boiled it, and sent it in to the guests. The guests ate the mutton, had

some tea, and then began drinking kumiss. As they were sitting with their host on down cushions on a carpet, conversing and sipping kumiss from their cups, Elias having finished his work, passed by the open door. Muhammad-Shah, seeing him pass, said to one of the guests: 'Did you notice the old man who passed just now?'

'Yes,' said the visitor, 'what is there remarkable about him?'

'Only this—that he was once the richest man among us,' replied the host. 'His name is Elias. You may have heard of him.'

'Of course I have heard of him,' the guest answered, 'I never saw him before, but his fame has spread far and wide.'

'Yes, and now he has nothing left,' said Muhammad-Shah, 'and he lives with me as my labourer, and his old woman is here too—she milks the mares.'

The guest was astonished: he clicked with his tongue, shook his head, and said: 'Fortune turns like a wheel. One man it lifts, another it sets down! Does not the old man grieve over all he has lost?'

'Who can tell? He lives quietly and peacefully, and works well.'

'May I speak to him?' asked the guest. 'I should like to ask him about his life.'

'Why not?' replied the master, and he called from the kíbítka in which they were sitting: 'Babay,' (which in the Bashkír tongue means

'Grandfather') 'come in and have a cup of kumiss with us, and call your wife here also.'

Elias entered with his wife ; and after exchanging greetings with his master and the guests, he repeated a prayer, and seated himself near the door. His wife passed in behind the curtain and sat down with her mistress.

A cup of kumiss was handed to Elias ; he wished the guests and his master good health, bowed, drank a little, and put down the cup.

'Well, Daddy,' said the guest who had wished to speak to him, 'I suppose you feel rather sad at the sight of us. It must remind you of your former prosperity, and of your present sorrows.'

Elias smiled, and said : 'If I were to tell you what is happiness and what is misfortune, you would not believe me. You had better ask my wife. She is a woman, and what is in her heart is on her tongue. She will tell you the whole truth.'

The guest turned towards the curtain.

'Well, Granny,' he cried, 'tell me how your former happiness compares with your present misfortune.'

And Sham-Shemagi answered from behind the curtain :

'This is what I think about it : My old man and I lived for fifty years seeking happiness and not finding it ; and it is only now, these last two years, since we had nothing left and have lived as labourers, that we have found real happiness,

and we wish for nothing better than our present lot.'

The guests were astonished, and so was the master; he even rose and drew the curtain back, so as to see the old woman's face. There she stood with her arms folded, looking at her old husband and smiling; and he smiled back at her. The old woman went on: 'I speak the truth and do not jest. For half a century we sought for happiness, and as long as we were rich we never found it. Now that we have nothing left, and we have taken service as labourers, we have found such happiness that we want nothing better.'

'But in what does your happiness consist?' asked the guest.

'Why, in this,' she replied, 'when we were rich, my husband and I had so many cares that we had no time to talk to one another, or to think of our souls, or to pray to God. Now we had visitors, and had to consider what food to set before them, and what presents to give them, lest they should speak ill of us. When they left, we had to look after our labourers, who were always trying to shirk work and get the best food, while we wanted to get all we could out of them. So we sinned. Then we were afraid lest a wolf should kill a foal or a calf, or thieves steal our horses. We lay awake at night, and we got up again and again to see that all was well. One thing attended to, another care would spring up: how, for instance, to get enough fodder for the

winter. And besides that, my old man and I used to disagree. He would say we must do so and so, and I would differ from him; and then we disputed—sinning again. So we passed from one trouble to another, from one sin to another, and found no happiness.'

'Well, and now?'

'Now, when my husband and I wake in the morning, we always have a loving word for one another, and we live peacefully, having nothing to quarrel about. We have no care but how best to serve our master. We work as much as our strength allows, and do it with a will, that our master may not lose, but profit by us. When we come in, dinner or supper is ready and there is kumiss to drink. We have fuel to warm us when it is cold, and we have our fur cloak. And we have time to talk, time to think of our souls, and time to pray. For fifty years we sought happiness, but only now at last have we found it.'

The guests laughed.

But Elias said: 'Do not laugh, friends. It is not a matter for jesting, it is the truth of life. We also were foolish at first, and wept at the loss of our wealth; but now God has shown us the truth, and we tell it, not for our own consolation, but for your good.'

And the Mullah said: 'That is a wise speech. Elias has spoken the exact truth. The same is said in Holy Writ.'

And the guests ceased laughing and became thoughtful.

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY

*Translated from the Russian by Mr. and Mrs. Aylmer Maude*

*(Slightly abridged and adapted)*

### NOTES

Count Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) is perhaps the greatest of Russian writers. He was of noble birth and heir to a vast estate, but he did not care for wealth or social position. His novels, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection* have earned for him a European reputation. He has also written many essays and short stories. Tolstoy's writings are marked by realistic detail, great sincerity, and high moral purpose.

22. *head of cattle*, 'head' is a unit in numbering cattle; after a numeral, 'head' must be construed as plural, e.g. 200 head of cattle.

*kumiss*, or koumiss, a liquor made by fermenting the milk of mares, a favourite drink of the Tartars and the Russian peasants.

*sherbet*, a word borrowed from Arabic; a cooling drink of fruit-juice.

23. *Kirghiz*, a pastoral, nomadic Mongolian tribe.

24. *Mullah*, from Persian 'Mullā', said to be a corruption from Arabic 'Maula'; one learned in theology and sacred law.

25. *kibitka*, from the Tartar 'Kibits', a tent covered with felt, or a wagon or sledge with a hood.

27. *one another*. 'Each other is by some writers used only when no more than two things are referred to, *one another* being similarly appropriated to larger numbers.'—H. W. Fowler, *Modern English Usage*.

28. *Holy Writ*. Holy or sacred scriptures generally, though specifically it means the Bible.

#### EXERCISES

1. Write in your own words the story of Elias.
2. What do we learn about the life of Russian peasants from this story?
3. Explain:—
  - (a) Fortune turns like a wheel. One man it lifts, another it sets down.
  - (b) She is a woman, and what is in her heart is on her tongue.
  - (c) The same is said in Holy Writ.
4. Use in sentences of your own: *year by year*; *little by little*; *face to face* (with misfortune); *far and wide*; *take to drink*; *go into service*; *get used to*.
5. Put into Indirect Speech the paragraph on p. 28 beginning: 'Now, when my husband and I.'
6. What is the moral of the story of Elias?
7. Explain: '*It is not a matter for jesting; it is the truth of life.*'

#### 4. THE CABULIWALLAH

(From *Hungry Stones and other Stories*)

My five-year-old daughter Mini cannot live without chattering. I really believe that in all her life she has not wasted a minute in silence. Her mother is often vexed at this, and would like to stop her prattle, but I would not. For Mini to be quiet is unnatural, and I cannot bear it long. And so my own talk with her is always lively.

One morning, for instance, when I was in the midst of the seventeenth chapter of my new novel, my little Mini stole into the room, and putting her hand into mine, said : 'Father ! Ramdayal, the door-keeper, calls a crow a krow ! He doesn't know anything, does he ?'

Before I could explain to her the difference between one language and another in this world, she had embarked on the full tide of another subject. 'What do you think, Father ? Bhola says there is an elephant in the clouds, blowing water out of his trunk, and that is why it rains !'

And then, darting off anew, while I sat still, trying to think of some reply to this : 'Father ! what relation is Mother to you ?'

With a grave face I contrived to say : 'Go and play with Bhola, Mini ! I am busy !'

The window of my room overlooks the road.

The child had seated herself at my feet near my table, and was playing softly, drumming on her knees. I was hard at work on my seventeenth chapter, in which Pratap Singh, the hero, has just caught Kanchanlata, the heroine, in his arms, and is about to escape with her by the third-story window of the castle, when suddenly Mini left her play, and ran to the window, crying: 'A Cabuliwallah! A Cabuliwallah!' And indeed, in the street below, there was a Cabuliwallah, walking slowly along. He wore the loose, soiled clothing of his people, and a tall turban; he carried a bag on his back, and boxes of grapes in his hand.

I cannot tell what my daughter's feelings were when she saw the man, but she began to call him loudly. 'Ah!' thought I, 'he will come in, and my seventeenth chapter will never be finished!' At that very moment the Cabuliwallah turned, and looked up at the child. When she saw this, she was overcome by terror, and running to her mother's protection, disappeared. She had a blind belief that inside the bag, which the big man carried, there were perhaps two or three other children like herself. The pedlar meanwhile entered my doorway and greeted me with a smile.

So precarious was the position of my hero and my heroine, that my first impulse was to stop and buy something, since Mini had called the man to the house. I made some small purchase, and we

began to talk about Abdur Rahman, the Russians, the English, and the Frontier Policy.

• As he was about to leave, he asked : 'And where is the little girl, sir?'

And then, thinking that Mini must get rid of her false fear, I had her brought out.

She stood by my chair, and looked at the Cabuliwallah and his bag. He offered her nuts and raisins, but she would not be tempted, and only clung the closer to me, with all her doubts increased.

This was their first meeting.

A few mornings later, however, as I was leaving the house, I was startled to find Mini, seated on a bench near the door, laughing and talking, with the great Cabuliwallah at her feet. In all her life, it appeared, my small daughter had never found so patient a listener, save her father. And already the corner of her little *sari* was stuffed with almonds and raisins, the gift of her visitor. 'Why did you give her those?' I said, and taking out an eight-anna piece, I handed it to him. The man accepted the money without demur, and put it into his pocket.

Alas, on my return, an hour later, I found the unfortunate coin had made twice its own worth of trouble ! For the Cabuliwallah had given it to Mini ; and her mother, catching sight of the bright round object, had pounced on the child with : 'Where did you get that eight-anna piece?'

'The Cabuliwallah gave it me,' said Mini cheerfully.

'The Cabuliwallah gave it to you!' cried her mother greatly shocked. 'O Mini! how could you take it from him?'

I entered at the moment, and saving her from impending disaster, proceeded to make my own inquiries.

It was not the first or the second time, I found, that the two had met. The Cabuliwallah had overcome the child's first terror by a judicious bribe of nuts and almonds, and the two were now great friends.

