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# FACTS AND IDEAS



PHILIP GIBBS





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# FACTS AND IDEAS

SHORT STUDIES OF LIFE AND  
LITERATURE

BY

PHILIP GIBBS

AUTHOR OF

"KNOWLEDGE IS POWER" "FOUNDERS OF THE EMPIRE" ETC.

"He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise—who, though young and strong, is full of sloth—whose will and thought are weak,—that lazy and idle man will never find the way to knowledge."

—WORDS OF BUDDHA.

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## FOREWORD



SUCCESS is always a pleasant introduction, both for men and books. I may therefore best introduce this small volume by saying that the short essays contained in it have already had a successful career before reaching their present and perhaps, as some may think, unmerited dignity of book publication.

Like the essays in my former book, *Knowledge is Power*, of which indeed these are a continuation, they appeared originally in a number of weekly newspapers, including the *Weekly Scotsman*, the *Leeds Weekly Mercury*, the *Belfast Weekly News*, the *Nottingham Guardian*, and six others. In that form they seemed to find favour with a large circle of readers, not only in this country but in far parts of the world to which such a paper as the *Weekly Scotsman* finds its way.

The most agreeable proof to me of this popularity has been the receipt of nearly four thousand letters from my newspaper readers, containing many warm expressions of thanks for the pleasure and interest the little sketches have afforded and for the encouragement they have given to students, young and old. I have had letters from nearly all our distant colonies and from many foreign countries. Among my unknown correspondents there have been many of evident culture and wide reading, as well as those possessing a more elementary education, but with a really heroic desire for self-improvement. Soldiers and sailors on foreign stations, farmers in Canada, South Africa, and Australia, clergymen and schoolmasters, clerks, engineers, and British working men, governesses at home and abroad, and young men and women of all sorts and conditions, have written

to me with an enthusiasm which to some may seem almost laughable, but naturally has been pleasing to me.

It seems to show that there is a large number of people who, having perhaps but little time or opportunity for long and difficult works, are nevertheless prepared to take an intelligent interest in some of the intellectual problems of the past and present, who are delighted to know a little more about the great names and events of history than they learned in their school-days, and whose imagination is easily kindled by the great elemental facts of life and knowledge, if they are presented not too ponderously and with a few vivid touches.

It is not everybody who lives within reach of a public library, or can afford many books even in this era of cheap literature, or moves in a social circle where conversation may take the place of books. And there are very many people who would not read at all, however easy or difficult it may be to get books, unless they received some friendly guidance and encouragement. It is to such as these, I fancy, that my little essays have been welcome and helpful. It is a satisfaction to me to know that they have not been regarded as an easy way of acquiring knowledge in the "tit-bit" style, but—as most of my correspondents have told me—they have been an incentive to them to study works bearing on the subjects I have so briefly sketched.

To help some people to a few ideas which otherwise they would not have, to give them a glimpse of studies which they would find fascinating to follow by themselves, to quicken their imagination and stir their sympathy with some of the great things and beautiful things of life, has been my purpose in writing the short sketches included in this book and its predecessor. The latter—*Knowledge is Power*—met with a very friendly welcome from reviewers, and has already had a considerable sale. I trust that this book also will find as much favour as its simple scope may warrant and its purpose deserve.

PHILIP GIBBS.

January, 1905,

26 OVERSTRAND MANSIONS, LONDON, S.W.

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## PART I

# SERIOUS SOLILOQUIES



### 1. How to be Happy though Poor.

THERE is a good deal of cant written—and still more talked—about poverty. It is not a nice thing to be poor. Those who wallow in riches are too apt to talk about the cares of them, and yet in their hearts they know they lie, and would not give up their wealth for what they call the careless liberty of the poor.

It was all very well in the early days of the world. The poor then had not such a bad time. Men's needs were fewer, the pressure of life was not so great, the struggle for existence not so keen.

But poverty nowadays means the stunting of the mind, the weakening of the body, the depression of the soul. It is not good, perhaps, to be very rich, but it is very good to have just that margin of money which enables a man to get free from the haunting fear of destitution which clogs the steps of so many good workers of to-day ; just that little superfluity which allows him to indulge in such luxuries as the books he wants to read, the places he wants to see, the leisure he needs for thought and self-ennoblement.

Poverty is not such an easy thing as some people think. It is supremely difficult to be poor properly and not to drift into the quicksands of squalor, when the earning of the daily bread is the high-water mark of endeavour, with a little rest, a little frolic, as the only things to make life worth the living.

Poverty nowadays means not only little wages, but long hours. Leisure is for the well-to-do. Beauty also is their perquisite, and knowledge for them is a road all smooth and easy to travel upon.

**Poverty  
and En-  
vironment.**

There are very few men who can rise superior to their environment, and with the poor this is not often of a helpful character. I do not signify only that poverty which goes in rags and tatters, but that also which dwells in mean streets and walks the pavement in a black coat the worse for wear, eminently respectable, yet the garb of the army whose soldiers' pay is a living wage and just no more than that.

This respectable poverty is the worst of all. It is so deadening in its influence. It is so hard even to be respectable that there the ideals of life come to an end, and men will spend their days and sometimes half their nights for no other purpose than to be respectable, forgetful of other and higher aims, and giving themselves no time for any broadening and deepening of heart and brain, so busy are they with the work of keeping themselves alive, of feeding their families, of paying the rent, of clothing in the manner that befits their precious respectability.

It is only one poor man in ten thousand who rises above the level of his surroundings and who takes poverty by the throat and stifles its invitations to let things slide, not bothering about the difficulties and disadvantages which beset those who will become the masters and not the serfs of poverty. The few men who do get above the vulgarity of their environment are the philosophers of poverty.

**The Poor  
Philo-  
sopher.**

And, after all, there is a philosophy of poverty. It is the best philosophy in the world, because the rarest and most difficult. It means self-denial of an heroic kind, self-respect of the hero also. It means the capacity of ignoring the temptations of the commonplace, of refusing the acceptance of things ugly and stupid and vile as the inevitable accompaniments of life.

It means the quality of getting all that there is to be got for nothing. Yet what is worth a good deal belongs to the poor as well as the rich—the gifts of the sun and the stars, the picture galleries of the streets, the poetry of the night, the beauties of passing faces, the music of the wind and rain, the admiration of the good things which are given free by a fate that would be kind if men would let her be.

The philosopher of poverty does not despise it, but rather acknowledges it in simplicity and makes the best of it,

And he is able by his philosophy to estimate the facts he has to face and the little recompenses of life at their proper value.

For instance, if it is a choice between a new book and a new coat, he has to decide from which of the two he will get the most value. If to buy a coveted print he has to walk to his office and back again instead of using the tram-car, he has to make up his mind whether the refreshment to be got from "Dante meeting Beatrice" is sufficient to counteract the leg-weariness of the daily walks.

The philosopher of poverty quickly learns to cast off from himself all burden of false shame for lack of lucre.

He is not like so many of his fellows who strive to hide their poverty by covering it under an ostentation of being better off than their neighbours; stinting themselves in secret so that they might make a show in public; keeping a maid-servant when they cannot afford to buy a set of English masters, which are really cheaper and far more useful; living in a house with a rent of £10 in excess of what they ought to spend if they wanted to put by a little gold for a fortnight's holiday somewhat farther off than the nearest seaside.

**Proud Humility.** But the man who is able to face poverty with cheerful courage is not above doing his own household service, washing up his dinner-things with no sense of humiliation, and making his bed if need be, with a certain pride in being independent even of the slovenly char-woman, and lighting his fire in the morning to cook his own breakfast with no personal irritation against such domestic burdens.

Did not Carlyle during his first years at Cheyne Row shovel his own coals, to the scandal of his neighbours, but with perfect serenity of mind? He was certainly one of the philosophers of poverty, and gave the world an example of high thinking with plain living, which should not count for nothing in the teaching of great men.

The man who has found out with uncommon wisdom the relative value of the figures which make up the sum of life is in many respects far more wealthy than his neighbours who draw a much larger weekly wage. For they fritter away their money on things that make a show but give them little satisfaction, whereas he, stinting himself in things which matter little to him,

is able to buy at least a few treasures and a few pleasures which are an infinite source of enjoyment.

In many respects also he has the laugh of men who, never having to think twice before they are able to satisfy a wish or a whim, become cloyed with a surfeit of good things, each of which loses a lot of its value because it has been so easily acquired.

**Inculcating Optimism.** He cannot afford many books, for instance, but each one bought with hard-earned money, saved at much sacrifice, is to him a real joy, to be read and read again, to be looked at upon its little shelf with loving eyes when there is no need to open the covers again because it is known by heart.

His walls are somewhat bare, but the few prints and pictures on them are records of triumph, and each reproduction of one of his favourite masterpieces yields him far more relative pleasure than the masterpieces themselves in all the glory of their colour do to the owner of the priceless picture gallery in which they hang.

And the man who roves the world at will, moving from one place to another, through long months of idleness, not always gets as much refreshment from his travels as he who looks forward half the year to a fortnight in some place of his desire and back again for half a year to the recollection of these fourteen days which are filled with many golden hours of sight-seeing.

From this point of view, the philosophy of poverty does not tend to pessimism and does not consist in the mere stoic endurance of evil and misfortune.

## 2. Marriage and a Man's Career.

There can be no doubt, on the evidence of the Somerset House statistics, and other means of information, that there is an increasing tendency for men to marry later in life than was the custom of their fathers. But apart from statistics and in ordinary club-room and after-dinner conversation—often the best guide to changes in social life—anybody with his ears open may know that early marriages are generally condemned.

You will hear fathers of families confess their own folly by

advising their sons to keep a cool head in the society of women, and to avoid the "catastrophe," as they call it, of marrying young.

"Take my advice," says the greybeard, "and don't make an ass of yourself. A man who marries before he has an established career gives hostages to fortune and spoils his whole chance of happiness and success."

I have often noticed how guilty a young man looks when the talk runs upon marriage, if he has already joined hands with a partner and is endowed with the responsibility of parentage. If the fact is not generally known, he keeps his wife in the background and remains silent, or, if he has to confess to the situation, laughs uneasily and plays the traitor to his own convictions, even if in his own heart he knows that marriage has been no failure for him.

**Early Marriage.** It is not often, certainly, that a young married man has the courage to make a stand for the wisdom of early marriage, if such he thinks it to be. For, of course, it does require courage to express an opinion contrary to the particular philosophy of one's social environment, and of the very latest brand. It is almost as audacious as to wear the cut of a coat of last year's fashion.

It must not be thought, either, that this new disinclination against early marriage is merely derived from the material philosophy of selfishness. There are men, of course, who, liking fat cigars and stalls at the theatre, a well-stocked wardrobe, an evening game of billiards at the club, and all the little luxuries of bachelorhood on a modest income, are loth to deprive themselves of any of these things by sharing their moneys with a wife with her many expensive requirements.

There are others, too, of an exacting temperament, who, apart from the sordidly economic side of the question, have an objection to early matrimony because they will not be bothered by babies and bottles and the domestic accompaniments of the matrimonial state.

**Ambition and Marriage.** But these are by no means the chief reasons why young men of to-day so often decline to yield to the natural desire of putting a ring on the third finger of their own particular pretty girl and of setting up a *ménage à deux* with accommodation for future possibilities.

There is another reason of a more pardonable kind, and worthy of careful consideration by the fireside philosopher. The case was put to me with some point and lucidity by a young friend of mine the other day who is an excellent type of modern young manhood blessed with brains and ambition.

"It is a constant temptation to me to marry," he said. "I am earning a fair income, and there are several girls whom I love very dearly. But I put the thought of marriage away from me with a stern sense of duty. As you know, I have an ambition. It is not a very big one. I do not want to become Prime Minister or to found empires. But I have a definite goal in view, and I want to get there. Now, if I marry, my wife must be, or should be, my first consideration. I must give her not only my money but my time. The first I might afford, but the latter—no."

The fact is that he is afraid, like many others of his age and position, that marriage would spoil his career. Now most young men have a career before them, and it is certainly part of their duty in life that that career should be fulfilled if possible, whether it is to climb from the humble position of errand boy to the proud pedestal of a shopkeeper, from that of a junior reporter to editor-in-chief, or from that of a clerk in a City office on thirty shillings a week to a place on the Stock Exchange with thirty thousand a year.

If, therefore, early marriage is more often than not an insurmountable barrier to success, the young men of to-day cannot be verily blamed for a lengthy bachelorhood.

**The** But the question is—Does early marriage spoil  
**Tempera-** a man's career?  
**mental** In many cases it does.  
**Benedick.**

There are very many men who earn their livelihood by work which depends largely upon temperament and emotion. The artist, the author, the actor, and the musician cannot often stand the strain of those inevitable domestic troubles from which there is no escape in marriage.

They get irritable when the baby begins to cry—and irritation has spoilt many a masterpiece. They lose control of their nerves when the wife wants to know how long the butcher is to be kept waiting for the settlement of his account. And the nerves of the artist are easily jangled to the detriment of his work.

They get dispirited and depressed when their partner in life points out their little failings and rebukes them for their little follies. So often the poet who lives on his emotions loses his inspiration. Temperament is too often the cause of divorce. Therefore a man with a temperament should avoid early marriage.

**Common-sense and Domesticity.** But, thank Heaven, it is not every man that has a temperament. There are commonplace, common-sense individuals with steady nerves, who can face a butcher's bill or a wife's frown with the knowledge that the first will be paid in due course, and that the latter may be smoothed away with a smile or a kiss.

To all such persons I think early marriage is no barrier to the fulfilment of a career, but rather of very helpful tendency. A young man living in single state has too often the distractions of bachelor pleasures to draw him aside from the pathway to his goal of life. He plays cricket and tennis, he belongs to a club, he joins the volunteers, he has his smoking concerts, and he wastes his time generally like most other men of his age.

But if he is married he can neither afford the money nor the time for these social distractions, and his nose is kept to the grindstone in a way that is not wholly pleasant, and is sometimes distinctly painful, but which is often very profitable both in material and mental resources.

**The Significance of Matrimony.** No man may think he knows the meaning of life until he is married—and it is sometimes very valuable to know what life means pretty early. No man, either, may think he knows himself until he sits on the opposite side of the breakfast-table to a woman who sees him every day, at every hour of the day, and in all moods.

That also is sometimes very useful.

A married man learns the depths of brutality and selfishness which lie in his nature. He learns to know how easily and involuntarily he jars the most tender chords in a woman's heart by his clumsiness, how difficult it is for him to stand upright when a woman leans upon him for support in troubles of their married days.

When things go wrong he must be the strong one, feeling all the time his own weakness. He knows what sorrow is, for sickness comes, and his heart is torn with a great pain when the

woman he loves better than his own life lies ill. He knows, in fact, the meaning and mystery of life and those plain simple truths of the family state, with its pleasures and its troubles and its duties, which are necessary to teach a man his manhood in its fulness, which sober him down from the giddy irresponsibility of bachelorhood, from the high but foolish flights of young untamed imagination, to a sense of the sincerity and reality of man's estate.

### 3. The Divine Right of Selfishness.

The duties of unselfishness are taught as common platitudes. We learn them in our copybooks. They are preached to us and at us from the pulpit—and it is a very good gospel, too. Yet, after all, there is a sermon to be preached on the other side, and the divine right of selfishness is not often taken as a text.

I hope I shall not be mistaken. I do not mean that material selfishness which eats into the soul of a good many men and women so that they have no thought for their neighbours, and spend the money that comes to them by luck or fair ways on their own carnal enjoyments and mundane desires, caring nothing if those about them are in trouble or want, and sparing nothing from their superfluity for those who lack bare necessity. Such selfishness as that is perhaps the very worst form of sinfulness among the many sins of man.

#### **The Rights of Person- ality.**

But there is another kind of selfishness which is quite proper and just, and the lack of it breeds a weakness in a man which wastes some of the best stuff of human life and intellect. It is the right a man has to his own personality, the duty he has to develop that personality along its best and noblest lines.

There are some people who are so good-natured, and have before them such a high and, in my opinion, mistaken ideal of unselfishness, that they allow their time to be wasted, their energies to be sapped, and their intellect to be cramped by the continual and trivial demands of their family or social circle.

This is especially the case with men and women who stand out a little from their fellows by superiority of mind and energy. They are made the moral, mental, and social props upon which lazy-minded and ignorant people lean heavily. You will often see this in family life.

**The Claims  
of the  
Incapable.**

There is generally one of the girls in a large family upon whom the burdens of the household fall. The other girls get her to mend their frocks and frills. The mother perhaps delegates a good deal of the domestic responsibility to her because she is so capable and has such a good head for economy and administration. The boys make a slave of her—a willing slave, it is true, but yet she never has any time to call her own, so clamorous are these numerous demands.

So it is in the larger world. A man who has acquired a reputation among his friends for his sane and trustworthy judgment, for his scrupulous honour, for his brilliant gifts, is dragged willy-nilly into family squabbles, is nominated an executor of his friends' wills, is held up at every turn of life's road by highway robbers who demand his brains to do some mental task which they could do themselves if they only put their wits to work.

**The Penalty  
of Popu-  
larity.**

A man or woman with exceptional conversational powers or social gifts is always a prey to people who wish to be entertained. He is bombarded with invitations to dinners and At Homes, and is put down as rude and ill-mannerly if he does not accept. He can never have a quiet time at his club, but is dragged out of his quiet thoughts by people who want to be amused or instructed with no trouble to themselves. It is the penalty of popularity.

And the worst of it is, that however little a man cares for popularity, however much he dislikes it, he finds it the most difficult thing in life to resist its clutches. A novelist who once perpetrates a comic book which "catches on," a painter who in a weak moment puts on to the market a wishy-washy picture which appeals to popular emotion, is doomed to struggle all his life against his reputation for that kind of work. The public will take nothing else from him. Thomas Hood might have been a great tragic poet but for his early rhyming puns, and there is not an actor living who would not tell you that he was born to play "Hamlet," but cannot get away from "Bob Acres" and "Sam Gerridge."

**Laudable  
Selfishness.**

This is where the divine right of selfishness comes in. A man, as I have said, has a right to his own personality, and no one should be allowed to thwart his career. If a man must be unsociable in order to work out his evolution in art, or literature, or invention, or any other

kind of work which may ultimately be of benefit to mankind generally, he owes it as a duty to himself to be selfish enough to refuse the demands of his fellows who wish him to waste his time upon them.

And if any man has some great goal before him, or some important work in hand, he may, I think, properly refuse to spend his time upon useful but trivial tasks which may be expected of him as a member of society. The selfishness which prompts a man to leave the madding crowd to take care of itself for a time, and to return, so to speak, into the desert, where he may hold communion with his own soul, is no crime, although it may earn him hard names in his little circle.

**The Rising Generation.** I often think that fathers expect too much of their sons when they demand that they shall follow in the business which their sires have built up, giving no thought to different ambition which may inspire the younger generation. Yet this is an everyday difficulty.

Many a young man who feels a strong conviction that he was marked out by nature to be a lawyer, or a doctor, or an artist, or any other profession that may be mentioned, discovers that it means a horrid quarrel with his parent, who has succeeded as a draper, or a bootmaker, or a manufacturer of patent pills, and who wishes his son to follow in his footsteps. It is natural enough, of course, for the parent, and often very foolish of the son. For the former does not like to see a good business thrown away or passing over to strangers, and the latter is often very wrong in thinking that he has any gifts for a different career.

But here, again, the law of selfishness is a good law, and not even a parent has the right to protest against it. For perhaps, after all, the son knows himself and the possibilities of his brain and character without self-deception. Who knows that if he accedes to his father's demands and goes on producing cheap boots and patent pills, that the world may not be losing the first inventor of human flight, or an artist of rare genius, whose works may be of infinitely more value to mankind than the aforesaid articles?

**Self-Sacrifice.** Or, again, many a man is hindered from rising into a higher plane of thought and life because he cannot resist the appeals of the class in which he was born to remain with them.

Perhaps they are hopelessly vulgar and hopelessly ignorant, yet he loves them, for vulgarity and ignorance are often but accidents of environment, and do not hide the sterling gold of character. Yet he knows, perhaps, that if he remains with his own people he must remain also at their level. The higher world calls to him, and his heart prompts him to the belief that he is destined for something nobler, for something better, than he can attain in his own surroundings.

What is he to do? Shall he remain in the environment which jars against his higher instincts, or shall he go forth and grasp the laurel which may be awaiting him on the hilltop above his village?

It is a difficult question, for undoubtedly it is a beautiful virtue which prompts a man not to forsake his own kind, to remain with them even in their ignorance and narrowness of outlook. Yet to me it seems that the higher virtue belongs to the man who, in spite of the dragging at his heart-strings, goes out alone to climb the hill of fame.

At any rate, the history of the world's great men and women is full of examples of those who have bowed to the law of selfishness and neglected the smaller duties in order to fulfil those higher ones which lead through selfishness to the service of mankind.

And yet 'tis a dangerous doctrine, and perhaps too casuistical for plain minds. But I trust, in writing these words, I shall not have led any into error of mere vulgar selfishness in the ordinary meaning of that word.

#### 4. The Saving Grace of Humour.

"Give me a man who can laugh," said Carlyle, "a fine, fat, hearty laugh." And the sage of Chelsea was right. It is one of the most precious things a person may possess, this gift of laughter. A man who has it carries a touchstone which transmutes everything he meets into gold. A laughing man is a public benefactor. He has hidden upon his person a bacillus which spreads infection wherever he goes, but the laughing bacillus is infectious not with disease but with the reverse of disease—good health and happiness. It is good to be in that man's company. Be we ever such dull dogs, he will cajole a smile out of us. However heavy

be the burden of our care, his merriment will lighten it a little.

Let us learn to laugh. It is a splendid lesson, whatever the fee to be paid. Let us train our eyes to see the comical aspect of things, and our ears to catch the humours of those about us. Let us laugh at the world and its ways, for really it is a very funny world, and its little ways are uncommonly full of drollery; let us laugh at our neighbours—good-humouredly and without malice, mark you!—for there is not a man or woman who meets us in our daily walk but has some little peculiarities of manner that will raise a smile if we can but notice them; let us laugh at a good jest, at a good play, at a good book, if there is a grain of wit to be found. Above all, let us laugh at ourselves!

**The True Humorist.** That is the best of all good laughter. The man who can laugh at himself is the true humorist. And in that lies the saving grace of humour. That is what may keep a man sane in this age of increasing insanity. That is what comforts him in time of trouble, discomfort, and annoyance. And that is what teaches him to find his own level, and to expel those vile humours (to use the word in the old-fashioned sense) of self-conceit and false shame which surge up in the best of hearts at times.

“Well, I did make a pretty fool of myself that time!” says the humorist as he walks along the street. And then he will break out into a hearty “Ha! ha! ha!” which makes the passer-by stare at him as if he were an escaped lunatic. But he is a very wise man. Those three guffaws have cleared away a mist of foolishness that was fogging his brain when he thought of a certain occasion not long since when he played the part of Bottom with the ass’s ears before an assembly where he would fain have posed (and for the time believed he did) as the hero.

We all have our little weaknesses, our vanities, and foolish prides and awkward mannerisms. The only way to keep them within bounds is to study the humour of them, to be the first to poke fun at them, to meet them with a grin when they come poking their impudent noses into one’s face at unexpected moments. “Hullo, you scamp, I thought I had throttled you three nights ago, but there you are trying to make a fool of me again!” As the French say, “C’est le ridicule qui tue,” which being interpreted means that laughter

is more deadly than dynamite. So, if you want to assassinate a private enemy in the shape of one of those conceits who are always dogging a person's footsteps—just laugh at it, and you have it by the throat.

**Dull Dogs.** Without humour, a man, worse still a woman, is in a poor way. Better were it that he, or she, had not the wherewithal to buy a crust of bread, for one can but die once; but to live without humour is to be dead to everything good in life, and to be no more than a walking mummy, swathed about with layer upon layer of self-conceit. Fortunately, there are not many people entirely destitute of humour, though a good many are very economical in this respect and think that a little goes a long way. But now and again one does happen to meet a humourless being—and oh, the horror of it! I would rather meet a ghost on a dark night, even if it were a turnip with a candle inside, which is enough to frighten anyone with weak nerves.

I remember that Oliver Wendell Holmes writes of one of these strange beings, describing in his inimitable way that "her features disordered themselves slightly at times in a surface smile, but never broke loose from their corners and indulged in a riotous tumult of a laugh, which I take it is the mob-law of the features and propriety the magistrate who reads the Riot Act."

"You will remember," he goes on, "certain persons who have the misfortune of presenting to the friends whom they meet a cold damp hand. There are states of mind in which a contact of this kind has a depressing effect on the vital powers that make us insensible to all the virtues and graces of the proprietor of one of these self-absorbing organs. When they touch us virtue passes out of us, and we feel as if our electricity had been drained by a powerful negative battery, carried about by an overgrown human torpedo." So much for the unfortunate being without a sense of humour.

**A Sense of Contrast.** Humour, of course, like poetry, is to a certain extent inborn, and not to be manufactured. But it may also be largely developed by training and education. If a person acquires the excellent habit of looking at the humorous side of things he becomes so sensitive to the comedy of life, so keen-eyed for the ridiculous, that

he sees a thousand things to laugh at which the ordinary person would pass by without so much as the ghost of a grin.

Charles Dickens was like this. If he went out of his front door he was certain to see some comical scene going on in the road. He would fall a-laughing at a grotesque group of chimney-pots to be seen from his window, and crack his sides over the absurdity of a door-knocker or a dust-bin. He was always on the *qui vive* for drollery, and had an extraordinary sense of contrast, which, after all, is the secret of humour.

As an instance of this characteristic I have always been amused at that story of how he and his wife were serenaded by some admirers during their visit to the States. "They were most beautiful singers," wrote Charles Dickens in a letter, "and when they began in the dead of night in a long musical echoing passage outside our chamber door, singing in low voices to guitars, about home and absent friends, and other topics that they knew would interest us, we were moved more than I can tell you. In the midst of my sentimentality, though, a thought occurred to me which made me laugh so immoderately that I was obliged to cover my face with the bedclothes. 'Good heavens,' I said to Kate, 'what a monstrously ridiculous and commonplace appearance my boots must have outside the door!' I never was so impressed with a sense of the absurdity of boots in all my life."

Humour is not a Saxon or Teutonic characteristic.

**The Humour of the Celt.** The French and the Irish have the inborn gift of laughter to a far greater extent. The Irishman with the toes peeping through his boots, a battered hat, and a shirt that is somewhat draughty, will not be denied his joke, and will laugh with a gay heart and a "What's the use av smilin' on the wrong side av yer face, at all, at all?" And the Frenchman, during a siege of Paris, or some other calamity which makes food scarce and the future black, will shrug his shoulders, make an excellent soup out of a crust of bread and some cabbage water, and cry with an entire absence of gloom, "A la bonheur, camarade!" with a jest flavoured with a little "Gallic salt."

Such humour is the sunshine of life—poverty, misfortune, even ill-health, is conquered by it—and the man who loves a laugh, and does not neglect his love, has a treasure which kings may envy but cannot buy.

### 5. Shrines of the Departed Great.

On Thursday, 26th November last,<sup>1</sup> the Earl of Rosebery unveiled a tablet affixed to Holly Lodge, Camden Hill, the house in which the great Lord Macaulay died. It was the inaugurating ceremony of a new work undertaken by the London County Council to preserve the memorials and to indicate the whereabouts of houses in the great capital where there formerly resided men and women of renown.

It is to me a hopeful sign of a new sense of the duties and ideals of citizenship that a great public body like the London County Council should associate itself with this patriotic work.

I have a profound belief in the value of preserving those relics of the past which have yet withstood the inevitable destruction of modernity. I believe that, in these days of bustling commonplace, it is good for the imagination, good for the moral well-being of the people, to have in their midst memorials of the great ones of the past, whose names are still an inspiration and whose life-work is our most splendid inheritance.

Surely, therefore, the best memorials of these great characters are the houses in which they once lived, in which they first saw the light of day, or in which, perhaps, when the battle of life was over and the victory won, they laid them down and died.

**Haunted Houses.** For no man or woman may live in any house for any length of time without bequeathing to it something of their spirit. The houses of the departed great are haunted with old ghosts.

However matter-of-fact a man may be, however prosaic and unimaginative, he cannot, I think, stand within four walls where once some hero or heroine of old renown lived and laboured, without being stirred with an emotion that counts for something in the shaping of his own character.

Here, in these rooms which once resounded with the laughter, and perhaps with the groans, of a man or woman out of whose strugglings or heart-burnings came works which count for much in the world's wisdom, or beauty, or entertainment; here on these stairs, which once echoed with the footsteps of one of our

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1903.

national worthies ; here in this home, which was once the place of peace and rest and private life of one whose public career was in the glare of the world's footlights, old memories are summoned up which it is good for one to recall, old voices ring in the ears, old faces pass before one's mental vision, which lift one's thoughts above the ruck of the commonplace and bring them into communion with the immortal dead.

It is a pity that the majority among us do not take more trouble to preserve such shrines of historic memories. The jerry builder has been allowed to demolish many an old house hallowed by a glorious past. And even those still in existence are often passed by without a thought of their reminiscences.

It is only the few, the very few, among our people who make pilgrimages to such shrines to do reverence to the memory of those who once dwelt therein.

**Pilgrims  
from the  
West.**

It is different with those descendants of the race who live in the New World. Lacking the relics of old days, they yet value more than we the traditions of the past enshrined in old buildings and old places.

Were it not for the Americans, Stratford-on-Avon, and those many other quiet spots which once were the environment, influencing to no mean extent the characters of great men and women, would be neglected and deserted.

But these citizens of the New World come from afar to seek out, and to steep their minds with the scenes familiar once to the great ones of the past. I remember some time ago paying a visit to another house of Lord Macaulay's. It was a draper's shop, and the old shopkeeper told me how two American ladies had recently asked permission to walk into the garden and pick a few leaves from an old tree there. The permission was given, and the old man, going out after some while to see what had happened to his visitors, found one with tears in her eyes as she spoke to her companion of the great man who had once read his books beneath the shade of the solitary old giant.

To some the emotion would seem ridiculous. Yet, though perhaps there was no need for tears, it was pleasant to think of those two American women cherishing with such tenderness the memory of the great writer whose works had given them a vivid insight into the spirit of history and acquainted them with the life and manners of the forefathers from whom they had sprung.

**The Streets  
of a Great  
City.**

It is, as I have said, an encouraging sign of the times that the London County Council should realise so fully the value of such influences as to go to the expense and trouble of affixing memorial tablets upon the historic houses of the great city.

“The streets of London,” said Lord Rosebery in his brief but entirely charming tribute to the memory of Macaulay, “are not as a rule replete with interest”—and what the noble earl said of London he might say of many other of our modern cities.

“They are perhaps becoming more varied as time goes on, but in my youth at least they consisted of long wastes and dreary yellow brick and stucco. I ask those who are in the habit of taking long walks in London or in other great cities whether it is not an immense relief to the eye to come on some tablet which suggests a new train of thought, and which might recall to the mind the career of some distinguished person.”

**The  
Influence  
of History.**

Lord Rosebery expressed his belief in the influence of such tablets upon the minds of young men of to-day. “It is not a bad thing to have it forced on their minds that there are other avenues to fame” than the field of sport.

For myself, I may say that some of the pleasantest hours of my life have been spent in wandering through highways and byways in search of houses made memorable by the former presence of men and women of renown.

It is a pleasure which when once acquired never palls upon one, and every new town visited gives opportunities for pleasant pilgrimages to shrines of the departed great.

I would urge upon all my readers not only the intellectual enjoyment to be derived from a visit to such a place, but the absolute duty imposed upon them by the spirit of patriotism, to do all in their power to preserve any old building which has once been associated with historical persons, and to keep alive those reminiscences, or, in the words of Lord Rosebery, “those pleasant traits, which endear a man’s home to the public.”

**6. The Nation’s Greatest Danger.**

Although I am not numbered among the ranks of pessimists who are at present groaning out lamentable prophecies of the

down grade of the nation, the deterioration of national physique, the falling backward before foreign competition, the inefficiency of those in high places, the increase in the ranks of pauperism, the era of big trusts, and the danger of a European conflict ending in the break-up of the empire, I am bound to say that a study of contemporary social life and a comparison of the characteristics of our own country with those of others lead me to the conclusion that the Anglo-Saxon race, in spite of its inherent strength, has many weaknesses (in part derived from its consciousness of that strength), and is in some things ill-equipped to keep pace with the demands now made upon a nation which should maintain its position in the forefront of the world's rivals.

**Strength and Weakness.** The strength of the British Empire lies in the characters of its individuals. Its weakness is in its incapacity for organisation.

I am so much of a Jingo that I believe our Anglo-Saxon is equal to three men of any other race if it is a question of "grit," bull-dog courage, resource in the face of difficulties, nerve in the face of dangers, calmness in defeat, endurance, determination, and dash when fighting at close quarters with an enemy that comes out into the open.

The whole history of the race redounds to the credit of the individual, not only in war but in exploration, in colonisation, in science, in commerce, and in social reform. But it is a strange paradox that the whole history of the race is discreditable to its capacity for organisation.

The shame as well as the glory of the late war is only an example of what has happened in many previous wars. We fought our way through and won. But at what a cost!

The individual was splendid. The private soldier and the officer were of first-rate fighting quality. They were called upon to show their mettle, and they proved themselves to be such stuff as makes men heroes. But, as the now famous War Commission Report has proved with a most deplorable show of evidence, the individual was thwarted, foiled, wasted, crushed, by an utter lack of efficient organisation.

Perhaps it will never be fully known to the public what an unholy muddle that chess-board of the war was in, and how all the pieces were jumbled up in inextricable confusion. The Staff, the Transport, the Intelligence Departments were all in chaos. I have talked with officers in high command, who now admit the

woeful tangle of the whole organising force of the army in the field.

Yet, bad as it was, it was no worse than at other crises of our country's history. The Crimean War is a blacker chapter than the Transvaal War. And the student of Wellington's great series of victories knows well enough how he won them in spite of, and not with the aid of, the army organisation of his day; how there, again, it was the individual who came out strong, and the system that hindered his finest efforts.

**The Man  
and the  
Machine.**

Now, if our organising genius were as great as our individual "grit" we should be irresistible. Unfortunately, however, the separate strength of a number of individuals is as nothing compared with the force of an efficient system. This was seen clearly enough in the Franco-Prussian War.

The German soldier, take him man for man, is not considered as equal to the French soldier, who has superior intelligence and infinitely more daring. But the Germans have the knack of organisation, and their army is a machine in which every wheel works in harmony.

Consequently in 1870 the French were crumpled up.

They would probably meet with the same fate if a new war broke out between the two nations to-morrow.

With our own army it seems as if every wheel worked independently of every other, the effect being a jarring, jangled discord.

The same thing is to be found in civil and political life as well as in the military element of our national existence.

The individual Anglo-Saxon has, I venture to say, an inherited understanding of the business of social life, and of the just issues of political life, which is not so strong a characteristic of other nations.

I believe also that in all great public problems and difficulties there is a great majority of individuals in this country who would be able to put their fingers upon the weak spots, and have a kind of intuitive sense which shows them the truth about these things.

But there is an utter lack of organisation which prevents this great body of public opinion from finding expression in one loud, unflinching, unanimous voice, and it has to proclaim itself now here, now there, in isolated, individual expressions that seem like so many voices crying in the wilderness.

**The Value  
of Clubs.**

It is the same in every town and village, in every department of our social being. Each man lives too much his own life. He does not realise sufficiently the value of combination and collaboration, nor his duty to society as well as to himself. I think it would be an excellent thing if people in this country associated more in clubs.

That is the first step towards a training in organisation and in establishing an organised force of opinion.

In Germany there is a complete network of clubs covering the whole country, with a thread of connection between each other, so that when any question arises affecting their interests they may combine in giving utterance to their united views. The German has a positive genius for club life. It is a part of his very nature. Even in London he cannot exist without this means of social and intellectual communication, and there are no fewer than fifty German clubs in the English capital.

**The Duties  
of Citizen-  
ship.**

I think another of the great dangers to our national existence is a lack of interest and of knowledge in the duties of citizenship.

English home life is too self-satisfying and too self-centred. The average man is content if he may build up the prosperity and happiness of his own little household, which to him represents the world. He has not, as a rule, that broader public spirit which would induce him to give some thought and time to the prosperity and happiness of his fellow-citizens, of his fellow-countrymen, or of his imperial kinsfolk.

There are, of course, admirable exceptions. In every town there are men who are ready to give their time and energy and brains in the service of the commonweal. But every man who has tried to bring about a civic reform or to obtain the backing of public opinion knows how immensely difficult it is to stir the least ripple of interest in the placid surfaces of the people's indifference.

**Public In-  
difference.**

Even in questions of enormous import to the nation, in spite of the efforts and energies of newspapers and the vehemence of public speakers, the great substratum of society is hardly moved with the shock of events.

I am assured by people who have been touring through England during the recent weeks that numbers of working-class men have never heard of the fiscal problem.

This seems almost incredible, yet I cannot doubt the veracity of my informants. They assure me also that many others with whom they have spoken, although they have a vague idea of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, are absolutely indifferent to the great issues at stake.

Here, again, I think that there is much to be done by a development of political clubs and debating societies who organise and formulate public opinion, and to stimulate a keener interest throughout the great body of the nation in problems of vital social import.

The fact is that the most dangerous tendency of our national life at the present time is a total lack of enthusiasm for all that is outside the petty personal interests of the individual, and a strong disinclination among the people for any theories, ideals, and systematising that involve the interests of the commonweal and of future generations.

The lessons of evolution have not yet reached the hearts of the great community, giving them a new conception of duty which may lead them to sacrifice to a certain extent the individual self-concern to the collective well-being of the greater number.

PART II

SOME FANCIES AND  
A FEW FACTS

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I. Fairy Tales and the Child-Mind.

It may seem a little strange that I should choose so childish a subject to write for readers who are out of the nursery. Yet I am a great believer in the value of fairy tales. I believe they are an essential part of a good education. I believe they exercise a profound effect upon one's character throughout one's life.

When I hear a person say that he, or she, has never made the acquaintance of Grimm and Andersen, I feel a deep compassion for that person. I pity that person for having had a blighted childhood, and for having a mental blank which may never be filled up. And I have a little doubt in my mind whether all can be right with that person's moral character.

It seems to me that it must have certain lamentable limitations, that it cannot be so "well-poised, melodious, and whole," as if in childhood the fairy realm had been explored in all its nooks and crannies.

**Primitive  
Morality.** For, apart from every other reason—and there are many—why fairy tales are a valuable means of education, they have a great moral influence upon the mind at the most impressionable period of life.

Fairy tales were not invented by idle brains for idle moments, the light and frivolous fancies of a professional story-teller to

tickle the ears of his audience. But they enshrine the primitive morality—the best morality—of the people. They may, in fact, be accounted as religious literature. For you will find that in all fairy tales the principles of right and wrong, of good and evil, are very clearly and emphatically shown. The good fairy and the bad fairy are always fighting against each other, and it is a blessed thing that in these simple tales the bad fairy, although she may seem to triumph for a time, is always defeated in the long-run and gets the punishment she richly deserves.

In life also there is always a good fairy and a bad fairy, but, alas! the latter sometimes gets the upper hand, though not so often as some seem to think. Evil does, as a rule, bring its own punishment and virtue its own reward, whatever pessimists and novelists may have to say about the matter.

These old fairy tales awake in child-hearts a sympathy for those whom fortune treats unkindly. They teach a pity for the weak and helpless, for those distressed by biting poverty, for good people oppressed by bad ones. Children learn from fairy tales to love the virtuous and to hate the wicked. And from these old legends they are first inspired with enthusiasm for heroes and heroic deeds, and are first taught to see the beauty of unselfishness and humility, and the duty of obedience and truth.

Once upon a time—how I used to thrill when that old familiar phrase used to meet my eyes when as a small boy I turned the pages of a tattered Grimm! —once upon a time a poor widow lived in a little cottage not far from a thick wood. In front of the cottage there grew two rose trees—the one with white, the other with red roses on it. The widow had two little girls. She named one of them Snow-white and the other Rose-red, after the two rose trees. One cold night they heard a loud knock at the door.

“Quick, Rose-red!” cried the mother, “open the door! Perhaps it is some poor man who has lost his way.”

Rose-red pushed back the bolt and then ran screaming away. It was no poor man, but a big black bear!

Snow-white hid herself behind the mother’s chair, and Rose-red got into the cupboard. Then the bear began to speak.

“Don’t be afraid,” said he; “I only want to warm myself a little; I am half frozen.”

“Poor bear!” said the widow. “Lie down before the fire as long as you like, only take care not to burn your fur.”

Then she called to the children, "Come here, Snow-white and Rose-red; the bear is a gentle creature, and will not harm you."

So the children ceased to be afraid, and soon became quite friendly with the bear, who went away in the morning. But in the evening he returned again, and all through the cold winter he took shelter at night in the cottage.

When the warm spring came, the bear said, "Now I must go away. I shall not return again all the summer."

"Where are you going?" asked Snow-white.

"Into the wood, to keep my treasure safe from the wicked dwarfs."

Now, I wonder how many of my readers remember the end of this old story: how the children, being left alone, meet an ugly dwarf one day, who has caught his beard in a cleft in a tree, and how, when they set him free, he is rude and ungrateful to them; how they meet him several times afterwards, and each time do him a service, but never get aught but hard words in return for their trouble; and how, at last, he is about to ill-treat them when there is the sound of a roar in the forest, and the big black bear comes bounding up and crushes the ugly bad dwarf to death. Then a sudden change comes over the bear, and he turns into a handsome young prince.

"I am the King's son," said he. "I was changed into a bear by the wicked dwarf, who stole all my treasures. Only by the dwarf's death could I be changed back again into my own shape."

They all went home together to the widow's cottage. Soon afterwards Snow-white was married to the prince, and Rose-red was married to his brother. The widow left her cottage and dwelt with her children in the King's palace. And so they all lived happily ever afterwards.

**Early Lessons.** This is one of the fairy tales I remember reading so well as a small boy out of a big book. To us grown-ups it seems very simple and unmeaning, yet to a child it is full of lessons. It teaches one that even a fierce creature like a big bear (or a rough man) may become friendly if treated with kindness. It teaches one, however, that one must not always expect gratitude in return for kindly deeds, as seen by the behaviour of the little dwarf. And the child learns to believe—a belief that is a very glorious source of hope—that in the hour of danger help will always come in the nick of time.

What a beautiful lesson of humility there is in the tale of "Cinderella"! What a hero is that jolly little chap, Hop-o'-my-Thumb! What lessons of prudence and accuracy are to be learnt from the tales of the Two Brothers and the Journeymen Tailors! How delighted is the child to find that the wit of young Jack is worth more than the brute strength of old Giant Blunderbore. What glorious fun it is when the brother and sister, locked up in a cage by the wicked old witch who is fattening them up for a feast, trick the old lady by putting a bone through the bars when she comes to feel how plump they are! How the young heart is stirred by emotion when the babes are left in the wood by their wicked uncle and the robins cover their bodies with leaves.

All these stories, as I have said, are full of moral value, and teach children to have a full sympathy and a tender heart for the sufferings and sorrows, not only of their fellow human beings, but of the animal world around them.

**The World of Make-Believe.** Yet this is not the only, nor indeed the chief, value of fairy tales. I think their influence is best in quickening and feeding the imagination of children. It is not good for children to be very matter-of-fact, to know in their early years very much about real life.

Childhood should be, and very often is, a dream-world, a time when everything around one is but a part in the game of make-believe.

That is the best game in life, and happy are the man and woman who still are able to summon back their childish zest and talent for this make-believe, so that though they dine off mutton they can pretend it is venison, and though they are poor, and ill-treated by fortune, they can deceive themselves into believing that one day the good fairy will come and change their humble lodgings into a gorgeous palace, and their poor shoddy clothes into purple and fine linen.

**Playing at Fairies.** I know people like this. They have a happy knack of thrusting aside care, of locking up the commonplaces of life in the cupboard, shutting out the greyness of life by pulling the window curtains; and then drawing up to the fire they say to you, "Come, let us play at fairies." And, like very children sitting in the nursery corner, these men and women, who have to face life in its grim moods,

conjure up bright fancies, and once again the good fairy appears with her magic wand, and once again the black imp is put into punishment. And "all live happily ever afterwards"—until to-morrow morning.

But they could never do this unless in their childhood they had sat in the glimmering twilight with Grimm's dear book by the fender, or lain upon the lawn with the breeze fluttering the leaves of Hans Andersen and his spirit-children.

**Real and Unreal.** I remember in my own childhood the characters of these old folk-lore tales were far more real to me than the people who moved in my little world. These people of flesh and blood seemed such incomprehensible beings. They could not understand me, nor I them. They cared for things which appeared to me devoid of interest, and they cared nothing for things which to me were the only things that mattered—white mice, little tin soldiers, a cubby house at the bottom of the garden, shadows dancing on the wall, the hills and dales of the bedclothes, the *Swiss Family Robinson* with coloured pictures; best of all, the green-backed volume of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.

But Jack the Giant-Killer, Hop-o'-my-Thumb, Puss in Boots, Goldilocks, Little Red Riding Hood, the Little Tailor, and many another personage, were my friends. I knew them, and they knew me. I lived in their world, the dream-world with woods in which stood little huts of gingerbread, with mountains of glass and hills of gold, peopled by giants, and dwarfs, and dainty little elves, and horrid old witches and good fairies, beautiful damsels and fairy princes, and one small boy with a pale face and timid eyes who sometimes got frightened in the dark and sometimes woke from a day-dream to wonder where he was.

**2. The Mystery of the Night.**

I think there are few people living in cities who have much acquaintance with the night. They do not rise of a morning until the sun has drunk the last drop of dew upon the grass; and if they do not go to bed until the small hours of the night, it is not because they are walking under the stars, but because they are talking beneath the gas jets.

To me the "soft stillness of the night" has always had a

fascination. After the noise and turmoil of a busy day I love to take a stroll into the darkness when the cool hand of night soothes one's hot, excited thoughts, calming one's nerves, and reminding one how paltry and insignificant much of this worry and hurry of life really is in the great sum of existence.

Night is the time of introspective thoughts, when a man hears the still, small voice of his own soul crying to him in its loneliness. In the daytime he forgets himself in his environment. The sun shines down upon the world, and in its light life's little tragedies and comedies and pantomimes are performed before the great public, each of whom forgets to some extent his own part in the drama by watching that of others. In the light of day there is the work to be done by which a man must live, and there are those thousand and one little trivialities to be gone through which make up the daily routine of a civilised person and cause him to lose his own personality by attracting his thoughts to things outside his being.

But in the darkness and stillness of night the importance of these outward things sinks into the deeps of insignificance, and the true values of things, judged in relation to that planet-world winking at us from some hundred thousand of miles' distance, judged in relation to those ghosts, who flit past us in the night as memories of the dead centuries, come to one's vision with a clearness that is only possible when the dark curtain has fallen upon the crowded scene, and one wakes with a start from a foolish, heated day-dream to the cold and calm reality of the true life of the soul.

Yet in some scenes not encompassed by mean streets, and where the eye may have room to search long distances of half-darkness, there is a beauty of night which checks too much introspection, and demands an observant homage from a midnight wanderer.

**Beauty in  
Darkness.** If one wishes to understand the beauty of night, let him leave his bed an hour before the sun and turn his steps to some such scene as this, where I have often strolled by night—a long field sloping down to a pond fringed with willows, and farther (margined with shivering rushes) to a river; on the right, close at hand, a clump of woods, and away beyond the river a line of low hills, with a small town straggling to the summit, upon which the spire of a church tapers into the sky. In the daytime there is nothing very fine about

this spot. There are a hundred more beautiful places within five miles of it. But at night, when I have stepped from a small house adjoining, attracted by the passionate notes of the nightingale—

“ Sweet bird that shuns the noise of folly,  
Most musical, most melancholy ! ”

there has been a divine loveliness in the folded pinions of the darkness brooding over this solitary place. For it is not a darkness that presses close upon one, impenetrable as a velvet pall, curtaining one's eyes from hidden things, but it is a darkness translucent with the pale rays of the moon. The willows overhanging the little fish-pond are turned, where the light falls upon them, to silver, and in their shadows ebony. The river flashes out here and there like a sword drawn from its scabbard, and then is swallowed up into yawning gulfs of blackness under the rugged brow of the steep bank. The nightingale has finished its voluptuous chant. Not a sound stirs. It seems as if Nature is hardly breathing in her sleep. So still is it, so silent, that a man walking alone down the footpath to the river is apt to stand with a sudden tremor at the heart, straining his ears, struck with a momentary fear of his own absolute solitude and of this appalling stillness.

Then suddenly the tension is relieved by the splash of a water-rat as it plunges off a floating log, and a moment later a buck-rabbit scuttles past one, almost tumbling head over heels in its sudden fright at one's approach. At this hour before the dawn there is a pungent fragrance in the air which makes the nostrils quiver with its keen earth-flavour. In such an hour and in such a scene the night folds one in its garment of pulsating darkness, and one feels, perhaps for the first time, something of that communion between man and Nature which was the inspiration of all pagan creeds, and which, though they materialised it into the gross substance of their deities, yet enshrined in their religious literature—be it the Greek mythology or the Scandinavian Nibelungenlied—the spirit of the Nature-world.

**Night  
in a City.** Yet, magical as is the greeting of the night over meadows and woods, it is not so profoundly impressive as when one stands in the heart of a great city slumbering beneath the moon. The thought of night comes

to me always with the same brain picture. I stand upon a bridge haunted by the footsteps of old ghosts and thronged in the daytime by jostling crowds of modern men and women, but now silent and solitary, save for the dark form of a night watchman who stands with a halo of light about him from the lamp-post and a bold black shadow thrown across the footway.

Down below is the great river, a river of old-historic memories, and through the white, hazy mist that floats above its surface in this night-hour it seems as if the departed great ones who once passed down this river in victory and in defeat, in triumphal progress and in a progress that would end upon a little green with the headsman's block upon it, it seems as if their spirits were hovering above the waters now, and as if their voices were wailing through the mist.

Down below through this thin, shifty, mist-like white smoke the silent highway reflects the blurred images of the lights on the bridge and the lanterns of barges moored alongside the wharves. The buildings on the riverside loom out darkly, their daylight hideousness hidden by the cloak of night, so that now they are invested with a sombre grandeur, towering grimly over the water, great masses of blackness, with here and there a ghostly gleam of white as the riverside lights fall upon a stone frontage or a whitewashed wall.

A deep silence broods over the water and over the great city upon its banks. But now and again in the middle of the stream a small "tosher" tug speeds swiftly down the tide, uttering that hoarse, guttural noise—"tosher! tosher! tosher!"—from which riverside men have given it its name. When it has passed silence reigns again, broken only by the lap, lap of the water against the wooden piers, until suddenly, from farther down the river, a wild, piercing siren-shriek rings out, followed by a deep booming answer from a bigger vessel. Then silence again.

I know no more strangely thrilling feeling than to let one's eyes pierce through this picture in black ink and to let one's being be filled with the mystery of the great shadows. All that is sordid, commonplace, familiar, passes away, and here there is the grandeur and the awfulness with which night invests even the ugliest of great cities when one is away from the glare of the gaslights.

"Ne'er saw I, never felt a calm so deep,  
The river glideth at his own sweet will;  
Dear God, the very houses seem asleep,  
And all that mighty heart is lying still."

**Night-Sounds.**

In the night one's senses are more subtle, one's body seems spiritualised, and one's emotions are more highly strung. With the most dull-witted man darkness sets the imagination at work. One never sees ghosts by daylight. But in the darkness no man may quite rely upon the soundness of his "common-sense," for another sense is awakened within him which makes him see with the eyes of the mind rather than with those of the body.

In the night, sound has an added value. The tolling of a bell or the pealing of many bells falls upon one's ears with a cadence that thrills the pulse, which would be untroubled were the clanging notes heard in the daytime. And in the darkness a sudden shout will set one's blood curdling with an undefined alarm, whereas in the light of day it would be unheeded.

I remember one dark night I crossed the Pont Neuf at Paris, and stood for a moment gazing at the sombre and majestic pile of Notre Dame. The cathedral was in the deepest gloom, except where the moon rising behind it touched its pinnacles with silver. It was in the small hours of the night, and not a soul was passing. I stood there alone, until suddenly a figure slouched from the black shelter of a buttress and stood in the patch of light beneath a gas-lamp. It was a wild, ragged creature, with shaggy beard and long, lean arms.

For some reason I do not understand—for I do not think he could have seen me where I stood, and no one else was near—he threw up his hands, and in a wild, hoarse, horrible voice shouted out the cry of venomous despair, "Vive l'anarchie!"

Three times he repeated the cry, and then disappeared into the black shadows. To say that my nerves thrilled at the sudden breaking of the city's silence is but feebly to indicate the effect of this raucous shout. It was like a scene in old Paris when beneath the shadow of these same stones many a deed of midnight horror was enacted. For once I was glad to get away from the night into the cosiness of a well-lit room.

### 3. Unpainted Pictures of Everyday Life.

The man who gets most pleasure out of his life, provided he is not overweighted by more than the ordinary burdens of existence, is he who by nature and training is possessed of strongly

developed and highly refined senses, especially the senses of seeing and hearing.

The highest revelations of those senses are to be found in the artist and the musician, according to the measure of their gifts. Both musician and artist have a special joy of their own in life denied in part or wholly to less gifted mortals. The musician, with his sensitive ear, finds melody in running waters and in the voices of the winds. The sounds of the world around him, unheard, or at least unnoticed, by ordinary folk, the song of birds, the toil of men, the laughter of women, the shouts of little children, the tramp of an army, the gallop of horses, the hum of insects, come to his ears with ever-changing, infinitely various harmonies.

And so also the artist's eye, gazing about him, sees beautiful, strange, subtle combinations of form and colour which mean nothing to those whose eyes are not trained to see, but which to him are a source of endless interest and never-failing joy.

It is not all of us who may interpret the sounds of the world into vocal or instrumental music, nor all who may reproduce the sights of the world through the medium of oil-paint or water-colour. But it is a part of my philosophy that every man and woman born into the world should so train their senses of hearing and seeing, that though they may not belong to the professions of the musician and the artist, they may partake of the joys of both.

**The Artistic Sense.** As regards the artistic sense, there are few people, if any, in which it has not reached some stage of development, enabling them to appreciate its pleasures. There is, for instance (I should think), scarcely anyone who cannot derive a certain pleasure—of very varying degree, according to the temperament and training of the individual—in the contemplation of a fine or agreeable picture.

Standing before a canvas upon which a Reynolds, a Gainsborough, a Leighton, or a Leader has lavished his love and skill, there are, I fancy, few of even the most moderately intelligent beings who cannot perceive and enjoy the beauties of form and colour depicted thereon. I have often studied the visitors at some of the great galleries, and noticed how some of the humblest and presumably least educated among them have stood gazing with evident pleasure at some landscape or figure picture.

Now this leads me to the real theme of this little essay, to which the foregoing has been mere preamble. And that is, that although every ordinary person can appreciate a painted picture, there are remarkably few who take any notice of, or find any pleasure in, the unpainted pictures of life. And the latter are so much more numerous!

It is only the artist, or the person with the artist's eye, who sees the picturesqueness of the world around him. It is this which constitutes the artist's private possession of pleasure. For one picture he paints he sees a hundred, I might almost say a hundred thousand, which he might have painted. The streets, the fields, the lanes, are to him great public picture galleries, where he may constantly find delight without payment of an entrance fee.

Ordinary people hurrying past him see nothing worth their attention. They are not conscious that every day of their lives they are passing pictures worth more than all the Royal Academies and National Galleries of the whole world. For any artist worthy of the name will admit that no picture has ever been painted, or will ever be painted, which reproduces with perfect fidelity all that may be seen by seeing eyes in any scene of real life.

And this is what I think everyone should attempt to do—to train himself into seeing and studying the unpainted pictures of the world about him.

It is not a question of special gifts alone—though some, of course, born with the artistic temperament, need but little teaching or training—but it may be readily acquired merely by the habit of directing one's attention to one's surroundings to find the picturesque in them.

Some of my readers who follow me may stop and say, "That is all very well, but how am I to see unpainted pictures that might be the original of Leader landscapes when I live in city streets?"

That is true as far as it goes, but there are other kinds of pictures than landscapes, and the picturesque may be found in the streets just as well as on the moors or by meandering streams.

To-day I passed down one of the highways of a big town, and came to a little square where five streets converge and the traffic is in constant turmoil. In the centre of the roadway is a concrete "island of refuge," and there, grouped about a lamp-post, were half

a dozen flower-girls. Their great baskets were heaped high with chrysanthemums, white and yellow, and they were busily arranging them into "market-bunches."

In their careless attitudes there was a grace not wholly spoilt by the ill-made dresses and heavy shawls. One of them bent over her basket, while a companion had stretched her hand above her head, gazing with a smile at the best of her bunch, a great white flower with ragged petals. One sitting with hunched-up knees and her back to the lamp-post was nursing a tiny baby, and another, whose strident cry had arrested a customer, was pinning a flower to his coat. As I passed, three city pigeons fluttered down near the little group and preened themselves close to the flower-baskets.

In the midst of the busy traffic it seemed to me that there was a picture which might tempt the brush of any painter, yet I warrant not the greatest of French impressionists could have given all the colour and "atmosphere" of that little scene of city life. It was one of the world's unpainted pictures.

**Pictures in Motion.** But the scene I have sketched is so obviously picturesque that it may spoil the very point of my remarks. What I want to impress upon my readers is the fact that the picturesque is to be found in what many people would think the most commonplace sights. One need not, for instance, go far to find a group of navvies picking up a road. Ninety-nine out of a hundred men and women would pass them by with no more than a glance, yet to the artist's eye there is in the swaying bodies of those stalwart men, as their picks rise and fall, as the lines of their muscles change, a life-study which might serve as the inspiration of a modern Michael Angelo.

It is not everyone who is fortunate enough to live in the midst of landscape or seascape scenery, but no one is deprived of the beauties of the sky and of its subtly changing light.

It is only the man whose eyes are trained to see from the artist's point of view who knows how magic are the effects of light even in the most squalid city or in the meanest streets. There is a glory on brick walls and housetops when the sun turns all to gold. There is a mysterious glamour brooding over even the ugliest, grimmest slum when the light fades into twilight, and the air is quivering with shadows, and great gulfs of blackness hide the commonplace.

Even in the country, where scenes of beauty are more apparent, they seldom attract the eyes of the average person.

Only yesterday I made a two-hundred-mile railway journey, of which every mile was a panorama of rural loveliness, of gold-brown autumn tints, of little villages nestling beneath green hills, of rustic bridges over swift-running streams, of little cottage groups with goose-ponds on the greens, and children chivying a-down the road, and old men leaning upon old gates, and matrons standing with hand shading eyes as they watched the train speed past with trailing smoke.

Two hundred miles of unpainted pictures !

Yet those in my carriage gazed out of the window hardly at all, and then but to yawn. To them those fair scenes were meaningless, valueless. Yet all of them were men of education, and not one amongst them, if he were placed opposite a good painting of one of those little scenes by the railway, but would have said, "How beautiful ! How true to nature !"

The fact is that there is too little study given to the unpainted pictures of the world which all may enjoy and all possess.

#### 4. How to Holiday.

There is nothing in which a man so reveals himself as in the way he spends his holidays. Therefore, if anyone would hide the secrets of his nature, let him abstain from talking in company of the manner and method in which he passed those fifteen days of grace away from the daily drudgery of office, factory, workshed, or shop.

If a man will but tell me in a few words what he has done with his annual vacation, he is at the mercy of my judgment. I know that man. I know him in and out, and through and through, and from the crown of his head to the sole of his boot. I know the size of his brains and the weight of them, the bigness of his heart and how and when it beats, the richness or the poorness of his blood, the toughness or the tenderness of his skin, and whether he is shortsighted or whether he can see through a brick wall. In fact, I know that man's anatomy better than if I had dissected him in a railway carriage with a penknife or a carving knife, during that five minutes he has been gossiping about his "gay time at Brighton," or his fortnight's "slack" at Walton-on-the-Naze.

**Self-  
Revelation.**

But a holiday is also a great self-revelation, if a man is given to introspection. For in those previous fifty weeks of the year he is ground down by force of circumstances into the common ruck of everyday life. His time is not his own. His thoughts are to a certain extent made for him by his inevitable environment. He goes where he has to go and does what he has to do.

When, however, the harness is taken off, and he lays down his pen or his tools with two weeks' freedom before him, the original man in him is now apparent. He can go where he likes, he can do what he likes, he has time to think. That choice is his self-revelment. There is no hiding his nature then. All his vulgarity, all his petty vanities and follies and ignorance are made manifest; or, on the contrary, all his refinement, his imagination, his good sense, and his lifelong culture.

There are not many holidays in this life of ours. Most of us are born to hard work, and plenty of it. Therefore these two or three weeks a year are not to be wasted or frivelled away. They should be made the golden hours of one's life, upon which one may look back with the remembrance of gladness and sunshine of heart. They should be more than that. As Wordsworth said :

“The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.”

**Far from  
the Mad-  
ding Crowd.**

In this holiday time, therefore, we should take occasion to get away from the world, from its sordidness and small ambitions and cares of self, and as the old prophets and saints used to retire at times into the desert for self-communing and refreshment of spirit, so one should look upon a holiday as a means of discovering ourselves, and refreshing our nature and recuperating our jaded spirits, by leaving the “madding crowd” for a while for “fresh fields and pastures new.” And by the madding crowd I do not mean the people of other scenes beyond our everyday environment, or of other habits and ways of life to our own, whether in the country towns and villages of our own nation, or abroad; but what I do include within that term are those noisy crowds who throng the popular seaside resorts of the British Isles, and who take with them to these holiday places just those same manners and amusements and habits of speech and thoughts to which we are accustomed all the year round.

When a man goes for a holiday he should make up his mind to slip out of the slough of his workaday life, and to get away as far as possible from his usual surroundings. Then, when he has made up his mind whether it is to be a walking tour through England, Scotland, or Ireland, a two weeks' trip abroad, or a fortnight's sojourn in some beauty-spot where he can see the sky, and hear the wind, and lie on his back in the sun, his next duty is to prepare his soul so that he shall be in the right mood to realise all that will be experienced during that brief spell of freedom.

And this is the test of his character. The enjoyment a person gets from his holiday is not what he receives, but what he brings. By the measure of his culture and depth of character so shall be the value of these new impressions.

**London,  
Old and  
New.**

Take, for instance, the man who comes up to London for the first time. To one it will be but a monstrous town of bricks and mortar, of shops and theatres, of moving crowds, of continuous traffic, of dirt and noise, of restaurants where one may get good dinners, of parks where one may see well-dressed people. There is not much gladness or refreshment of soul in such impressions as these.

But to another man, who has devoted some hours of his life to good literature, who has cultivated his imagination and his ideals of art and reverence, London is full of infinite charm, of wonderful and mysterious beauty, of throbbing and tumultuous interest. His footsteps will lead him to haunts of ancient peace and to shrines of old historic memories. There will be sermons in stones; and the ghosts of heroes and heroines, of sages and wits, and of men and women whose life-struggles are written in letters of gold upon the pages of our country's history, will throng upon him and cry to him in voices echoing down the ages with words that will ring in his ears and move him to profound emotion.

**The  
Highways  
of England.**

So also the man who does a walking tour through a county of England shall get from his holiday a value in proportion to what he brings. To one man it will mean but long and dusty roads leading from one town to another, very similar in appearance and differing very little from each other in their essential character-

istics, where inns of varying quality shall provide him with bread and cheese and beer, or table-d'hôte and wine according to the fatness of his purse and the inclinations of his stomach, and his sensations will vary between tiredness and heat, hunger and thirst, a grateful rest and a good night's sleep.

But to another this same walk will be along roads which tell their story as he goes, where his ears perhaps may catch the echoes of the steady tramp of marching legions, or the clatter of a troop of Cromwell's Ironsides, or the gay songs of Rupert's Cavaliers. And in each town there will be some old church or some old castle, manor, or wall which will provide him with pleasant food for thought until he reaches the next town on his road, and pleasant memories to last a lifetime.

And again, the man who has chosen to spend his fifteen days in some quiet, retired spot will only have himself to blame if he experiences the horrors of boredom, or goes back to work feeling his time has been wasted. For to the cultured and imaginative man, forced all the year round to toil and drudgery, there is never boredom if he may stretch his legs across a heath or common where the eye has room to roam into the azure distance, and where, taking off his hat—that sign of civilised serfdom—he may feel the wind blow his hair from his forehead and the cobweb from his eyes. Or if he may roam along a pebble beach or down a leafy lane, or by the foot-track through a field of reddening corn, or beneath the canopy of o'erspreading trees, or through the sedge-grass by the brook-side, he shall find new lessons, new beauties, new revelations of God and Nature and himself that shall repay him for these fourteen days of absence from the turmoil of the world.

Therefore to the man about to take a holiday,  
**Golden Knowledge.** I would say, Go you to Paris, to Antwerp, to London? Then prepare yourself to understand what such towns have to offer you. Read their history, know the men and women who have walked upon their stones, fill your mind with the literature that has been produced there, and freshen your memory of the scenes enacted within the boundaries of their walls. Go you into rural scenes? Then learn what Nature has to teach you, and what she has taught such Nature lovers as old Chaucer, Shakespeare, Tennyson, or Izaak Walton, White, and Greenleaf Whittier. Go you into the county towns of England? Then learn a little architecture, so that you may

understand the churches ; a little history, so that you may fill the old castles and houses with the characters of long ago ; a little archæology, so that you may find an interest in those old stones and coins and relics of the days when the bones of your forefathers were clothed with the living flesh.

Then shall your holiday be indeed full of golden hours, and you will return to the daily round, the trivial task, with a spirit quickened by bright remembrances.

### 5. The Science of Serendipity.

According to the *Arabian Nights*, there was once a certain gentleman named Serendib, who was, like Shakespeare's pedlar, though in a different manner, "a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." That is to say, he went about picking up odds and ends, a part here and a fragment there, which he pieced together again to make a complete and perfect whole.

Horace Walpole—that butterfly of letters—made use of this old character to coin a new word which he called Serendipity, meaning thereby the science and art of picking up odds and ends of old books, old china, and old wisdom, which, although a little time-worn, or a little cracked, or a little outside the scope of ordinary use, might one day fit in with some other thing or thought (for serendipity is concerned with things of fancy as well as of fact), to their mutual advantage and to his.

**The Serendipity Shop.** What reminds me of Horace Walpole's curious word is that an establishment has recently been set up in London under the name of the "Serendipity Shop."

Passers down Westbourne Grove stop to puzzle out the meaning of this unfamiliar sign, and peering through the windows they get a glimpse of old pictures and old books, and odds and ends of treasure-trove such as one might expect to find in one of the old curiosity shops which abound in the neighbourhood of Wardour Street.

Upon inquiry, I found that the proprietor is a true believer in serendipity, and for many years has been in the habit of collecting books and prints and autographs, and other treasures of art and literature, which have an added interest when brought together.

For instance, there is upon his shelves an edition of Edgar

Allan Poe's poem "The Raven," with original notes scribbled by that other poet, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and it is dedicated on the flyleaf by Poe himself with respectful homage to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose poetry he greatly admired. So here in this one little volume three great names are linked together by a bond of sympathy. And that is an example of true serendipity.

**The Pedlar of Knowledge.** But Horace Walpole when he coined the whimsical word gave it a wide meaning, using it frequently to denote that capacity which some people have of acquiring a great store of small facts and out-of-the-way items of information, which make their mind a kind of curiosity shop of knowledge, from which they will draw forth when a customer comes, in the form of an intelligent question or a sudden demand for help, some odd fact, some unfamiliar tale, some curious knick-knack of knowledge, some out-of-the-way piece of information, which they bring forth out of the little corner cupboards of their brain at unexpected times.

Dr. Johnson was one of the masters of serendipity. His great mind was stored full of these odds and ends of knowledge. Profound as was his scholarship, his nature was yet capable of absorbing information about the merest trifles in an accurate and thorough manner. So excellent was his memory and so keen his observation that any explanation once given to him of some scientific process, some social usage, or some quaint aspect of human nature, was recorded with the clearest impression upon the tablets of his brain.

This was the chief secret of his wonderful conversational powers, which held men spellbound and indifferent to the lapse of time. True that he had a sonorous eloquence of speech that was very impressive apart from the wit or wisdom of what he said, but it was for the matter and not for the manner of his conversation that people thought it a privilege to sit round the learned Doctor. They were astounded at the immense variety of his information. He could talk of brewing like a brewer, of acting like an actor, of theology like a churchman, of painting like a painter, and upon a thousand and one different topics which lie quite beyond the scope of the average person's acquaintance, in a precise and familiar manner.