They had many quaint jokes, which amused them greatly. Mini would seat herself before him, look down on his gigantic frame in all her tiny dignity, and with her face rippling with laughter would begin: 'O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah! what have you got in your bag?'

And he would reply, in the nasal accents of the mountaineer: 'An elephant!' Not much cause for merriment, perhaps; but how they both enjoyed the fun! 'And for me, this child's talk with a grown-up man had always in it something strangely fascinating.

Then the Cabuliwallah, not to be behindhand, would take his turn: 'Well, little one, and when are you going to your father-in-law's house?'

Now nearly every small Bengali maiden had heard long ago about her father-in-law's house; but we were a little newfangled, and had kept

these things from our child, so that Mini at his question must have been a trifle bewildered. But she would not show it, and with ready tact replied: 'Are you going there?'

Amongst men of the Cabuliwallah's class, however, it is well known that the words 'father-in-law's house' have a double meaning. It is a euphemism for jail, the place where we are well cared for, at no expense to ourselves. In this sense would the sturdy pedlar take my daughter's question. 'Ah,' he would say, shaking his fist at an invisible policeman, 'I will thrash my father-in-law!' Hearing this, and picturing the poor discomfited relative, Mini would go off into peals of laughter in which her formidable friend would join.

Mini's mother is unfortunately very timid. Whenever she hears a noise in the street, or sees people coming towards the house, she always jumps to the conclusion that they are either thieves, or drunkards, or snakes, or tigers, or malaria, or cockroaches, or caterpillars. Even after all these years of experience, she is not able to overcome her terror. So she was full of doubts about the Cabuliwallah, and used to beg me to keep a watchful eye on him.

If I tried to laugh her fear gently away, she would turn round seriously, and ask me solemn questions:

Were children never kidnapped?

Was it not true that there was slavery in Cabul?

Was it so very absurd that this big man should be able to carry off a tiny child?

I urged that, though not impossible, it was very improbable. But this was not enough, and her dread persisted. But as it was a very vague dread, it did not seem right to forbid the man the house, and the intimacy went on unchecked.

Once a year, in the middle of January, Rahman, the Cabuliwallah, used to return to his own country, and as the time approached, he would be very busy, going from house to house collecting his debts. This year, however, he could always find time to come and see Mini. It might have seemed to a stranger that there was some conspiracy between the two, for when he could not come in the morning, he would appear in the evening.

Even to me it was a little startling, now and then, suddenly to surprise this tall, loose-garmented man laden with his bags, in the corner of a dark room; but when Mini ran in smiling, with her 'O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah!' and the two friends, so far apart in age, subsided into their old laughter and their old jokes, I felt reassured.

One morning, a few days before he had made up his mind to go, I was correcting proof-sheets in my study. The weather was chilly. Through the window the rays of the sun touched my feet, and the slight warmth was very welcome. It was nearly eight o'clock, and early pedestrians were returning home with their heads covered. Suddenly I heard an uproar in the street, and,

looking out saw Rahman being led away bound between two policemen, and behind them a crowd of inquisitive boys. There were blood-stains on his clothes, and one of the policemen carried a knife. I hurried out, and stopping them, inquired what it all meant. Partly from one, partly from another, I gathered that a certain neighbour had owed the pedlar something for a Rampuri shawl, but had denied buying it, and that in the course of the quarrel Rahman had struck him. Now, in his excitement, the prisoner began calling his enemy all sorts of names, when suddenly in a veranda of my house appeared my little Mini, with her usual exclamation : 'O Cabuliwallah ! Cabuliwallah !' Rahman's face lighted up as he turned to her. He had no bag under his arm today, so that she could not talk about the elephant with him. She therefore at once proceeded to the next question : 'Are you going to your father-in-law's house?' Rahman laughed and said : 'That is just where I am going, little one !' Then seeing that the reply did not amuse the child, he held up his fettered hands. 'Ah !' he said, 'I would have thrashed that old father-in-law, but my hands are bound !'

On a charge of murderous assault, Rahman was sentenced to several years' imprisonment.

Time passed, and he was forgotten. Our accustomed work in the accustomed place went on, and the thought of the once free mountaineer spending his years in prison seldom or never

occurred to us. Even my light-hearted Mini, I am ashamed to say, forgot her old friend. New companions filled her life. As she grew older; she spent more of her time with girls. So much, indeed, did she spend with them that she came no more, as she used to do, to her father's room, so that I rarely had any opportunity of speaking to her.

Years had passed away. It was once more autumn, and we had made arrangements for our Mini's marriage. It was to take place during the Puja holidays. With Durga returning to Kailas, the light of our house also would depart to her husband's house, and leave her father's in shadow.

The morning was bright. After the rains, it seemed as though the air had been washed clean and the rays of the sun looked like pure gold. So bright were they, that they made even the sordid brick-walls of our Calcutta lanes radiant. Since early dawn the wedding-pipes had been sounding, and at each burst of sound my own heart throbbed. The wail of the tune, Bhairavi, seemed to intensify the pain I felt at the approaching separation. My Mini was to be married that night.

From early morning noise and bustle had pervaded the house. In the courtyard there was the canopy to be slung on its bamboo poles; there were chandeliers with their tinkling sound to be hung in each room and veranda. There was endless hurry and excitement. I was sitting in

my study, looking through the accounts, when some one entered, saluting respectfully, and stood before me. It was Rahman, the Cabuliwallah. At first I did not recognize him. He carried no bag, his long hair was cut short and his old vigour seemed to have gone. But he smiled, and I knew him again.

‘When did you come, Rahman?’ I asked him.

‘Last evening,’ he said, ‘I was released from jail.’

The words struck harshly upon my ears. I had never before talked with one who had wounded his fellow-man, and my heart shrank within itself when I realized this ; for I felt that the day would have been better-omened had he not appeared.

‘There are ceremonies going on,’ I said, ‘and I am busy. Perhaps you could come another day?’

He immediately turned to go ; but as he reached the door he hesitated, and said : ‘May I not see the little one, sir, for a moment?’ It was his belief that Mini was still the same. He had pictured her running to him as she used to do, calling ‘O Cabuliwallah ! Cabuliwallah !’ He had imagined too that they would laugh and talk together, just as of old. Indeed, in memory of former days, he had brought, carefully wrapped up in paper, a few almonds and raisins and grapes, obtained somehow or other from a countryman ; for what little money he had, had gone.

I repeated : 'There is a ceremony in the house, and you will not be able to see any one today.'

The man's face fell. He looked wistfully at me for a moment, then said 'Good morning', and went out.

I felt a little sorry, and would have called him back, but I found he was returning of his own accord. He came close up to me and held out his offerings with the words : 'I have brought these few things, sir, for the little one. Will you give them to her?'

I took them, and was going to pay him, but he caught my hand and said : 'You are very kind, sir! Keep me in your memory. Do not offer me money!—You have a little girl : I too have one like her in my own home. I think of her, and bring this fruit to your child—not to make a profit for myself.'

Saying this, he put his hand inside his big loose robe, and brought out a small and dirty piece of paper. Unfolding it with great care, he smoothed it out with both hands on my table. It bore the impression of a little hand. Not a photograph. Not a drawing. Merely the impression of an ink-smearred hand laid flat on the paper. This touch of the hand of his own little daughter he had carried always next his heart, as he had come year after year to Calcutta to sell his wares in the streets.

Tears came to my eyes. I forgot that he was a poor Cabuli fruit-seller, while I was—. But

no, what was I more than he? He also was a father.

That impression of the hand of his little Parvati in her distant mountain home reminded me of my own little Mini.

I sent for Mini immediately from the inner apartment. Many difficulties were raised, but I swept them aside. Clad in the red silk of her wedding-day, with the sandal paste on her forehead, and adorned as a young bride, Mini came, and stood modestly before me.

The Cabuliwallah seemed amazed at the apparition. He could not revive their old friendship. At last he smiled and said: 'Little one, are you going to your father-in-law's house?'

But Mini now understood the meaning of the word 'father-in-law', and she could not answer him as of old. She blushed at the question, and stood before him with her bridelike face bowed down.

I remembered the day when the Cabuliwallah and my Mini had first met, and I felt sad. When she had gone, Rahman sighed deeply and sat down on the floor. The idea had suddenly come to him that his daughter too must have grown up, while he had been away so long, and that he would have to make friends anew with her also. Assuredly he would not find her as she was when he left her. And besides, what might not have happened to her in these eight years?

The marriage-pipes sounded, and the mild

autumn sunlight streamed round us. But Rahman sat in the little Calcutta lane, and saw before him the barren mountains of Afghanistan. ‘ ‘

I took out a currency note, gave it to him, and said: ‘Go back to your daughter, Rahman, in your own country, and may the happiness of your meeting bring good fortune to my child!’

Having made this present, I had to curtail some of the festivities. I could not have the electric lights I had intended, nor the military band, and the ladies of the house were despondent about it. But to me the wedding-feast was all the brighter for the thought that in a distant land a long-lost father had met again his only child.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

### NOTES

For the biographical note see the Notes on *Gitanjali* in this volume.

‘The Cabuliwallah’ is one of the most famous of Tagore’s short stories.

*Cabuliwallah*, a native of Cabul, the capital of Afghanistan; now usually spelt Kabul.

45. *a crow, a krow*, an amusing blunder in the original Bengali (in which the story was first written before it was translated into English); the joke cannot be rendered into English.

*Bhola*, Mini’s nurse.

*elephant in the clouds*, one of Bhola’s fictions to satisfy Mini’s endless questions.

46. *Pratap Singh*, Mini’s father was a novelist.

He was writing a sensational novel, full of thrills. When Mini interrupted him, he was describing how the hero of the story, Pratap Singh, was trying to escape out of a third story window with his beloved Kanchanlata.

*third story*, or second floor; the numbering of floors and stories is peculiar. The ground floor is the first story, but the first floor is the second story, the second floor is the third story and so on. The word is also spelt 'storey', and the *O.E.D.* says that 'storey' is probably derived from the same root as 'story', and goes so far as to recommend the spellings 'story' and 'stories' for the floors.

47. *Abdur Rahman*, the Amir of Afghanistan at that time.

*the Russians*, India is vulnerable to attack from the north-west, through the Khyber Pass. Russian policy should be carefully watched lest the Russians should plan an invasion of India with the help of Afghanistan.

*Frontier Policy*, problems connected with the defence of the NW. Frontier.

48. *not much cause for merriment*, it does not impress us as a great joke, but it greatly amused Mini.

*newfangled*, new-fashioned, fashionable; the word literally means 'inclined to take (to) new things'. In the old-fashioned Bengali households, people talked without reserve about marriage even in the presence of children. Mini's parents were fashionable and considered that a child should not know anything about such matters.

49. *euphemism*, Greek word meaning 'fair speech'; an unpleasant thing is referred to by a

pleasant allusion; e.g. 'He is a little queer' means 'He is out of his mind'.

*jail*, also spelt *gaol*; the *O.E.D.* recommends the spelling *jail*.

*father-in-law*, policeman, according to the Cabuliwallah's slang.

*slavery*, Mini's mother suggested that the children who were kidnapped, were sold into slavery in Cabul.

50. *proof-sheets*, also simply *proofs*; the first copies of a printed page.

51. *Rampuri shawl*, Rampur is the capital of a small State in N. India. Rampuri *chuddars* are very famous.

*lighted up*, became radiant and cheerful at the sight of little Mini.

*seldom or never*, note the idiom; we can say *seldom or never* or *seldom, if ever*.

52. *filled her life*, entered into her life and took up all her attention.

*Durga*, or Parvati, is the consort of Siva, one of the gods of the Hindu Trinity. Siva's abode is on snowy Kailas. During the Puja festival, Durga is supposed to visit her father's home. At the end of the festival, she returns to her lord, on Kailas.

*Bhairavi*, one of the tunes in Carnatic or Hindustani music.

*chandeliers*, pron. shandileers; branched, ornamental candlesticks hanging from a ceiling.

53. *better-omened*, more auspicious. Mini's father thought that as Rahman had been in prison for murder, his return on Mini's wedding-day was not auspicious,

55. *He also was a father*, we were equal, all social distinctions being forgotten.

*his little Parvati*, the Cabuliwallah's child, who, like Siva's consort, Parvati Devi, lived in the mountains.

To the simple-minded Cabuliwallah, it had never occurred that his child would have grown up into a young woman during his long absence.

56. *saw before him*, in a reverie or day-dream.

### EXERCISES

1. Give an account of the first meeting of Mini and the Cabuliwallah.

2. Describe how a friendship grew up between the child and the Cabuli.

3. Relate the circumstances of Rahman's arrest and imprisonment.

4. Tell the story of Rahman's return from prison and his visit to Mini's house on her wedding-day.

5. Explain the italicized words in the following:

(a) She had *embarked on the full tide* of another subject.

(b) Her face *rippled with laughter*.

(c) Mini would go off into *peals of laughter*.

(d) With Durga returning to Kailas, *the light of our house* also would depart for her husband's house, and leave her father's in shadow.

6. Use in sentences of your own: *without demur; judicious bribe; quaint joke; strangely fascinating; feel reassured; call names; laugh away a fear*.

7. Sketch the character of the Cabuliwallah or of Mini.

## 5. THE STORY OF JOAN OF ARC

(From *A Child's History of England*)

IN a remote village among some wild hills in the province of Lorraine, there lived a peasant whose name was Jacques d'Arc. He had a daughter, Joan of Arc, who was at this time in her twentieth year. She had been a solitary girl from her childhood; she had often tended sheep and cattle for whole days where no human figure was seen or human voice heard; and she had often knelt, for hours together, in the gloomy, empty, little village chapel, looking up at the altar and at the dim lamp burning before it, until she fancied that she saw shadowy figures standing there, and even that she heard them speak to her. The people in that part of France were very ignorant and superstitious, and they had many ghostly tales to tell about what they had dreamed, and what they saw among the lonely hills when the clouds and the mists were resting on them. So they easily believed that Joan saw strange sights, and they whispered among themselves that angels and spirits talked to her.

At last, Joan told her father that she had one day been surprised by a great unearthly light, and had afterwards heard a solemn Voice, which said: 'Joan, thou art appointed by Heaven to go and

help the Dauphin!' It was the voice of Saint Michael. ' Soon after this, Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret appeared to her with sparkling crowns upon their heads, and encouraged her to be virtuous and resolute. These Visions returned sometimes ; but the Voices spoke to her frequently saying again and again : 'Joan, thou art appointed by Heaven to go and help the Dauphin.' She almost always heard them while the chapel bells were ringing.

Her father, who did not believe that she really heard these Voices, said : 'I tell thee, Joan, it is thy fancy. Thou hadst better have a kind husband to take care of thee, girl, and work to employ thy mind.' But Joan told him in reply that she had taken a vow never to have a husband and that she must go as Heaven directed her, to help the Dauphin.

It happened that a party of the Dauphin's enemies' found their way into the village and burnt the chapel, and drove out the inhabitants. The cruelties she saw committed touched Joan's heart. She said that the Voices and the Figures were now continually with her ; that they told her she was the girl who, according to an old prophecy, was to deliver France ; and she must go and help the Dauphin, and must remain with him until he should be crowned at Rheims ; and that she must travel a long way to a certain lord named Baudricourt, who could and would bring her into the Dauphin's presence.

As her father still said : 'I tell thee, Joan, it is thy fancy,' she set off to find out 'this lord, accompanied by an uncle, a poor village wheelwright and cart-maker, who believed in the reality of her Visions. They travelled a long way, over a rough country full of the Duke of Burgundy's men, and of all kinds of robbers and marauders, until they came to where this lord was.

When his servants told him that there was a poor peasant girl, named Joan of Arc, accompanied by nobody but an old village wheelwright and cart-maker, who wished to see him because she was commanded to help the Dauphin and save France, Baudricourt burst out laughing, and bade them send the girl away. But, he soon heard so much about her lingering in the town, and praying in the churches, and seeing Visions, and doing harm to no one, that he sent for her, and questioned her. As she said the same things as before, Baudricourt began to think there might be something in it. At all events, he thought it worth while to send her on to the town of Chinon, where the Dauphin was. So he bought her a horse, and a sword, and gave her two squires to conduct her. As the Voices had told Joan that she was to wear a man's dress now, she put it on, girded her sword to her side, bound spurs to her heels, and mounted her horse and rode away with her two squires. As to her uncle the wheelwright, he stood staring at his niece in wonder until she was out of sight and then went home again.

Joan and her two squires rode on until they came to Chinon, where she was, after some doubt, admitted into the Dauphin's presence. Picking him out immediately from all his court, she told him that she came commanded by Heaven to subdue his enemies, and conduct him to his coronation at Rheims. She also told him (as the Dauphin confessed) a number of his secrets known only to himself; and, furthermore, she said there was an old sword in the Cathedral of St. Catherine at Fierbois, marked with five old crosses on the blade, which St. Catherine had ordered her to wear.

Now, nobody knew anything about this old sword; but when the cathedral came to be examined—which was immediately done—there, sure enough, the sword was found! The Dauphin then required a number of grave priests and bishops to give him their opinion whether the girl derived her power from good spirits or from evil spirits; they held prodigiously long debates about the question in the course of which several learned men fell fast asleep and snored loudly. At last, one gruff, old gentleman said to Joan: 'What language do your voices speak?' and Joan replied to the gruff, old gentleman: 'A pleasanter language than yours.' Then they agreed that it was all correct, and that Joan of Arc was inspired from Heaven. This wonderful circumstance put new heart into the Dauphin's soldiers when they heard of it, and dispirited the English army, who took Joan for a witch.

So Joan mounted horse again, and again rode on, until she came to Orleans. But she rode now as never peasant girl had ridden yet. She rode upon a white war-horse, in a suit of glittering armour with the old sword from the cathedral, newly burnished in her belt; with a white flag carried before her, upon which were a picture of God and the words 'Jesus Maria'. In this splendid state, at the head of a great body of troops escorting provisions of all kinds for the starving inhabitants of Orleans, she appeared before that beleaguered city.

When the people on the walls beheld her, they cried out: 'The Maid is come! The Maid of the Prophecy is come to deliver us!' This, and the sight of the Maid fighting at the head of her men, made the French so bold, and the English so fearful, that the English line of forts was soon broken, the troops and provisions were got into the town, and Orleans was saved!

Joan, henceforth called The Maid of Orleans, remained within the walls for a few days, and caused letters to be thrown over, ordering Suffolk and his Englishmen to depart from before the town according to the will of Heaven. As the English general very positively declined to believe that Joan knew anything about the will of Heaven, she mounted her white war-horse again, and ordered her white banner to advance.

The besiegers held the bridge, and some strong towers upon the bridge; and here the Maid of

Orleans attacked them. The fight lasted for fourteen hours. She planted a scaling-ladder with her own hands and mounted a tower wall ; but was struck by an English arrow in the neck, and fell into the trench. She was carried away and the arrow was taken out.

After a while she got up, and was again foremost in the fight. When the English, who had seen her fall and supposed her dead, saw this, they were troubled with the strangest fears, and some of them cried out that they beheld St. Michael on a white horse (probably Joan herself) fighting for the French. They lost the bridge, and the towers, and next day set their chain of forts on fire, and left the place.

But as Lord Suffolk himself retired no farther than the town of Jargeau, which was only a few miles off, the Maid of Orleans besieged him there, and he was taken prisoner. As the white banner scaled the wall, she was struck upon the head with a stone, and was again tumbled down into the ditch ; but she only cried all the more, as she lay there : 'On, on, my countrymen ! and fear nothing, for the Lord hath delivered them into our hands !' After this new success of the Maid's, several other fortresses and places which had previously held out against the Dauphin were delivered up without a battle ; and at Patay she defeated the remainder of the English army, and set up her victorious white banner on a field where twelve hundred English lay dead.