Shakespeare must have been another and greater master of what Horace Walpole calls the science of Serendipity, and there is no need to recount once more how infinitely various, how

amazingly comprehensive, was the knowledge of the man whom every profession has claimed for its own, and who seemed to know the secrets of every trade and custom of human life.

**A Walking  
Encyclo-  
pædia.** But one need not go so far back as Shakespeare and Johnson for masters of serendipity. In almost every social circle there is one man at least who is reputed to be a kind of "storehouse of general information."

I myself know a man who carries his encyclopædia in his head. He is as familiar with the roads of the old Roman Empire as with the footpaths about his own town. He knows unfailingly the characteristics of all the great painters and of the various periods of architecture, furniture, china, and many kinds of arts and crafts. He knows Domesday book by heart, yet is not so buried in the past but that he has a larger collection of anecdotes of living people than any man I know.

And although he is a scholar in the old-fashioned sense of the word, his mind is stored, like that of Don Quixote, with a multitude of strange facts gleaned from old books and from the world about him.

**The Secrets  
of the  
Science.** The question arises: How is it that some men have the capacity for acquiring so much casual and what one might call accessory knowledge, while others, who certainly cannot be put down as possessing inferior intellect, are limited to the rather narrow groove of their special avocation and line of study?

I think the answer is that the lover of serendipity is possessed with a ceaseless curiosity, and is interested in little things as well as in big, besides having an accurate observation, quickened by this inquisitiveness, and a fine memory, strengthened by lively interest, which is the best stimulant of memory. And another quality possessed by this class of persons is a sociability which draws out all that is best in those about them.

You will see the characteristics of such a person clearly enough on a railway journey of an hour or two. The average person, the typical Englishman, sits in his corner with a rug over his knees and a newspaper screening him from his fellows. Beyond an occasional "Not at all," or "Yes, I prefer the window open," he does not consider it necessary or even well-mannered to indulge in conversation with strangers.

Not so the disciple of Serendib. Before he has been in the carriage ten minutes he has asked ten questions. At the end of a quarter of an hour he has thawed the ice, and is on terms of good-fellowship with every occupant in the carriage. He leads the conversation skilfully so that each man talks on his own subject, and adds his little counter of knowledge to the pool. At the end of a three hours' journey he steps out well satisfied. He has perhaps learned something new about Persia and Japan, he has an accurate understanding of the patent laws, he has been initiated into the mysteries of commercial travelling, he has learned the difference between Brussels lace and Valenciennes, he has added to his collection another anecdote of some public person, he has become acquainted with a new piece of slang, and learned its derivation, and so on, and so on.

To the ordinary person the disciple of Serendib is a mystery, his knowledge savours of the miraculous. **The Quick Eye.** When a man names the painter of an old picture, or the period of an old church, or the class of an old piece of china, without a moment's hesitation, and without any consultation of text-books, his friends are apt to cry in astonishment, "How do you know? How do you know?" "Why, it is easy enough," says the other, "you have only got to look at it."

And that is the truth of the matter. The serendipity man has the gift of looking at things with seeing eyes. Whether it is a book, a teacup, an oak sideboard, or what not, he notes by a quick, searching glance its essential characteristics, which become stamped upon his mind. Thus after some experience his continued observation enables him to classify these characteristics in his mind in an almost intuitive way.

I know a man, for instance, who can accurately tell the date within five years, and infallibly tells the nationality of the printers, of any book published between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Yet he has never made a special study of this, and has derived his knowledge merely by close observation when handling old and new volumes.

So in every department of knowledge it is the eye that sees the details of a thing, and the mind that records them with a clear impression, which enables a man to gather together a "Serendipity Shop" full of treasures of art and literature and life, picked up by the wayside and found in odd corners and at odd times.

## 6. The Necessity of Noise.

There has lately been formed in London a society for the suppression of noise. Piano-organs are to be banished with the utmost rigour, hawkers' cries are to be throttled without exception. The shouts of newsvendors, the ringing of bells, the barking of dogs, the melodies of itinerant musicians, are to be regarded as public nuisances, punishable with severe penalties.

Of course the stringent rules drawn up by the society are not as yet invested with the majesty of the law. But no doubt the worthy Londoners responsible for these threats against the noise-producers of the great city are satisfied at having done their duty by protesting against the nerve-destroying influences of modern city life.

**A Silent City.** Yet I think the members of this society would be a little surprised if they read the comments of many foreigners when recording their first impressions of London. They remark upon the intense silence of the great city. I remember a striking passage by the distinguished French novelist, Alphonse Daudet, which I quote from memory.

"London," he wrote, "is a city of silence. There is nothing more wonderful, nothing more horrible, than that world of bricks and mortar inhabited by millions of moving shadows working frenziedly in the pursuit of wealth or desperately for food, without noise, without gaiety, without any joyous sounds which are the music of human life. The great traffic rumbles through the streets with a dull, monotonous murmur, the tramp of great legions may be heard if one listens with hard-strained ears, a confusion of voices in the dull English monotone blends into a deep undertone of sound, but it is only like the sougling of the wind over lonely moors, and the beating of the waves upon a desolate seashore which hardly breaks upon the silence which broods over uninhabited places."

**Silent Horrors.** This is no doubt a little exaggerated, and would perhaps be laughed to scorn by the Londoner who has got into the habit of thinking that he lives in the midst of ceaseless noise. Yet there must be some truth in it, because other visitors to England have remarked in somewhat similar words upon the silence of the great metropolis.

It may seem curious to some that these other impressionists, like Alphonse Daudet, found no beauty in the silence of London, but regarded it with awe, not unmingled with horror. It seemed to them that there was something uncanny, something almost devilish, in the presence of great multitudes doing their daily work with so little tumult of sound.

**Cheerful Noise.** Certainly, foreign cities are more noisy than towns in this country. There are more staccato notes vibrating in the air above the general rumble of traffic. The drivers urge on their horses with high-pitched cries, the streets resound with shrill laughter, snatches of loud song, and voices ranging up and down the vocal keyboard with much more variety of sound than the average Anglo-Saxon could possibly produce in an ordinary conversation free from passion. There is a great jingling of bells, and tooting of horns, and blowing of whistles, and jolting of heavy carts over those cobblestones which pave the roads of most Continental towns.

So the foreigner coming to this country misses his accustomed noise, and feels like a man suddenly gone deaf in one ear. To him it is not noise but silence that is nerve-destroying.

**Alone with Silence.** And when one comes to think of it, there is something rather terrible in the deeps of silence. Only yesterday I had some experience of this, for I lost my way in a wood in the heart of the Derbyshire Peak country. Having wandered about for some time in vain endeavour to find a way through the darkness, I suddenly stood still and listened as it were to the silence. It was intense. Not a leaf stirred on those dark fir trees. Not a bird chirruped on the branches. Not a rabbit moved through the undergrowth.

As I stood in the midst of this wood, surrounded by silent hills and dales, I could hear the beating of my heart, and—I confess—I felt afraid. Of what? Certainly not of man or spirit, but only of the silence. It got upon my nerves, and I was glad when suddenly the sound of a hoarse voice singing an old song broke upon my ears, and a sturdy yokel tramped towards me.

George Borrow, the author of those breezy books, *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye*, although a very child of Nature, who had lived a gipsy life for years and loved the solitary moors and the rolling hills with an almost pagan love,

sometimes found his manhood broken down by the great silence of the country. He tells frankly enough how sometimes, when he lay beneath his caravan pitched upon some solitary camp, he would be attacked by the horrors, and, starting up, oppressed by the absence of all human sound, he would shriek himself into unconsciousness.

The same experience befalls the boundary riders of Australian cattle ranches and the stockmen on lonely sheep farms. Many a poor fellow has gone stark staring mad because he has not been able to bear up against the dangers of silence.

Some people would say it is the solitude and not the silence that is so full of terror, but I doubt whether this is so. Prisoners, for instance, sentenced to solitary confinement have said that they have been able to retain their sanity if they have heard the sounds of other men at work in the cells, or the noise of the outside world. But if they have been immured where no sound could reach them, their reason has lost its balance, and they have succumbed to the sheer horror of the silence.

All this proves that there is in human life a real necessity for noise, and those people who wish to abolish the noises of city life would be doing a great disservice to their generation if they succeeded in their object.

**Noises Good and Bad.** We do not want to abolish noise, but rather to change hideous noises for others more musical. The shrieking of railway whistles, the barking of fog-signals, the sudden yell of a motor-horn, the hoarse rasping cry of a newsvendor, are certainly abominations, and exceedingly trying to the nerves.

But the chiming of bells, the music of the piano-organs, the jingle of cabs, the merriment of laughter, the sound of song, even such lingering old cries of street hawkers as "Sweet lavender" and "Buy a broom," which still survive from the time when every seller had his song, should be welcomed as notes in the great harmony of the living world, without which the silence would be oppressive and one's spirits dull as ditch-water.

## 7. The Value of a Pose.

I suppose the word "pose" is almost a slang term that needs some interpretation to people who live outside the set in which it

is used. In London it has grown to be a part of the language of the so-called cultured classes, no doubt because the characteristic expressed by the word is part also of their nature. A man in Cockney cant is said to have a "howling pose," or "a very decent pose," or even "a very useful kind of pose."

It is not easy to give a definition of the term, but perhaps it may be best expressed as the manner which a person assumes towards his fellow-beings, based upon the ideal of his own personality which he puts before himself, or based upon his estimate of its commercial and social value.

Some poses are very obnoxious. The "howling pose," referred to above, is pretty bad, and grievously common. It is the loud pose of a man who wants to make out that he is a mighty fine fellow, and knows all the time, except when he is posing to himself, that he is nothing but a black sweep. The pose of intellectual superiority is generally accompanied by horrid ignorance. The pose of moral superiority is often a very effective cloak of hidden vice.

Another pose I have very frequently come across is the pose of good-nature—a hearty, smiling, teeth-showing, smacking-you-on-the-back kind of pose—which is sometimes dropped suddenly and with startling effect when the owner of it is thwarted or irritated or asked for a five-pound note by some hard-up fellow who has received this bounteous joviality.

I often wonder to myself why it is necessary to **An Assembly of Poseurs.** put on a pose at all. It is a lot of trouble, anyway. The other night I was at a public dinner of political and literary people, and I sat silent, wearying through the courses and listening to the conversation around me. Everybody was posing, and I should think every pose was represented. There was the loud pose and the simpering pose, the literary genius pose and the political orator pose, the man of fashion pose and the long-haired poet pose—in fact, it was an excellent all-round study in poses.

Then I got into conversation with the man next to me, who had not opened his mouth during dinner, except to put food into it.

"Can you explain to me the value of a pose?" I asked.

He laid down his knife and fork and looked at me.

"It is very useful," he said.

"How so?"

“Well, it’s a kind of defensive armour, you know, against the inquisitiveness and aggressiveness of one’s neighbours.”

**The  
Necessity  
of Posing.**

I was very glad to find a man who seemed to have studied this great subject, and I questioned him further. He was evidently not displeased to expound his theory, for I noticed that he ignored the remaining courses of the dinner so that he might talk without interruption.

I found that he considered some sort of a pose absolutely necessary in modern life. In his opinion, most people are only too ready to take advantage of a man who reveals his true nature, ready to pillory his little weaknesses and laugh at his little sentiments, to expose his ignorance, to plagiarise his self-acquired wisdom.

“The great art of life,” said my philosopher of the dinner-table, “is to hide one’s real personality from prying acquaintances and to return to the centre of a circle of which the circumference is a pose.”

He was convinced in his own mind that many a man put on a blustering exterior to conceal his shyness, and that many a one professed a hard cynicism in order to keep secret a private well of sentiment.

Then again, according to my chance acquaintance, the world always takes a man at his own estimate. “Therefore,” he said, “who is going to be fool enough to ticket himself at too low a price? You see all these people here? They all buy their wares in the cheapest market and hawk them in the dearest. It is considered sound social economy. That long-haired poet pecking at his chicken over there knows quite well that his poetry will be judged according to the length of his hair. Therefore he wears it over his collar. That’s his pose. And that Welsh politician laying down the law about the Licensing Bill is perfectly well aware that he is very ignorant of the problem, but he is an M.P., and must be dogmatical. That’s his little pose.”

I was not altogether pleased with these rather cynical remarks, but I was bound to confess that there was some truth in them.

Then my philosopher of posing went on to declare that he believed the world owed a good deal of its greatness to this cause.

“You see,” he said, “after long practice a pose becomes a kind of second nature, so that a man who poses as a hero is

often really heroic, and a man who poses as a superior moral person gradually lifts himself to a higher plane of virtue. It is not as if people posed only to their friends, but they do so often as much to themselves. I am sure lots of people hesitate to play dirty tricks, not because they are held back by a natural and educated sense of honour, but because they are afraid of spoiling their pose."

"Come," I said, "I cannot have that. It is the worst form of cynicism I have ever met."

"It's the plain, unvarnished truth," he said.

Then I thought I would scotch him. "Look **The Pose of not Posing.** here," I said, "you are the champion of posing. Tell me what is your own particular brand?"

He smiled at me over his black coffee.

"That's my secret," he said.

"Oh," I retorted, "our conversation would be incomplete without that finishing touch."

"Well, I will tell you. It is the pose of being without one. It's very subtle, but very effective."

I had listened very patiently to his exposition of the subject, so that I felt I had a right to an innings, and I preached a little homily in the interregnum of two political speeches from the guests of the evening.

"I hate your poses," I said, "of all kinds whatsoever. Give me a natural man and woman, who do not pull the shutters down before the windows of their soul, nor swathe themselves in countless mummy-cloths of deceit. The finest thing in life is to sit opposite a man or woman in an evening *tête-à-tête*, when vulgar, foolish, popinjay worldlings are left on the other side of the blinds, and to have a straight talk from heart to heart, with no reservation or half-revelations, but each giving to the other free access to the inner sanctuary. And there is nothing more consoling in a world too much given up to sham and shallowness than to meet casually a man or woman who, scorning the chilliness of formality or the artificiality of social ceremony, looks out with frank, candid eyes, and speaks with a carefulness for sincerity and truth and balanced judgment."

My philosopher of the dinner-table puffed a little ring of smoke from his cigarette.

"Why, bless me," he said, "your pose is the same as mine, but, I confess, you beat me at the game!"

## 8. The Coming of Autumn.

To town-dwellers the coming of autumn has no meaning. The whisper of it is unheard amidst the roar of a city's traffic. The strange mysticism of it does not move the hearts of those whose thoughts are bounded by brick walls and shop windows.

But to those who are fortunate enough to dwell beyond the streets, and whose eyes have liberty to roam over farmlands and fields where cattle graze, and orchards laden with ripening fruit, the coming of autumn brings with it a thousand signs of Nature that tell of change.

It comes upon one as a sudden revelation, setting the heart throbbing with a vague and unexplained emotion. The sun is shining, as in the full blaze of summer. The air is humming with the murmurous melody of a myriad insect-organists. The sky is of a deep transparent blue, without a fleck of cloud. The garden is fragrant with the smell of flowers, and the road outside is white with dust.

But suddenly into one's senses steals a faint aroma, and with the warm wind comes a breath that gives one a little thrill like a mysterious whisper half heard amid the chatter of gay voices.

That aroma is pungent with decay, and that breath is the whisper of death.

Although the sun is shining, and the birds are singing, and all around one Nature seems in the rich and glorious enjoyment of maturity, one is startled by the shock of consciousness in the inevitable shadow of the grave.

**Melancholy** Strange that the gladness of autumn should be  
**Beauty.** so mingled with sadness too. For surely there is  
no season of the year so beautiful and so enjoyable.  
Spring has the ecstasy of youth, and summer the glory of the conqueror, but in autumn the fruits of victory are brought home.

Good has it been to see the ears of corn swelling in the generous summer sun, and, in the fine old phrase, "whitening to the harvest." Good is it still to watch the apple trees bending under their burden of red and golden fruit. Glad, too, are the sounds of autumn, the dull whirr and shriller click of the reaping machine, the shouts of the harvesters, even the quiet thud, heard by listening ears in a quiet garden, of the apple or

pear dropping to the ground, unmoved by any breath of wind, but by sheer perfection of ripeness.

Yet in the midst of life we are in death, and fruition is followed by decay.

There is a glory on the garden wall, and the house is draped with gorgeous tapestry. The afternoon sun falls upon leaves of such gorgeous tint, of such rich red and of such burnished gold, that the eyes rejoice in the feast of colour. Yet, alas! it is but the hectic flush of the dying plant and the beauty of a glorious decay. Already the paths are strewn with dead leaves, that shiver and rustle in each passing breeze and sometimes rattle their dead bones in a ghostly dance of death; and though the gardener may brush and brush, and sweep them away into hidden corners, in vain pretence that summer is still in its prime, their comrades fall before the sickle of the unseen reaper, and the gardener has all his trouble again in the burying of them.

**An Autumn Morning.** It is in the very early morning, before the sun's rays have warmed the chilly earth, that the coming of autumn is most clearly revealed to one. At that early hour the low-lying fields and the roadways dipping down to the valley are covered with a thin vapoury mist as white as the hoar frost which has not yet arrived. The vapour floats about with every breath of wind, rolling like quicksilver along the surface of the meadows, swirling round the trunks of trees, passing in a ghostly way through the thick hedges, creeping stealthily into barns and cattle-sheds, and lying like the smoke of fairy charcoal-burners upon the undergrowth of the woods. Sometimes, indeed, it is wafted to one with the very smell of smoke from greenwood fires—a pungent, faintly intoxicating smell, but wholly delicious. This ghostly smell of burning—for it does not come from fires kindled by mortal hands—is a sure sign that autumn is upon us. It comes really from the corruption of vegetable matter, a funeral burning of Nature's own children.

It is only the early risers who see the first mists of autumn. As soon as the shadows of the trees falling across the dew-spangled fields—as long as the last shadows of evening—have crept back to their trunks in shortened stature, and as soon as the sun has risen high in the full brightness of the day, the thin white mist lying like a nightgown over the sleeping fields is rolled up before the warm rays, and only shreds of it linger for a little while in damp and shady places.

Another little sign of Nature to mark the season's change, a tiny note struck on the clock of Time, is the first chirrup of the cricket. Its tick-tick-tick, sharp and distinct when all is quiet, is like the beating of the baton in the orchestra of Nature's insect instrumentalists. But it is the ticking of a death-watch, and it is only heard when summer is at an end and the flowers are fading and dropping petals upon the great graveyard of plant-life.

**Summer's Elegy.** And at this time some new choristers come to sing the elegy of summer. The robins have just put on their scarlet waistcoats, and have but just learnt to pipe. The very sight of them, even in the warmth of autumn sunshine, brings to one's mind a sudden vision of naked branches, of keen north winds, of sparkling Jack Frost with his pale smile, of country roads foot-deep in snow; for the robin redbreast is our winter bird, and summer is doomed when it hops upon the garden gatepost and pipes its shrill lyrics in full-throated melody.

But there is other music which plays the funeral march of summer—a deep, melancholy music, which during the last few nights has boomed out with an accompaniment of drums and bass viols, with the shriller notes of Nature's fifes and the twanging of Nature's harp. It is the great orchestra of the north wind. In spite of the glorious sunshine of these September days, so genial that, basking in it, we refuse to believe in the passing of summer, at night the wind has blown from the north-east, and light sleepers have already been disturbed by its shrill and plaintive wailing round the chimney-tops, and by its deep reverberating voices chaunting Gregorian litanies beneath the foliated arches of the trees. Now and again the windows rattle and bang as though ghostly hands were knocking on the panes, and outside there is a sudden, long-drawn shriek, and a clatter as though a thousand demon horsemen were galloping furiously over the fields. They are the advance scouts of the winter legion, and where their hoofs have passed we find next morning in another day's sunshine trenches full of dead leaves, and beds where fallen flowers breathe out the last fragrance of their life.

"If ever," said Nathaniel Hawthorne in one of his tales of the "Old Manse," "if ever my readers should decide to give up civilised life—cities, houses, and whatever moral or material enormities in addition to these the perverted ingenuity of our race has contrived—let it be in the early autumn. Then Nature

will love him better than at any other season, and will take him to her bosom with a more motherly tenderness. How early in the summer, too, the prophecy of autumn comes! There is no other feeling like what is caused by the faint, doubtful, yet real perception—if it be not rather a foreboding—of the year's decay, so blessedly sweet and sad in the same breath.

“Did I say there was no feeling like it? Ah, but there is a half-acknowledged melancholy like to this when we stand in the perfected vigour of our life and feel that Time has now given us all his flowers, and that the next work of his never-idle fingers must be to steal them one by one away.”

It is just that feeling of likeness between the life of man and Nature's year that in the autumn gives one pause. In the spring we feel the immortality of youth in the very joy of living; in the summer we may lie on our back in the grass watching the clouds flit by in a blue heaven, with no inclination for a moral; but in the autumn no man can be quite unstirred by emotions that lead him on to meditate on the seven ages of man, and even the fool in the forest will tell us that

“So from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,  
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot,  
And thereby hangs a tale.”

## 9. A Reverie on New Year's Eve.

“Bells, bells, bells,  
The tintinabulation of the bells.”

The night is dark and cold. In the towns the wind wails plaintively, rising now and again to a shrill shriek as it whirls through a funnel-like alley and emerges into an open space with a gust that sends the midnight wayfarers staggering backward a moment. In the country great billows of wind come rolling across moor and meadow with a sullen roar like the surging of the sea. Presently there is a lull, and over the land from north to south there falls a hush. To those who have come out to-night full of the sense that before another quarter of an hour has ticked its way into the shadow of the past another year will have gone, another come, their silence is full of a tense expectancy, so that the pulse is stirred with a strange excitement.

It is the night of New Year's eve.

**Ding, Dong,  
Bell.** Hark! On a sudden the air is full of sweet sounds. It is the song of the bells. From the city steeple a peal rings out with silver-clanging resonance. The rippling notes flood through the quivering air with plaintive melody. Softly they begin like harp-strings touched by gentle fingers, but gradually louder and louder they chime out, awakening echoing notes from every quarter, then with unrestrained volume clashing forth into pealing cadences, heart-stirring and tumultuous.

The peal is jubilant, triumphant. Yet to many ears among those people who gather silently upon the footway they sound like the bells that peal forth a victory, when every note sobs in tearful harmony for those who have fallen in the fight and who do not share the triumph.

For a few minutes only the City Church seems alone in its message of pealing notes. Then a neighbouring steeple takes up the song, mingling the first silver bell-sounds with deeper tones. Now the signal has been given, and in many parishes, in many towns, and in many countries the bell-ringers are at work, and all the air is throbbing with melody, and the wind sweeping from one end of the country to the other bears with it a flood of trembling, eddying sound, which no mortal ear may hear in all its blending, melting harmony, but which to higher spheres might doubtless come like the melody of a wondrous instrument played by the hands of the Master.

**What the  
Bells say.** The song of the bells! How differently it sounds to different ears, how differently interpreted!

To some the bells ring gay and joyous tunes, with words of bright hope for that New Year which is about to be born in the womb of Time.

Look at that young man stepping briskly to and fro upon the pavement outside the church. He has been there for ten minutes, and every time he passes beneath the gaslight one may note a smile upon his face, flickering about his lips and eyes with a tell-tale joyousness of heart. A very dolt could guess the thoughts passing beneath that low-crowned hat. They are thoughts of a woman's face, and of words that have been spoken by eyes but not yet by lips. They are thoughts of a soft hand and of a little ring, and of a kiss to seal a compact that will last till death. They are thoughts of a little house, and of a cheery fireside, and of baby voices, and of all the joys of home, which

at every stroke of the bells are coming nearer, nearer, in that New Year which is also coming so soon, so soon.

The bells ring on, their tones stealing into the hearts of the listening throng, dispelling all thoughts of everyday incidents and commonplace details of life, but creating that weird sensation of watching the hand of Time's eternal clock, of counting the seconds by heart-throbs that still divide the Old Year from the New.

To some the bells sing gay and joyous tunes, to others tunes of infinite pathos.

**Bells  
across  
the Fields.** It is in a little country village. The old grey-stone church that has listened eight hundred times to its bells ringing in a New Year stands supported by the naked limbs of those stalwart trees which in summer embosom it in greenery, and from its leaded window-panes a light gleams out palely. There is a midnight service, and up the little, straggling, cobbled street a score or so of villagers in twos and threes come to welcome the New Year with prayer and prayerful resolutions.

But though they have come to pray, it is with no solemn air and long-drawn visage. Cheery words are exchanged as they meet at the church porch, and up the road a clear laugh rings out in harmony with the music of the bells.

But when they have all gone in, and the bells have ceased awhile, and solemn organ strains float into the midnight air, a woman-form passes through the churchyard gate, and, going to the foot of a grave with a new-cut tombstone, stands there motionless with clasped hands and bent head. The light from the church windows falls upon a girlish face, frail and pale, lines of sorrow about the sweet, full mouth.

What thoughts are they which cause the tears to tremble on those downcast lashes? Alas! thoughts that many a maid is thinking to-night.

A year ago and he was alive, and they two were full of hope. A year ago and he had written, "The war will soon be over, and I shall soon be home!" A year ago and the bridal gown was being made for that home-coming. And now the war was over—and he had come home, but only to sleep in the little churchyard with never an awakening in this world.

And the New Year bells clashing out again ring the knell of

past joys and past hopes, and have no promise in them for the cold and dreary future.

Why is it that the sound of the New Year bells brings all sorts and conditions of people out of doors to brave the coldness of the night?

There must be more sentiment and imagination in human nature than is commonly supposed.

Even among the noisy crowd surging round St. Paul's singing music-hall ballads intermingled with snatches of old national songs, there is real emotion hidden beneath the rather artificial rowdiness. As the clock booms out the strokes which number the last moments of the dying year, a perceptible thrill passes through the motley crew, who clasp hands and bellow forth a verse of "Auld Lang Syne," and in the eyes of many who would be least suspected of emotion there is a moisture that tells of feelings strangely stirred.

**Aspirations under the Bells.** Few can withstand the influence which prompts a retrospect of their life's story. Once a year only, many who are not given to over-much thoughtfulness or introspection sum themselves up and weigh themselves in the scales of judgment.

"Well, well, I've been a rotten egg," says a bloated, weak-mouthed, seedy-looking fellow in a burst of confidence to a man he has rubbed shoulders with on the pavement, "but, strike me, I'll go one better in the New Year."

And in ninety-nine hearts out of a hundred who are "seeing the New Year in," the aspiration is whispered, half-unconsciously maybe, or with a cynical smile of doubt even when the resolution is registered, to "go one better" in the New Year.

"My dear fellow," says a red-faced, scrofulous-looking individual to a neighbour who has imparted a like confidence, "here is the fifteenth time that I have stood on this same spot on this same night, making resolutions to turn over a new leaf—twenty new leaves—as fast as the minutes are ticked out by the old clock. And so far I have never kept one of them! And yet, bless my soul, here am I to-night still registering vows which I know will be forgotten as soon as the first snore stirs my pillow. 'Tis a darned queer thing is human nature!"

What extraordinary types of this "darned queer thing" does one meet on a New Year's eve huddling beneath some city church, listening to the song of the bells!

**Listeners  
to the  
Bells.**

Here is a group of human scarecrows, "tattered and torn, and all forlorn"—gaunt-visaged men, their thin, ragged coats buttoned tight across their narrow chests, their hands thrust deep into the empty pockets of their patched trousers. With them are some frowsy women, more wretched-looking than the men, with pale, haggard faces, peering forth from ragged shawls. It is a representative group of the Great Unwashed. How strange, how passing strange, that any grain of sentiment should have moved these people to come listening to the bells.

How is it that any sentiment remains in hearts which from childhood have been hardened by the grim prose of life? Why should they listen to these bells ringing in a New Year which to them will bring the same number of miserable days, the same round of grinding toil, the same starving poverty, the same dreary, starving life, unrelieved by scarce a ray of brightness?

And not more than three paces away is a man who has all that they have not, and yet whose face is more miserable than any of theirs.

He is a gentleman with a fur-lined coat turned up to the ears, and his tall hat pressed down upon his brows. His face is clean-shaven, with clear-cut features, but there is a stamp of inexpressible pain upon it with deeply graven lines about the eyes and mouth. For five minutes he has stood upon the curb-stone with folded arms across his chest, absolutely motionless. Then, as the last stroke of midnight reverberates down the street, a great sigh heaves its way from him, and he turns upon his heel and strides away with measured and heavy steps.

The New Year has come.

From thousands of belfries throughout the country the tintinabulation of the bells vibrates in the night air, making silver melody. And hundreds of thousands of people with their ears full of this sound wend their way homewards to sleep, and wake again to a New Year of life and work.

PART III

EVERYDAY PHILOSOPHY



**I. Effect of Climate on Character.**

IN studying the course of the world's history, and in estimating national character, one is apt to leave out of account the profound influence of climate. And yet it is this question of climate which determines to a very great extent the position which one nation stands in relation to another—its moral condition, its social characteristics, its religion, art, and intellect.

In the early ages of the world, when the races of mankind were in the seething cauldron of primitive barbarism, climate was the first cause of evolution. In the same way that animal organisms are modified by their environment, adapting themselves to surrounding circumstances, so as to ensure the survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence under different conditions producing distinct tendencies and character, which are further handed down by the laws of heredity, so also tribes and nations passing from one country to another were compelled to adapt themselves to altered conditions of life, which have reacted inevitably upon individual character.

Even now, when the great barriers between one race and another have to a large extent been broken down by a world-civilisation which is increasingly cosmopolitan, when even the original effects of climate have been considerably modified by increasing comforts and shelters unknown to our forefathers, when peculiarities of character are under a levelling process by similarity of education and interchange of thought, climate

accounts for the marked distinctions in character which still exist between Eastern and Western races, between peoples who live in the Highlands or Lowlands, in the interior or on the sea-board, in cold, warm, or damp countries of the world.

**When the World was Young.** But the effect of climate on character is more easily to be traced in the early ages when the globe was being mapped out by the successive waves of invasion of primitive races. We know that the great Aryan race is the family from which the majority of European nations have sprung. In the plains of India the Aryans lived an agricultural and pastoral life of a distinct and homogeneous character.

But when by pressure of other Eastern races they were forced westward, scattered into nomadic tribes, taking separate routes in search of new lands, the great Aryan family split up into nations which through the course of time became as diverse in character as in geographical distribution, and which we now recognise under such broad divisions as Celt, German, Greek, and Latin.

**Primitive Germans.** These diversities of character were not accidental, but the result of physiological and psychological laws.

Take the case of the Germans, who plunged into the northern forests of Europe. Their life was a continual struggle for existence against the forces of Nature. The great gloomy woods through which they had to force their way, the mist-exhaling swamps, the cold, damp atmosphere, which killed off the weak, hardened the strong, chilled the early glow of their Eastern blood, and clouded their brains with something of that gloom and fog by which their life was surrounded. The continual warfare against wild beasts and wild tribes bred in them a natural ferocity, and the rigours of climate coarsened and hardened their minds as well as their bodies, so that they found pleasure in gross lusts, in drunkenness and gluttony.

In the shelter of rude huts, in clearings of the primeval forest, listening to the rain-storms beating upon the great trees and the water dripping from the leaves to the dank undergrowth, these skin-clad Germans were filled with sombre thoughts, dark superstitions of nature gods, fierce, horrible, and bloodthirsty, taking possession of their souls.

The French historian, Henri Taine, has drawn a boldly coloured picture of these early Germans, and shown—no doubt with some exaggeration natural to a man of Latin race—how their rough qualities still survived when their descendants settled in England, and still survive, though in a modified degree, to-day.

**Northern Barbarians.** “Huge white bodies, cool-blooded, with fierce blue eyes, reddish flaxen hair, ravenous stomachs filled with meat and cheese, heated by strong drinks; of a temperament slow to love, home-stayers, prone to brutal drunkenness: these are to-day the features which descent and climate preserve in the race, and these are what the Roman historians discovered in their former country. There is no living in these lands without abundance of solid food; bad weather keeps people at home; strong drinks are necessary to cheer them; the senses become blunted, the muscles are braced, the will vigorous. In every country the body of man is rooted deep into the soil of Nature; and in this instance still deeper, because, being uncultivated, he is less removed from Nature.”

And later on, when they have got a certain amount of law and order, and established property, “Behold them now in England, more settled, and wealthier; do you find them much changed? Changed it may be, but for the worse, like all barbarians who pass from action to enjoyment. They are more gluttonous, carving their hogs, filling themselves with flesh, swallowing down deep draughts of mead, ale, and spiced wine, all the strong, coarse drinks which they can procure, and so they are cheered and stimulated. Add to this the pleasure of the fight.

“Not easily with such instincts can they attain to culture: to find a natural and ready culture we must look amongst the sober and sprightly population of the South. Here the sluggish and heavy temperament remains long buried in a brutal life; people of the Latin race never at a first glance see aught in them but large gross beasts, clumsy and ridiculous when not dangerous and enraged.”

“Up to the sixteenth century,” says an old historian, “the great body of the nation were little else than herdsmen, keepers of beasts for flesh and fleece; up to the end of the eighteenth century drunkenness was the recreation of the higher ranks; it is still that of the lower; and all the refinement and softening influences of civilisation have not abolished amongst them the

use of the fist and the rod. If the carnivorous, warlike, drinking savage, proof against the climate, still shows beneath the conventions of our modern society and the softness of our modern polish, imagine what he must have been when, landing with his band upon a wasted or desert country, and becoming for the first time a settler, he saw on the horizon the common pasture of the border county, and the great primitive forests which furnished stags for the chase and acorns for his pigs."

**People of the South.** Very different was the character developed among those Latin peoples who settled in Italy and Greece. The balmy warmth of the climate, not hot enough to be enervating and languorous, brought out the milder and softer tendencies of character. Nature being more kind, the people, not solely occupied in a fierce struggle for existence, had time for the cultivation of art. Their conditions of life permitted of joyous outdoor pleasures. Their architecture became beautiful because the efforts of the builders were not directed merely to protect the dwellers from rough and foul weather. The sunny water enticed them upon its placid bosom, so that they could cultivate maritime trade with other nations. The blue vault of heaven, into which the eye might gaze through a rarefied atmosphere unclouded by fog or mist, raised the mind of man above the earth and filled him with bright visions and speculative thoughts that found their way into a beautiful mythology and a metaphysical philosophy.

**Religion and Climate.** This influence of climate is most clearly traced in its effect upon the religions of mankind, and especially upon the early religions. The old paganism of the Danes and Germans was absolutely different in character from that of the Romans and Greeks. Fierce, gloomy, terrible were the gods of the Norsemen, embodiments of the most awful forces of Nature—the thunder, the storm, the lightning, and the flood.

But in the Roman and Greek mythology the gods are of a softer nature, more pitiful, more friendly to mankind, swayed by sensuous emotions, beautiful as Nature in those southern climes, the spirits of the stream, the glade, of the star, and of the cloud, now bright and ethereal as the sunlight, now sweet and melancholy as the shadows flitting across the hillsides of Olympus.

Though these broad distinctions of character may not be

so clearly defined nowadays, after long centuries of intermingling between race and race, yet to a certain extent they exist still and will always exist.

Men who dwell in the lonely highlands—whether of India, or Africa, or Scotland, or Ireland—are of a more exalted nature, more poetical, visionary, unpractical, emotional, passionate than those who dwell in the populous plains and are hard-headed, business-like, and homely. Those who dwell in cold latitudes are inevitably more energetic, harder-working, and dogged than those in the warmer South, who are less ambitious, less pushing.

But in the South there is more gaiety, more easy-going enjoyment of life, more subtlety of thought, more culture and refinement; in the North more austerity and gloominess of thought, more hardness and roughness of character: in the South more song, more art, and the poetry of love; in the North more depth of thought and earnestness of religion, and poetry that is not mere joyous carolling, but tells of great wrestlings of the soul.

Even in the narrow limit of the British Islands we may trace these influences of climate. The Highlander is mystic, passionate; the Lowlander practical and commercial; the north-countryman keen-witted, dogged, hard-working; the southerner (in Somerset, Devonshire, Hampshire, and Sussex) dull-pated, slow-moving; the East Anglian taciturn, morose; the Welshman hot-tempered, full of poetry and music and superstition.

In the narrow compass of this article I have had to write in broad and general terms, having no space for every necessary modification, but in the following pages I will give more particular examples.

## 2. Effect of Climate on Character—*continued.*

My preceding argument on this subject is presented with a certain baldness necessary to the short limit of my space, but may seem to some of my readers as begging the question, without a sufficient show of reason and without allowing enough for those multitudes of causes which influence character irrespective of climate.

It is necessary now to consider the subject upon more scientific grounds; and to understand the reasonableness of the theory, one must inquire into the fundamental laws of climate in regard to man's social condition.

**Climate  
and Food.**

To start with, it requires no argument to prove that the food supply of a country is governed by its climate. There are some countries in which Nature is a fairy godmother, and scatters the fruit of the earth into the laps of her children with no more trouble on their part than the sowing and the gathering.

On the other hand, there are vast tracts of land which would be sterile but for ceaseless toil, and yield only a bare and beggarly harvest at the end of it. And again there is the frozen north, where men may woo the soil in vain, and must make their food of blubber and oil. And there are temperate regions, where men's reasonable labour is duly rewarded and leaves them a certain leisure. And so on with many varying degrees of ease or hardship by which men may gain their daily bread or their daily blubber, as the case may be.

**Food and  
Civilisation.**

Now, the food supply is the prime factor of man's development. It is a strange thing to consider that civilisation, moral and mental culture, and the highest planes of art, literature, and science, depend on a well-fed stomach; but it is a fact. If we turn over the pages of the world's history, we shall find that those regions where ancient civilisations flourished are also regions where the food supply was abundant and easily obtained; and if we look at the world of to-day, we shall note that tracts of country where the soil is unsympathetic to the seed, and where there are few natural food resources, are inhabited by people of little account in the civilised world.

The reason is, that when food is procured easily it leaves a people with leisure for the cultivation of the intellectual and artistic side of their nature; and on the other hand, where food is scarce, human nature expends its whole energy on the one great need.

Henry Buckle, in his great work on *The History of Civilisation in England*, bears out this fact with an excellent example.

"In Asia," he says, "civilisation has always been confined to that vast tract where a rich and alluvial soil has secured to man that wealth without some share of which no intellectual progress can begin. This great region extends, with a few interruptions, from the east of southern China to the western coasts of Asia Minor, of Phœnicia, and of Palestine.

“To the north of this immense belt there is a long line of barren country, which has invariably been peopled by rude and wandering tribes, who are kept in poverty by the uncongenial nature of the soil, and who, as long as they remained on it, have never emerged from their uncivilised state.

“How entirely this depends on physical causes is evident from the fact that these same Mongolian and Tartarian hordes have at different periods founded great monarchies in China, in India, and in Persia, and have on all such occasions attained a civilisation nowise inferior to that possessed by the most flourishing of the ancient kingdoms. For in the fertile plains of southern Asia, Nature has supplied all the materials of wealth; and there it was that these barbarous tribes acquired for the first time some degrees of refinement, produced a national literature, and organised a national polity: none of which things they, in their native land, had been able to effect.”

**Other Civilisations.** In the same way we may see that the Arabs in their own country, where great arid deserts give no promise of fertility, have always been a savage, uncivilised people, for in their case, as in all others, “great ignorance,” as Buckle says, “is the fruit of great poverty.” But in the seventh century they conquered the best part of Spain, and in the ninth century the Punjab, and eventually nearly the whole of India.

As soon as they were established in their new settlements their character seemed to undergo a great change. Accumulating wealth, they acquired the graces of civilisation, and these nomadic tribes of rude barbarians became, as soon as they left their native country, the founders of great empires, and, of more lasting importance, the founders of great sciences and the transmitters of a great heritage of knowledge.

So in Egypt the fertile valley of the Nile became the seat of the oldest civilisation, contrasting with the surrounding regions of Africa, whose sterile soil has never produced a race above the lowest strata of humanity.

Thus it will be seen how the food supply of a race is of immense influence upon the character of the people; and as the food supply is regulated to a large extent by climate, it follows, as the night the day, that climate itself is of preponderating influence upon character.

**Climate  
and  
Population.**

Climate also regulates the relative increase of population in the same way, through the condition of the food supply, and thus again reacts on character. In India, for instance, a man may keep his body and soul together on a small quantity of rice, and the climate is generally favourable to the cultivation of this grain.

The consequence is that there is no check on the population, and human life has always been "cheap." When people multiply so easily and so rapidly the price of labour is of course very little, because there are many more hands ready to do a piece of work than are necessary. In these Eastern countries, where people may keep themselves alive on "a mere nothing," and are willing to work for a bare pittance, the character of a nation will always be debased in course of time, and it will generally be found, on turning over the pages of history, that all such peoples have, as a rule, been trodden beneath the heel of tyranny, and that they have seldom had the spirit to rise against their taskmasters.

The nations who have advanced quickest in civilisation have been those in which such conditions have prevailed, but they have degenerated quickly from the cause I have just pointed out. The nations who have advanced furthest in civilisation, and who bid fair to dominate the world for many centuries to come, have been those in temperate regions, where Nature to be won must be wooed, and where neither on the one hand an excess of fertility, nor on the other a sterility of soil, has encouraged an over-population or checked all enterprise by miserable poverty.

**Physical  
Nature.**

Climate, of course, means a good deal more than "hot or cold," "wet or dry." It includes the science of geography, which relates to causes of upheaval in the earth's surface, and thereby the arrangement of mountains, the origin of watersheds, the course of rivers, the formation of bays and creeks, the presence of swamps and fen country, and the very distribution of towns.

London was not dumped down in haphazard way. The existence of the largest city in the world was predetermined by the laws of climate long before it was named Lun-dun, "the City of Ships." Rome stands where it is because the climate of the early world produced certain aspects of nature which instantly commended itself to the practical eyes of those Latin wanderers who founded "the City of the Seven Hills."

**Climate  
and Great  
Men.**

It was climate which produced our Shakespeare. The woods and the streams and the meadows of fair Warwickshire, determined by the climate of England, gave him one side of his character. The life of the country people, the adventurous spirit of those Elizabethan worthies who lived on the coast of that "jewel set in a silver sea," the whole soul of the nation in that golden age, was evolved out of many causes, of which the prime cause was the influence of climate; and William Shakespeare born in some other country, perhaps in a tropical region, would have been of widely different character, quite apart from all differences of education, to the man through whose great brain had blown the breezes of a Western land.

Perhaps I have explained my meaning rather crudely, but these few hints of a great subject may put my readers on a new line of thought and investigation.

**3. The Influence of the Drama.**

In one of the most important literary reviews of the day an article has recently appeared denying, or at least depreciating, the importance of the drama as a social influence.

It is surprising to me that in this twentieth century, which can look back upon the philosophy of Plato, the plays of Æschylus, the essays of Bacon, the works of the Elizabethan dramatists, the diary of Pepys, the memoirs of the French Revolution, and the biographies of countless modern worthies, a statement like this could be made in cold print in all seriousness.

It is almost like denying or depreciating the influence of oratory or of literature.

Whether the drama of to-day regarded in its general effect has a good or a bad influence is another question altogether, but that its influence is to be reckoned with seems to me beyond dispute.

**The Limitations of the Drama.** Of course this influence is to a certain extent limited.

There are many excellent people, for instance, who never come in touch with it at all, or only in an indirect way through its effect upon other people. They have been brought up in the belief that the theatre, or, to use the

good old-fashioned English name, the playhouse, is a very wicked place—a trap for the innocent, a temptation to the weak.

There are others in country parts who have not the opportunity of seeing dramatic performances, however strong their desire. And, lastly, there are many who cannot afford the price of a seat, and therefore, being honest men and women, abstain from the luxury.

So it is that there is a large body of people in this country who are to a certain extent, though not wholly, outside the influence of the drama.

In the olden days the thought and ideals of the nation were expressed, and the religion and morality of the people were taught, very largely by means of the popular miracle plays which were performed in almost every town and village at Easter, Christmas, and other seasons of the year. With the advent of a more general knowledge of letters developed by the invention of printing, these old plays gave way to the reign of literature, and this change of form for the wit and wisdom of the nation has lasted until the present day, when the novel is the popular vehicle of knowledge and entertainment.

Nevertheless, the people who for the most part lead the thought of the day, and those who are "in the movement," to use a convenient phrase, are, in the majority, habitual playgoers. To those who disapprove of the drama this may be contended as an exaggeration, yet, if I were to name the leading writers, artists, poets, statesmen, and politicians of the day, I feel convinced that, with hardly an exception, they would all admit to the fascination of the play. Certainly, in that class of society where the stress of life does not press so hardly as to prevent the pursuit of pleasure as well as of money, the drama is the recognised inspiration for new fashions of thought and speech, and the one source of entertainment which never stales.

Because many of these people go to the play for entertainment pure and simple, desiring no instruction and careless of the moral, is no argument against the influence of the drama. On the contrary, all forms of entertainment have a potent influence of one sort or another.

The game of bridge has been one of the most recent and pervading influences of society, and a very bad one. The game of cricket has done a great deal in shaping the character-

istics of the nation. Bull-fighting in Spain has a profound effect upon the life of the people.

And in the case of the modern drama, although a person may go to the play to be amused and to pass a pleasant evening, he is none the less unconsciously affected by the ideas, speech, emotion, and moral, or non-moral of the piece.

**The Sense of Sight.** And it seems to me certain that a good play or a bad play must leave a much stronger impression upon the mind of the spectator than a good book or a bad book, a good picture or a bad picture, a wise oration or a foolish one.

And for this reason. A dramatic production acts upon those senses by which the human brain derives thought and emotion for the building up of character.

The printed page may, and of course very often does, convey vivid impressions which result in strong emotions. But these are feeble compared with those of things actually seen instead of merely imagined.

The sense of sight is the most powerful of all the senses in the service of intellect and emotion, and it is this which makes the actor's art so singularly impressive. The soliloquies of Hamlet wrestling with doubt and despair still one's heart even when read from a volume of Shakespeare's plays, but when such an actor as Henry Irving or Beerbohm Tree speaks these words, and the turmoil of Hamlet's soul is depicted by dramatic facial expression and interpreted by subtle and studied gestures, and by all that "business" (as it is technically called) of the dramatic art by which a clever actor knows how to play upon the emotions of his audience, the effect is increased a hundredfold, and the onlooker is held spellbound by the magic glamour of a great imaginative character reproduced in the flesh.

**The Power of a Voice.** But the actor does not depend for his impressiveness merely on gesture and facial expression. He may reach the hearts of his audience also through the medium of sound.

And here, again, there is a vast distance between the effect of words read and words spoken. The human voice is an organ of unlimited range of expression, and the man who knows its powers may hold the very breath of a great audience waiting upon his lips.

It is only the actor and the orator who know the powers of a good voice. The ordinary people of to-day, in this country at least, speak in a level monotone, which is only changed in moments of passion or deep emotion. But the actor (of course I include the actress too) has a command of his voice which enables him to express the lights and shades of feeling; to let it thrill with the accents of anger, hate, and fear; to let it drop into the soft music of love and gentleness; to pitch it upon the key of satire and derision; to let it tremble with the quavering of terror, despair, and expectancy; to let it swell with triumph and pride; to throw into its notes the vibrating energy of intense emotion, of heated thought, of agony of heart. The quick-drawn sigh, the quivering breath, the staccato note of surprise and indignation, the low, tremulous tones of pleading and of pity, are the actor's and the actress's aids to dramatic portraiture, and it is only those who have thrilled at the voice of an Ellen Terry or of a Forbes Robertson who can appreciate the irresistible effect of dramatic elocution.

Then, again, the art of stage furnishing and lighting, the help of fine or realistic costumes, the skilful "make-up" of the actor or actress, combine to produce an impression upon the imagination which, according to all the laws of psychology, must have a profound influence upon the emotions of an audience.

**The Modern Play.** And whether, as I have said, this influence be good or bad need not now be discussed, but it seems to me certain that the modern drama does have an effect upon the thought and tendencies of present-day society.

Because, however feebly, the modern play reflects, satirises, and crystallises all the floating ideals, all the new phases of social custom, all the latest forms of phrase and fashion, all the sentiment, prejudice, folly, wit, vice, and virtue which are the characteristics of twentieth-century life.

And therefore, by "holding the mirror up to nature," however blurred may be the image, the spectator sees himself as others see him, sees his own mode of life pictured in miniature, is led to understand "the form and pressure of the time" more clearly than his own intelligence moving in his own narrow track would have allowed him, and is unconsciously but not the less powerfully influenced in his own character and ways of thinking, speaking, and living.

The plays of A. W. Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, J. M. Barrie,

Sydney Grundy, and other leading dramatists of the day, have permeated every phase of modern thought, being discussed and quoted in the clubs, at the dinner-tables, in the letters, and in the literature of all who move in the circles of English society which mould the character and impel the tendencies of the nation.

It cannot be said, therefore, with any truth, that the drama of to-day is without influence, and not to be taken into account when estimating the forces at work upon our social evolution.

#### 4. The Man in the Street.

We have been hearing a good deal about this individual lately. He seems to have been discovered by the newspapers, and adopted by needy politicians when they want to shelve responsibility. But, as a matter of fact, he existed a long time before he was crystallised into a phrase.

And he is a very interesting study, though not always an edifying one.

He has many moods and many peculiarities, but his most conspicuous characteristic is his absence of self-will when in the company of his fellows, or, to put it in other and more scientific words, he catches the infection of a crowd.

There is nothing more interesting than a study of the psychology of a crowd. It is not so much a collection of individuals as a complete organism, subject to the same influences, swayed by the same impulses, and operating in a common action.

The man in the street is powerless of resistance against the magnetic influence of a crowd. I have often seen him struggle and succumb in the whirlpool of a crowd's enthusiasm.

I have seen men of republican convictions cheer themselves hoarse at the passing of a king, and then go away feeling humiliated at this disloyalty to their conscience and ideals. I have sat beside politicians who have previously made up their minds and seen them flush with ill-repressed enthusiasm at a speech by an eloquent opponent, and unconsciously join in the after-dinner applause as though their own opinions had been exactly expressed instead of absolutely contradicted.

When the news of the ultimatum to President Kruger was announced by the Lord Mayor of London to a great gathering of

**The Psycho-  
logy of the  
Crowd.**

citizens I stood outside the Guildhall and watched the wild excitement of the crowd, and listened to the shouts of "Down with old Kruger," uttered by men some of whom I knew were praying in their secret hearts for peace and dreading the approach of war.

The very men who looked upon the German Emperor as the arch-enemy of their country cheered him to the echo when he came upon a visit to us, and those who had said the harshest things against the French nation during the Fashoda and Dreyfus "affairs" greeted the French President in London as the representative of a nation whom they now seemed to regard as their dearest friends.

**The Thrill of Excitement.** The fact is that the individuals of a crowd are rarely masters of themselves, but are subject to that strange thrill, partly mental and partly physical, which passes like an electric current through a gathering of people when any strong interest creates a nervous tension in them.

In the same way that to hear a number of people laughing causes an instinctive desire to smile on the part of the onlooker, although he does not know the cause of their mirth, so when there is cheering or a waving of hats it requires an effort on the part of any individual to resist the infectious enthusiasm.

It is for this reason that a crowd of people is often guilty of violence or heated indignation which sometimes finds a vent in cruelty. Two or three speakers uttering fierce words will often stir a gathering into fury quite out of proportion with the actual sentiments of the individuals taken separately.

The excesses of the French Revolution were often deplored by the very people who had indulged in them, and citizens guilty of red-handed murder, who had hung men *à la lanterne* for no other reason than that they were aristocrats, and had jeered at gentle women as they passed on their way to the scaffold, were often in private life good husbands and kind fathers, and lovers of peace, and good-hearted neighbours.

**Playing upon the Populace.** So it is that the man in the street, who in his own little home is a person of quiet domestic virtues, fond of gardening, not above nursing the baby, kind to his cat, and generally unemotional, loses his individuality when he gets into a crowd, so that at the words of some blustering politician he shows the tigerish aspect of human

nature, or in a moment of popular rejoicing gets rid of his respectability and indulges in the riotous excesses of a Mafeking day.

It is a knowledge of this psychology of the crowd that gives the popular orator his power. The calm, logical, dispassionate reasoner, as well as the noisy windmill work of an opposite type, may equally fail in convincing a crowd. But the man who can play upon the emotions, who can tickle the vanity, pander skilfully to the prejudices, and awaken the sleeping passions of a mob, may drive them anywhere he wills as long as they are under the spell of his eloquence.

**The Leaders of Men.** The man in the street is always ready to follow a leader, and, as it generally happens that in every crowd there is one man at least who was born with the gift of command and the instinct of leadership, in a moment of tumult or excitement he is the one instantly elected to play the chief part in the game of follow-my-leader.

One sees this time and again at perilous crises. The fact that some shipwrecks are the scenes of wild panic, while others are made glorious by the quiet resignation and unselfish courage of the passengers, is not, as some are apt to think, because those on one vessel were naturally or by training more courageous than those on the other, but in nine cases out of ten it is because on the panic-stricken vessel there was no leader whose bold, ringing words and magnetic personality stilled the shaking nerves of his fellows and inspired them with his example, whereas on the other such a man sprang into command in the very throat of the danger.

**The Courage of Everyday Life.** Not that the man in the street is wanting in pluck. He has indeed as a rule a deep fund of courage, especially of passive courage, which is always admirable and sometimes heroic. He knows how to suffer without too much grumbling. He knows how to starve, if needs must.

It is the rule rather than the exception that the man in the street lives in a constant peril, and he is aware of it though he tries to forget it.

In this country there are many millions of men whose livelihoods, and their families', depend upon a clear brain and sufficient good health to keep them at work, and with whom an accident, a few weeks' illness—worse than all, a stroke of ill luck

—is fatal. Without pity they are trampled under, and the gaunt wolf shows its ugly teeth over the threshold. It is no mean courage that keeps such men cheerful and calm. Yet the man in the street seldom shows the white feather.

**The Genius of Common-sense.** Although, too, as I have said, he is not master of himself in a crowd, yet individually he is not lacking in intelligence or personal convictions. He has, indeed, the genius of common-sense. His knowledge of history, of literature, of other nations, is extremely limited, but he looks at his problems with shrewd eyes, and measures them by the experience of his own life.

It is this very narrowness of outlook which often gives him a wisdom lacking in more learned men. In matters of national importance, those who are called upon to guide and govern the people are often led into error by elaborate theories and high-pitched ideals, blinded by their own cleverness and convinced of their own far-reaching foresight.

But the man in the street looks neither backward nor forward, neither to the left nor the right. He strips the questions of all theory, brings them down from the clouds of idealism, and says to himself and to anyone who cares to listen, "This is how the thing will affect me, and my missus, and my kids. This is how it will work with Bill Smith, who lives next door, and Jack Jones, round the corner. I don't care tuppence about posterity, whatever that may be, and the Germans or the French or the Russians have never frightened me yet, and never will. But I know my own business and my own difficulties and my own interests, and if there is any talk of making my life harder than it is already I am not the man to put up with it."

In the same way he judges of questions of international justice by the light of his own simple ethics. The man in the street is not as a rule a religious man, but he has elementary notions of right and wrong, and a very strong conviction as to the necessity of fair play in every department of life. Above all, he hates everything that savours of cant, humbug, and sham, though his knowledge of human nature is not always enough to enable him to detect these qualities.

**Heroes and Scapegoats.** He is prone to hero-worship, and it is difficult to shake his belief in any man whom he has once put upon the pedestal of honour. Once having called

a man hero, and put his picture in his little front parlour, the most lamentable failure calls forth his pity but cannot shake his faith, and open conviction of inefficiency only makes him suspicious of slander.

Yet he requires also a scapegoat upon whom he can visit the sins of omission or commission in the affairs of the nation or of the parish. He does not believe in divided responsibility. If anything goes wrong someone is to blame, and the man in the street considers justice is not done until punishment is meted out. He is not a searcher of motives, and does not accept the plea of extenuating circumstances. "Off with his head" is a popular judgment when a verdict has been given.

**The Soft Side of Sentiment.** Curiously enough, however, the man in the street, in spite of his practical common-sense, is at the mercy of his sentiment. This is his weakest side, as well as sometimes his noblest. A successful appeal to his sentiment melts all his seeming hardness into almost maudlin sympathy and makes him an easy dupe for a cunning knave.

"An unfortunate gentleman" with a barrel-organ, a woman in exaggerated "weeds" singing through the streets, a sturdy rogue who plays "the old soldier" and exhibits a medal bought at a pawn-shop, a music-hall ditty about "the old mother at home" or "the signalman's sacrifice," exercise a powerful influence upon the emotional side of his character, and draw forth his compassion and generally his hard-earned cash. The old phrases, "Soldiers of the King," "For Home and Beauty," "Death rather than Dishonour," never fail to stir him to the very core.

In short, take him for all in all, the average man in the street is a simple, sincere, unsuspecting soul in all matters of sentiment, yet shrewd, hard-headed, and practical in all those things that relate to the business of life and work.

## 5. How to read Contemporary History.

It seems to me a pity that our modern system of education is so very ancient, or rather I should say it is a pity that it deals so exclusively with the dead past, with things that have happened and have been done, and with men and women who have played

out their parts and now live only in a ghostly way, rather than with things that are now doing and with people still at work.

It is admirable, of course, to know something of the siege of Troy, yet the siege of Port Arthur is not without significance in its influence upon the world of the future. It is well to learn a little about the voyage of the *Beagle*, but the voyage of the *Discovery* is also worth following. The history of the Corn Laws is an important chapter in English history; so also is the story of Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy.

**Past and Present.** We could not do very well without a mental portrait gallery in which Robert Clive, David Livingstone, George Stephenson, Michael Faraday, Benjamin Disraeli—to name but a few men whose work we now inherit—are not hung upon the line.

But while they are still with us, it is worth our while also to study the achievements and influences of modern people, not of so high a rank perhaps, but carving their names upon the tablets of time, such as Lord Kitchener, Lord Milner, Sir Harry Johnston, Sir Hiram Maxim, Lord Kelvin, Mr. Balfour, Lord Rosebery, M. Santos Dumont, and Sir William Ramsay, to name at random a few of our modern men of action.

Of course there is not time for everything in this life, and the student who is giving his mind to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, or to Green's *Short History of the English People*, may complain that he has not time to study with much thoroughness the present position of Great Britain in Egypt, the causes and progress of the Russo-Japanese War, and its probable influence upon European Powers, economic problems of the fiscal policy, the ethics of the Yellow question, the real meaning of our mission in Tibet, and other current events, except as outlined in the summaries of newspaper reports, in descriptions of battles, and by a hasty glance through leading articles in his own particular journal.

**History in the Making.** Yet, somehow or other, I am not a great believer in that plea of no time. Most people seem to find such a lot of time for mere foolishness. Anyhow, I feel sure it would be a good thing if schools, and educational institutes of all kinds, would set apart a few hours in their weekly curriculum for the consideration of history in the making.

And still more do I think that every University would do

well to establish a new Chair, and to appoint a Professor of Contemporary History, who by some years of special attention to home and foreign politics, by some acquaintance with foreign countries and currents of thought, by a more than ordinary knowledge of nineteenth-century history and of the traditions, prejudices, enmities, and interests it has bequeathed to the twentieth, should be able to explain the inner workings, the tendencies, the inevitable consequences of events which to the ordinary lay mind—that is to say, to the average newspaper reader—are mere haphazard, disconnected, somewhat meaningless episodes along the road of Fate.

This suggestion, however, is sheer impudence on my part.

But I may be allowed, in the circle of my own readers, to hint to them that there is a very interesting—more than that, an enthralling and fascinating—field of study to be found in following the tracks of contemporary history in the very footprints of those who are the messengers of progress, in one way or another, towards good or evil goals.

**Daily  
Universal  
History.**

A good daily newspaper is, of course, the easiest and, to a certain extent, the best way of getting a fair general knowledge of history in the making. A newspaper is merely another name for a universal history—divided into daily instalments.

Some of my readers may interpret the remark that they don't want to be told to read their newspaper, because they could not do without it at any cost.

But then there are ways of reading a newspaper. The man, for instance, who does not study contemporary history in the proper sense of the word is just as much—probably more—interested in the latest sensational murder, the latest society divorce, the latest sporting news, last night's dramatic criticism, and so on, as he is in the rumour of a European complication.

But the real student of contemporary history has an eye for other things, and, when he gets home, a pair of scissors, a paste brush, and a book for cuttings. He jumps upon tiny two-line telegrams which pass unnoticed by the ordinary reader, but which supply him with another little link of circumstantial evidence which he is building up into a big case in connection with some question of foreign political importance.

His scissors get to work to supply his paste-up book with an interesting interview with some explorer who has just pushed a

little farther aside the veil which still hides, even nowadays, some parts of this much-explored world. He has, in fact, a book all to itself of biographical cuttings, from which he is able to put his hand upon facts concerning the life-work of men and women who are doing big things, more or less, in problems of scientific, political, military, and social importance. New inventions, new discoveries, new additions to the world's thought in many of its branches are recorded by his newspaper cuttings, and he treasures up also expert articles by men of authority upon the really great national and international events of the year.

**Contemporary Chronicles.** But this newspaper reading, immensely valuable as it is for the groundwork of contemporary history, is by no means the only literature to be studied in the subject. In fact, the literature is so overwhelming that the great difficulty is one of selection. The important and periodical review, such as the *Fortnightly*, *National*, *Contemporary*, and *The Nineteenth Century—and After*, must be consulted.

Reminiscences of diplomats are issued every year, of varying importance and interest, but all serving a useful purpose in enabling the student at home to get a peep behind the scenes of foreign courts, to understand the intrigues and subtleties of foreign policies, to get an acquaintance with the chief men of Europe who pull the wires to make the puppets dance.

Consular reports make very valuable and very entertaining reading, and more than any other literature published give valuable and suggestive information upon British trade and influence in various parts of the world, and the difficulties and prejudices we have to contend with. They are also very salutary now and again in filling one with a healthy sense of one's own stupidity.

**Romantic Blue-books.** Blue-books sound pretty bad, I admit, but I have sat down to some Blue-books which have been more interesting than many novels which I have undertaken to read, and which, in spite of an absence of "style" and of all attempt at sensation, are not without a vast deal of romance to those who do not think romance consists only in a little blood and a lot of love.

Books of travel, Royal Society lectures, trade and scientific journals, parliamentary reports, and treatises on foreign affairs,

provide the student of contemporary history with the facts from which he can make his own deductions.

It is a study of real, practical, living interest, and the man who pursues it diligently will at the end of a few years find himself with a broad outlook upon the modern world, which may be helpful not only to himself but to his nation.

### 6. Life in Town or Country.

One of the problems "in the air" just now is whether a town life or a country life is best for the development of mental and moral character. Some, indeed, would limit the scope of the question, and ask whether character is at all affected by the differences between town and country, being inclined to maintain that if a man is morally disposed he will be so whether he lives in an environment bounded by bricks and mortar or in some beauty-spot of nature, and that if he has been gifted with a sound intelligence it will be developed as well in both places.

The problem is not one of merely academic interest. The answer to it is of real importance to the national well-being, for if mind and morals are so considerably modified by environment as some assert, it is essential that those who are anxious for self-cultivation, upon the right lines, and especially those entrusted with the upbringing of children, should select their dwelling-place in accordance with their judgment on this subject.

It seems to me, so far as I have studied the matter, that life should be divided into three stages: In childhood one should live in the country; from young manhood upwards one should dwell in the towns; and in middle age one should return again to the country.

**In the Town.** A town-bred child has many advantages, but these, I feel sure, are outweighed by its immense disadvantages. In the town the boy or girl becomes very precocious in a knowledge of "the world," in which one generally includes the flesh and the devil.

A knowledge of the world is a very handy thing, but in my opinion one may acquire it too soon in life. It is exceedingly useful for a man or woman—indeed it is absolutely necessary for them both—to know the literature of the human face, to be able to read a man for a rogue or an honest person by a glance

at his frontispiece, whatever may be his title. It is useful also to come in contact with all sorts and conditions of men and women, not necessarily by intimate acquaintance with all these classes, but by seeing them in the streets—the poor and the rich (with a thousand different grades between those two extremes) all playing their part, big or little, upon the stage of life.

The town-bred child soon learns “to know his way about,” to use a Cockney expression; he is quick of brain and tongue, his mind becomes stored with thousands of stray facts relating to the world and its ways of which the country child is at that age entirely ignorant, and he has a thousand human interests which at present lie dormant in his country cousin.

But this precocious knowledge exacts its penalties. This early sharpness of intellect and multiplicity of interest robs the child of that simplicity of mind which is the dwelling-place of the imagination, and which gives the depth and sincerity of character not usual in the typical child of the town.

**In the Country.** A knowledge of life should come later than a knowledge of nature. The best school for children is in the lanes and the fields. Better than to know the names of the daily newspapers, of the theatres and their latest plays, of popular actors and popular songs, of the latest thing in picture-postcards, and the hidden and not too wholesome delights of the penny-in-the-slot machines, is for a child to know the birds that visit its parents' garden, to know their different notes and the varieties of their eggs, to be acquainted with every wild flower that grows in the fields, to have learnt the old legends about them and the country rhymes, to be familiar with the ways of the animals, to have watched the season's changes and to have heard the heart-beats of Nature when the spring comes, to have seen the summer die, and to have waited through the winter in its death-like beauty.

**The Lessons of Youth.** These things are only learnt in youth. A townsman may think to woo Nature when he has reached middle age, but she will not respond to his advances. She gives her love and tells her secrets only to young lovers.

It is a great possession this, the love and knowledge of Nature. Those who possess it hardly realise all that it is to them. But the townsman whose childhood was lived amidst bricks and mortar keenly feels what a blank there is in his life,

what a great gap in his knowledge, through being ignorant of that country lore which makes every lane and dell, stream or pond, full of living interest to those who are hail-fellow-well-met with all the inhabitants of the vegetable and animal world.

To my mind, there is no doubt that a country life does affect one's character considerably, but in a subtle and sub-conscious way. A man is not made a rogue because he lives in a town, nor is he made virtuous by living in the country; but granted good material to work upon, a sound mind, a healthy conscience, and an innate love for knowledge and beauty, an apprenticeship to Nature is a very valuable training if one wants to do anything big in life.

**Town and  
Country  
Morals.**

I do not hold with those who claim that the laws of nature are always moral, and that "a return to nature," to use the cant phrase, is the cure for all the vices of humanity. Nature is non-moral in the conventional sense. A return to nature would mean a return to the morals of the farmyard.

We all know that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and however beautiful may be his surroundings, however deeply he may be moved by the sights and scenes of the country, a man will not find this sufficient restraint upon the baser part of his nature, which may be held in check only by the iron grip of civilised law and the voice of religion.

But in the same way that the body, nourished on good simple food in early life, is built up into strength which enables it to endure the stress and strain of manhood, so the mind fed upon the simple pleasures and interests of country life in childhood is more healthy and vigorous than that of the person whose early education has been of the stimulating and artificial character of town life.

**Food for  
the Mind.**

Nevertheless, life in the country must not be too continuous if the mind is to get a broad and ample culture. On the threshold of manhood, when the blood runs riot, and the pulse beats quick, and the brain is filled with all kinds of unsatisfied longings and aspirations, then town life is essential to give the needful variety of interests, and food for new thought and experience.

The clash of mind with mind, the kaleidoscope of characters

and opinions, the hustling and jostling of humanity, is a phase of life through which everyone should pass if he would know the world as one playing a part in it, and not as a mere spectator.

In the town there are, of course, opportunities for learning which do not exist in the country—libraries, museums, theatres, concerts, and last, but not least, fine shops in which are displayed many objects of art and taste which educate the mind in refinement and æstheticism.

As regards the moral side of the question, it must be confessed that it is a difference in opportunity for immorality and a difference in the influence of public opinion that constitutes the relationship between the morals of town and country, rather than the influence of environment. Public opinion is naturally a very strong power in the village and small country town, where everybody is very much under the eyes of his neighbours. In the town a person may hide himself in the crowd and have no other censor than his conscience, but in the village he challenges the condemnation of all his little world if he lapses from the path of virtue—and he will not escape stoning.

For the same reason, there is more individual dignity and self-respect in the country than in the town. In the village everybody is somebody, but in the town everybody is nobody.

## 7. The Glamour of the Impossible.

The distinction between men of genius of whatever class—such as literary men, soldiers, prophets, hairdressers, tailors, explorers, inventors, and thieves—and men of mere average intelligence and of ordinary aspirations, lies wholly in the different qualities of ambition.