She now urged the Dauphin to proceed to Rheims, as the first part of her mission was accomplished, and to complete the whole by being crowned there. They set forth with ten thousand men, and again the Maid of Orleans rode upon her white war-horse, and in her shining armour, and at last came to Rheims. And in the great cathedral of Rheims the Dauphin actually was crowned Charles the Seventh in a great assembly of the people. Then the Maid, who with her white banner stood beside the king in that hour of his triumph, kneeled down upon the pavement at his feet, and said with tears that what she had been inspired to do, was done, and that the only recompense she asked for was, that she should have leave to go back to her distant home, and her sturdily incredulous father, and her first simple escort, the village wheelwright and cart-maker. But the king said : 'No !' and made her and her family as noble as a king could, and settled upon her the income of a count.

Ah ! happy had it been for the Maid of Orleans if she had resumed her rustic dress that day, and had gone home to the little chapel and the wild hills, and had forgotten all these things and had been a good man's wife and heard no stranger voices than those of little children !

It was not to be, and she continued helping the king and trying to improve the lives of the coarse soldiers, and leading a religious, an unselfish, and a modest life herself beyond any doubt.

Still many times she prayed the king to let her go home ; and once she took off her bright armour and hung it up in a church, meaning never to wear it more. But the king always won her back again, and so she went forward to her doom.

When the Duke of Bedford, who was a very able man, began to be active for England, and brought the war back into France, Charles marched on Paris, which was opposed to him, and attacked the suburb of St. Honoré. In this fight, being again struck down into the ditch, she was abandoned by the whole army. She lay unaided among a heap of dead, and crawled out how she could. At the siege of Compiègne, held by the Duke of Burgundy, where she did valiant service, she was basely left alone in a retreat, though facing about and fighting to the last ; and an archer pulled her off her horse.

O the uproar that was made, and the thanksgivings that were sung, about the capture of this one poor country girl ! O the way in which she was demanded to be tried for sorcery and heresy, and anything else you like, by the Inquisitor-General of France, and by this great man and by that great man, until it was wearisome to think of ! She was bought at last by the Bishop of Beauvais for ten thousand francs, and was shut up in a narrow prison—plain Joan of Arc again, and Maid of Orleans no more.

Sixteen times she was brought out and shut up again, and worried and entrapped, and argued

with, until she was heart-sick of the dreary business. It is very affecting to know that even at that pass the poor girl honoured the King who had used her for his purposes and so basely abandoned her; while she did not mind the reproaches that were heaped upon herself, she spoke out courageously for him.

It was however natural in one so young to hold to life. To save her life, she signed a declaration prepared for her—signed it with a cross, for she could not write—that all her Visions and Voices had come from the Devil. Upon her recanting the past, she was condemned to imprisonment for life, ‘on the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction.’

In her loneliness and anxiety the Voices and the Visions returned to her, and her enemies, who only awaited a chance, made her confess that she was again inspired. For this relapse into heresy and sorcery, she was sentenced to be burnt to death.

And at last in the market-place of Rouen, in the hideous dress which the monks had invented for such spectacles, with priests and bishops sitting in a gallery looking on, (though some had the Christian grace to go away, unable to endure the infamous scene), this shrieking girl—last seen amidst the smoke and fire holding a crucifix between her hands, last heard calling upon Christ—was burnt to ashes. They threw her ashes into

the River Seine ; but they will rise against her murderers on the last day.'

In the picturesque old town of Rouen, where weeds and grass grow high on the cathedral towers, and the venerable Norman streets are still warm in the blessed sunlight, there is a statue of Joan of Arc, in the scene of her last agony.

CHARLES DICKENS,  
(Slightly abridged)

### NOTES

The story of Charles Dickens's (1812-1870) early life is told in the first chapters of his novel *David Copperfield*. He suffered poverty and misery both at home and at school. In his twenty-first year, Dickens began to write for the periodicals and his *Sketches by Boz* were very well received. Then he began to write *The Pickwick Papers*. These appeared in twenty monthly parts. *The Pickwick Papers* gained for their author fame and fortune. *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *A Tale of Two Cities* and other novels followed. In 1849, Dickens started a weekly paper called *Household Words*, in which his *David Copperfield* appeared serially. His *Child's History of England* was published in 1852-4. He died in 1870 leaving an unfinished novel, *Edwin Drood*.

The story of Joan of Arc (here reprinted in a slightly abridged form) forms the second part of Chapter XXII of *A Child's History of England*.

'Orleans was besieged by the English. There seemed no hope for the town or for the Dauphin,

who was so dismayed that he even thought of fleeing to Scotland or to Spain—when a peasant girl rose up and changed the whole state of affairs.’

The story of this peasant girl I have now to tell.’ From *A Child's History of England*.

61. *the Dauphin*, this was the title of the eldest son of the King of France. The province of Dauphiné in France was ceded to the French King in 1349 on condition that his eldest son and heir to the throne should be called henceforth the Dauphin. Cf. the title of Prince of Wales, which dates from the time of Edward the First's conquest of Wales.

64. *Jesus Maria*, Jesus son of Mary.

67. *Inquisitor*, an officer of the Inquisition. The Inquisition was an ecclesiastical tribunal for the suppression of heresy and the punishment of heretics. It was set up in the thirteenth century by Pope Innocent the Third.

68. *the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction*, she was condemned to a life of sorrow and affliction.

*crucifix*, Latin *cruci-fixus*, ‘one fixed to a cross’; an image of Christ on the Cross.

#### EXERCISES

1. What was the mission of Joan of Arc?
2. Give an account of the relief of Orleans by the Maid.
3. Describe the coronation of the Dauphin at Rheims.
4. Give a short account of Joan's trial and martyrdom.
5. Write the story of Joan as told by herself.

## VERSE

### I. CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born or taught  
That serveth not another's will ;  
Whose armour is his honest thought,  
And silly truth his highest skill !

Whose passions not his masters are, 5  
Whose soul is still prepared for death ;  
Untied unto the world with care  
Of princely love or vulgar breath ;

Who hath his life from rumours freed, 10  
Whose conscience is his strong retreat ;  
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,  
Nor ruin make accusers great ;

Who envieth none whom chance doth raise  
Or vice ; who never understood 15  
How deepest wounds are given with praise ;  
Nor rules of state, but rules of good :

Who God doth late and early pray  
More of His grace than gifts to lend ;  
Who entertains the harmless day  
With a well-chosen book or friend ; 20

—This man is free from servile bands  
 Of hope to rise, or fear to fall ;  
 Lord of himself, though not of lands ;  
 And having nothing, he hath all.

SIR H. WOTTON\*

### NOTES

Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639) was English Ambassador at the Court of Venice and was employed on various other diplomatic missions from 1604-1624. He lived in corrupt times but was himself scrupulously honest. He seems to have despised diplomacy and once wrote: 'An ambassador is an honest man, sent to lie abroad for the good of his country.' This definition brought him into disfavour with James I.

The verses on *A Happy Life*, probably composed in 1616, are praised by Palgrave as 'a fine specimen of poetry written by a thoughtful man who practised this art but little.'

Lamborn writes in *Poetic Values*, 'Wisdom is here packed, as in a proverb; it is pregnancy, not picturesqueness of phrase, that holds us.'

2. *That serveth not another's will*, cf. W. E. Henley :

'I am the master of my fate;  
 I am the captain of my soul.'

4. *silly truth*, plain truth.

8. *princely love or vulgar breath*, the favour of his sovereign or the praise of the people. The word *vulgär* is used in the old sense: *of the people*, cf. *the vulgar tongue*—the language of the people.

9. *Who hath his life from rumours freed*, who does not listen to idle scandal or publish it; or, who has never given cause for rumours to arise about himself.

11. *state*, estate.

12. *Nor ruin make accusers great*, his downfall cannot profit his enemies. Perhaps the poet had in mind the Roman law by which an informer was rewarded out of the estates of his victim.

14-15. *who never understood how deepest wounds are given with praise*, praise hurts us when we know that we do not deserve it. (As Pope says: 'Praise undeserved is satire in disguise'.) The poet means that the happy man has never learned, by receiving undeserved compliments, how to hurt others in the same way.

Ben Jonson also says:

Crafty malice might pretend this praise,

And think to ruin where it seemed to raise.

16. *Nor rules of state, but rules of good*, (He does not know) policy or maxims of diplomacy but only the laws of virtue and truth.

18. *More of His grace than gifts to lend*, to grant him spiritual rather than material benefits.

19. *entertains the harmless day*, passes the day agreeably in innocent pursuits.

21. *bands*, a variant spelling of 'bonds'.

### EXERCISES

1. Give in your own words the characteristics of a happy life.

2. Compare this poem with the *Ode to Solitude* by Pope (see Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*. No. 118

(Oxford Edition), where it is printed under the title of 'The Quiet Life'). Which poem do you like better and why?

3. Write a careful paraphrase of each stanza so as to bring out the full meaning of the poet.

4. Write a short paragraph on one of the following :—

(i) 'Sweet are the uses of adversity'—

Shakespeare.

(ii) 'What shall it avail a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'—

The Bible.

#### MEMORABLE SAYINGS

1. A good name is better than gold.
2. Live not to eat, but eat to live.
3. No sunshine but has some shadow.
4. The tongue is not steel, yet it cuts.

## 2. THE VILLAGE SCHOOLMASTER

(From *The Deserted Village*)

BESIDE yon straggling fence that skirts the way,  
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,  
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,  
The village master taught his little school ;  
A man severe he was, and stern to view ; 5  
I knew him well, and every truant knew ;  
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace  
The day's disasters in his morning face ;  
Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ; 10  
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,  
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned ;  
Yet he was kind ; or, if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault ;  
The village all declared how much he 'knew ; 15  
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too ;  
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.  
In arguing too, the parson owned his skill,  
For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still ; 20  
While words of learned length and thundering  
    sound  
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around,  
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,

That one small head could carry all he knew.  
 But past is all his fame. The very spot  
 Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

### NOTES

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774) was born at Pallas in Ireland. He tried various professions in turn without success and turned at last to literature. *The Traveller* and *The Deserted Village* established his fame as a poet. *The Vicar of Wakefield* and his essays have gained for him a very high place among English writers of prose. Johnson said of him: 'He touched nothing that he did not adorn.'

The present selection is from *The Deserted Village*, ll. 193-216.

The poet revisits 'Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain'; it is now deserted, all its peasants having emigrated. But he recalls happy memories of rural life and manners, and, in the clergyman and the pedagogue, he has given us two lovable and immortal characters.

The original of the village schoolmaster is probably Paddy Byrne, who taught the poet in his boyhood.

7. *boding*, foreboding.

13-14. It may be noted that the poet rhymes *aught* and *fault*, because in his day, the word *fault* was pronounced *faut*.

16. *cipher*, do sums in arithmetic; (*cipher* comes from the Arabic *çifra*).

17. *terms and tides presage*, he could foretell

when the rents and wages fell due as well as the days when the festivals of the Church would fall; he was a walking almanac.

*term*, day fixed in the year for payment of rent, wages and other rural debts; e.g. Michaelmas Term.

*tide*, 'time' generally, as for example noon-tide, spring-tide, but esp. refers to festivals of the Church, e.g., Easter-tide, Whitsun-tide, Christmas-tide. In this sense it is archaic.

18. *gauge*, (pron. *gage*) measure the contents of a barrel of ale, etc.

#### EXERCISES

1. Sketch the character of the Schoolmaster and describe his various accomplishments.

2. Read in *The Deserted Village* the description of the village clergyman (supposed to be a picture of the poet's own father, Rev. Charles Goldsmith) and sketch his character in your own words.

3. Write your memories of your own school and your earliest teachers.

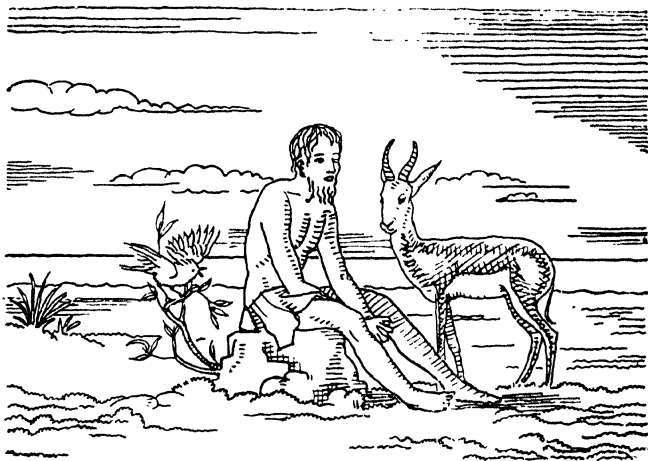
4. Explain: *counterfeited glee; the busy whisper; dismal tidings.*

3. THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER  
SELKIRK

I AM monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute ;  
From the centre all round to the sea  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.  
O solitude ! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face ?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms  
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,  
I must finish my journey alone,  
Never hear the sweet music of speech ;  
I start at the sound of my own.  
The beasts that roam over the plain  
My form with indifference see ;  
They are so unacquainted with man,  
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love  
Divinely bestow'd upon man,  
O had I the wings of a dove  
How soon would I taste you again !  
My sorrows I then might assuage  
In the ways of religion and truth,  
Might learn from the wisdom of age,  
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.



Ye winds that have made me your sport,                   25  
     Convey to this desolate shore  
 Some cordial endearing report  
     Of a land I shall visit no more :  
 My friends, do they now and then send  
     A wish or a thought after me?                   30  
 O tell me I yet have a friend,  
     Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind !  
     Compared with the speed of its flight,  
 The tempest itself lags behind,                   35  
     And the swift-wingéd arrows of light.  
 When I think of my own native land  
     In a moment I seem to be there ;  
 But, alas ! recollection at hand  
     Soon hurries me back to despair.                   40

But the seafowl is gone to her nest,  
 The beast is laid down in his lair ;  
 Even here is a season of rest,  
 And I to my cabin repair.  
 There is mercy in every place,  
 And mercy, encouraging thought !  
 Gives even affliction a grace  
 And reconciles man to his lot.

W. COWPER

### NOTES

William Cowper (pronounced Cooper) was born in 1731 and died in 1800. It has been said that 'Cowper's life is a pathetic story of a shy and timid genius'. He had frequent fits of melancholy and the little happiness he enjoyed he owed to kind friends like the Unwins and John Newton. *The Task* published in 1785 is his best poem, but he will be remembered for his shorter poems like *John Gilpin*, *On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture*, *On the Solitude of Alexander Selkirk* and *The Loss of the Royal George*.

The poem first appeared under the full title of *Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk during his solitary abode in the island of Juan Fernandez*.

Juan Fernandez is an island in the South Pacific, about 400 miles from the coast of Chile. Selkirk, who had quarrelled with his captain, was landed here in 1704, and lived a solitary life for over four years, till he was rescued by a passing vessel.

His story, published first by Capt. Rogers,

stirred the imagination of people. Steele tells it in one of his essays; and it is certain that the story suggested to Defoe the idea of his *Robinson Crusoe*.

10. *my journey*, my life's journey; the comparison is common in poetry.

16. *Their tameness is shocking to me*, cf. Tennyson's description of Enoch Arden in his solitude. He describes the beasts and birds of the tropic island as 'the helpless life so wild that it was tame'.

19. *O had I the wings of a dove*, quoted from Psalm lv. 6. 'O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest.'

27. *some cordial endearing report*, some sincere and heart-felt message of love and affection; 'endearing' usually means 'inspiring affection' but is used here in the sense of 'showing affection'.

39. *recollection at hand*, the remembrance of my situation and surroundings.

46-47. *mercy . . . gives even affliction a grace*, divine mercy gives us strength and fortitude to bear our calamities and makes even our sorrows sweet.

#### EXERCISES

1. What are the feelings of Selkirk in his solitude?

2. What are his hopes, comforts and wishes in his solitude?

3. Explain and refer to their contexts the following:--

- (a) O solitude! where are the charms,  
That sages have seen in thy face?

- (b) Society, friendship and love  
Divinely bestow'd upon man.
  - (c) And mercy, encouraging thought!  
Gives even affliction a grace.
4. Write a short essay on one of the following :
    - (a) The blessings of friendship.
    - (b) The blessings of solitude.
  5. Read *Robinson Crusoe* at least in an abridged edition.

## MEMORABLE SAYINGS

1. The hand that gives, gathers.
2. Some are wise, and some otherwise.
3. Prevention is better than cure.
4. Lost time is never found again.

#### 4. THE DAFFODILS

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees, 5  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the Milky Way,  
They stretched in never-ending line,  
Along the margin of a bay : 10  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :  
A Poet could not but be gay 15  
In such a jocund company !

I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
• What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood, 20  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude ;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

## NOTES

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) is one of the greatest poets of England. He was born in the beautiful Lake District of Cumberland where most of his later life was passed. The famous *Lyrical Ballads*, poems by himself and his friend Coleridge, appeared in 1798. Though he became famous, for most of his life his means were slender and he realized the high ideal of plain living and high thinking. He was made Poet Laureate in 1843.

This poem, written in Grasmere in 1804, is one of Wordsworth's finest. 'The daffodils grew on the margin of Ullswater (a deep lake in the mountains of Cumberland) and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves.'—Wordsworth.

4. *golden daffodils*, the colour of the daffodil is a golden yellow.

7. *as the stars that shine*, this beautiful simile presents us stars above and stars below—the stars of the Milky Way and the dancing daffodils.

8. *Milky Way*, galaxy; a brilliant band or track, encircling the heavens irregularly, consisting of innumerable stars.

20. *vacant or in pensive mood*, idle or meditative mood; 'vacant' means 'free from thought' (poetic).

21-22. The lines were suggested to the poet by his wife.

The memory of these beautiful aspects of Nature is one of the blessings of solitude. Wordsworth says that the mind is 'a mansion for all lovely

thought, the memory a dwelling-place for all sweet sounds and harmonies'.

## EXERCISES

1. How does the poem illustrate the poet's love of Nature?

2. Read Herrick's poem *To Daffodils* in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, No. 110 (Oxford Edition), and compare the two poems.

3. Explain: *the Milky Way; jocund company; the inward eye; the bliss of solitude.*

4. What are the things that please you in this poem?

## 5. HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay !  
On the mountain dawns the day ;  
All the jolly chase is here  
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear ;  
Hounds are in their couples yelling, 5  
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,  
Merrily merrily mingle they,  
'Waken, lords and ladies gay !'

Waken, lords and ladies gay !  
The mist has left the mountain grey, 10  
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,  
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming ;  
And foresters have busy been  
To track the buck in thicket green ;  
Now we come to chant our lay, 15  
'Waken, lords and ladies gay !'

Waken, lords and ladies gay !  
To the greenwood haste away ;  
We can show you where he lies,  
Fleet of foot and tall of size ; 20  
We can show the marks he made  
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd ;  
You shall see him brought to bay ;  
'Waken, lords and ladies gay !'

Louder, louder chant the lay, 25  
Waken, lords and ladies gay !

Tell them youth and mirth and glee  
 Run a course as well as we ;  
 Time, stern huntsman ! who can balk,  
 Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk ;  
 Think of this, and rise with day,  
 Gentle lords and ladies gay !

30

SIR W. SCOTT

## NOTES

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) was a poet before he was a novelist, though he is better remembered today for his Waverley Novels than for *The Lady of the Lake* or *Marmion*. His poems were immensely popular in his own day, and it was only the greater popularity of Byron that eclipsed the fame of Scott. Besides his longer narrative poems, Scott wrote a number of beautiful songs, ballads and lyrics, e.g., *Rosabelle*, *Lochinvar*, etc.

This song appears in the Appendix to the general Preface of *Waverley*, 1814.

6. *horns are knelling*, 'knelling', often used in a 'mournful' sense, is here used in the sense of 'sounding'.

7. *Merrily merrily mingle they*, the sound is an echo of the sense.

11. *Springlets*, diminutive of 'spring'; cf. streamlet, rivulet, etc.

*Springlets . . . steaming*, refers to the mist that hangs over the stream.

12. *Diamonds . . . gleaming*, refers to the drops of dew that glitter on the brushwood.

14. *To track*, to follow the traces and hunt down the stag.

23. *brought to bay*, 'to bring to bay' is 'to drive' the stag to a position where it is forced to turn and defend itself; cf. other phrases, 'to stand at bay,' 'to turn to bay', etc.

29. *balk*, also spelt 'baulk'; the *O.E.D.* recommends 'balk'.