Every man is ambitious, but their ambitions are directed to varying ends. The normal commonplace, common-sense citizen, cast from a mould which turns out millions of human stereotypes, each exactly like the other, has for the highest object of his life the attainment of things possible, such as a house at £60 a year, a wife with a pretty face, a good library, a well-stocked wine cellar, and other little luxuries of the world.

But the man of genius is not content with things possible. He is constantly craving for the unattainable. His soul is bewitched by the glamour of the impossible. He wants to discover the North Pole. He spends his life in inventing a

flying machine, and only succeeds in finding his death. If he is a Napoleon, he dreams of founding new empires and of looting the treasures of the world, and his ambition grows with what it feeds on until he meets his Moscow or his Waterloo. If he is a hairdresser like Willie Clarkson, he dreams of new creations for the divine Sarah, his soul is filled with the music and poetry of wigs, and he burns his heart out in striving to realise his ideals.

**Striving after Ideals.** The literary man, the musician, and the painter, above all others, are victims to this glamour of the impossible. Their achievements are but the graveyards of their aspirations. They never attain to that "grace beyond the reach of art" which in their secret hours pervades them with a sweet aroma of thought, raising them above the hilltops of the known world to those inaccessible mountains which are only scaled in waking dreams by men and women who through their whole life strive to reach the summits and fail in part, or wholly.

For when after these travels of the imagination they wake up before their paper, or canvas, or instrument, they have but the memory of their dream; and when they seek to interpret it in prose, or poetry, or painting, or music, it is but the shadow of the memory of a dream; and those who read the poem, or see the painting, find therein still less to satisfy them, getting no more than the reflection of the shadow of the memory of the dream.

That is why men of genius are always miserable. They have their moments of joy, it is true, joy such as the ordinary man or woman never knows, a divine exaltation of spirit when the impossible is almost within their reach, when they are struggling onwards to attain it, when far below comes the noise of the madding crowd, and they are alone with their art, a whirlwind of the music of thought, or of sound, or of word-witchery clashing through their brains and throbbing through their pulse, when all else in the world is mere foolishness, and poverty, sickness, domestic troubles are forgotten in the richness and glory of this golden glamour of things impossible.

**The Divine Afflatus.** But those moments of the divine afflatus are but few in the sum of their existence, and they are more frequently cast down by failure. Of course the world does not always call it failure. Those who see the picture

hanging on the wall cry out words of praise and stand enchanted by the beauty of it or enthralled by the mystery of it.

And yet the painter himself, while acknowledging a half success, is despondent at what he knows to be his half failure. For, after all, how can mere paint and canvas record those gorgeous colours of his mental vision? How can the human hand and the human eye materialise those thoughts which came to him in divine beauty?

Labour as he will, strive as he may, retouch or repaint, adding stroke to stroke, light to light, when all is done he has but produced a thing of which he may boast in public, being but a fool as most men are, but of which in his secret heart he is ashamed, knowing this so-called child of his brain to be a changeling.

And so also the literary man, even the man who **Inarticulate Inspiration.** is crowned with the applause of a great public, feels that he cannot interpret the words that have been whispered to him by the spirits.

His soul has perhaps been pervaded with beauty beyond the eyesight of his fellows, the beauty of sound and colour and form and motion of a dream-world where all senses are spiritualised, and his brain has teemed with thoughts vague and shadowy and undefined, in which the mysteries and truths of life unknown to many of those who have been given the gift of life are half revealed—and yet, and yet, when he sits down to his table and takes up his pen before a sheet of white paper, he finds that words are wooden things, that language, rich and copious as it is to express all ordinary meanings, is powerless to convey from his soul and his mind to those of other men the things which have been vouchsafed to him in his groping through darkness to the infinite light.

The stereotyped phrases, the similes that have been used a thousand times, the old familiar sing-song of prose cadences, the words that are coins of unvarying value representing but not really containing thought itself, come from his pen, jerkily and laboriously, and, when the page is written and he reads it over, he sickens at the blurred image of his bright vision, which is no better than the sun shining in a muddy pool.

And the man of empire, like the man of the pen, he too never attains the summit of the impossible mountain. Napoleon, the type of the modern warrior who lives for ambition's sake,

was never satisfied, and with all Europe at his feet (save the little British Isles) stretched forth his hand to clutch the East within his grasp, and failed.

**The Attraction of the Unattainable.** Yet, though the glamour of the impossible is like a will o' the wisp that often leads to madness, it is one of the follies of life to which the world owes its wisdom.

For just as a mirage in the desert has often led the fainting traveller onwards, inspiring him by its beautiful lie to efforts and endurance which otherwise he could not have put forth, until, stumbling ever onwards, he comes at last to a real oasis in the desert, or leaves his bones to whiten on a hill of gold, marking the spot for those who follow him in his track more easily, so this seeking after the impossible has lured many on to discoveries of infinite value to their successors, and their failures to reach the goal of their desire have yet pointed the way for others to lands of beauty, to springs of sweet refreshment, to hills crowned with a golden glory.

The glamour of the impossible is, in other words, that beguiling light which leads men to seek for the attainment of high ideals beyond the very sight of their fellow-mortals and often beyond their own reach.

### 8. Some Thoughts on Thought.

It is not often we think. Now and again we do in a spasmodic sort of way, but only very rarely. We go to bed at night and get up in the morning; we go to the office and do our daily task; we eat our meals, and read our papers, and talk a good deal, mostly nonsense, but we don't think—not often, any way.

We are like a piano played on by skilful fingers. No doubt, if the piano were a personality, it would consider itself a mighty fine fellow for sounding such a variety of notes. It would rather fancy, in its own conceit, that it made the fingers play, instead of the fingers playing it. And we, in our own conceit, have the same little fancy. We don't a bit realise that we have so many notes like a piano, and that we are played on by fingers over which we have no control.

A clumsy fellow treads on our corn. This makes us C

sharp, and we utter a note which is not generally played in polite society. The rain spoils our new suit, and we are immediately B flat. So we have a number of notes to suit all occasions and played on by a variety of causes—only we don't call these notes by musical signs, and our keyboard is very extended. Our notes have names such as "How do you do?" and "Very well, thank you," and "Beastly bore, don't you know," and "Waiter, pork chop and lager beer, and look sharp about it," and so on up and down the scale of human language. You see, we don't have to think much to play the tune of life.

**The Music  
Box.**

We are hardly so dignified as a pianoforte. We are almost as mechanical as a piano-organ. Have you ever seen the "inside" of a piano-organ? No? Well, I will tell you. I once went into the holy of holies where piano-organs are materialised.

This romantic place was in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, London, and by means of a password, of which I will not reveal the secret, I was ushered into the awful presence of the *deus ex machina*—the god out of the machine. He was a fat—a very fat—Italian, and he sat on a little—a very little—stool. Before him on a cylinder, and suspended between the skeleton of a piano-organ, there was a great roll of cartridge paper, and the Italian gentleman was busily engaged, with an ethereal smile hovering about the creases of his face, and his hair like the quills of the fretful porcupine, in punching a number of little holes in the roll of paper. By a contrivance that I need not explain, these holes become the means by which the notes are sounded when the humble, garlic-smelling foreigner turns the handle of his instrument.

Some impatient reader will begin to snarl and ask me not to talk sky-bosh, and to get on to the subject of Thought. Bear with me, O snarling reader. I am giving an object-lesson of high psychology.

**Life's  
Organ.**

We ourselves are very like that roll of cartridge paper, which is the essential feature of a piano-organ's inside. From our earliest youth upwards we are punched with a number of little holes, not by a fat Italian, but by all sorts of people who profess to understand the music of life—and who very often produce a lamentable discord—such as parents and schoolmasters, and clergymen and

journalists, and Mother Grundy and Modern Society, and other prominent public persons.

And then the handle of life's piano-organ is turned by an objectionable person called Time, who does not smell of garlic, but does smell very considerably of the burial-ground. And so, the handle being turned, we play our notes by means of the little punched holes, and according as they have been punched by the various music-masters who have had the job we grind out our tune with variations to some such titles as "The Education Bill," "Down with the House of Lords," "For King and Country," "One Man One Vote," "An Englishman's House is his Castle," and other popular songs too numerous to mention.

And all the time the human pianoforte thinks his notes are working of their own accord!

It is only now and again we find the human machine who plays his tunes himself. Perhaps one in a hundred does, and then a good many on his repertory are variations of old familiar songs.

**Original  
Tunes.**

Yet now and again, as I have said, there is a man who plays life's tunes himself, and not only that, but one who plays original tunes. Then he sets all the people in the street dancing a jig to his notes, and very queer dances he sometimes leads them. Jean Jacques Rousseau played a tune which eventually led a king and queen to dance their heads off. Oliver Cromwell played a very similar air.

George Stephenson made a musical instrument out of a boiling kettle, and his tune has done something the same thing that Orpheus did in the long ago when the sound of his piping notes tamed the wild beasts and endowed even trees and stones with life. That jig of the boiling kettle has changed the face of the globe, and what is more important to me at the present moment, when I am writing these lines, is leading me a dance from Newcastle to Leeds at the rate of sixty miles an hour.

**Thought's  
Locomotion.**

A queer thing is thought. It is like the road from Cheapside to the City. In the road itself there is a good deal of traffic and noise, 'busmen shouting, and cabs dashing about, and people looking into shop windows and hustling and jostling each other on the way to their offices.

And down below the surface of the road is the Underground Railway, with a train going steadily from station to station, and down below farther still is the Twopenny Tube (my railway geography may be weak, but, for the sake of my simile, if there isn't there ought to be) with an electric train rattling along at full speed to its destination, but silently, unnoticed and unseen by the traffic in Cheapside.

So it is with thought.

At the present moment I am in a railway carriage with a drunken sailor who at intervals insists on telling me lies about a shipwreck which he never experienced. In one corner is a woman with a baby who keeps on sneezing. The rest of the carriage is full of passengers who are talking to each other sufficiently loud for me to hear disconnected phrases. As far as my thought is concerned, this is Cheapside. Down below is my underground railway of thought, my sub-consciousness in which my train, or, in another word, my brain, is being filled with passengers, or, if you like to call them so, impressions, and jogging along from station to station, where some get out and some get in, with tickets clipped, or taken, by the inspector, who calls himself Memory.

And down below farther still is my Twopenny Tube, with the electric train which is carrying my thought swiftly, silently, and surely to—the end of this article.

**Thoughts in Idleness.** A queer thing is thought. We sometimes load up with more thought when we don't think at all. Lying on a cliff with a breeze blowing into our faces and our eyes gazing out to the horizon where the great golden ball sinks into a sea of silver, we do not think; at least I don't. It is only afterwards, when perhaps some sniff of seaweed in a seaside lodging brings back the scene to us that we think thoughts which may find their way out into poems or pictures, or music which will move the hearts of men and women with the power of beauty.

A queer thing is thought. We get into habits of thought. Scientific men tell us that if a man thinks much on one subject it makes an actual furrow in his brain, and the more he thinks of it the deeper the furrow, so that his thoughts by degrees inevitably follow the same track. In other words, we get into a rut. This should teach us to be careful, for one evil thought draws the line, and two evil thoughts engrave the line, and three

evil thoughts chisel the line. And there we are in the rut, and it is a clever man who can get out of it.

So is it also, thank Heaven, with good thoughts. And as we may choose good or bad we may plough our own furrow. I hope my readers will plough their thought-furrows in the right direction. And now an end to this gossip, for if my readers are as ready for bed as I am, they will want to say "good-night!"

### 9. The Quest of Truth.

I am afraid there are few people who realise quite clearly and consistently what is or should be the sole object of learning. It is nothing else than to find the truth.

All literature, art, and science is valueless unless it endeavours to express some truth truthfully. Curiously enough, however, this essential condition is often completely overlooked both by those who think they are learning and those who think they are teaching.

Many of those who spend a substantial portion of their lives in the reading of books, do so without the least idea that their time is well-spent or ill-spent, according to the amount of truth they have laid hold of. They go to books for everything else but truth. They read in order to kill time, in order to amuse themselves, in order to forget themselves. They assimilate a certain amount of knowledge because it has a market value, because it is fashionable, because it is "good form."

And so with those who spend a substantial portion of their lives in writing books. They write, not because they have something new to teach, or something true to teach, but because, by stringing together a number of words in a pleasing style, by describing characters or narrating anecdotes to arouse the curiosity or amusement of the public, they are rewarded by applause, renown, and good red gold.

It is just because the world as a whole is not in quest of truth, and does not really care for truth, that literature, oratory, and art, and to a certain degree science (I mean especially philosophical science), attain such a poor standard at the present time, and are so overloaded with worthless and ephemeral productions.

"What is truth?" said jesting Pilate. It is, of course, the most difficult question of life. It is, in fact, the only question in life worth troubling about to find an answer. But no answer

is likely to be given if we do not ask the question, or if we deliberately put truth on one side, preferring falsehood. Unfortunately, that is what most people do at the present day, and as a consequence all forms of literature and art simply reek of falsehood.

Cleverness is the quality most appreciated with the majority. If a man is clever we forgive him if he is false. Many writers are but clever coiners of phrases. They make an epigram neatly worded and glaringly untrue. And just because it is so violently untrue we think them marvellously clever fellows to have thought of such a thing. We chuckle over it and are more pleased with it than if it expressed the most profound wisdom.

There are philosophers of to-day—and of yesterday too, because the fault is as old as literature itself—who will discourse in many volumes upon evils that do not exist or upon social tendencies that are not in motion, who will build up theories of the universe upon foundations that stand upon no more secure base than their own imagination, and evolve new philosophies elaborately constructed upon a bed-rock of ignorance.

We have a passion for “style” at the present time. It does not seem to matter what a man has to write about if he pleases his readers with honeyed periods, or startles them with sensational sentences, or shocks them with a brutality of language, or lulls them with a soothing sentimentalism, or puzzles them with strange words, or amuses them with sparkling paradoxes, or overwhelms them with a flood of metaphor. If only we were to put the single question, “Is this true?” to any of these books, they would be immediately revealed as mere glittering falsehoods.

That is the one and only test of every form of literature and art. “Is this true?” We may put the question to whom or to what we will—to the novels of Charles Dickens, to the poems of Tennyson, to the pictures of Turner, to the sonatas of Mendelssohn, to the orations of Lord Rosebery, to the plays of W. S. Gilbert, to the jokes in *Punch*, to the latest jests of the day. In so far as they are true they are good. In so far as they are untrue they are bad.

How shall we know they are true? That is, of course, the difficulty. But it is not nearly so difficult as we might imagine. Truth is generally self-convincing to those who are seekers of truth. Take a lyric of Tennyson. Besides the music of the lines, which is truth expressed in rhythm, his images take concrete shape in our imagination. They become pictures

clearly painted on our brains. Instantly the conviction comes to us—not “how beautiful!” but “how true!” They are beautiful because they are true, not true because they are beautiful. His metaphors, in which he compares one thing with another widely apart, are impressive and forceful because they show an accurate similarity between these two things which before had seemed to us wholly different. We see that the comparison is true, and only because it is true does it give us delight.

So with painting. An artist's sole endeavour is to strive after truth. If he paints a landscape he must use the colours of Nature, and not of his paint-box and his fancy. He must only put on to his canvas what he sees in Nature, not what he wants to see. The great painters are great because they were true—absolutely, fervently, enthusiastically true—true even to ugliness, even to brutality, even to disfigurement, and centuries after they painted their masterpieces we cannot stand in front of their canvases, and look at those portraits, or those landscapes, without a voice crying out within us, “By Heaven, this is truth!”

Certainly, the truth of yesterday is not always the truth of to-day. In the case of the old masters—Giotto or Cimabue, for instance—we see, in the light of our modern knowledge of art, how weak was their drawing, how ludicrous their perspective. Nevertheless, we may see also their earnest endeavours after truthful expression, and their pictures, crude as they are, are worth more than some modern paintings which are deliberately false in their sentimentality, in their colouring, and in their conception.

Again, one man's truth is not always another man's truth. To me, for instance, Turner may seem utterly false to nature, to you divinely true. But that may be my fault and my ignorance. You may have studied cloud effects, and the values of light and shade, the glories of a thousand sunsets, the mysteries of sea and sky, the grey tones of mist and smoke, the golden glamour in a sunlit valley. Therefore what seems unnatural to me, only knowing perhaps the nature of London bricks and mortar and the scenery of London pavements, may be to you the perfect expression of familiar truths.

That would be my fault. For if I had sought truth diligently and used my eyes, looking sometimes at the sky instead of no higher than my nose, or watching a sunset from a railway

train instead of reading the police news, I also might see that Turner told the truth.

There is another thing besides ignorance which prevents men from seeing the truth—and that is prejudice. My truth is not your truth because I am a conceited ass, or you are. I have written a book, perhaps, denying the doctrine of free-will. I am associated in men's minds with this particular theory, or any other. Now, if I were in quest of truth it would rejoice me to be proved wrong in my arguments; for even to be proved wrong is a distinct gain in knowledge, and leads a little nearer to the truth. But no; my only concern in life is to prove myself right, to cram my doctrines down every gaping throat, to make converts to my own philosophy. If any timid voice ventures to protest that I may be mistaken, or offers a new fact which throws out of gear my own chain of reasoning, I do not run to him for further enlightenment, but I knock him on the head as violently as possible with ponderous arguments to prove that he is either a fool or a knave, or more probably both.

I am afraid we are all partisans, and partisanship is never allied to truth. To me Cromwell was a hero, to you a murderer; and so I burrow into old documents to prove his greatness and his glory, and you burrow into old documents to prove his villainy, and each of us ignores the other's evidence. Of course if we really were in quest of truth we would put our heads together in perfect amicability, and say that, after all, whatever we wish to think about Cromwell, here are facts which show that he was a man like other men, neither hero nor saint. Blundering here and failing there, dignified now and brutal then, rising sometimes to splendid heights of nobility, and falling sometimes into a pretty low meanness.

Men of science, above all men, should be searchers after truth and proclaimers of truth, even though they may be jeered at as inconsistent, even though it upsets the convictions of a lifetime, even though it convicts them of innumerable errors in the past. Alas, not so! They will throw down the gauntlet of a theory to all the world, and challenge any Protestant to mortal combat. They will fight desperately against all odds to prove their little domestic pet of an opinion to be flawless at all points. They will, in fact, set up the standard of their own conceit and win over the ragged battalions of ignorance, rather than throw down their own authority and obey the leadership of a wiser man. This is

not true of the really great men and women of the world. The greatest minds are the most modest, and they succeed in the quest of truth because they recognise their own ignorance.

### 10. The Virtues of Laziness.

Industry is a very admirable thing. In fact it is, I am sure, one of the supreme virtues of life. A man may have very ordinary brains, but if he uses his time to its full advantage he may possibly acquire more knowledge and put it to a far better use than a man of genius who is incorrigibly idle.

This may seem at first sight a contradiction of my title but it is not really so. For there is such a thing as being too industrious. Like all virtues when carried to excess, it develops into a vice. The wisest man is he who has the habit of industry, but knows also when and how to be lazy.

There are some men who are so industrious that they never allow themselves time for mental or bodily relaxation. They belong to what is now known as the class of "hustlers." They are always busy with some work or other. They always want to be doing something.

You will never find them with their eyes closed in an arm-chair, or watching a wreath of smoke curl out of their lips with languid enjoyment. They are always in a state of nervous tension, studying hard or writing hard, every half-hour mapped out for its own particular job. They make their very pastimes a hard labour, and play cricket or tennis as if it were an important duty of life, or expend as much mental energy in weeding a garden or pruning their rose trees as if the prosperity of their nation depended on these exertions.

If they go to a new city or a foreign country they have their nose in a guide-book all day long, and walk through as many galleries, museums, churches, and other show-places as they can crowd into their time-table.

One of these men summed up his philosophy to me the other day in the following words: "Always be busy with something, no matter how trivial or unimportant, so long as it keeps your hands or brain occupied. For Heaven's sake, don't loaf. I hate a loafer."

**In Praise  
of Loafing.**

Now, personally, I rather like a loafer. At any rate, I like a man who knows how to loaf decently at times. In my opinion, it is an essential part of one's education. I like a man who can lean over a gate by a cornfield, we will say, or overlooking some view where fields stretch away to the horizon line, when the eye has room to roam over a panorama of countryside, with here and there a church spire gleaming in the sunshine, and here and there the roofs of a little village appearing above a rising ground, and who will stay there for half an hour by the clock of heaven, not moving, not turning his head, not even thinking, but just lazy.

And I like a man who when he starts out for a walk does not say to himself, "Let me see, I have got two hours: if I walk fast I can go eight and a half miles, and perhaps nine," but who loafs along careless whether he goes eight miles or eight hundred yards, stopping to listen to a thrush piping to its mate, going out of the highroad when a shady bypath beguiles him, stretching himself down by some brookside, and perhaps dropping off into a drowsy day-dream, from which he rouses himself just in time to get back to supper, after having been absolutely and unmistakably lazy.

I like a man who will lay down his pen or his book now and again and say to himself, "Now I'm going to be lazy," and, leaning back in his chair at an angle of thirty, listens to the ticking of the clock with a kind of unholy pleasure at hearing the minutes go by while he is doing nothing, reading the titles of books which he does not half know, and reflecting what a lot he might learn if only he were not in such a confoundedly idle mood, following a stray thought half-way, and then letting it go because he will not be bothered in following it to the end of its tether, letting himself drift down the stream of laziness and half-unconscious meditation, like a boat going with the tide, the waters of life lapping against the sides with a sweet, murmurous melody.

**The Uses of  
Laziness.**

This may sound strange philosophy for one who, like myself, has so often preached the gospel of work. There are many who would pronounce such inaction to be horrid waste of time. But laziness is not always waste of time. It is sometimes the most blessed use of time. I think I may claim as well as anyone to know the meaning of long-sustained mind labour of a sort. I know the temptation, and

have yielded to it, of going on working, ding-dong, ding-dong, long after the brain has any elasticity or natural oil, until you can almost hear the machinery creaking inside like the rusty old works of a watch, and every atom of thought-power is ground out with the efforts of a Mr. Mantalini at the mangle.

**Overwork and Relaxation.** It is a pardonable error, of course, this folly of overwork. But it doesn't pay in the long-run. Life is not really long enough to learn all we want to learn, or to do all we want to do; but the wise man is he who learns soonest the simple fact that the bow which is never unstrung is quickest to break.

I think one of the truest figures of speech is when we talk about a "time of unbending." It is just those times when we "unbend," when we relax our mental tension, that are productive of new stimulus and stored-up energy for future use. Periods of laziness are as good and necessary for the brain as sleep itself. It is, in fact, a waking sleep, and in the dreams of idle hours the mind gets sometimes nearer to the highest truths and the most divine beauties than in the strenuous thought of working days.

**All Work and no Play.** It is a great and flagrant error, I might almost say a crime, of some modern schools, to heap up lessons upon young brains, so that they have no time for relaxation. I do not know whether the evil is widespread, but certainly there are certain day schools within my own knowledge where the boys go home after seven hours' work with a pile of home-lessons to get through before the next morning. It is one of the iniquitous results of those necessary evils—examinations.

I have two boys specially in my mind who were trained under such a system. They had both plenty of brains—more than the usual quantity, I should think; but whereas one industriously and conscientiously went through those home-lessons night after night for the sake of the good marks, the other, though he worked well in the day, scamped them with a most imperturbable impudence, ready to face the music in the morning, but having "a real good time" overnight, while his companion was "swotting."

Those two boys are now young men. One is highly nervous, irritable, and physically weak; the other robust and hearty, and the lazy boy has outstripped his diligent competitor.

**Industry—  
a Habit.** It is easy to be idle when one is young, but not so easy as one gets on in life. Industry, as I have said, becomes a habit. City men especially get into a way of always being busy with big or little things, and they will not even eat their dinners without a book or a newspaper at their elbow.

In the train to and from their offices they read the morning or the evening paper from the first column to the last, not because they take an absorbing interest in the police court cases, and the trivial items of news that now find their way into the papers, but because they are so desperately afraid of doing nothing, and being alone with their own thoughts.

Put one of these men on to the middle of a lawn, out of the reach of a newspaper, with no one to discuss politics with, with not even a tennis racket or a croquet mallet as an available object for hitting something, and he will feel like a fish out of water.

**Laziness a  
Virtue—  
Sometimes.** But the man who has trained himself in the virtue of laziness is perfectly content to lie on his back with the sun in his face, or to sit under the shade of a tree and watch the sparrows hopping on the garden wall.

It does not matter to him if, coming home, he has not an evening paper which tells him all over again what he read at breakfast. He is content to look out of the carriage window, letting his thoughts fly as fast as the houses and trees and fields which race across his vision, thinking perhaps not at all, but merely receiving impressions which are but the embryos of thought.

It is in those times of seeming inactivity that the mind gets a good deal of its nutriment, and, often when one least appears to be thinking or learning, one sows the seeds of ideas which yield the best fruit of thought.

Not seldom the man who is never idle, one of the world's champion "hustlers," achieves only a mighty mass of work which has but a monetary value, but not seldom also the man who indulges in a reasonable relaxation, and who knows how and when to be lazy, is he who enriches his fellows with things of beauty and of truth worth more than gold.

# PART IV

## SOME LITERARY SIDELIGHTS



### I. Books New and Old.

FOR those like my readers, most of whom have, if I mistake not, a love of books, and who avail themselves of the numerous cheap reprints and productions which put the treasures of literature within the reach of the most moderate means, it is interesting to study what one may call the evolution of the book trade. And in this connection it is very interesting to recall the days when the "patron of letters" was the most potent influence in the production of books.

**The Book  
Trade of  
To-Day.**

At the present time there is a great reading public, with an ever-increasing appetite for paper and print. Unfortunately, so far this appetite is not as a whole very refined or discriminating, because the education of the people is of such recent growth that learning is not appreciated so much as entertainment, and "tit-bits," gossip, and light fiction are more in demand than work of a serious and scholarly character.

Naturally, the booksellers—or, to use the modern term, the publishers—being business men, more anxious for the advancement of their sales than for the advancement of learning, find it more to their advantage to appeal to the great majority of the semi-educated and dilettante class than to the small minority of serious students, and to sell large numbers of books at a cheap price than a few expensive ones. This, as we shall see later, has introduced a complete change in the quality and character-

istics of book-production. But it has also altered the position of the author in relation to his readers.

**The Author and his Readers.** Nowadays a literary man who can supply a "public want," as it is called, finds no difficulty in getting a publisher to produce his work at his (the publisher's) own risk and cost. And by means of the modern system of advertising, both publisher and bookseller find no difficulty in getting in touch with the great reading public.

But in olden times it was altogether different. The reading class was a very limited one, restricted to the ranks of the wealthy and the learned. Both the demand and supply of books were small. But, on the other hand, the reading public as a whole were ready enough to pay good prices for their books, and quality of production was more to be desired than quantity.

The risk of producing books would therefore have been much greater if the same methods had been pursued as now. But the system was different, and the literary patron was the protector both of the author and the bookseller.

**The System of Patronage.** It was very necessary for a writer without personal influence and means to secure the patronage of a nobleman, a statesman, or some great man of letters, whose reputation and rank would serve as an introduction and advertisement to the literary circles of the time. In many cases this patronage was a very solid means of support, for it was generally expected of a nobleman or other great person who permitted a work to be dedicated to him, that he should give a *quid pro quo*, and disburse some of his good guineas in return for the flattery and homage of the writer.

This system of patronage goes back almost to the beginnings of literature. One of the most famous patrons of literature was the Roman patrician, Mæcenas, the friend and Minister of the Emperor Augustus. He was a generous friend to the poets and philosophers of the time, and especially to the two great poets, Virgil and Horace. The former was indebted to him for the recovery of his farm, which had been seized by the soldiery, and it was at the request of this patron that Virgil undertook his famous work, the *Georgics*. Horace benefited even more from his patron, who gave him a rich farm in the Sabine country, upon which he was enabled to live comfortably and to cultivate his poetry as well as his fields.

But we need not go back so far as eight years B.C. Visitors to the National Gallery at London will probably remember the well-known picture by Ward representing Dr. Johnson in the ante-chamber of Lord Chesterfield. The learned Doctor is waiting vainly for an audience with the nobleman whose patronage he desires, but the other claimants on his Lordship's bounty are being admitted beforehand, while the great scholar sits there stolid, dignified, oblivious to the movements and whisperings about him.

**Poets and  
their  
Patrons.**

If we study the lives of the English poets, we shall find that most of them owed the production of their works to the friendship and support of some such man as Chesterfield. Shakespeare himself is said to have owed his introduction to the Court to the favour of the Earl of Southampton, who was the great patron of that time, and to whom he wrote a dedication full of respectful homage and flattery, that would be fulsome if it were not excused by the hyperbole of poetical imagination.

But much later than the Elizabethan epoch did poets and literary men attach themselves to a patron. James Thomson (1700-48), who wrote the *Seasons*, would have starved in London had it not been for the timely assistance of a "noble lord." The copyright of "Winter," the first portion of his long poem, brought him in only three guineas, but we are told by his biographer that "Lord Withington, to whom it was dedicated, fulfilled the expected duty of a patron by presenting him with twenty guineas."

Dryden sought vainly for the patronage of Sir Charles Pickering, a cousin of Oliver Cromwell, and afterwards succeeded in gaining the protection of the sons of the Earl of Berkshire (whose daughter he afterwards married), who had much influence in the world of letters.

Pope was first encouraged to publish his verses by the praises of Sir William Turnbull, a distinguished statesman, and Mr. Walsh, a landed gentleman. "I know no one so likely to equal Milton as yourself," Walsh had said of his juvenile friend. "It is not flattery at all to say that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age." But this praise, encouraging as it was, was not so helpful as the more substantial support they gave to the young poet.

Joseph Addison's first step to favour and fortune came to him with the patronage of the Lord Treasurer Godolphin,

who was so struck with admiration for his poem on the "Battle of Blenheim," that he offered him the post of Commissioner of Appeals, from which he was afterwards promoted to be a Secretary of State.

The new biography of the poet Crabbe, by Canon Ainger, reminds one of Burke's generous assistance to the young man when, having come to London with three pounds and a bundle of manuscripts, he found starvation staring him in the face, and the awful thought of suicide forcing itself upon his mind.

We are amused now, and sometimes a little disgusted, when we read some of the dedications by which writers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries sought to express their gratitude for past favours and their "lively expectation of benefits to come."

The learning, the magnanimity, the virtues, the fame, the rank, and the personal greatness of their benefactor, were announced with a sonorous exaggeration that would make the greatest scholar of our time, or a nobleman of the most exalted rank, blush with shame, not unmingled with indignation at the excess of flattery. But no epithets were too sublime, no praises too high, for the "singular good lord" of the literary dependant.

**Publishing  
by Sub-  
scription.** The patronage of one great patron was in course of time replaced by authors obtaining a number of patrons, or, as they then began to be called, "subscribers."

When a writer desired to undertake some work requiring much expenditure of time and money in its production, he issued a subscription list and circulated it among people whom he thought would be likely to encourage the undertaking by paying in advance for one or more copies. Having obtained fifty, sixty, a hundred, or three hundred guineas, as the case might be, according to the size and character of the work specified in the prospectus, the author could then devote his leisure to the quiet and deliberate production of his literary enterprise, which, if not successful according to the modern idea of big sales, was, on the other hand, assured from failure.

**The Old  
and  
the New.**

From the point of view of book-production in its technique, these old methods were far more advantageous than those of to-day. The people who became the patrons of letters and book-buyers were

those who, as I have said, were willing to pay high prices, and expected in return good quality.

So if we look at the books of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries we find how solid they are, how spacious and generous in their characteristics, compared with which the modern six-shilling novel or three-and-sixpenny reprint is but a poor, shoddy thing. The stoutness of paper, the breadth of margin, the good honest type, well impressed by hand machines, bindings made to wear to a hale old age, and not for the flashy showiness of a publishing "season," good engravings done by skilled artists instead of the blotchy "photogravures" of modern book illustrations,—these are what fill the book-lover with admiration for "the good old times." Modern books are pretty, tasteful, handy, above all cheap, but they are like the boudoir knick-knacks of the Tottenham Court Road compared with the solid furniture of our great-grandfathers.

One cannot put the hand of the clock back. It is the age of cheap books, and it is a splendid and wonderful thing that this mighty increase in the production of books has followed the increase of population, so that all who will may read and learn.

The advance of democracy is not to be checked. Nevertheless, it is well to look back upon the old aristocracy of books, and pleasant to see and handle those richly appressed volumes of the old régime, so superb in comparison to their successors in this age of cheapness.

## 2. The Art of Quotation.

**The  
Beginner's  
Snare.** Young essayists especially are prone to the evil habit of dragging in old and familiar "quots" by neck and crop. It is also a lazy way of avoiding a difficult or subtle expression of thought by leaning upon the crutch of somebody else's wit or wisdom. I have sometimes had essays sent to me by young aspirants to literary success which have reminded me of a cake with a lavish quantity of plums but precious little flour. And that sort of thing is apt to be indigestible.

The worst of it is that nine out of ten are as hackneyed as a popular air on the piano-organs. Each one of them has rung in one's ears so often that the first word of it gives one the weary anticipation of hearing an oft-told story.

The lavish use of quotation is sometimes, but not often, effective, and it must always be done skilfully to avoid boredom. Hazlitt is one of the few men whose pages positively bristle with quotations and yet without offence. But then his knowledge of poetry covered such a great range, and his mind was so steeped in splendid images that they came from him as easily and naturally as if they were his own thoughts, and not often did he use one that any schoolboy could give the reference to. I once sent a list of his quotations to a friend of mine who has made it a lifelong hobby to trace such casually quoted phrases in the works of great writers to their original sources, and who is constantly consulted on this subject by scholars; yet a good many lines on this list of mine baffled him, to my surprise and his own mortification.

**The Art of Quotation.** This is the secret of the art of quotation, that they should be brought into one's writing without effort, and that the freshness of the thought should not be dulled by everyday repetition. In this case a few lines of glorious imagery, of pregnant wisdom, or keenly pointed wit, strike home to the heart of the reader with immense effect.

The heritage of our national literature is such an inexhaustible treasure trove, and the knowledge of the public outside the pale of the literary profession is so limited to a few stock works, that it does not require incredible study to stow one's mind with noble sayings or pointed phrases little known to the generality that flash out spontaneously to help out one's own poor thought with an occasional gem of purest ray serene.

Yet even this has its dangers, because such a gem of illuminating thought is apt to show up the dull commonplace of one's own style. As Oliver Wendell Holmes said in his delightfully witty way, checking himself from repeating a phrase from some great humorist, "If I quoted the passage its brilliancy would spoil one of my pages, as a diamond breastpin sometimes kills the social effect of the wearer, who might have passed for a gentleman without it."

**Jewels of Thought.** On the other hand, a fresh and apt quotation is often a gift of precious price to the reader, who would otherwise be defrauded of his money's worth, but to whom these few lines come as a kind of talisman to un-

lock the doors of his own heart, so that he may see into the secret chambers which never before had he entered. It is a wonderful power this, of putting into black and white a thought which perhaps will move a man to some great heroism that otherwise would have been undone, which will be a comfort to him in the hour of black distress, a warning in the hour of temptation, a guide to him in the maze of doubt, or a new rung upon the ladder of knowledge from which he may step to a higher platform of thought.

“A small drop of ink,  
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces  
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.”

**Hidden Treasure.** A pleasant hour may be spent now and again with a good dictionary of quotations. It is delightful to turn over the pages haphazard and refresh one's memory with these jewels of thought gathered up from the treasure of English literature, to acquaint oneself also with the origin of many which perhaps one has often enough paraded with dazzling effect in company without the least idea of the first owner of these second-hand goods.

It is surprising to find how some of these phrases, familiar in our mouths as household words, first won their way into the current language in works which are now forgotten and dead but for these few lines of living thought. Some of the most perfect gems of crystallised wisdom came from the brains of men whose very names are strange to us. Who, for instance, now reads *The Votary of Wealth*, and who knows its author, J. G. Holman? Yet one line is often quoted and has grown into the language—"the luxury of doing good."

Most of us would shy at a drama with the terrifying title of *Chrononhotonthologos*, yet Carey's epigram, "One ounce of mirth is worth a pound of sorrow," is a proverb familiar to all of us, I think. Who would give Young as the author of the well-known phrase, "A fool at forty is a fool indeed," or Burton of the famous line, "Set a fool on horseback and he will ride a gallop," or Sir Philip Sidney as the originator of that courteous title for one's wife, "My better half"?

These are but a few that occur to me at random, and may be multiplied a thousandfold. As I have said, it is amusing and instructive to spend a few leisure hours occasionally searching out this information in a dictionary of quotations, and it is good

to test one's memory of phrases which by current use are apt to be debased.

The authors of the Bible do not come last in the category of those who have supplied not only the English but almost every other nation with apt and familiar quotations. Naturally, the wisest man that ever lived comes first on the list. "Proverbs" is full of household words, such as, "A soft answer turneth away wrath," "Fools hate knowledge," "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise," "Spare the rod, spoil the child," "Heap coals of fire upon his head," "Hope deferred makes the heart sick." In the New Testament we find quotations from the Old. St. Paul speaks of heaping coals of fire. He is also responsible for "In the twinkling of an eye," "As a man sows, so shall he reap," "To the pure all things are pure." The Book of Ecclesiastes, Jeremiah, Job, Psalms, and other books of the Bible, teem with old and well-known quotations.

Some of the best-known sayings, that seem as fresh and up-to-date as if they were originated yesterday, are almost "as old as the hills." John Heywood, who lived early in the sixteenth century, has gathered together in one volume many delightful and favourite proverbs. To name a few, "A hair of the dog that bit us," "A man may take a horse to the water, but he cannot make him drink," "A penny for your thoughts," "A rolling stone never gathers moss," "All is not gold that glitters," "As like chalk to cheese," "Beggars should not be choosers," "Better late than never," "Rob Peter to pay Paul."

A friend of mine once had an interview with a very distinguished scholar, and asked him for some little sentence of good counsel which he might treasure up as a guiding post in his literary career. The great man paused, and then said, with the profound utterance of an oracle, "Verify your quotations!" It was not a bad piece of advice.

### 3. The Lost Art of Letter-Writing.

The penny postage, the telegraph, the telephone, and the railway have in many ways annihilated space. They have brought the uttermost ends of the earth within call of each other. Friends living in London and New York are now, from the point

of view of communication, no farther away from each other than in the old days were two persons in London and Edinburgh.

This has done much for the progress of humanity in a broader knowledge of men and things, as well as in many other ways, nevertheless the ease and rapidity of communication have also caused many pleasant features of leisured social life to disappear in the whirlpool of modern "bustle," as our friends say "over there."

**"Modern  
Tele-  
graphese."** It is undoubtedly the cause of the decline of letter-writing, formerly one of the most delightful and most generally cultivated branches of literature. At the present day it is not considered worth people's while to indulge in lengthy correspondence. "Telegraphese" is the fashion of the times, or the "All's well" of a picture-postcard.

The newspapers, and the spread of popular periodicals, have contributed to this decadence of the private letter. For, after all, thinks the traveller of to-day, who goes to the Continent, or even as far as Japan or India, what is the good of writing a description of the places he visits when it has been done a hundred times before with pictures plain and coloured in the family magazine? Then, too, he will be home again before his friends have hardly realised his absence, and he can tell them all about it from the depths of his arm-chair.

**"The Polite  
Letter-  
Writer."** Not so in the days of the post-chaise. The lady who went from London to Cheltenham or Leamington or Bath, to "take the waters" for any fashionable malady she might possess or invent, was anxiously entreated by her friends to send them full and particular accounts of all the adventures that she might meet with, and of the incidents during her stay.

It is amusing now (and perhaps a little pathetic) to read some of those old faded letters which our grandmothers wrote to each other in the long ago. One perceives how seriously they looked upon that duty of correspondence, and how faithfully they performed it.

"Upon arriving at my lodgings," so one may often read, "I hasten, my dear, to narrate to you the incidents of my journey (which was long and fatiguing) and the beauties of the country through which we passed (which was truly sublime)." Then

follows a lengthy and elegant description of the road from, say, Twickenham to Tunbridge Wells, interspersed with quotations from the poets and from Mr. Burke on "The Sublime and Beautiful," and followed by rhapsodies on the Pump Room at the Wells, where formerly Beau Nash was master of ceremonies. "How chaste!!!" exclaimed our great-grandmothers, with many marks of ejaculation.

**The  
Elegance  
of Style.**

Of course much of the private correspondence of the days before quick transit would seem to us now dull and tiresome to a degree. Yet the art of letter-writing cultivated as a polite accomplishment by everyone who boasted of any elegant education produced a high general standard of style which we look for in vain in the scrappy and careless epistles of to-day, and in many cases where the writer had wit, imagination, and observation the letters were in their way the most delightful form of literature that has ever been penned.

**The  
Personality  
of the  
Writer.**

For in letter-writing at its best there is an easy familiarity, a discursiveness of thought, a lightness and brightness of style that may not be found in the more stiff and more conventional composition of other kinds of prose. And what gives it its especial charm is the individuality revealed in it. That is indeed the unique value of epistolary art.

The writer is able to put upon the paper his little prejudices, his whims and fancies and conceits, his opinions and ideals, his emotions and his experiences, without fear of being charged with egotism or of boring the great public with unessential trivialities.

That is why a bundle of old letters is often more valuable to the student of social history than any other documents, because very often the trivialities of one period are more interesting to those who live in a later period than many events which were formerly considered important.

Even, therefore, when the person corresponding has no claim to fame either as a great wit or a great personage, his letters may often be immeasurably delightful to a future generation because of the sidelights they throw upon the manners of his times. But when in addition to this the writer belongs to that small class whose personalities, whose lightest words and most trivial ex-

periences are treasured up by those who come after them, their letters are the closest and most intimate revelations of character which it is possible to have.

**The Failure of the Artificial.** Some letter-writers have spoilt most of the true value of their compositions by "keeping an eye upon posterity," and so destroying the essential qualities of ease, simplicity, and naturalness. Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son were admired, by a false judgment, for a long time as models of the art of letter-writing. But they are too formal, too artificial, too evidently written for publication, to have any of that charm which belongs to the best type of letter.

Now letter-writing is undoubtedly an art, but it must not be artificial. There must be no suspicion that in those lines written to a friend the correspondent is courting the applause of a crowd. A letter to be worth anything must at least seem spontaneous, unforced, and it must be stamped throughout with the seal of privacy between one mind and another, so that to the reader in after years it may seem as if he were privileged to overhear a confidential conversation.

**The Charm of Letters.** Three of the best letter-writers in the English language—Cowper, Pope, and Gray—did not write without art, but their art consisted in just that very power of writing nothing stiffly, and in giving their reflections, observations, and witticisms in that easy, unaffected, impromptu style which does not suggest books of reference or the set composition of the essayist.

Even the correspondence of Swift, who could never be frivolous and never bantering, and whose gloomy, cynical soul looked out upon life with none of that detachment of mind which is the general attribute of the agreeable letter-writer, has that individual, personal impress which gives his letters a quality of self-revelation more intimate than that of his other writings.

To those who have read and loved the essays of Charles Lamb there will be no astonishment that his letters should rank among the most charming of their kind, for all his writings partake of the nature of private correspondence, and their charm is largely due to the fact that he seems to take each of his readers into his confidence as a personal friend, from whom he

does not need to hide his foibles or his frailties, and whom he is not afraid of boring with his random and errant fancies.

**Modern  
Letter-  
Writers.**

Among modern letters, those of Robert Browning and his wife are surpassingly beautiful, yet, though I say it with all reverence, I do not think they are the best type of the epistolary art. They are too self-conscious even in their self-revelation, and too studied in thought and expression. They have not that waywardness of fancy, that whimsicality and wantonness of expression which gives such charm to the letters, for instance, of Byron, of Shelley, and, to name a very different character, of Horace Walpole.

For the very effervescence of high spirits and rollicking good-humour the letters of Charles Dickens are without equal, especially in the early years of his fame, when the glory of conquest was not dimmed by the frequency of achievement.

The letters are the key to his character and work. To the Dickens worshipper it is entrancing to watch the development of his hero, and to study his methods as revealed in the letters. Here, indeed, more than in any other literature I know, are we let into the secret chambers of the mind of a genius. The lightning observation, the playful sunshine of wit which illuminates the most commonplace thing, the patience, the industry, the unquenchable enthusiasm by which alone even the highest genius may be developed to bear good fruit, is displayed in Charles Dickens' private correspondence.

Among women letter-writers Mrs. Carlyle is among the finest of the moderns. She had the inimitable gift of giving a dramatic interest to the most trivial incidents of domesticity, and her caustic wit fired her hastily written notes with a kind of blue flame which leaps out at the reader and burns into his brain some scorching epigram, some shaft of sarcasm, which fills him with astonishment and admiration for the genius of this brilliant woman.

Nor must I omit to mention Robert Louis Stevenson, who may, I am afraid, be called the last of the letter-writers, as he was also one of the best.

No longer do men and women take the time and trouble to scribble more than hasty notes in abbreviated diction, from which grammar is eliminated and style unattempted. It is one of those lost arts which have gone with the good old days when life was more leisurely and literature less in quantity than low in quality.

#### 4. Society and Literature.

The student of literature is too apt, I think, to consider that the works of great masters (and all literature indeed) are produced by the study and meditation and out of the imagination of minds rising far above the average intelligence of the people about them, and to a large degree independent of that intelligence.

In fact, it is a general belief that literature has a profound influence upon society, and that great writers lead rather than follow the trend of the public opinion of their time, being by the gift of genius isolated, as it were, from the prejudices, sentiments, and passions of their age, evolving a new wisdom out of their inner consciousness.

I will not deny that in some small measure this is true, but it is important for the student to realise that to a very large extent literature depends for its characteristics upon the society in which it is produced, that really society has a more profound influence upon literature than literature upon society, and that its vigour or its weakness, its immorality or its respectability, above all, its manner and medium of expression—dramatic, epic, prosaic, and so on—is the result of the social environment of the writers, and not, as many seem to think, a cause of the social characteristics of their time.

**A Result, not a Cause.** If one studies English literature with this point of view in mind, it is interesting to note how changes of social custom and of politics, and different ideals and convictions of the national mind, have produced correspondingly different forms of literature, and to an unprejudiced mind it seems to me impossible to argue that the literature has had more than an insignificant influence upon the facts of the people's history.

Before the last century, it must be remembered, the reading public was very limited in numbers. Even as late as the days of Queen Anne, when English literature was by no means at a low ebb, it had an almost exclusively London circulation, among wits and scholars, and the rural population and humble classes had but little chance of obtaining books. Still more, of course, was this so in earlier times of history. The works of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare were only known to courtiers and patrons of letters, and in the case of Shakespeare to those town-

dwellers who attended the playhouse. It cannot be said, therefore, that these earlier writers had much influence upon their time.

**The Social Influence.** But undoubtedly the society in which they moved had an all-pervading influence on them. In Chaucer's works we may find the healthiness, the common-sense, the coarseness, the shrewdness, and vigour of the English people, who at this time were freeing themselves from the fetters of feudalism and serfdom, and who were advancing to the dignity of a great and free nation with the civilising influences of arts and handicrafts and prosperous commerce, and yet with the primitive qualities of strength and underlying brutality, characteristic of, and indeed necessary to, a nation in its youth.

In Chaucer's tales the influence of Italy, which in his time was the fount of romance and poetry, and the country to which English gentlemen travelled for a greater refinement and culture than was obtainable in their own land, is very apparent, and it is equally clear that Chaucer, who, like all authors, wrote to be read, appealed to that aristocratic class of military men and cultured courtiers who comprised the only public in which literature in those days was valued and could be appreciated.

So with Spenser, we may see how the environment of the English Court, with its passionate idealisation of the Virgin Queen, and the afterglow of the fast-fading story of chivalry, which was then the favourite sentiment yet not the real living motive force of the time, produced the *Faery Queene* and its subtle allegories. In the next reign chivalry was as dead as a door-nail, a mere ridiculous remembrance, and an altered condition of society produced a new form of literature.

Shakespeare himself, in spite of his transcendent genius, was to a large extent the product of his age—an age in which the nation was aglow with a new patriotism and quick with new ideals, the imagination of the people stirred to its depths by the wonderful discovery of a New World, and the blood of the people tingling with an adventurous spirit which sent its young men across the seas to far lands, from whence they came home again with strange and marvellous tales.

The old religion had been shuffled off and a new philosophy had come, all the old trammels of mediævalism had been burst by the giant strength of the nation, which was just feeling its manhood, and a new audacity, an immense vitality of thought, surged through the brains of the English people, and especially

of such men as Essex, Sidney, Raleigh, and all those young, ardent spirits who were acquainted with the treasures of old knowledge, but drank eagerly of the new learning. In the works of Shakespeare, and of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries we find a mirror of this wonderful period, and there is no doubt that the period produced the men.

After this time there was a rapid decay of the drama, which was then the best and most representative form of national literature. The dissoluteness of society brought in by Charles II. and his immoral crew was reflected in the plays of Wycherley, Ford, Vanbrugh, and others, who found their public among these loose-living courtiers, when the playhouse was no longer, as in Shakespeare's time, in close touch with national sentiment. The drama, in fact, ceased to represent the spirit of the people, and, whereas it had only been coarse, it now became foul and vicious and thoroughly decadent.

**Politics and Literature.** Then with the Revolution a new era of society came in, and with it a new style of literature. It was the time of the beginning of modern party politics, and the coffee-houses of London springing up by hundreds in every part of the town became the haunt of Whigs and Tories, who reviled each other with a passion which the controversies of modern politics have only a faint relation to.

It was this phase of London society that produced the political poems of Dryden, the "squibs" and pamphlets of Defoe, the satires of Swift, and the hacks of Grub Street, who sold their pens to the party which might offer the best fee, or from the highest point of view to that party which their conscience bade them follow. Even then, as I have pointed out, literature was a "close preserve," and fifty miles beyond London even the gentry, squires, and lords of the manors subsisted on a book or so of heraldry and Baker's *Chronicles*.

Literature in the time of Queen Anne was essentially of London growth; and although I do not deny that Swift and Defoe, for instance, had an influence upon their society, it is more than probable that their works were almost the product of that society.

**Popularity of Letters.** Later on, the increased facilities of communication between town and country were the direct inducement to a wider and more popular form of literature,

appealing not only to the politicians and wits who haunted "Wills" and "Buttons," but to rural gentlemen and even to ladies of the upper classes, who previously had been more or less unprovided with modern letters.

This was the essay originated by Richard Steele in the *Tatler*, and perfected by Addison in collaboration with Steele in the *Spectator*. These essays were really the first attempt to cater in prose for a class outside the somewhat narrow circle of wits and pedants who had formerly been the book-buying public; to treat in a light, easy, and attractive style of the foibles and fashions of the time, and to deal with subjects of literary, philosophical, antiquarian, and social interest in what is now called a "popular" way, so that people of average intelligence and of good breeding, but of no great education, might take pleasure in them.

Thanks to the vivacity and wit of Steele, and the learning and charm of style of Addison, the experiment succeeded beyond their hopes, and founded a new school of letters which had a long and wide influence.

**Matter and Manner.** The social conditions of the time and the changes in national characteristics are equally marked upon the poetry and prose of this period. It was a time when the imagination of the people, in the broader sense, was rather restricted. The growing passion of the Elizabethan period and the wild dissoluteness of higher society of the Stuart era had been replaced by what might be called the spirit of common-sense. Respectability was one of its highest virtues, and the intellect of the period was of a critical and contemplative kind rather than idealistic or formative. Style was more appreciated than imagination, and emotion of the passionate sort was considered, in modern phrasing, as "bad form," being replaced by a mild and amiable sentimentality which struck none of the deeper chords of human nature.

This was due in a large measure to a change in the political and economical conditions of the country, which, after a revolutionary period, was settling down into quiet reaction, intolerant of new ideals and believing in material prosperity and a *status quo* as the chief source of national happiness.

During this time men's minds were turned rather to the study of themselves as members of a civilised society than to the broader mysteries of human life. So we find that Pope, with his

fine chiselled style of verse, replaces the more untrammelled natural harmony of previous poets, and his fine gentleman's wit, his philosophy of the clubman, and his refined and boldly imitative classicism, take the place of the more rugged, virile, coarse, but living genius which had stimulated such men as Marlowe and Ben Jonson.

Another change in the history of letters which took place at this time, and which was due to a change of social custom, was the gradual disappearance of patronage. Formerly it had been the habit, and indeed the necessity, of a poet or a prose writer to solicit the favour of some great nobleman, who, in return for his flattery or political service, paid him by pension or place.

But about the time when Dr. Johnson, after waiting in Lord Chesterfield's anteroom, and enduring the insolence of that nobleman's hangers-on, renounced all form of servile submission to the patron of letters, this class, which in the past had really done much for literature, gave way before the advent of the booksellers and of the subscription system, by which authors were able to earn their livelihood in a more independent way, and to appeal to a wider public.

It is impossible in the short space of this article to trace the influence of society on literature from that time to the present day, but these remarks may be concluded by pointing out how the present conditions of society—in this age of railway travel, of restricted leisure, of keen competition, of undue strain upon the nerves, above all of the recent invasion of the great masses into the public of readers which was formerly an aristocratic and scholarly preserve—have produced a literature the chief characteristics of which are sensationalism, “boiled down” knowledge, slipshod style, and ephemeral interest, with a few comparatively brilliant and admirable exceptions.

This state of things is inevitable, because people have not so much time for reading, and have much more varied interests than their forefathers, so that the long and deeply learned works which weighed down the shelves of former students have been replaced by “pocket editions.” It is not the fault of our present-day authors, for, as I have endeavoured to prove, they are but the products of their age, and write only what people are willing to read.

### 5. Did Bacon write "Shakespeare"?

I have been several times invited to write a review and criticism of the Baconian theory, but have so far refused because I have hesitated in disturbing, and perhaps confusing, the minds of my readers with a controversy which, to my own mind, is unprofitable, because on the one side it is mixed up with so many absurdities, and on the other has already been sufficiently proved.

I see, however, that the Baconian Society is preparing a new and extensive scheme of research and propaganda for the purpose of proving that the "so-called Shakespearian plays" were written by Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam. It therefore seems to me right that before the popular mind can be prejudiced it is well for those who reverence the memory of the real Shakespeare to defend that great master again from the ingenious but fantastic attacks of those who deny his claim to enduring honour.

The chief arguments of the Baconians may be summarised as follows:—

**Things Impossible.** It is, they say, impossible to conceive that an ill-educated country lad, who left "a bookless neighbourhood" at twenty years of age for a Bohemian life in London as a common play-actor, should possess the sublime genius, the wonderful range of language, and the extraordinary knowledge of courtly diction, of classical mythology, of history, of law, and of medicine, as exemplified in the series of plays which are the masterpieces of the world.

Secondly, it is equally inconceivable, they say, that the man who is said to have produced such mighty works should have returned to his native town in middle age, there to spend the remaining years of his life in respectable middle-class obscurity. Thirdly, they hold that this William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon could have had no claim upon the plays because he made no mention of them in his will, and left no instructions for collecting them and revising them in permanent form.

**Bacon's Footprints.** So far as regards the man of Stratford-on-Avon himself. Now, this is where Bacon comes in. Francis Bacon, say those who love him "not wisely, but too well," must have written the plays, because no other man living at that time had such a stupendous genius, such a wide vocabu-

lary, such a deep knowledge of the classics and all ancient learning, of history and law and medicine, of the language and customs of court-life.

Secondly, they say the dates of publication of Shakespeare's plays "so called" coincide remarkably with those periods of Bacon's public and private life when he had leisure to turn his attention to the production of these literary works.

Thirdly, they are satisfied that their theory is the only explanation of the curious fact that "Shakespeare's" works were collected by some one or other after the death of the actor, that they were considerably revised, and that this took place before the death of Bacon himself.

Fourthly, and this is the strongest part of their argument, they have made an elaborate, industrious, and highly valuable comparison of words, sentences, thoughts, errors, and philosophic doctrines to be found in both the work of "Shakespeare" (they always use the inverted commas for the name which has become an offence to them) and of Bacon.

This gives quite fairly and without any reservation the more reasonable arguments of the Baconians.

**Wild Imaginings.** But in addition to these arguments they put forward a mass of theories so fantastic, so imaginary, so wholly without the least foundation of proof, that they seem more like the wild imaginings of disordered brains than the critical reasonings of those who profess the desire to advance the cause of truth.

To take my readers through all this maze of mystery, to summarise all these conjectures, far-fetched allusions, and strained meanings attached to simple phrases, would neither be possible nor profitable in this space.

Suffice it to say that to the Baconians their master was a man and worker of mystery. The natural son of Queen Elizabeth, and the half-brother of the Earl of Essex (whom the Queen and Bacon together sent to the block), he was bound to conceal the authorship of the plays, which he wrote for the good of humanity, for fear of losing his position in the State at a time when, according to these theorists, it was a disgrace for a statesman to write dramatic works.

**The Rosy Cross.** According also to the Baconians, this man, who as a lad said with superb audacity, "I take all knowledge for my province," became the head of a secret

society called the "Rosicrucians," or members of the Red Cross, who were forerunners of the Freemasons. All the members of this society were sworn to keep the secret of their master, and to hand it down from generation to generation until the time was come for it to be revealed. That time is not yet come, though it is near at hand, and many Baconians firmly believe that a secret brotherhood is still in existence which purposely seeks to hide the mystery of Bacon's authorship of the plays, and other and even more important secrets of his life, until the time is ripe for their disclosure.

All this extraordinary story is built up upon sundry vague and mysterious statements to be found in Bacon's writings; upon certain curious watermarks of some of the paper upon which some of Bacon's works are printed, and which may or may not be the emblems of a secret society; and, lastly, upon the famous cipher said to be hidden in the plays, corresponding to the cipher described by Bacon in one of his works. Of this, however, it is sufficient to say that Mrs. Gallup's recent and notorious attempt to translate the so-called cipher has been absolutely disproved.

Lastly—and I now will complete my very scanty summary of Baconian absurdities—not only is Francis Bacon credited with the authorship of the plays, but he is said to have been the author of the *History of the World*, "supposed to be" by Sir Walter Raleigh; the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, "supposed to be" by Richard Burton; the sermons "supposed to be" by Jeremy Taylor; and many other Elizabethan works.

I do not propose to refute those remarkable statements concerning the "mystery" of Francis Bacon, nor to prove that he did not write the works mentioned. It would waste my time as much as if I set out to prove that Charles Dickens and not Cruikshank wrote the *Pickwick Papers*, or that Wellington won the Battle of Waterloo instead of Bill Adams. I will therefore confine my arguments to the more reasonable theories put forward in the first part of this article.

First, then, is it impossible that William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon could have acquired the knowledge and wisdom necessary for the production of the plays? I will answer, Nothing is impossible to genius. Was not—and I say it with the deepest reverence—was not Christ the son of a carpenter? And was not Mohammed a common camel-driver? Are not the greatest

**The True  
Shake-  
speare.**

geniuses of the world nearly always recruited from the humblest ranks?

It is true that at the Stratford Grammar School Shakespeare could not have got more than an elementary education of a literary kind, though it would have made him acquainted with many of the mythological stories of Greece and Rome, which were then more familiar to every kind of schoolboy than they are to-day. But in the fields and woods and lanes of Warwickshire he was learning other things not less necessary to the man who wrote the plays—the names and habits of Nature's children, the songs of the birds, the voices of the winds, the fragrance of the flowers, "sermons in stones," "books in the running brook," and all that country lore with which the pastoral plays are stored in every line. The old country sports and games, legends and lyrics, to which continual allusion is made in the plays could only have been learnt by a man who had lived the boyhood which William Shakespeare of Stratford lived.

If Francis Bacon, the Cambridge student, lawyer and courtier, wrote the plays, how is it that they are full of Warwickshire words and phrases, of allusions to places round Stratford-on-Avon, and of names belonging to people contemporary to Shakespeare in the adjacent villages?

**The School of Life.** True that the young Warwickshire man came to London with but a limited vocabulary, as Baconians contend. But London town in those days was the mint in which the English language was being coined anew, and it was the very school of life.

The veil had just been lifted from the New World, and a spirit of adventure, of romance, and of discovery was in the very atmosphere. In the taverns might be met sailors who had sailed with Drake in the Pacific and had fought many a sea-fight on the Spanish Main. Here also were adventurers who had lived by their swords in many a country of Europe; gallants who had learned the songs of Petrarch and the tales of Boccaccio in sunny Italy; down-at-heel, ragged-hosed men who lived on the memory of past exploits at the Court of France; men who on hungry stomachs dreamed new philosophies; men who with eyes dimmed by study and starvation saw before them the glamour of the philosopher's stone which would turn all to gold; lawyers and pedants, courtiers and fops, cut-throats and cut-purses, knocked elbows in those taverns, where men consorted in strange fellow-

ship. Here was it that new words were coined from the slang, the schools, and the markets of foreign lands. Here was it that Shakespeare learned that wonderful knowledge of human life and its passions in its lowest as well as its highest types.

**High Life and Low.** Baconians ask, "How is it possible that Shakespeare, the Warwickshire peasant, should have learnt the stately diction of kings and noblemen?" But I ask, How is it possible that Bacon, the aristocrat, should have learnt the tavern slang and thieves' cant, the wild ways and strange speech of those Elizabethan Bohemians with which the man who wrote the plays was so absolutely familiar? It is easy enough for genius to learn the conventional attributes of kings and princes, to put in their mouths noble sentiments and stately speech, but it takes even more than genius to become familiar with the spirit and speech of low-class life so as to reproduce with such living power those characters like Nym, Bardolph, and Pistol, and a hundred others of the kind which pass before one's mind in a gallery of portraits that hold the very mirror up to Nature. In such a school as London then afforded, Shakespeare could, and did, with his mighty genius at work, learn all that he required for his immortal plays. I find I have already exceeded space, so that I must restrict my further arguments to a summary which, though brief, will I think be convincing.

**Theories versus Facts.** Baconians say that Shakespeare must have been very ignorant, because he spelt his name in four different ways. Sir Walter Raleigh, however, was equally various in the spelling of his name. Yet nobody denies that he was a scholar and man of extreme culture.

As regards the absence of all mention of the plays in Shakespeare's will, this is merely due to the fact that at Shakespeare's death there was no dramatic copyright, and plays were therefore worth nothing from a monetary point of view.

As regards the similarity of words and phrases used by Bacon and Shakespeare, the same parallels may be found as abundantly in other Elizabethan authors. In any given period of history there are current expressions and allusions used in everyday speech and writing, and the drama is essentially the medium for reproducing them.

The revision of Shakespeare's plays was only in accordance

with the usage of playwrights and publishers of that period, and the fact that a revised version of the plays was issued after Shakespeare's death is no more proof that Shakespeare did not write the plays than the revision of the Bible in the time of James I. is a proof that David did not write Psalms.

Lastly, the many contemporary allusions to Shakespeare, and especially those pen-portraits by Ben Jonson and Fuller, in which the marvellous personality and wonderful genius of the "Swan of Avon" is acclaimed with a full meed of praise, will stand for ever as a stumbling-block in the way of those who would deny the identity of the master in order that Francis Bacon may be falsely aggrandised.

## 6. Literature and Journalism.

Some of my correspondents have from time to time accused me of sneering at journalism, because I have occasionally held up a warning against too much time devoted to the reading of newspapers. This accusation is a little strange, for do not my own essays appear in a newspaper, and does a man throw stones at his own house?

On the contrary, I hold that journalism at its best is a very high form of literature, though distinctive from and inevitably of a less permanent value than that other kind of writing which, at its best, endures for all time, and which is alone worthy of the name of Literature in the highest sense of that word.

Journalism is the literature of everyday life, living only for a day. Nevertheless, in its record of passing events and in its description of passing scenes, it is the material from which the historian, the novelist, the essayist, and the moralist obtain a large part of their knowledge of life and events.

**Interpreters  
of Daily  
Life.** Journalists are the eyes and the ears of the world by which other men may see and hear. They are the chroniclers of daily life.

They are more than chroniclers, they are interpreters of daily life. The journalist of highest rank has by natural gifts and by arduous training qualities of observation as far beyond the power of the ordinary individual as the scent of the beagle is beyond that of man.

His eyes are trained to note details, to see swiftly and

accurately the slight gesture which conveys a warning beyond words, the fleeting expression of a face which reveals a hidden motive, the sudden movements of a crowd which denote the eddying gusts of passion.

He must have something of the artist in him and something of the poet, for he is quick to see the picturesque and quick to feel the emotion of a dramatic moment. He is able in brief and vivid words to conjure up in other men's imaginations the splendour of a pageant, the terror of a tragic happening, the comedy of one of life's little dramas.

He is a student of atmosphere. He records the sunlight sleeping on the walls, the dark shadows brooding over an evening scene; he makes his readers feel the chill of rain-swept streets, or the heat of a desert plain, or the damp warmth of a fever-stricken swamp.

**The Onlooker.** He is a man of detached mind, standing somewhat apart from his fellows. For while they are absorbed in the words of an orator, he is watching the effect of those words upon the audience; and while the speaker is playing upon them as a skilful musician touches the notes of his lute, the journalist does not respond as do the others, but watches those tricks of oratory which work upon the feelings of a crowd, and tests the sincerity of the speaker with the dispassionate diagnosis of a man trained in the science of human nature.

Above all, the journalist must have the talent of discrimination. He must with quick judgment seize upon the essentials and separate them from unessentials. From a lengthy eloquence of a two hours' speech he extracts only the gist which lies in a few brief pregnant sentences.

A great modern newspaper is to no mean extent the history of the day's life of the world. The tragedies and comedies of that day's life, the heroisms and the blackguardisms, the words of wise men and of foolish men, the passing changes of social custom, the changing views of peoples and of individuals, are recorded in that epitome of the world's news.

**Two Kinds of Literature.** Journalism is therefore literature of a kind that no one may ignore or despise. Nevertheless, because of those very qualities I have described, it may not rank with that literature

which is the light of the world. For whereas the greatest journalist may only write of individuals, of isolated events, of the scenes and the customs and the creeds of a day, recounting as accurately as possible those things he sees and hears, the great novelist, or poet, or essayist, on the contrary, deals not with the individual but with the type. His teaching is not of things that concern the day or the week, but is based upon life's fundamentals, which last for ever. He does not diagnose the character of one man or woman, but the human heart itself.

The wit of a Shakespeare or of a Molière is not the mere flashing shaft that hits the butt of the moment and is then forgotten, but lives with the vital tissues of human comedy that men and women of future ages may recognise and respond to. The tragedy of a low-life drama recorded by the vivid pen of the journalist may thrill the pulse as we read the paper at the breakfast-table, but we have forgotten it by the time we come to eat our lunch.

A story of shipwreck, of heroism on the field of battle, of a terrible murder, or of a guilty conscience that drives a man to confess his sin, or such a tragic drama as that of late in Servia, may be told in the columns of a newspaper with all the terse power of a brilliant journalistic pen.

Yet, in spite of this power and brilliance, no true story told in a newspaper so grips the heart, and lives in the imagination, and enforces a great lesson of life, as one of those entirely imaginary stories built up in the mind of such writers as Daniel Defoe, Walter Scott, George Eliot, William Makepeace Thackeray, or Emile Zola.

**A Great Distinction.** The reason is, as I have said, because the journalist is bound inevitably to write of separate events, of isolated circumstances, of chance happenings; whereas the great novelist, when for instance he describes a wreck or a storm, typifies as it were all the wrecks or storms that have ever happened, discarding the mere casual incidents of one particular wreck or storm, and giving in his imaginary account the general qualities, the spirit, the atmosphere—call it what you will—appertaining to those things in general.

When Shakespeare conjured up the torture-stricken character of a murderer he was not describing the particular mind-workings of the individual, but the general and universal effects of that particular form of sin upon the mind of man.

This, in fact, is the distinction between journalism and literature. The former deals only with individuals and events, and the latter with types and universals.

### 7. What's in a Name?

There is a great deal more in a name than some people may think.

The name of a tiny village may often give the key to the history of a country. The name of a commonplace person living in this twentieth century, serving perhaps behind the counter of a shop, may reveal the character of his ancestors in the fourteenth century, and farther back, when they were warriors, or robbers, or lords over broad lands.

In the names of places as well as of persons the student of language may, if he have the cunning, find the social life of a people like a tale in a nutshell; and more than that, for he will also hear in the ring of an old name a faint echo, but still an echo, of the poetry and imagination and the ideals of old days gone by.

**National  
Character-  
istics.** And if we contrast the names of one nation with those of another, we may find the differing characteristics of those nations during their primitive periods.