30. *Stanch*, again two alternative spellings are found: 'stanch' and 'staunch'; the *O.E.D.* recommends 'staunch' for the adjective, and 'stanch' for the verb.

'stanch as hound' means 'true as a hound'.

#### EXERCISES

1. Give the substance of the song.
2. Describe a hunting-scene 'with hawk and horse and hunting-spear'.
3. Describe a modern 'shikar' expedition.
4. What are the words and phrases peculiarly used in the hunt? E.g., *hounds in couples, to track the buck, brought to bay*; find other examples.
5. Why is Time compared to a huntsman? Is the comparison apt or striking?



## NOTES

Robert Southey (1774-1843), prose writer and poet, was the friend of Wordsworth and Coleridge. He lived at Keswick (pron. Kez'ik) in the Lake District. In 1813 he was made Poet Laureate. His longer poems are little read now, but some of his shorter pieces are still very popular, e.g., *The Inchcape Rock*, *After Blenheim* and *The Holly Tree*. As a writer of prose he takes a very high place, his *Life of Nelson* having become a classic.

The poem was written at Keswick in 1818.

Fowler quotes a long passage from Macaulay to illustrate the poem. Macaulay says: 'Just such is the feeling which a man of liberal education entertains towards the great minds of former ages. The debt which he owes to them is incalculable. They have guided him to truth. They have filled his mind with noble and graceful images. They have stood by him in all vicissitudes, comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude.'

13. *My thoughts are with the Dead*, he turns away from the busy life around him and lives in the noble society of the dead.

18. *an humble mind*, formerly the initial 'h' was not pronounced here, and so 'an humble' was right; in modern English we say 'a humble'. For the same reason 'an hundred', 'an historian' are common in eighteenth century literature.

23-24. *a name . . . that will not perish in the dust*, he hopes to become one of the immortals. This hope has been fulfilled, and Southey is remembered today as one of the great masters of English prose.

## EXERCISES

1. Describe the life of a scholar, after Southey.
2. Is the life of a scholar, as described by Southey, a perfect life?
3. Discuss the statement that 'life cannot be fully lived in a library any more than in a sports field or a shop'.
4. Good books have often been compared to good friends. What is the meaning of the comparison? Write a short paragraph to explain it.

## 7. THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

OUR bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had  
lower'd,  
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the  
sky ;  
And thousands had sunk on the ground over-  
power'd,  
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw 5  
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the  
slain,  
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw ;  
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.



Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array  
Far, far I had roam'd on a desolate track :

'Twas autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way  
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me  
back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft  
In life's morning march, when my bosom was  
young ;

I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft, 15  
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers  
sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore  
From my home and my weeping friends never  
to part ;

My little ones kiss'd me a thousand times o'er,  
And my wife sobb'd aloud in her fullness of  
heart. 20

'Stay—stay with us !—rest !—thou art weary and  
worn !'—

And fain was their war-broken soldier to  
stay ;—

But sorrow return'd with the dawning of morn,  
,And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

T. CAMPBELL.

### NOTES

Thomas Campbell (1774-1844) won fame by his long poem *Pleasures of Hope*, but he is now chiefly remembered for his shorter poems like *Hohenlinden*, *The Battle of the Baltic* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*.

The poem was first begun in Bavaria in 1800 and finished in 1804. Though Campbell did not take part in actual fighting, he had seen some of the horrors of war, and his sympathy for the soldier is deep and sincere.

1. *the night-cloud had lower'd*, 'lour' or 'lower' means lit. 'to frown'; fig. it is applied to dark and threatening clouds. The spelling 'lour' (pronunciation rhymes with *our*) is recommended by the *O.E.D.*

6. *wolf-scaring faggot*, the fires lighted to keep away the wolves from preying on the wounded and the dead.

7. *the dead of the night*, midnight when everything is still or seems dead; cf. 'the dead hour of Dawn'.

9. *Methought*, from 'methinks' meaning 'it seems to me' (arch.).

11. The line originally stood thus:  
'Till Nature and sunshine disclosed the sweet way.'

14. *life's morning march*, in my childhood games.

22. *war-broken*, war-weary, heart-broken.

#### EXERCISES

1. Draw a contrast between his actual surroundings on the field of battle and the scene he saw in his vision.

2. Pick out from the poem (a) words suggestive of battle scenes, e.g. *sentinel*; (b) words suggestive of rural surroundings and domestic felicity, e.g. *my little ones*, *the wine-cup*, etc.

3. Write a short essay on the horrors of modern warfare.

## 8. NAPOLEON AND THE BRITISH SAILOR

I LOVE contemplating—apart  
From all his homicidal glory—  
The traits that soften to our heart  
    Napoleon's story.

'Twas when his banners at Boulogne 5  
Arm'd in our island every freeman,  
His navy chanced to capture one  
    Poor British seaman.

They suffer'd him, I know not how,  
Unprisoned on the shore to roam ; 10  
And aye was bent his longing brow  
    On England's home.

His eye, methinks, pursued the flight  
Of birds to Britain half-way over  
With envy ; *they* could reach the white 15  
    Dear cliffs of Dover.

A stormy midnight watch, he thought,  
Than this sojourn would have been dearer,  
If but the storm his vessel brought  
    To England nearer. 20

At last, when care had banished sleep,  
He saw one morning, dreaming, doting,  
An empty hogshead from the deep  
    Come shoreward floating.

He hid it in a cave, and wrought 25  
The live-long day laborious, lurking,  
Until he launched a tiny boat  
By mighty working.

Heaven help us ! 'twas a thing beyond  
Description wretched : such a wherry 30  
Perhaps ne'er ventured on a pond,  
Or crossed a ferry.

For ploughing in the salt-sea field  
It would have made the boldest shudder—  
Untarr'd, uncompass'd, and unkeel'd, 35  
No sail, no rudder.

From neighbouring woods he interlaced  
His sorry skiff with wattled willows ;  
And thus equipp'd he would have passed  
The foaming billows. 40

But Frenchmen caught him on the beach,  
His little Argo sorely jeering  
Till tidings of him chanced to reach  
Napoleon's hearing.

With folded arms Napoleon stood, 45  
Serene alike in peace and danger ;  
And, in his wonted attitude,  
Address'd the stranger :

'Rash man, that wouldst yon Channel pass  
On twigs and staves so rudely fashioned, 50.  
Thy heart with some sweet British lass  
Must be impassioned.'

'I have no sweetheart,' said the lad ;  
 'But, absent long from one another,  
 Great was the longing that I had 55  
 To see my mother.'

'And so thou shalt,' Napoleon said,  
 'Ye've both my favour fairly won ;  
 A noble mother must have bred  
 So brave a son.' 60

He gave the tar a piece of gold,  
 And, with a flag of truce, commanded  
 He should be shipped to England Old,  
 And safely landed.

Our sailor oft could scanty shift 65  
 To find a dinner, plain and hearty ;  
 But never changed the coin and gift  
 Of Bonaparté.

T. CAMPBELL

### NOTES

'This anecdote has been published in several public journals, both French and British. My belief in its authenticity was confirmed by an Englishman, long resident in Boulogne, lately telling me that he remembered the circumstance to have been generally talked of in the place.'  
 —Thomas Campbell.

3. *traits*, pronounce 'trayz'.

6. *Arm'd*. . . *every freeman*, all lovers of freedom armed themselves and prepared to defend

England, when they saw Napoleon's preparations for war.

16. *Dear cliffs of Dover*, the white chalk cliffs of Dover, which were so dear to his heart.

17-20. He was captive on a French vessel though he was allowed to land and wander on the coast of Boulogne. One night, when a great storm blew, he was on deck, and wished the ship might be driven on the English coast.

25. *wrought* (arch.), made; the word however survives in some contexts; e.g., 'He wrought infinite mischief;' cf. also the form 'wright' in *playwright*, *wheelwright* and surnames like *Cartwright*, which originally indicated occupation.

38. *wattled willows*, the soft willow woven into a network.

42. *Argo*, the name of the ship in which Jason and the Argonauts sailed to Colchis to win the Golden Fleece. The Frenchmen mocked at him and his *Argo*. (The word is used ironically.)

61. *tar*, sailor; also 'Jack-Tar' probably from 'tarpaulin' or the canvas caps the sailors wore.

#### EXERCISES

1. Tell the story of Napoleon's kindness to the poor English sailor.

2. Pick out all the nautical (sailor's) expressions in the poem; e.g. *launch*, *wherry*.

3. Read the story of Napoleon in some history book and describe his character.

4. Imagine the sailor telling the story to his mother after he had returned to England, and write down what he might have said to her.

## 9. THE PLATE OF GOLD

ONE day there fell in great Benares' temple-court  
A wondrous plate of gold, whereon these words  
were writ :

'To him who loveth best, a gift from Heaven.'

Thereat

The priests made proclamation : 'At the midday  
hour,

Each day, let those assemble who for virtue deem  
Their right to Heaven's gift the best ; and we will  
hear

5

The deeds of mercy done and so adjudge.'

The news

Ran swift as light, and soon from every quarter  
came

Nobles and munshis, hermits, scholars, holy men,  
And all renowned for gracious or for splendid  
deeds.

10

Meanwhile the priests in solemn council sat and  
heard

What each had done to merit best the gift of  
Heaven.

So for a year the claimants came and went.

At last,

After a patient weighing of the worth of all,  
The priests bestowed the plate of gold on one who  
seemed

15

The largest lover of the race—whose whole estate,

Within the year, had parted been among the poor.  
 This man all trembling with his joy, advanced to  
 take

The golden plate—when lo! at his first finger  
 touch

It changed to basest lead! All stood aghast; but  
 when

20

The hapless claimant dropt it clanging on the floor,  
 Heaven's guerdon was again transformed to  
 shining gold.

So for another twelvemonth sat the priests and  
 judged.

Thrice they awarded—thrice did heaven refuse  
 the gift.

Meanwhile a host of poor, maimed beggars in the  
 street

25

Lay all about the temple gate, in hope to move  
 That love whereby each claimant hoped to win  
 the gift.

And well for them it was (if gold be charity),  
 For every pilgrim to the temple gate praised God  
 That love might thus approve itself before the  
 test.