For instance, the essentially religious temperament, and the Catholic ideals of the Celtic race in the first enthusiasm which followed the introduction of Christianity to Western Europe, is shown by the number of place-names in Ireland, the Celtic part of Scotland, Wales, and parts of France, which have their origin in the name of some local hermit, or the saint to which a church was dedicated.

In Ireland nearly three thousand names begin with "Kil," which means "church" or monk's "cells." Thus Kilkenny means the church or cell of St. Cannech; Kilbridge, of St. Bridget; Kilkieran, of St. Ciarran, and so on.

In Scotland there are many such names, as Kilpatrick, Kilfinan, Kilmarnock, etc.

In parts of France nearly every small town is named after a "patron saint," as St. Malo, St. Quentin, St. Didier, St. Valery, St. Pierre, St. Martin, and about six thousand others,

In Cornwall, always a Celtic stronghold, we find the same characteristics in such names as St. Ives, St. Columb, St. Just, St. Michael's Mount, St. Mawes, etc.

**German Warriors.** Not so with Teutonic countries. The German tribes that swept across Europe in the fifth century of the Christian era were a fierce, warlike, pagan race, and the names of their dwelling-places, or of their camps, were taken from those of their chiefs, coupled generally with some geographical description of the country.

Thus, in Germany, Rudelsheim is "the home of Rudolf (the Strong Wolf)." Wolfbertshausen is "the houses of Wolfbert (the Shining Wolf)." Rappoltsweler is "the dwelling-place of Ratbold (Bold in Council)." So in England also Edmonton is the town of Edmond ("Noble Protector"), Wolfigton the town of the Wolf family, and so on.

**The Coming of the Saxons.** The early settlers of the British Islands also paid attention to the geographical characteristics of a place when giving it its name, and we may trace the settlements of Saxons and Danes, and the gradual westward movement of the earlier Celtic races thrust back by the invaders, by the different forms of the name-endings.

For instance, the most familiar terminations of Saxon towns are burgh, a fort (such as Edinburgh); burn, a stream (Bannockburn); dal, a valley (Kendal); ey, an island (Thorney); field, a forest clearing (Sheffield); ham, a home (Nottingham); weald, a wood (Cotswold); ston, a stone (Kingston); hurst, a forest (Penshurst); mere, a lake (Grasmere); stock and stead, a place (Woodstock, Hampstead); ton and worth, an enclosure (Norton and Chatsworth). These examples may be multiplied by the dozen, sometimes by the hundred.

**The Old British Names.** In those parts of our islands where the Celts held their position longest, or are still on the land, we find names made up of such words as ben, a mountain (Ben Nevis); Avon, a river (Aberavon, meaning the river's mouth); lyn, a pool (Lynn Regis); ken, a head (Kenmore); dun, a fort (London, or Dundee); inch, an island (Inchcolm); llan, a church (Llandaff); caer, a castle (Carnarvon); bally, a town (Ballyshannon, and six thousand four hundred places in Ireland).

**Relics of the Danes.** Traces of the Danish settlement and influence in our islands may be found in the names they left as a remembrance. These generally have such endings as by, a town (Whitby); thorpe, a village (Althorpe); thwaite, a clearing (Applethwaite); toft, a homestead (Lowestoft); wick, a creek (Berwick); fel, a hill (Scawfell); ness, a cape (Skegness); beck, a stream (Troutbeck).

**Roman Britain.** The tramp of the Roman legions along the great highways which they cut through the wilderness of ancient Britain still echoes in the names of their military forts and stations, many of which are now the most important towns. Generally they took the old British name and joined it on to their own distinguishing noun of castra, the camp, which the Anglo-Saxons afterwards changed into caster or chester. Examples come to the mind in numbers, of which I need only mention Rochester, Colchester, Winchester, Lancaster, Doncaster, and Tadcaster.

**Nature in Names.** When we remember the veneration paid by the British Druids to the oak trees, and the superstitions of the Saxon pagans, who believed that trees were often inhabited by fairy creatures called pixies, it is not surprising that a great many place-names are derived from those of the oak and the ash, the birch and the beech, the pine and the thorn, the broom and the alder, the rush and the fern.

As examples of this poetical nomenclature I will mention only Farnborough, Rusholme, Appleby, Ashton, Bromley, Aldershot, Thornton, and Acton (from ac, Saxon for oak).

**Early Nicknames.** To turn from the names of places to names of persons, we find that it was not until the late Middle Ages that the fixed second name, or what we call the surname, came into usage.

The first names were nearly all in the nature of "nicknames," that is to say, a person was distinguished from his fellows by being named after some peculiar quality of body or mind. Doubtless, in many cases also the person chose his own name, and gave himself the self-praise of a high-sounding title to strike awe into the hearts of friends and foes.

If we analyse the old Saxon names we shall find that they nearly all typify primitive qualities of courage and wisdom in

council, and they are curiously like the names of Red Indian chiefs well known to the readers of Fenimore Cooper and Mayne Reid by such titles as Sitting Bull, Black Eagle, Big Bear, and so on.

The Saxon name of Arnold signifies "Eagle Strength," Bernard is the "Stern Bear," Roger "Glorious Spear," Richard "Stern Might," Albert "Noble Brightness," Alfred "Noble Peace," Ethelred "Noble Counsel," Ethelwulf "Noble Wolf," and so on.

The principle of nicknames is further carried out in such elaborate forms as Ethelred the Unready, Edmund Ironside, and John Lackland.

Nor is it a true surname when before the fourteenth century we find men called by such names as Piers Plowman, John Carter, Wat Tyler, Will Fletcher, etc. The man was merely called after his trade, and if his son changed his trade his name changed with it.

**Family Names.** By degrees, however, family names began to be common, and a man was named after his father or his father's trade, or, failing that, after the place in which he had settled or from which he had come.

The Scottish Mac, the Welsh Map and Ap, the Irish O', the English (or more probably Danish) son, all meaning descendant or son of, became a common way of fixing a man's identity.

An enormous number of names may be traced to this origin, even in cases where by careless pronunciation the derivation is not very apparent—as example, Kew, from MacHugh; Powell, from Ap Howell; Pugh, from Ap Hugh; Barry and Parry from Ap Harry; Jones, Evans, Williams from John's son, Evan's son, William's son, and so on.

Many names derived from the residence of their first owners are concealed under such forms as William Woods, John Green, Harry Townsend, George Yates, Sidney Wells, the final "s" in each case denoting the possessive case formerly rendered by the old English form of William atte (at the) Wood, John atte Green, Harry atte Town-end, George atte Gate, and Sidney atte Well.

It will be seen, therefore, even from the brief category I have given so far, that when one asks, "What's in a name?" he may find a good deal more than he expected.

### 8. Home Life in the Middle Ages.

“We who live at home in ease,” as the old song has it, have but a vague idea of how our forefathers passed their everyday lives, what sort of homes they had, and what effect those homes had upon their morals and character. It may be interesting, therefore, and I hope my readers will not growl, if I take a brief jaunt backwards into history, and give one or two outline-pictures of home-life in the Middle Ages.

Having read Sir Walter Scott, G. A. Henty, Charles Gibbon, and other historical romancers of our youth, it is hard to get rid of the idea that mediæval knights and ladies spent their days in the chill discomfort of a gloomy castle, that the men clanked about the great keep clothed continually in steel armour, and that the women and wealth were guarded from foes without by battlement and bastion, rampart and moat.

This is quite a fancy picture. True, there were many castles belonging to the great nobles built to withstand the shock of siege and the assault of time, but these were mostly garrisoned on behalf of the king, and all were dwelling-places only when there was national disturbance and civil war.

**The Old Manor.** Gentlemen in the olden days lived not so much in castles as in their manor houses, and it is by the architecture of these domestic buildings that we are able to form an idea of their everyday life. Let us study for a moment the earliest form of manor house. It was of simple design, and was practically the same, except in size, whether it were built for noble or citizen.

The chief feature was the central hall—a large, lofty room reaching to the height of the building. At one end, over a vaulted cellar, was a smaller room, the private chamber of the knight and his lady. This was called the solar, meaning the room where one may enjoy the sun, and corresponded to the modern drawing-room. Generally the walls of the great hall were of stone, but the roof would be timbered, and all the adjuncts of the manor would also be of wood. These would consist of a chapel, where every morning the household would hear Mass, a lady’s bower, a buttery (or butlery), where the beer and wines were stocked, a brewery, bakery, laundry, and out-houses, according to the wealth and social position of the owner.

**The Great Hall.** The hall was the common room, in which the little community would meet in daily intercourse.

It somewhat resembled a modern Dissenting chapel, the roof being often supported by a double row of pillars dividing the room into a nave and two aisles. At one end was a raised platform reserved for the use of the lord and lady, the members of their family, and distinguished guests. The body of the hall was sometimes called "the marsh," and the name helps us a little to realise the primitive simplicity of a dwelling-room with a mud floor strewn with rushes.

The windows were small and narrow both in hall and solar, being protected from rain and wind by canvas or wooden shutters, until with the fourteenth century came the use of glass windows. These, however, were for a long time such expensive luxuries that they could only be indulged in by the very rich. Even then the window frames were made so that the glass could be taken out and put in again without difficulty, and in time of storms or danger the panes would be deposited in a safe place. Many noblemen having several manors of their own in different parts of the country made it their habit to travel frequently from one to the other, and upon these occasions they would take their window glass with them to be fitted up in the manor where they proposed to tarry.

But let me get back to my great hall. This, as I have said, was the common room of the lord and his retainers. There they assembled for meals, the family dining at a table on the raised dais, and the humble folk sitting at the long wooden benches on trestles (which during the day were taken down and packed against the walls) in the aisles on either side of the hall. There were no chairs until the end of the Middle Ages, rough benches without backs serving for the ordinary men and women, their betters being provided sometimes with more comfortable wooden seats with backs.

Shut your eyes for a moment and picture to yourselves an evening scene in one of these old manor halls.

**A Peep into the Past.** The room is empty and dark, for it is four o'clock and a winter's day. Presently a lusty young squire comes in whistling a merry catch and carrying a torch in his hand. With this he lights the rush candles in the iron sockets on the walls, and their flicker gleams weirdly upon the plastered walls, which are painted in garish colours with

pictures from old romance. Then two villeins come in, rough fellows in smocks none too clean, with straws sticking in their shaggy hair. They set down the trestles on either side and fix the boards thereon, stopping to spit now and again in the rushes (their manners are lacking in refinement), and cursing in their beards when the young squire tells them to make haste because his stomach cries wolf.

Then come some maids with the snow-white napery, which they lay upon the table on the dais, not too busy to ogle the squire, who blows a kiss to them while he sits on a bench picking his teeth and kicking his heels. Now other servants enter, and there is a fine bustle while the brass bowls and dishes and goblets (it is too early yet for crockery) are set out on the dresser behind the lord's table, making a grand show in the gleaming candlelight.

By this time the men and women belonging to the manor crowd into the hall, their stomachs telling them the time o' day. With them come their dogs and cats, waiting to gnaw the bones which will presently be thrown to them in the rushes.

When they are all seated on the benches, the knight and his lady, who have been sitting in the solar, through the open door of which they can see everything that passes in the hall, enter with much dignity, bowing gravely when all their people rise to curtsy to them. The knight has his favourite hawk on his wrist, and this he sets on a perch by his side, calling pet-names to it now and again and giving it a sop from his own dish. Now down the length of the "screens," a passage leading from the door of the hall to the kitchen outside, come the cooks bearing steaming viands, and preceded by an ancient minstrel, who proclaims the joyous advent of roast meats by a triumphant twanging of a stringed instrument called a "giterne."

The great people being served first by squires on bended knee, the common folk, whose eyes have been rolling greedily towards the good cheer, are next attended to. The meat is ladled on to their trenchers, these being square slabs of slack-baked dough, which, when they have done service as plates, are eaten for pudding or thrown to the dogs, according as appetite dictates.

After dinner, all being cleared away, there is a time for unbending. Musicians in the minstrel gallery twang forth merry tunes. Then a game is put on foot—hoodman blind (or blind man's buff)

being prime favourite, for it is a rollicking good game 'twixt man and maid. The squires are not above taking part in it for the sake of kisses from the wenches in dark corners, and even the lord and his lady will join in now and again; for in these days, though the classes are well divided, the reign of snobbishness is not yet.

Tiring of hoodman blind, the good folk gather round the burning logs on the hearth in the centre of the hall, kept in their place by the iron "dogs," or handirons, as they are sometimes called.

Then, when the rushlights burn dim, and the flickering fire-light throws queer dancing shadows on the walls, stories are told from the legends of old romance, and the hearts of squire and yeoman glow at the doughty deeds of Sir Tristram, of Guy of Warwick, of the great Arthur, and of Richard Cœur de Lion, while the hearts of maid and mother are melted by the lamentable tales of sweet-love-sorrowing in the Romance of the Rose, and in the ballad of Palamon and Arcite. Those who do not care for the fireside tale busy themselves with dice and gambling, and so the evening passes till nine o'clock comes, and with it bedtime, according to the old rhyme—

"To rise at five, to dine at nine,  
To sup at five, to bed at nine,  
Makes a man live to ninety and nine."

**Primitive Manners.** There were no bedrooms to go to in the early Middle Ages. The hall itself served as a bedroom for all the household except the lord and his lady, who laid themselves to rest in the solar. Great mattresses of straw were set down on the floor, and the men and women disposed themselves thereon for the night.

It was an age of but rare decency, yet they had their little rules of social etiquette, and we read with amusement how the lady of the household teaches her servants "prudently to extinguish their candles before they go into their bed, with the mouth or with the hand, and not with the shirt," meaning thereby that they must not snuggle into bed with half their clothes on and then put out the candle by throwing their shirt at it. It was the more prudent still to extinguish the candle before undressing, for until the fifteenth century the night-dress had not been invented by modest inspiration, and every mother's son went to bed as naked as he was born.

Now the little scene we have conjured up may end to the discordant chorus of the snoring household, who in those days of good digestions and well-strung nerves knew not the word insomnia.

**Increasing Comforts.** The advancement of civilisation was marked by additions to the manor house for the purpose of greater privacy. As the fourteenth century merged into the fifteenth fresh rooms were added round the great hall, serving as separate bedrooms for men and women, one also for the lord and lady, who kept the solar as their guest-chamber, a bower for the ladies' day-room, and other domestic offices clustered round the kitchen.

The plastered walls of the hall were now hung with tapestry, often of wonderful workmanship and design, pictures from Bible history or from the national chronicles being wrought thereon by the taper fingers of the lady and her maids, who day by day, and year by year, and stitch by stitch, worked those rich hangings which were the glory and the pride of the mediæval home.

So much store was set by them that on great feast-days of the saints they were frequently carried through the streets in solemn procession. The solar was sometimes adorned with a carpet, and later in mediæval history, other places, such as the ladies' bower and the dais, were also carpeted. In the fifteenth century it became the fashion to tile the floor of the hall, but for a long time rushes and sand were the only protection from the damp in the homes of all but the very wealthy.

**The Dwellings of the Poor.** If this was the condition of the manor houses, it will be realised how primitive were the dwellings of the humbler classes. The yeomen and burgesses of substantial position were on the whole comfortably housed in buildings very similar to the manors, though of course on a much smaller scale. The peasants, however, lived in mere hovels, somewhat worse perhaps than the most miserable shanty in the west of Ireland at the present day.

For furniture there would be nothing more than one or two rough benches and a trestle table. The mud floor would be littered with straw, and this would be the only bed of the goodman and his family. The walls were made of withes interlaced and filled up with mud, and the roof would be of

unhewn boughs or thatched straw. A part of the one room would sometimes be partitioned off as a shelter for pigs and fowls when the weather was bad outside, but more often than not the animals would be given a friendly welcome, and the eldest son would sleep with his back propped against the old sow, and the babies would nestle among the sucking-pigs.

Through open door and open window the wind would come blowing with a healthy if uncomfortable draught, and this was very necessary when a fire was lit on the great stone in the centre, for there was no chimney, and the smoke would fill the hut with an atmosphere irritating to throat and eyes.

“Full sooty was her bower and eke her hall” was Chaucer’s description of a poor widow’s cottage, and we may learn from the same source how bare, how comfortless, how dirty were the dwellings of the poorer classes in mediæval England.

Yet we must not jump to the conclusion that this meant unhappiness and misery. On the contrary, these men and women of the Middle Ages were a jovial, merry-hearted race. They spent their lives mainly in the open air, and their cottages were merely sleeping places and shelters from turbulent weather. The green field was their parlour and the shady wood their bower. A better carpet than our modern Brussels was the soft springing turf of Nature’s carpeting. Better than whitewashed ceiling was the sky above.

They were a hardier race than many of their descendants, who shiver at an open window and sneeze at a draught. Simplicity of life was not wholly to their disadvantage, and the absence of luxuries afforded a Spartan training in which the weak went to the wall, and the law of life was the survival of the fittest.

## PART V

# THE VICTORIAN ERA : AN HISTORICAL RETROSPECT



### 1. The Early Years of the Reign.

**Victoria  
the Good.**

VICTORIA, the late Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India, was the only child of Edward Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. Her Majesty was twelve years old before she learnt that she was to inherit the throne of England, with all its power and magnificence. The princess was not, however, so much elated at the prospect of her brilliant future as she was pensive at the thought of such great responsibilities.

The Queen's early childhood was as simple as that of an ordinary British boy or girl. She was allowed no luxuries, either of dress or food, and indeed many a well-to-do merchant's child was more pampered than the future Queen of England. She was taught to be truthful, polite, industrious, thoughtful for the comfort of others, and, in short, all those lessons which are learnt at the knees of every good mother. The Princess Victoria had an early love of learning, and when quite young could speak French, German, and Italian fluently, and had a considerable knowledge of Latin and mathematics.

At two o'clock on the morning of 20th June 1837 William IV. died. Immediately the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain drove off to Kensington Palace. Everybody was asleep, and it was some time before the visitors could obtain admittance. They were told that the princess was sleeping, and

could not be disturbed. The Archbishop, however, said that he had come to see "the Queen" on business of state, and could not be refused. The attendants yielded, and in a few moments a young girl of eighteen entered the room with tears in her eyes. She had a shawl thrown over her nightgown, her hair was falling upon her shoulder, and her bare feet were in slippers. It was the Queen.

**The Coro-  
nation.** The Queen's coronation did not take place until a year after her accession, during which time the young girl, who till then had been living in strict seclusion, had won the heart of the nation by her simplicity and grace.

The day of coronation was one of great jubilation. From all parts of the world came visitors to see the crowning of the maiden Queen, and Great Britain was said to have gone "coronation mad." Everybody entertained everybody else. The Duke of Wellington gave a ball to two thousand people. There was a gigantic fair in Hyde Park, which was visited by the Queen herself. Theatres were thrown open to the public, there were free dinners to the poor, and in all parts of the country there was universal rejoicing.

There was one little incident during the ceremony of coronation which still lives in the heart of the people. A venerable old nobleman, Lord Rolle by name, who was upwards of eighty years of age, advanced to swear allegiance to the young Queen, but as he mounted the steps to the throne he stumbled and fell. The Queen, pitiful, hastily stepped down from her throne, and, holding out her hand to the old man, gently helped him to rise. It was innumerable acts like this, rising spontaneously from a pure goodness of heart, that endeared the late Queen to her people.

**The Prince  
Consort.** The Queen's counsellors earnestly hoped that they would soon find a husband who should be a worthy protector to his young wife. It was not long before Her Majesty was touched by the grace and charm of the young Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg, who came on a visit to the English Court. The Queen wrote to her uncle, "Albert's beauty is most striking, and he is most amiable and unaffected—in short, very fascinating." Shortly afterwards she wrote again, "I love him more than I can say."

It is often said that royal marriages are more affairs of convenience than of inclination, but in this case at least it was a true love match. The marriage took place on the 10th of February

1849, and on that day the young Queen and her Consort began that beautiful married life which set an example to the nation of simple and homely virtue. The young pair were happy in their mutual love and the similarity of their tastes, and, when children came, the husband and wife found their pleasure, not in the glare and brilliance of society but in the quietude of the fireside or a romp in the nursery.

The Prince Consort was one of the best of husbands and fathers. Everybody who came in contact with him admired him for his simple, unaffected manner, his purity and honour, his manly and unselfish devotion to the Queen. When, on 15th December 1861, he died, after twenty-one years of married life, the nation, which had loved him for his own sake, joined with heartfelt sorrow in the mourning of the widowed Queen.

When Victoria came to the throne our country was very different from what it is now. The steam engine had not yet established its iron reign over the surface of the earth. Electric lighting tram-cars, hansom cabs, and many other conveniences and luxuries of modern life, were still in the land of the unknown.

There was a good deal of romance and charm about these old coaching days. What a jolly time it must have been that journey from London to Edinburgh, in fine weather, with a great-coat and a stout heart! What a bustle there was as the coach clattered into the town with the cracks of the whip and the tootling of the horn! Then mine host of the "Greyhound" or of "The Leather Bottel" would come to the door of his cosy hostelry with a wink and a joke to the driver and a happy greeting to the passengers, while the ostlers uncoupled the horses and gave them drink.

Then, after a hasty snack, on to the coach again, with a mighty blast from the horn, a clatter-bang out of the inn yard, accompanied by a crowd of cheering urchins and a pack of barking curs, until they were left behind, and the coach was rumbling along the dusty roads, up hill and down dale, past farm and park, cottage and manor, through the turnpikes and toll gates of old England.

But there is another side to the picture. Imagine the same journey in sleet and rain, with an outside berth on the coach. Imagine one's legs gradually getting numb, one's feet losing all sensation, and one's ears tingling and smarting in the cold air.

**Great  
Britain in  
the Thirties.**

Imagine the horses slipping and splashing through miles of mud, until perhaps the coach stuck fast in a deep rut, or an axle broke, and the poor shivering travellers had to wait until it was mended before they could drive on again to transact their business, meet their wives, bairns, and sweethearts, as the case might be. Imagine all this, and you have a coach ride in bad weather in the early Victorian period.

**British Sports and Pastimes.** The steam engine has brought a good deal of comfort and luxury, but is also the cause of a good deal of smoke and dirt and noise which we could very well do without. Still, although our country has lost much of her beauty, she has gained other things which largely compensate for it.

It cannot be denied that our grandfathers of the thirties were by no means so refined as we are to-day. A nation's character may be read in its amusements. When those are found to be of such a nature as cock-fighting and prize-fighting, it cannot be said that the country has reached its highest point of civilisation. These were the popular sports in the early Victorian period. A prize-fight between two well-known champions was often the scene of wild excitement. The ring was generally thronged with noblemen, fashionable gentlemen, sporting men, honest men and rogues, and the betting was often enormously high. It was not until 1860 that the public began to see the folly and viciousness of these practices, but after that date it rapidly declined, until it was prohibited by law. Duelling was practised until 1843, when the great influence of the Prince Consort helped to put a stop to it.

Education was very backward in the early days of Victoria's reign, and this accounts for a great deal of the drunkenness and brutality then common. The elementary schools were either in the hands of private individuals, who kept them for profit, or were established by the British and National Societies, who were the pioneers of elementary education. But these two societies had only limited resources, and the number of schools was very small. Thousands of children never entered a school at all, and great numbers of adults could not read or write.

**The Dress of our Grand-parents.**

The costume of the thirties was more picturesque but not perhaps so comfortable as nowadays. The men usually wore a dark blue or green frock coat and a high and capacious neck-cloth, called a stock.

The latter was often so large, that when the lord and master of the household discarded it, his good lady would have it washed and converted into an apron for herself or a frock for the baby. The completion of the male costume was a waistcoat gorgeously embroidered with sprigs of forget-me-nots or other flowers, according to the wearer's fancy, and a pair of top-boots called "Hessians."

In 1870 that barbarous-looking atrocity called a "tall" hat came over from France, and it has stayed in fashion, with various changes of shape in the brim or in the crown, until the present day, and it is likely to remain until some modern reformer is bold enough to declare war against it.

The women, being of a changeable disposition (I say it in all reverence, dear ladies!), varied their fashions extensively and frequently in the Victorian era, and they continue to do so. Their dresses have been now wide, now tight, now pleated, now plain, and the shapes of their hats have been more numerous than there are days in the year. I will mention only two of the most famous—the "Dolly Varden" and the "coal scuttle" bonnets.

**History in Small Things.** It would take some imagination to fully realise our grandfathers' life in the early days of Victoria. The life of a nation is made up of little details—the cut of a coat, the cost of a loaf or of a cup of tea, the postage of a letter, the price of a newspaper, all the little necessities and little luxuries of everyday life. In the early Victorian era it cost 4d. to send a letter fifteen miles in the United Kingdom, 1s. for three hundred miles, 10d. to send a letter to France, double that to Germany, and 3s. 6d. to South America. People can still remember the time when the quartern loaf was 1s. 6d., when a pound of tea cost 7s. 6d., when tobacco was 10s. a pound—fancy that, ye devotees of Queen Nicotine!—and when a daily paper cost 7d.

## 2. To the End of the Crimean War.

Queen Victoria had not been on the throne more than two years before a number of disturbances took place in England of a rather serious character. At that time the whole of Europe was in a somewhat chaotic condition. The rise of the United

States of America, followed by the French Revolution, had shown the people that the real power lay in their hands, to be used for good or ill.

In every country there is always a party which prefers to get its wants by violence rather than by the slower and more righteous way of legislation. England was no exception, and in 1839 a revolutionary party gradually grew in size and importance called Chartists.

This party spoke freely of the use of arms as a lawful method of enforcing their rights. They obtained large quantities of guns and pikes, drilled themselves in public places, and formed torchlight processions, to the terror of peaceable citizens. Another way of asserting themselves was to march into the churches on Sunday and to take possession of them during the service, smoking and wearing their hats, but otherwise doing no actual damage. Most of this was mere bluster, and the bark was worse than the bite; but with the memory of the Reign of Terror still fresh, responsible people were naturally alarmed.

**The Chartists.** The Chartists were so called because they framed a Charter in which they demanded that certain radical changes should be introduced into the British Constitution. These changes were not in themselves very unreasonable or revolutionary, but they were demanded with such an air of violence that the country was seriously perturbed. An enormous crowd of people, led by Fergus O'Connell, proceeded to Parliament to present a petition; but the Government, wisely enough, refused to receive a petition accompanied by such a show of violence. In consequence of the refusal, serious riots occurred in various parts of the country, and at Newport the troops were called out and ordered to fire upon the people.

In 1848 a serious revolution took place in Paris, in which sixteen thousand people were killed and wounded. King Louis Philippe was forced to abdicate, and a Republic set up. This news acted like an electric spark upon the revolutionary party in this country. The Chartists, fired by the example of the Parisians, declared that they would enforce their demands at all costs. Fergus O'Connell and his friends drew up another petition, to which was annexed an enormous number of signatures. It was afterwards found, however, that thousands of these were false.

The Chartists announced that they would assemble in great force upon Kennington Common, from whence they would go

to Westminster to present their petition. The Government was now thoroughly roused. There was no knowing how much violence or destruction might be caused by such large numbers of threatening men if their demands were refused. The Duke of Wellington moved a large body of soldiers into London and placed them in public offices, such as Somerset House and the Bank, and in private houses and courtyards, where they would be in readiness in case of need. In addition, cannon were placed at the end of the bridges over which the Chartists would have to pass on their way to Westminster from Kennington Common.

At the same time the Government enrolled two hundred thousand citizens as special constables; and with this force of loyal and patriotic men, it would have gone hard with the Chartists if they had attempted violence. As it was, they were completely cowed by these precautions, and in the end their petition was driven in a cab to the Houses of Parliament, where it was duly examined and discovered to be a very sham document. This was the last that was heard of the Chartists as a body, although many of the demands embodied in the Charter have passed into law, with various modifications.

**The Reform Bill.** When Lord Derby was Prime Minister, with Benjamin Disraeli for Chancellor of the Exchequer, the great Reform Bill of 1832 was brought in, of which the object was to give votes to a great number of people who had not the right before. This measure aroused a great deal of excitement. There were many fiery debates in Parliament, and all over the country there were meetings and demonstrations for or against the Reform Bill. A party was formed called the Reform League, and held a number of meetings advocating manhood suffrage; that is to say, that every man, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, should have a right to vote.

The Reform Leaguers determined to hold a gigantic demonstration in Hyde Park on the evening of 23rd July 1832. The Home Secretary, however, was alarmed at what the consequences might be of such a crowd of excited people at a late hour in the evening, and he gave orders for the park gates to be shut at five o'clock. The Reform Leaguers were very indignant at what they considered an infringement of popular rights. As they could not go into the park by the gates, they

determined to smash down the railings. In spite of the efforts of the police, the railings were speedily broken down, and the mob surged into the park and gave vent to their feelings in fiery speeches and some stone-throwing. The police used their truncheons freely, and there were many broken pates in consequence. At last the Horse Guards were called out, and succeeded in dislodging the populace from the park. After long debates in Parliament, the Reform Bill was finally passed, which practically gave a vote to every householder, and the riots and disturbances ceased.

**The Corn  
Laws.**

In 1838 Richard Cobden, John Bright, and Charles Villiers, who were at the head of a party called "The Anti-Corn Law League," travelled about the country making eloquent speeches, in which they endeavoured to prove how much harm was done by taxing articles of food. The object of the League they represented was to induce Parliament to take away all taxes on imported corn. At first they were treated with derision, and afterwards with indignation and hatred. The landowners were greatly opposed to the taxes being taken off corn, and, as their class was in the majority in Parliament, it seemed very unlikely that the taxes would be abolished. Nevertheless, the eloquence and energy of Richard Cobden and his associates aroused the sympathy and convinced the reason of the nation.

At last Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, was converted to their views. Many of the Ministers under him, however, were strongly opposed to him, and he was obliged to resign office; but he soon came back again, supported by his old opponents, the Whigs. In 1846 a Bill for the abolition of all taxes upon corn was brought in, and it was at length passed by both Houses of Parliament, and became law. In a short time foreign nations were able to send in large quantities of corn, so that the price of bread rapidly became cheaper. The great disadvantage to this is that the poor British farmer who grows wheat finds that he cannot compete against foreign rivals, who have the advantage of a better climate and a better soil than our own.

**The Potato  
Famine.**

A circumstance that hastened the repeal of the Corn Laws was the Irish famine of 1845. The Irish peasantry depended almost entirely for their living

upon their crops of potatoes. This vegetable is, unfortunately, subject to a peculiar disease, which blackens the leaves and rots the potato itself, so that it is unfit for food. In 1845 a terrible blight occurred all over Ireland. Thousands of acres of potatoes were withered up as if by a curse.

The poor Irish peasants found themselves at the end of one short week utterly destitute of any means of living, and face to face with death. The suffering was too terrible for description. Villages, towns, and counties were filled with men, women, and children, naked and starving. From every cabin and mud hut of Ireland rose the terrible cry, "The hunger is upon us!" The living were soon unable to bury the dead. In that time many a brave priest lost his life by his devotion to his poor famine-stricken and plague-stricken countrymen. England and Scotland voted a sum of ten million pounds for the relief of Ireland, besides large sums of money from private and benevolent persons. But it was too little when so much was needed, and it came too late. Ireland was already bewailing her dead.

**War with Russia.** In 1854 we entered into a disastrous war with Russia. The Czar Nicholas had long been casting covetous eyes upon Constantinople. By various treaties with Turkey he had contrived to lay the foundation of a protectorate over the Christians of the Greek Church in Turkey, amounting to three-fourths of the Sultan's European subjects. England and France intervened, and after long and fruitless negotiations these two Powers, joined the following year by Sardinia, declared war against Russia on behalf of Turkey.

It happened, however, that England had been enjoying a long peace of nearly forty years, and her statesmen were utterly unprepared for war. The whole story of the Crimea is one long record of blunder and mismanagement. The system of transport was disastrously inadequate to the requirements. Food and clothing were sent to places where they were not wanted, while in other places the troops were dying of starvation and cold. The hospitals were in a horrible condition, and more British troops were killed by want of management on the part of the Government than by the shot and steel of the Russian foe. The only incidents that brightened this dark page of our history were the splendid deeds of bravery, and the heroic endurance of our soldiers against hunger, cold, and disease.

On 17th September 1854 twenty-five thousand British troops

under Lord Raglan, the same number of French under Marshal St. Arnaud, and five thousand Turks, landed in the Crimea, thirty miles north of Sebastopol.

The Russians were strongly posted on the steep heights above the river. The British troops waded through the water amid a storm of bullets from the enemy above, climbed up the heights in the face of a raking fire, and, after a desperate battle, completely defeated the Russians. During the battle the Guards were sorely pressed, and it was suggested that they should be ordered to fall back. It was then that the brave Scottish general, Sir Colin Campbell, made that reply which will always live in our country's history: "It is better, sir, that every man of Her Majesty's Guard should lie dead upon the field than that they should turn their backs upon the enemy." After the victory the allied forces took up their position near Balaclava, and commenced the siege of that vast fortress of Sebastopol. The Russians strove again and again, with splendid bravery and daring, to drive the allied forces from their position, but their efforts were in vain.

**Balaclava.** On 25th October was fought the battle of Balaclava, during which occurred the world-famous charges of the Heavy and Light Brigades. The first charge took place early in the day. General Scarlett, at the head of seven hundred of the Greys and Inniskillings, charged three thousand of the Russian horse. In less than five minutes, such was the terrific onslaught of our men, the Russian cavalry were thrown into complete disorder, and they were obliged to retreat with severe loss.

This charge is one of the most brilliant in the warfare of the world, but it was eclipsed in daring by that which occurred later in the day. Through a misconception of an order given by Lord Lucan, and carried to Lord Cardigan by Captain Nolan, the Light Brigade, composed of six hundred men of the Dragoons, Lancers, and Hussars, charged the Russian army in position, after riding for a mile and a half in the face of its murderous fire.

As the gallant troop dashed over the ground, their ranks were thinned by grape and shot and shell, belched forth from the Russian guns. On they went with a ringing British cheer, that in many a brave throat was changed to a dying gasp. Horses and men rolled over with gaping wounds, as volley after volley pealed from the enemy's cannon. But their comrades held on.

Faster and faster grew the pace. At last they reached the Russian guns. Sabres flashed in the air, and the Russian gunners fell before the onslaught. Right through a column of infantry rode the Light Brigade, slashing and thrusting. Then they turned and fought their way back; but of the six hundred who had charged, only one hundred and ninety-eight lived to tell the tale.