30

And so the coins rained freely in the outstretched  
 hands;

But none of those who gave, so much as turned  
 to look

Into the poor sad eyes of them that begged.

And now

The second year had almost passed, but still the  
 plate

Of gold, by whomsqever touched, was turned to  
lead. 35

At length there came a simple peasant—not aware  
Of that strange contest for the gift of God—to  
pay

A vow within the temple. As he passed along  
The line of shrivelled beggars, all his soul was  
moved

Within him to sweet pity, and the tears welled  
up 40

And trembled in his eyes.

Now by the temple gate  
There lay a poor, sore creature, blind, and shun-  
ned by all ;

But when the peasant came and saw the sightless  
face

And trembling, maimèd hands, he could not pass,  
but knelt,

And took both palms in his, and softly said : 'O  
thou, 45

My brother ! bear thy trouble bravely. God is  
good.'

Then he arose and walked straightway across the  
court,

And entered where they wrangled of their deeds  
of love

Before the priests.

A while he listened sadly ; then  
Had turned away ; but something moved the priest  
who held

The plate of gold to beckon to the peasant. So 50

He came, not understanding, and obeyed, and  
 stretched  
 His hand and took the sacred vessel. Lo! it  
 shone  
 With thrice its former lustre, and amazed them  
 all!  
 Son,' cried the priest, 'rejoice. The gift of God  
 is thine.  
 Thou lovest best!' And all made answer, 'It is  
 well,'  
 And, one by one, departed. But the peasant  
 knelt  
 And prayed, bowing his head above the golden  
 plate;  
 While o'er his soul like morning streamed the  
 love of God.

LEIGH HUNT

### NOTES

James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) was the friend of Charles Lamb, Keats and Shelley. He was one of the first to recognize the merit of these poets and to introduce them to the public. He wrote many delightful essays and his critical work is of a high order. As a poet he is not very great, but this and a few other poems have kept his name alive.

2. *wondrous* (poet.). The original form of the adj. was 'wonders' but after the analogy of 'marvellous' the suffix was changed to -ous.

3. *Thereat* (arch.), cf. thereof, therein, thereon, etc. which still struggle for existence.

9. *munshi*, an Urdu word adopted in English (old spelling 'moonshee').

20. *basest lead*, meanest, most worthless; one of the old meanings of the word 'base' was 'worthless'. Cf. base metals.

22. *guerdon* (arch.), reward.

28. *if gold be charity*, if the giving of alms alone may be considered true charity.

30. *That love might thus approve itself before the test*, that their love of humanity might thus be displayed before they were put to the test by the priests in council.

46. *bear thy trouble bravely*, cf. Milton's Sonnet *On his Blindness*.

'Who best bear His mild yoke, they serve  
Him best.'

56. *It is well*, it is just.

### EXERCISES

1. For whom was the plate of gold intended as a gift? How did people try to win the gift? Why did the beggars crowd round the Temple-gate? How did the simple peasant deserve the gift more than the rest? Why did people say it was just that he should be given the gift?

2. What is the moral of the poem? Compare it with that of *Abou Ben Adhem* by the same poet.

3. Explain :

(a) . . . all his soul was moved

Within him to sweet pity, and the tears  
welled up

And trembled in his eyes.

(b) O thou  
My brother! 'bear thy trouble bravely.  
God is good.

(c) While o'er his soul like morning streamed  
the love of God.

4. Explain: 'Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward.' Matthew, vi. 1.

#### MEMORABLE SAYINGS

1. East or West, home is best.
2. Well begun is half done.
3. It is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong.
4. The whole ocean is made up of single drops.

10 THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

OFt in the stilly night,  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Fond Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me :  
The smiles, the tears 5  
Of boyhood's years,  
The words of love then spoken ;  
The eyes that shone  
Now dimm'd and gone,  
The cheerful hearts now broken !  
Thus in the stilly night, 10  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,  
Sad Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me.

When I remember all 15  
The friends so link'd together  
I've seen around me fall  
Like leaves in wintry weather,  
I feel like one  
Who treads alone 20  
Some banquet-hall deserted,  
Whose lights are fled  
Whose garlands dead,  
And all but he departed !  
Thus in the stilly night, 25  
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,

Sad Memory brings the light  
Of other days around me.

THOMAS MOORE

### NOTES

Thomas Moore (1779-1852) was born in Ireland. He is best known as the poet of the *Irish Melodies* and *Lalla Rookh*. The latter poem published in 1817, consists of a series of Oriental tales, and is still popular. He received a literary pension and was a very popular poet in his day.

1. *stilly*, 'still'; used for the sake of the metre, which needed two syllables.

24. *And all but he departed, but* should be parsed as a prep., cf. Mrs. Hemans in *Casabianca*:  
'Whence all but he had fled.'

### EXERCISES

1. Compare this poem with *Past and Present* by Thomas Hood. Why is our recollection 'of 'other days' so often unhappy or at least melancholy?

2. Explain: 'A sorrow's crown of sorrow, is remembering happier things.'—Goldsmith.

3. What are your memories of your boyhood? Are they happy or sad?

4. Point out the figures of speech in this poem.

## 11. THE SLAVE'S DREAM

BESIDE the ungathered rice he lay,  
His sickle in his hand ;  
His breast was bare, his matted hair  
Was buried in the sand.  
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep, 5  
He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams  
The lordly Niger flowed ;  
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain  
Once more a king he strode ; 10  
And heard the tinkling caravans  
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen  
Among her children stand ;  
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks, 15  
They held him by the hand !—  
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids  
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode  
Along the Niger's bank ; 20  
His bridle-reins were golden chains,  
And, with a martial clank,  
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel  
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag, 25  
The bright flamingoes flew ;  
From morn till night he followed their flight,  
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,  
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,  
And the ocean rose to view. 30

At night he heard the lion roar,  
And the hyena scream,  
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds  
Beside some hidden stream ;  
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums, 35  
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,  
Shouted of liberty ;  
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,  
With a voice so wild and free, 40  
That he started in his sleep and smiled  
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,  
Nor the burning heat of day ;  
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep, 45  
And his lifeless body lay  
A worn-out fetter, that the soul  
Had broken and thrown away !

H. W. LONGFELLOW

### NOTES

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) was an American poet and professor. His long poem

*Hiawatha*, published in 1855, reproduces American Indian life woven round the figure of the hero, Hiawatha. Some of his shorter poems, e.g. *The Psalm of Life*, *The Village Blacksmith*, *The Wreck of the Hesperus* are found in many anthologies.

The poem was written at sea, and published in the volume called *Poems on Slavery*.

8. *The lordly Niger*, in Africa; it is over 2,500 miles in length and so justifies the adjective 'lordly'.

10. *Once more a king*, the unhappy slave, now toiling in a South Carolina rice-plantation, was, in his own land, the chief of a tribe on the banks of the 'lordly Niger'.

11. *caravans*, a word borrowed from the Persian 'Karwān' as early as 1600.

13. *dark-eyed queen*, dark eyes are a sign of beauty.

23. Note the galloping swiftness of this line.

29. *Caffre*, or 'kafir' a word applied by the Arabs to 'infidels'; also used to describe a South African race of the Bantus living in Cape Colony.

33. *the river-horse*, a translation of the Greek 'hippopotamus'; 'hippos' horse and 'potamos' river.

43. *the driver's whip*, the slave-driver's whip.

### EXERCISES

1. Give the substance of the slave's dream.
2. Describe a typical South African scene from your study of the poem.
3. Write an appreciation of the poem, quoting examples of alliteration, onomatopoeia, etc.

4. Explain : *the mist and shadow of sleep, the landscape of his dreams, the tinkling caravans, martial clank, glorious roll of drums, the triumph of his dream, the Blast of the Desert.*

#### MEMORABLE SAYINGS

1. Rome was not built in a day.
2. The noblest vengeance is to forgive.
3. No man is free who does not command himself.
4. God knows who are the best pilgrims.

## 12. THE BROOK

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down, 5  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorps, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow 10  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays, 15  
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret 20  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out, 25  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel 30  
With many a silvery waterbreak  
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go, 35  
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns, and grassy plots,  
I slide by hazel covers ;  
I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
That grow for happy lovers. 40

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance  
Among my skimming swallows ;  
I make the netted sunbeam dance  
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars 45  
In brambly wildernesses ;  
I linger by my shingly bars ;  
I loiter round my cresses.

And out again I curve and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

5C

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

## NOTES

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) was born at Somersby and educated at Cambridge where he made friends with Arthur Henry Hallam. He wrote poems even in childhood and in 1827 appeared a small volume entitled *Poems, by Two Brothers* containing his juvenile efforts. Arthur Hallam died suddenly in 1833 and Tennyson was filled with grief. He began to express his feelings in a poem *In Memoriam* which however did not appear till 1850. In 1842 some of his best work, including *Morte D'Arthur* and other poems, was published in two volumes. Tennyson was made Poet Laureate in 1850. His longest work is the *Idylls of the King*, telling the stories of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

This poem is a selection from a longer poem of the same name. Lawrence Aylmer revisiting the scenes of his boyhood, muses how his brother, Edmund, had made a poem on the babbling brook that flowed by Philip's farm.

The poem illustrates Tennyson's observation and love of Nature and his command of a melody that constantly recalls the sound of the things described; e.g. 'I babble on the pebbles'.

1. *coot and hern*, are water-fowl; 'hern' is a variant of 'heron'.

4. *bicker*, a repeated noise, such as the brawling of a stream over stones, the pattering of rain, etc.

7. *thorps*, or 'thorpes', villages; common in place-names in various parts of England.

9. *Philip's*, Philip Willows, a garrulous old farmer in the original poem.

11. *For men may come and men may go*, all the persons in the original story leave the land or die; the brook flows for ever.

14. *sharps and trebles*, higher notes (technical terms in music).

17. *fret*, eat away or wear away.

19. *fairy foreland*, a tiny headland or promontory that suggests the imaginary coast-line of fairy-land.

31. *waterbreak*, ripple; 'waterbreak' is used by Wordsworth in the same sense.

39. *forget-me-nots*, the bright blue flowers of the forget-me-not were supposed to ensure that those wearing them should never be forgotten by their lovers.

41. *I gloom, I glance*, 'I pass into shadow and then suddenly appear in the sunlight'; 'I look dull or bright'.

48. *cresses*, cf. Goldsmith: 'the brook with mantling cresses spread.'

### EXERCISES

1. Describe the course of the brook as it flows down from the hills to the river.

2. Describe in the same way the course of the river as it flows down to the sea.

3. Write a short description of the English country-side from your study of this poem.

4. Describe the course of any river which you know, e.g. the Musi, the Kistna or the Godavari, and give also a description of an Indian landscape.

#### MEMORABLE SAYINGS

1. Judge not of men or things at first sight.
2. An unhappy boy may make a good man.
3. Conscience is the chamber of Justice.
4. Denying a fault doubles it.

### 13. From GITANJALI

#### No. 4

LIFE of my life, I shall ever try to keep my body pure, knowing thy living touch is upon all my limbs.

I shall ever try to keep all untruths out from my thoughts, knowing that thou art that truth which has kindled the light of reason in my mind.

I shall ever try to drive all evils away from my heart and keep my love in flower, knowing that thou hast thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart.

And it shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my actions, knowing it is thy power gives me strength to act.

#### No. 69

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.

I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the

life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

### NOTES

Rabindranath Tagore was born at Calcutta in 1861 of a distinguished family of poets and painters. His first literary work was done in Bengali. During a visit to England he published *Gitanjali* and this established his reputation. His works consist of poems, plays, short stories and novels. His English poetry is without the ornaments of rhyme and metre but has a rhythm which recalls the Psalms of David. His short stories (collected and published under the titles of *Hungry Stones*, *Broken Ties*, *Mashi*, etc. are very deservedly popular. His novels *Gora* and *The Wreck* describing life in Bengal are equally famous. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1920. His works are marked by deep religious feeling, a passionate love of the beauty of earth and sky, and an intimate understanding of children and their ways.

*Gitanjali* (Song Offerings), a collection of prose translations made by the poet himself from Bengali, appeared in 1913, with an introduction by W. B. Yeats. 'These lyrics display in their thought a world I have dreamed of all my life long,' he says in the Introduction.

Tagore does not preach the philosophy of renunciation, but he sings of the glory and the joy of life.

## EXERCISES

1. What are the characteristics of poetry? Do you find all the characteristics here?
2. Give the substance of these prayers and explain their meaning and significance.
3. Turn into similes the following metaphors: *the light of reason, the shrine of the heart, the stream of life, waves of leaves, the ocean-cradle of birth.*

## MEMORABLE SAYINGS

1. The greatest wealth is content with a little.
2. Never trust to another what you should do yourself.
3. He bears misery best that hides it most.
4. Haste makes waste, and waste makes want, and want makes strife between man and wife.

## 14. SEA FEVER

I MUST go down to the seas again, to the lonely  
sea and the sky,  
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her  
by,  
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the  
white sail's shaking,  
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey  
dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of  
the running tide  
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be  
denied ;  
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds  
flying,  
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and  
the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant  
gipsy life,  
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the  
wind's like a whetted knife ;  
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing  
fellow-rover,  
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long  
trick's over.

5

10

JOHN MASEFIELD

## NOTES

John Masefield was born in 1874. He had 'sea fever' in his boyhood, ran away to sea and reached America, where he underwent many hardships. When he returned to England in 1897, he took to journalism, and five years later published his *Salt Water Ballads*. He has also written novels and plays but it is as a poet that he is likely to be remembered. His *Collected Poems* appeared in 1923. On the death of Robert Bridges in 1930, he was made Laureate.

The poem here quoted appeared in *Salt Water Ballads*. It is full of vivid images and a haunting rhythm; e.g. flung spray, blown spume.

3. *the wheel's kick*, the jerking of the steering wheel held by the helmsman.

8. *spume*, froth or foam of the sea.

9. *gipsy*, the word is derived from *gipcyan* for Egyptian, because the gipsies were formerly believed to have come from Egypt. An alternative spelling is 'gypsy' but 'gipsy' is slowly establishing itself, probably because of the recurrence of 'y' in 'gypsy'.

10. *the wind's like a whetted knife*, cf. Shakespeare:

'Thy tooth is not so keen' (of the winter wind).

11. *a merry yarn*, 'yarn' means 'spun fibre of wool, cotton, etc.', so fig. 'to spin a yarn' means 'to tell a tale'; the word is much used by sailors.

12. *quiet sleep and a sweet dream*, death and the life hereafter.

'*trick*' (nautical), 'the time allotted to a sailor on duty at the helm'; also in phrases, e.g. 'to take

one's trick' (at the wheel). 'The long trick' is a reference to life and the part one plays in life.

## EXERCISES

1. What are the images, the colours and the sounds suggested by the poem?
2. The poet has a passionate love of the sea. Others may have a love of mountains. Write a paragraph to describe the latter.
3. Why is English Literature so full of references to the sea?
4. Describe the scene on the deck of a vessel on a fair windy day.

15. THE MOON IS UP

THE moon is up : the stars are bright :

The wind is fresh and free !

We're out to seek for gold tonight

Across the silver sea !

The world was growing grey and old :

Break out the sails again !

We're out to seek a Realm of Gold

Beyond the Spanish Main.

We're sick of all the cringing knees,

The courtly smiles and lies !

I

God, let Thy singing Channel breeze

Lighten our hearts and eyes !

Let love no more be bought and sold

For earthly loss or gain ;

We're out to seek an Age of Gold

I

Beyond the Spanish Main.

Beyond the light of far Cathay,

Beyond all mortal dreams,

Beyond the reach of night and day

Our El Dorado gleams,

2

Revealing—as the skies unfold—

A star without a stain,

The Glory of the Gates of Gold

Beyond the Spanish Main.

ALFRED NOYES

## NOTES

• Alfred Noyes, born in 1880, early won recognition by his books *The Flower of Old Japan* and *The Forest of Wild Thyme*. He is one of the most melodious of present-day poets, using a great variety of verse-forms very skilfully. His most popular short poems are *Sherwood*, *The Highwayman* and *The Barrel-Organ*. Mr. Noyes is also a critic and has written among other books one on *Some Aspects of Modern Poetry*.

The poem brings back to us the spirit of adventure characteristic of the great Elizabethan seamen Raleigh, Drake and Gilbert.

4. *the silver sea*, the sea by moonlight; across the 'silver' sea they roved to find 'gold'.

7. *a Realm of Gold*, an 'El Dorado'; a fictitious city abounding in gold, believed by the Spaniards to exist upon the Amazon, in the province of Guiana.

8. *the Spanish Main*, originally the mainland of America, but later the sea near the coast from the isthmus of Panama to the mouth of the Orinoco.

11. *Channel breeze*, the winds over the English Channel.

15. *an Age of Gold*, or 'the Golden Age', i.e., the first and best age of the world, in which, according to Greek and Roman poets, mankind lived in a state of ideal happiness.

17. *far Cathay* (arch.), the old name for China; cf. 'Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay'—Tennyson.

23. *the Gates of Gold*, in El Dorado.

## EXERCISES

1. What do these adventurers hope to leave behind them? What do they hope to find in the lands beyond the Spanish Main?
2. Write an appreciation of the poem with reference to matter, form and style.
3. Read the story of any one of the great English seamen of the sixteenth century and narrate it in your own words.
4. Describe your vision of an ideal world (universal brotherhood, perfect friendship, peace and happiness, or anything else you believe in).

## 6. NIGHTFALL IN THE CITY OF HYDERABAD

SEE how the speckled sky burns like a pigeon's  
throat,  
Jewelled with embers of opal and peridote.

See the white river that flashes and scintillates,  
Curved like a tusk from the mouth of the city-  
gates.

Hark, from the minaret, how the muezzin's call 5  
Floats like a battle-flag over the city-wall.

From trellised balconies, languid and luminous  
Faces gleam, veiled in a splendour voluminous.

Leisurely elephants wind through the winding  
lanes,  
Swinging their silver bells hung from their silver  
chains. 10

Round the high Char Minar sounds of gay  
cavalcades  
Blend with the music of cymbals and serenades.

Over the city-bridge Night comes majestic,  
Borne like a queen to a sumptuous festival.

## NOTES

'My ancestors for thousands of years have been lovers of the forests and mountain caves, great dreamers, great scholars, great ascetics. My father is a dreamer himself,' writes Sarojini Naidu. Her father was Dr. Aghoranath, and she was brought up from childhood to a love of beauty and poetry. Edmund Gosse says in his Preface to her volume of poems entitled *The Broken Wing* that he frankly condemned her first effusions as being merely clever imitations, and that he encouraged her to put into metre her own original genius and describe the glory and splendour of Indian scenery. She took the advice and she is today perhaps the most popular poet in India. In a sense, she belongs to Hyderabad, and we are proud of her and her work. Her volumes of poems include *The Golden Threshold*, *The Bird of Time* and *The Broken Wing*.

This is a poem that should appeal to all of us because of its local colour.

The poet 'chooses her words and arranges them almost as a jeweller inlays his gold with gems'. The words used in the poem are happily chosen and each word has a rich, romantic suggestion that means more than it actually expresses; e.g. *languid*, *luminous*.

4. *Curved like a tusk*, we see the Musi near the city gate, but such a comparison probably never occurs to us; it is only a poet who can give us such a beautiful simile.

5. *minaret*, 'minar' and the more frequent word,

'minaret', are from Arabic. *Muezzin* (also in the form 'mueddin') is also borrowed from Arabic.

7. *trellised balconies*, balconies with trellis or grating of wood or stone; beautiful trellis-work or tracery in marble, is one of the glories of Mogul art.

8. *splendour voluminous*, rich splendour.

11. *cavalcades*, gay companies of men on horseback, or in figurative sense for gay and festive processions.

### EXERCISES

1. The poem is rich in metaphor. Point out all the examples.

2. What are the sights and sounds that delighted the poetess at nightfall in Hyderabad?

3. The poem describes nightfall in the city, probably a generation ago. The city has changed now. What are the sights and sounds you meet with today?

4. Have you read any other poem by the same author? If so tell what it is about.