**Inkermann.** On 5th November 1854 was fought the battle of Inkermann. This is often called the Soldiers' Battle, as it depended much more on the bravery of every individual than upon the skill of the commanders. It was fought in a dense fog. Eight thousand of the British forces were taken unawares. They were short of cartridges, but in a hand-to-hand fight they kept their own against forty-eight thousand Russians, until six thousand of the French allies came to their aid and completed the utter defeat of the enemy.

For nearly a twelvemonth Sebastopol was besieged by the allied forces. At length, in September 1855, after a tremendous cannonade, lasting three days, the French stormed and carried the Malakoff fort, which was the key to Sebastopol. During the same night the Russians evacuated the now blazing ruins of the city. Shortly after, Russia acknowledged her defeat and sued for peace, which was signed at Paris in 1856.

I have already said that the condition of the hospitals was very bad, but when this came to the knowledge of the British Government they sent out Miss Nightingale and a body of nurses to work in the hospital at Scutari. This devoted lady soon created order out of chaos. The poor wounded soldiers, suffering agonies too terrible for description, adored her almost as an angel sent from heaven. She passed among them with gentle words and cheering smiles, smoothing their pillows, moistening their parched lips, and doing all those beautiful little acts of charity which only women can perform. No wonder that Miss Nightingale lives in the hearts of the British people, and that she makes the brightest picture in the Crimean War.

### 3. The Indian Mutiny.

In 1857 occurred a terrible chapter in our country's history, which none can think of without a shudder at its awful horrors,

and a thrill of admiration for the many heroic deeds which it occasioned. This was the Indian Mutiny.

At that time the Bengal native army was very badly organised. Discipline was slack, and the native soldiers so vastly outnumbered the Europeans that they were not slow to realise their power. In spite of frequent petty mutinies, however, the British officers had a complete trust in the loyalty of their men; and they were taken wholly by surprise when, in the spring of 1857, regiment after regiment broke out in open mutiny.

The immediate cause of the revolt was the fact that greased cartridges were served out to the men, who considered it a defilement to touch the produce of the sacred cow on the one hand, or the unclean swine on the other. The mutiny spread like wildfire. Regiment after regiment rose against its officers; hundreds of British men, women, and children were ruthlessly murdered. All over Northern India little garrisons of Europeans were besieged by thousands of mutineers lusting for their blood.

The story of those brave little bands defending themselves against overpowering numbers, suffering agonies of heat, thirst, and disease, with their comrades, wives, and children lying dead and wounded around them, is one of the most heroic and most terrible in our history. The indomitable courage of the men was only surpassed by the noble endurance of the women.

One of the most awful tragedies of the Mutiny was at Cawnpore. This town, on the right bank of the Ganges, contained one thousand Europeans, of whom five hundred and sixty were children. The native troops in this town were among the first to revolt. The Europeans, under the command of Sir Hugh Wheeler and Captain Moore, managed to hastily entrench themselves with the women and children, and to keep the mutineers at bay.

For twenty days they were besieged by the infamous scoundrel Nana Sahib and his native forces. The suffering endured by the garrison passes all description. The heat was intense, and the supply of water so limited that not a drop could be spared for cleanliness. Even the little that could be obtained for drinking purposes had to be fetched from the well at a great risk of life from the enemy's fire.

John M'Gillop, a gentleman in the Civil Service, earned an undying glory by constituting himself "Captain of the Well."

**The Martyrs  
of Cawn-  
pore.**

Under the incessant fire of the enemy, he went to the well again and again to fetch water for the parched women and children. When at last he fell, mortally wounded, his dying words were an entreaty for someone to draw water for a lady to whom he had promised it. For twenty days ten thousand men raged round the little force. But each man in the garrison knew that he was fighting for those dearest to him, and the black mutineers suffered heavy losses at the hands of this band of heroes, worn with hunger, thirst, disease, and wounds.

At last, when the garrison was almost at its last gasp, Nana Sahib, who knew that help was at hand, determined to get the British into his hands by a diabolical act of treachery. He said that if they would lay down their arms he would give them a safe passage down the Ganges to Allahabad. With sore misgivings, the garrison accepted the terms, and staggered out of their bravely held entrenchments. They found boats at their disposal, but no sooner had they embarked than the natives opened a murderous fire upon them. Only four men escaped, and one hundred and twenty-five women and children were carried back to Cawnpore to suffer a more terrible fate.

While the brave garrison had been defending itself against the enemy, Sir Henry Havelock was fighting his way through the mutineers to come to its relief. But he arrived too late. He fought battle upon battle with thousands and tens of thousands of the mutineers, and defeated them again and again. At last he managed to force his way into Cawnpore, but he found to his horror that not one of the garrison remained, and that the women and children had been foully murdered and cast into the well.

Lucknow is another name for ever associated with the tragedy of the Mutiny. Here, in the **The Defence and Relief of Lucknow.** Residency, another British garrison defended itself against thousands of bloodthirsty enemies. Sir Henry Lawrence animated the garrison by his sublime courage and faith until he was struck down by cholera. His place was filled by the brave Brigadier Inglis, who kept up the courage of the garrison and repelled every effort of the enemy until help arrived.

At last, when they had held out for one hundred and thirteen days, Generals Havelock and Outram forced their way desperately through the mutineers and entered the town. The scene which occurred between the brave garrison and the forces which had

come to relieve it was one of intense pathos. One gentleman who was in the garrison has thus described it:—

“The Highlanders stopped everyone they met, and with repeated questions and exclamations of ‘Are you one of them?’ ‘God bless you! We thought to have found only your bones,’ bore them back towards Dr. Fayrer’s house, into which the generals had entered. Here a scene of thrilling interest presented itself. The ladies of that garrison, with their children, had assembled in the most intense anxiety and excitement under the porch outside when the Highlanders approached. Rushing forward, the rough and bearded soldiers shook the ladies by the hand amidst loud and repeated congratulations. They took the children up in their arms, and, fondly caressing them, passed them from one to another to be caressed in turn.”

Still, however, the position of the garrison was very perilous. Fresh reinforcements were constantly arriving, and they kept up an incessant attack. At last, however, when Sir Colin Campbell, who had been made Commander-in-Chief, arrived with his gallant Highlanders and a large force of British troops, they were utterly defeated and scattered, and once more Lucknow was relieved.

**The Siege  
of Delhi.**

Delhi, the city of lovely palaces and gorgeous mosques, is another town round which will ever cling the memory of the Mutiny. When the native forces revolted they slew nearly every British man, woman, and child, until the streets ran red with blood. In this city was a large powder magazine, containing over one thousand barrels of gunpowder. This was valiantly defended by a little band of nine British officers and men, chief among whom was the gallant Willoughby.

It was of supreme importance to India that the powder magazine should not fall into the hands of the enemy, and the party of nine recognised their responsibility. Rather than yield it to the mutineers they were determined to blow up the mine and themselves with it. For nine hours the heroic little band held their own against the yelling crowd of murderers. At last two of them were killed and all wounded.

The end was near. Lieutenant Willoughby calmly raised his hat. It was the signal for one of his companions to fire the mine. In a moment there was a terrific explosion. The building was rent asunder, and the ruins fell upon the horror-stricken

natives. Many hundreds were buried alive. Willoughby and his five comrades were horribly burnt and bruised, but they managed to escape alive. Four of them survived the Mutiny and received the Victoria Cross, but the gallant Willoughby and one of his companions were killed shortly afterwards.

The mutineers were now in complete possession of Delhi, and this became the headquarters of the revolt. From all parts of India the mutineers made their way hither to swell the ranks of the rebel army. The British forces strained every nerve to recapture the stronghold, and it was during the siege of this city that some of the finest deeds of heroism were enacted which brighten this terrible page of our country's history.

It was before Delhi that the famous exploit took place of blowing up the Cashmere Gate. In broad daylight, and in the full face of the enemy's fire, a little party, commanded by Lieutenants Home and Salkeld, sallied over the drawbridge to blow up the great Gate of Delhi, or to perish in the attempt. They were laden with heavy bags of gunpowder, which they deliberately piled against the gate. Man after man fell, riddled by the enemy's shot; but man after man carried on the work calmly and fearlessly.

At last the fuse was well alight. In another moment there was an awful explosion. The huge gates were shattered to fragments, and at the same time Bugler Hawthorn rang out the heart-stirring charge which called to his comrades to dash up and show the mutineers a specimen of British pluck. After desperate fighting, Delhi was taken, and the massacre of Cawnpore avenged.

Gradually, by the genius of Sir Colin Campbell, of Havelock, Outram, and other heroes, whose courage was only equalled by their patriotism, the Mutiny was quelled, and, by wise administration and unflinching justice, peace was restored to India. These events taught the country a fearful lesson. The British Government realised that the East India Company, which had formerly governed India, could no longer be allowed to do so, and on 1st November 1858 the power was taken from the Company, and Queen Victoria was proclaimed Sovereign of India. It was not till 1876 that the Queen took the title of Empress of India. Our army was reorganised, and at the present time the Indian native army is in a state of high efficiency, and the loyalty of the troops may be absolutely relied on.

#### 4. Domestic Reform.

##### **The Volunteer Movement.**

In 1859 our neighbours across the Channel, with whom we have had many a hard knock between the battles of Crécy and Waterloo, were supposed to regard us with very unfriendly eyes. Perhaps this ill-feeling was exaggerated in the minds of the Englishmen of those days, who did not think it unlikely that a French fleet might one day be seen from the white cliffs of Dover.

In order to be prepared for this undesirable event (which happily never took place), it was decided to organise an armed force of citizens. This was the origin of the Volunteers. Regiments were formed, uniforms and weapons supplied, and, in spite of a good deal of contemporary ridicule, they soon became a really efficient force. If the worst came to the worst, and a foreign foe ever trod on British soil, it would find it no easy matter to walk through a regiment of our citizen soldiers, and in the Boer War they have proved their mettle nobly and won honourable laurels.

##### **The Prog- ress of Education.**

I have already mentioned the backward state of education in the early Victorian period. In 1870 a Bill to remedy the evil was brought into Parliament by W. E. Forster. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 enacted that a sufficient number of elementary schools should be established to provide accommodation for the children of Great Britain. School Boards were organised, whose duty it is to superintend the schools in their districts, to see that there is sufficient accommodation, and that they are properly equipped and conducted.

In 1891 another Bill was passed which enacted that every child may receive a free education if its parents so desire. It is therefore a fact that every child in Great Britain must receive an elementary education, in which it learns, at least, to read, write, and do arithmetic. This is a great advance upon the days when a majority of the English people could not sign their names. The Government has also provided a liberal sum for the purpose of technical education and evening schools. Attention has been given lately to the question of secondary education, and the Act passed in 1900 gives promise of reformation in the management and curriculum of private and public secondary schools.

**Mr. Gladstone's Ministry.** In 1868 Mr. Gladstone had become Prime Minister, and this power he retained until 1874. He was succeeded by Mr. Disraeli, who governed the country for six years. During the latter's Ministry wars took place in Afghanistan and Zululand, while the Transvaal Republic and Cyprus were added to the Empire. In 1880 Disraeli, then Lord Beaconsfield, was driven from office by Gladstone, and in the same year the latter was called upon to deal with the Boers of the Transvaal, who rebelled against our Government. Thereupon Mr. Gladstone and his Ministry decided to give them their independence under the suzerainty of the British Crown.

However one may object to his policy, it must be admitted that it was an endeavour to carry into practice the highest ideals of Christian principle. Unfortunately, as the terrible events of the past few years have testified, the Boers looked upon our concession as cowardice, and returned evil for good.

In 1882 came the Egyptian campaign, when our troops fought against the army of Arabi Pasha, which had rebelled against our ally, the Khedive. After severe fighting, Arabi was defeated and taken prisoner at Tel-el-Kebir. This was followed by disastrous events in Egypt, when the fanatical Arab who called himself the "Mahdi" invaded the country, and besieged General Gordon and a small garrison at Khartoum. The British Government was lamentably slow in sending a relieving force to the gallant General and his men, and the country was shocked to the heart by the terrible news that Khartoum had fallen and Gordon was murdered.

In 1885 Mr. Gladstone declared himself to be in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, and in the following year brought in the first Home Rule Bill. This was defeated by thirty votes, and the Radical Government was succeeded by the Unionists under Lord Salisbury. Six years later Mr. Gladstone was again returned to power, and brought in a second Home Rule Bill. This managed to pass the Commons, but was thrown out by the Lords, and in 1894 Mr. Gladstone retired from public life. He was succeeded by Lord Rosebery, but he too resigned in 1895, and gave place to a Unionist Government under Lord Salisbury.

In 1887 and 1897 the Queen celebrated her two "Jubilees," and in every part of the British Empire the people showed their reverence and devotion to the lady who for sixty years had up-

held the honour and dignity of the British Crown. She outlived the century, with whose prosperity and glory she will be for ever associated in our country's history. On 22nd January 1901 she breathed out her spirit after a long life nobly spent in the service of her people, in whose hearts she is remembered.

**The Dying Century.** And now a few words must be said about the last great events of the Victorian era which stirred the Empire to its depths. In the autumn of 1899, after fruitless negotiations on the part of the British Government, the Boers of the Transvaal despatched an insulting ultimatum to our Minister and invaded our colonies, and the Orange Free State joined hands with them. The only possible answer was the dread arbitrament of war.

There is no need to go over the sad ground. In 1899 the Empire was awakened with a shock to the fact that her soldiers, who had gone out so gaily, were meeting with disaster and defeat. No shame may be imputed to them. They fought as British soldiers have always fought, and died as British soldiers know how to die. Our enemies had been under-rated, and we had been unprepared.

But let us not forget that the Boers fought in a country that was almost impregnable, and that it has been proved beyond a doubt that with modern weapons and ammunition the defence is ten times stronger than the attack. It was a war fought under new conditions, for no civilised nations had yet faced each other with the latest developments of modern science applied to the terrible purpose of destruction.

In those dark days of December foreigners prophesied the fall of our Empire. But they little knew the British race. No frenzied shriek of despair or reviling rose from the lips of the people. Men set their teeth, as those who knew their power, and from every part of our Empire the sons of our race sprang to arms and pressed forward, eager in the service of the mother country. To the South African veldt went men of Canada, men of Australia and New Zealand, Cape Colony and Natal, bushmen, backwoodsmen, and frontiersmen, while from India came offers from the splendid native regiments, eager to show their loyalty and zeal. The British Empire was shown to be no vague and shadowy name, but a great power bound with the bonds of blood.

The end of the war was what no loyal man of British race

had ever for a moment doubted even in the darkest hour. The Boers, in spite of their heroic courage, have had to pay the penalty of their misguided government, and under the British flag it is certain they will have no less liberty and greater justice than under those of the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State.

### 5. The Development of India.

I have already given a short narrative of the Indian Mutiny, but this sad page of history was like a storm suddenly darkening the heavens and bursting forth in fury, but subsiding rapidly into a remembrance of a black interlude in a spell of fine weather. For, indeed, it was no Indian Mutiny at all, strictly speaking, being but a rebellion of native troops with whom the Indian people had little sympathy.

Horrible though it was, in one thing it was valuable. It proved to us that by righteous administration, by respecting the religious and racial prejudices of the natives, and by governing them for their own good rather than our greed, we had reconciled them to British rule. The principal native princes of their States set a fine example of loyalty, and even in the revolting districts the great bulk of the people remained passive, and speedily returned to their allegiance.

In this article, therefore, I wish to give an outline of that steady development and consolidation of India which took place during the Victorian era, checked only for a time but not permanently arrested by the Mutiny. Our Empire in India was founded in the middle of the eighteenth century by Clive, who, starting as a humble officer of the East India Company, utilised his splendid inborn military genius and his marvellous administrative capacity to oust the French from their possessions, and to succeed to their dominant influence over the native races.

Warren Hastings followed him as Governor, and extended his work with no less genius, so that the East India Company, from a mere trading company of great wealth, became a ruling power of almost imperial predominance. It had raised a large native army welded with a few European troops and officers of its own, but these had to be augmented by royal troops from Great Britain, so that upon the periodical renewing of the Company's charter the British Government obtained more control of Indian affairs.

A succession of able administrators and capable British generals extended our dominion and sphere of influence. The constant quarrels between the native States naturally invited our participation and redounded to our own advantage, while the native combinations against us led to military operations which European discipline was able to meet successfully. Under Cornwallis, the Wellesleys, the Marquis of Hastings, Lord William Bentinck, India became British, or under British influence, from Cape Comorin to the valley of the Indus on the west, and to the valley of the Ganges on the east—that is to say, practically all we now hold, with the exception of the Punjab and Oudh.

**Bentinck's Reforms.** Lord Bentinck, Governor-General between 1828 and 1834, was a judicious reformer, who left a lasting influence upon India and did splendid work for the Empire. One of his most important reforms in Government was to entrust the less important tasks of offices to the natives themselves. Fifty years of British rule had done much to raise the native standard, and Bentinck wisely judged the time had come to trust the best of them (under European supervision), and to relieve valuable British officials of much routine work in Government departments.

This measure was very popular with the Hindus, who valued the trust reposed in them and fulfilled it faithfully. Bentinck's popularity with the natives helped him in his endeavour to suppress those two horrible items of native society—the Thugs, and the practice of Suttee. The Thugs were a fanatical and murderous society which had been the terror of previous Governments and of the natives themselves; but Bentinck, by enlisting the co-operation of several native States, succeeded in strangling this extraordinary religious sect.

But Suttee was more difficult to root out, for it had been an immemorial custom for widows to be burnt on their husbands' funeral pyres, and the practice received the warm sanction of the high-caste natives. However, by judicious firmness, this evil was practically abolished, though even now an Indian widow, no matter how young, is relegated to a life of drudgery and social ostracism, which makes many of them value death more than life.

In 1835 English became the official language of India, and, as a recent writer has well said, "the brains as well as the swords

of all India were placed at the disposal of the British Government." The numerous Eastern languages which acted as barriers to the transmission of thought were superseded by a language which contained all the riches of European literature and science, and Eastern minds, more subtle than those of the West, were now strengthened and developed through the medium of the English tongue. From that day to this we have never lacked fine native intellects for our Civil Service, and the Indian Renaissance is a remarkable chapter in the world's history.

At the commencement of Queen Victoria's reign we had to undertake some serious fighting in Northern India with the native races who had not yet been brought within our sphere of influence. In 1838 occurred the first Afghan War, which was succeeded by a second in 1841-42, when the British Resident was murdered at Kabul, and a small British army had to retreat before a great force of Afghans exultant with a short-lived triumph. The Government acted promptly, and an army forced its way steadily to the heart of Afghanistan, and taught Dost Mohammed, whom they placed on the throne, that no mountain range and no wild hill-tribes could resist the indomitable power of the British Government.

#### **The Sikh Wars.**

In the following years we had trouble in Hindustan, and annexed the State of Sinde, but this was only a preliminary to the first and second Sikh Wars in the Punjab. Sir Henry Hardinge, attacked by a nation of the best warriors in India, had to fight a series of desperate battles, which won only a temporary peace, during which the Kashmir province was detached from Sikh rule and placed under British suzerainty.

When Sir Henry Hardinge left India he assured his successor that "it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come." But he was mistaken, and only three months after the arrival of the Marquis of Dalhousie—who, fortunately for the Empire, succeeded as Governor-General—the Punjab was aflame again with the second Sikh War of 1848-49.

Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, was not fitted for his post, and on several occasions, by a lack of judgment, brought great danger upon the Empire. But he blundered through, and at last retrieved his former laxity at the battle of Gujerat, when, with stubborn ding-dong fighting, he broke up and shattered the massed Sikh armies. The enemy had invited the assistance of

the Afghans, but they arrived too late in the day, and three weeks after the great battle, when the last Sikhs had piled their arms in front of the British line, it is said they almost forgot their defeat in delighted laughter as they heard of the laggards from Afghanistan, "who had ridden like lions out of their hills, only to be hunted back into them at the lance-point like curs." The Sikh soldiers, who had been fierce but gallant foes, were proud to be re-enlisted in the ranks of the army that had so well beaten them, and these new troops became the backbone of our Indian army, and did splendid service for the Empire, being staunch during the time of the Mutiny, and fighting side by side with British troops.

The conquest of the Punjab was followed by an era of noble administration under Dalhousie and his two great subordinates, John and Henry Lawrence. The mass of the nation was disarmed, the turbulent rulers made impotent, the frontiers protected, roads built, and canals dug, so that this last British conquest became the most prosperous and most loyal of our Indian possessions.

**Statesman-like Policy.** In 1852-53 came war in Burma, which ended in its permanent annexation. Then followed the policy of making the British power paramount over the native States in India when they became kingless on the death of rulers with no direct descendants, and also over those whose rulers showed themselves incompetent or tyrannous.

The King of Oudh, the most abandoned of native potentates, was warned four times between 1831 and 1849 that if the anarchy and misrule of his territory continued the British Government would take over the kingdom. He failed to profit by these warnings, and one of Dalhousie's last acts, sanctioned of course by the home Government, was to depose the wretched creature and add Oudh to the Indian Empire.

Dalhousie did a splendid and glorious work in the consolidation of the Empire. He opened up the interior by roads and canals, established ports, surveyed the coasts, and improved the harbours. He built the first railways, introduced cheap postage, and covered India with a network of telegraph wires, while he encouraged education and trained a body of men who should carry on this work animated by his own ideals, and moulded according to his own business capacity. Modern India is in itself a memorial of Dalhousie's greatness.

Now as a blot upon this page of history comes the Indian Mutiny, but I will pass it by (having given a brief narrative of it in a previous article), and proceed with the story of Indian progress, which it only interrupted for a time. In 1858 the East India Company, which in its time had done good work, but had outlived its vocation, died a natural death, and by the Queen's proclamation at Allahabad the British Crown became the sole authority. India was made a part of the British Empire in name as well as fact. Lord Canning—a calm and just man on the pattern of an old Roman Consul—became first Viceroy, and he gave justice to India instead of the vengeance clamoured for by some who were maddened by the atrocities of the Mutiny.

But Canning went on his way unmoved. "I will not govern in anger," he wrote. "Justice, and that as stern, as inflexible as law and might can make it, I will deal out. But I will never allow an angry and indiscriminating act or word to proceed from the Government of India as long as I am responsible for it."

**Modern India.** Since 1858 the administration of India has been regulated by Acts of Parliament. Local legislation is entrusted to the Council of India, but the budget and general enactments are subject to special approval. The executive responsibility is borne by the Secretary of State as member of the British Cabinet, and therefore controlled by Parliament. He is advised by a council of not less than ten persons holding office for ten years, and not subject to political change, who must have been not less than ten years in the public employ in India.

The Viceroy, who resides at Calcutta, is appointed by the Crown, and represents the Emperor. As such he is nominally the absolute executive authority in India, but as a matter of fact is subordinate to the Secretary of State. He is aided by a consultative council of seven persons and a legislative council consisting of the former members, with six to twelve additional nominees. Under certain restrictions this council exercises complete local power.

Under this form of rule India has steadily progressed in prosperity, and reforms in domestic conditions have aided agriculture and industry, so that the advancement in both these pursuits has been very great.

In 1878-80 the integrity of the Empire had to be maintained at the cost of bloodshed in Afghanistan, whose ruler, Shere Ali, was conspiring against us with Russia. General (now Lord) Roberts, in command of the British forces, avenged a defeat at Maiwand, after a brilliant march of three hundred miles to Kandahar through a hostile country. Abdur Rahman, the nephew of Shere Ali, was given the throne left vacant by the latter's flight and death. An enlightened man and strong ruler, he remained consistently loyal to us, in spite of occasional moods of bad temper, and upon his death, a few years ago, his son, Habibullah Khan, has succeeded him peacefully, and pledged his allegiance to the British Crown.

Men of British blood may well be proud of their country's work in India. We have made it ours by wise government as well as the right of conquest, opening up vast markets to British trade and enterprise, and gaining in support of British world-supremacy 286 millions of loyal people, or, in other words, one-sixth of the whole population of the globe.

## 6. The Dominion of Canada.

In the following pages I shall briefly trace the growth of Canada during the Victorian era. During this period the British Empire has been developed and consolidated in a remarkable manner, and it is well that we in Great Britain should not confine our attention to our own native country, but should take a broad outlook upon that great and splendid Empire which has been built up by the brains and the blood of our race.

First let me give a sketch of Canada's progress since 1837, for of all our colonies this is the greatest and the most flourishing. East and west, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, it stretches for 3500 miles, and from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Polar Sea it covers an area nearly as large as the whole of Europe. Here are over five millions of British subjects, with room and opportunities for many millions more. In the future history of the world Canada will play no mean part. It has vast natural wealth, and its sons and daughters, with good British blood in their veins, freshened by the keen winds of the northern climate, invigorated also by a strain of French ancestry, have a healthy ambition and imperial pride.

Most of us know the story of Canada's conquest. French adventurers and colonists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries first explored the vast tracts of virgin land, settled there, and, aided by the generous exertions of the French Government, developed the natural resources of the country, built cities, and established a powerful and prosperous dependency of France.

The British had trading settlements (such as the Hudson Bay Company) in the north-west, and between these trappers and traders and the French-Canadians there was a continual smouldering enmity, which frequently blazed out into fierce warfare, in which the great Indian tribes took the part of French or British according to their sympathies or the extent to which they were bribed.

Then came actual war with France, and French Canada was instantly chosen for the point of attack by our great War Minister, William Pitt the elder. British admirals like Boscawen and Howe shattered French fleets, and cut off all reinforcements of the French army in Canada. Then Pitt, with the genius for knowing the right man for a job, which is the mark of a true statesman, picked out young General Wolfe to lead the command of the British army for the conquest of Canada.

It was a big task, but it was done. At Quebec, Montcalm, the French general, was utterly defeated, and although Wolfe fell in the hour of victory his work was carried on by General Murray, who advanced upon Montreal, while two other British armies converged upon the same point. On 8th September 1760 the French army capitulated, Montreal fell without a blow, and French rule in Canada was over.

For some time, however, Canada was a source of trouble to the home Government. The Indians did not love us. They sympathised far more with the French, who had the happy knack of understanding their habits and prejudices and conciliating them. Even the Iroquois, the one great tribe who remained consistently friendly to us, were in danger of being seduced by French agitators. In 1763 Pontiac, chief of the Ottawas, rose against us, and some serious fighting took place, which was, however, put down by successful generalship.

The British Government then endeavoured, wisely and honourably, to obtain on fair terms such lands as a growing

colony might require. These and other proclamations proved our good faith to the Redskins and reconciled them to our rule. The French-Canadians were also conciliated by the passing of the Quebec Act of 1774, which granted religious toleration and the maintenance of French civil law, while introducing British criminal law, a legislative council, and a system of local government.

**The United Empire Loyalists.** Although the American Revolution caused a loss to the British Empire of that great country now known as the United States of America, it was a source of prosperity to Canada. For a considerable number of people in the American States, realising more than the majority of their fellows the close bonds of blood, history, literature, and ideals which bound them to the mother country, in spite of its temporary injustice and petty oppressions, continued loyal to the British Government, and refused to fight against British soldiers.

Unwilling to become citizens of the new republic, and persecuted by the Republicans, they left the United States, to the number of about forty thousand, and migrated to Canada. These United Empire Loyalists, as they called themselves, made their homes in the provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, then almost entirely covered with forests, but soon turned into fertile meadow lands and flourishing towns and villages.

In 1812 their loyalty was again put to the test. The United States, arrogant with their new-found independence, declared war against Great Britain, and immediately attempted the conquest of Canada. But although between French-Canadians and United Empire Loyalists there had been considerable friction owing to differences of race, religion, and politics, and although both parties had grumbled at Great Britain on account of various irksome restrictions, yet when it came to a question of being a part of the British Empire or being merged into the United States, there was no hesitation. Mutual differences were laid aside: Loyalists, French-Canadians, and Redskins fought side by side, and the troops of the United States were beaten back at all points. When the war closed in 1815 not a foot of soil had been surrendered, and a better feeling remained between Canada and the Government in whose interest she had fought.

**Political  
Discontent.**

In 1837, however, the first year of the Victorian era, the condition of Canada was again looking serious. The old racial, religious, and political troubles were still rankling. Canada had a representative but not a responsible Government. That is to say, the assemblies of the provinces, which were elected by popular votes, could help to make laws, but had no control over the executive bodies ; and the councils, which were above the assemblies, and constituted the real Government, were nominated by the British Crown. Though in the minority, they were often antagonistic to the wish of the people. In Lower Canada especially this was the cause of intense bitterness. The French formed a great majority in the province and controlled the assembly, but they were checkmated at every turn by the British minority in the council.

The malcontents gathered round two revolutionary leaders named Papineau and Mackenzie—the first a French-Canadian and Speaker of the Quebec Assembly, the second a Scottish Radical editor. For a time things looked serious, but Mackenzie lost the support of the best part of his following by hinting at total independence from the mother country, and this to the United Empire Loyalists savoured too much of absorption into the hated republic farther south. The insurgents were quickly dispersed by local Canadians, and the two leaders fled for refuge to the States. Here Mackenzie received aid in men, provisions, and ammunition from the Yankees who sympathised with his purpose. These supplies were sent across Niagara River in the steamer *Caroline*, and an exciting little incident took place when this vessel was boarded by night as she lay moored to the American shore by a small British force, which fired her and turned her loose to go over the Falls. The Americans who had openly aided Mackenzie in his revolt pretended virtuous indignation at this violation of neutral soil, and nearly forced a war on Great Britain. For a year light skirmishing took place along the border line, but in the end of 1838 the rebellion was utterly extinguished.

**Wise  
Statesman-  
ship.**

The British Government now saw the necessity of inquiring with a broad and open mind into the causes and cure of these incessant troubles. Lord Durham was sent out as Governor-General, and at the end of a five months' rule sent back his famous Report,

which was a source of infinite good to Canada, and will remain as a monument to his memory.

It was a clear and eloquent statement of the racial and religious differences of Lower Canada, and especially pointed out the evil of allowing the provincial Ministers appointed by the Crown to over-rule the majority of the provincial legislature. It laid down for the first time the principle that with regard to domestic affairs colonial Ministers should be placed on the self-same footing as the Ministers at home.

"The Crown must consent," wrote Lord Durham, "to carry the Government on by means of those in whom the representative members have confidence." Durham's proposal was to reserve only four questions for imperial control—the form of the new Constitution to be given to Canada, foreign relations, the regulation of external trade, and the disposal of the north-west territories. Every other matter was to be left to the colonial Government. The last proposal was to do away with the race trouble by forming Upper and Lower Canada (which had formerly had separate Governments) into a single Constitution, and encouraging a federation between all the provinces of British North America.

In 1841 most of these proposals were put into force by the Union Act, which joined together the provinces and welded Canada into one Power. The council was made elective, and the Governor was Prime Minister representing the Crown, and bound by the constitutional duty of acting upon the advice of the Ministers supported by the legislature. The capital, which for some years had been movable between Toronto and Quebec, was in 1857 finally established at Ottawa by Queen Victoria herself.

In 1849 Vancouver Island, which had been discovered by Captain Cook in 1777 and annexed by Great Britain eleven years later, but which still remained unoccupied, was leased to the Hudson's Bay Company, and a few years afterwards the discovery of gold in British Columbia caused that island to be proclaimed as a colony. In 1866 the new territory joined the federated provinces, which a year later received the name of the Dominion of Canada.

**The North-West Territory.** The Hudson's Bay Company, which had been one of the earliest British trading companies in Canada, had rights over vast territories in the north-west, but, as they made their wealth out of

the furs which this lone land afforded, it was clearly not to their advantage to encourage agriculture and the development of the country.

But in 1869 the Dominion bought these rights for the sum of £300,000, various small areas still remaining the Company's private property. The rights of the Indians and half-breeds were to be strictly defended and respected, but the Métis, or French half-castes, made extravagant claims for land based on their Indian descent, and, finding their demands refused, flamed out into savage discontent.

A revolutionary French-Canadian named Louis Riel became the leader of the insurrection, and proclaimed the north-west as an independent colony. The Dominion had not yet taken over the territory, and the British Government sent over Colonel (now Lord) Wolseley, with about twelve thousand men, to put down the rebellion. The First Riel Rebellion, as it is called, was quickly suppressed, and the north-west territory was included in the Dominion of Canada as the Province of Manitoba.

For some years there was quiet, and Canada set about the definition of the Indian claims. By seven treaties stretching over seven years, the whole country, from the Rocky Mountains on the west to the Great Slave Lake on the north, was opened up to settled colonisation, and Indian reserves were marked out to the extent of about seven thousand square miles, or one square mile for every five persons. The Indians were satisfied, and the fiercest tribes agreed to the treaties, and have faithfully observed them.

**Peace and Prosperity.** The great undertaking of the Canadian Pacific Railway occupied the Canadian Government from 1871 to 1886. As a Government enterprise it was too huge a task, but in 1881 private aid was enlisted, and in four years a line was completed from Montreal to the Rocky Mountains.

Over this great tract of country—so vast that it takes nearly a week's travelling to traverse—now run splendid and fast trains, which have opened up Canada and brought its natural resources into the world's commerce.

A second Riel Rebellion in 1884 disturbed the tranquillity for a while, and gave much trouble to the mounted police and Canadian militia. But the Indian tribes were loyal, and Riel and his half-castes were eventually defeated. The rebellion collapsed, and the young scoundrel, its leader, was hanged, as

he richly deserved. From that day to this the Dominion of Canada has had peace, and its commercial prosperity has been developed without check.

The story of the Boer War, and the travels of the Prince and Princess of Wales, have proved again the loyalty of the Canadians. Side by side with our own troops, Canadian volunteers have fought and died, and in that blood on the veldt has been cemented anew the unity of the Dominion with the Empire. The cheers that greeted the heir-apparent of the British throne declared the loyal enthusiasm of Canada for the stability of the great Empire of which they are proud to own themselves a part.

Canada is the noblest record and testimony to the British genius for colonisation and government, for men of different race and different creed—French, British, and Indian—have, by the wisdom and the broad-mindedness of British statesmen, had their differences reconciled and their rights respected, so that they form one united and powerful Dominion with a great and glorious prospect.

## 7. British South Africa.

It is a strange historical fact that whereas Africa has been known to European nations many centuries before America and Australia were dreamt of, still less discovered, centuries also before India was a European market, it has only been explored and colonised during quite recent years.

But during the last twenty years it has been a sort of Tom Tiddler's ground for every ambitious State of Europe, and the British Empire, when it tardily awoke to the fact that Africa was not only an admirable outlet for the superfluous energy of her imperial-minded race, but might also prove a source of infinite wealth, found herself competed against by rivals who, having suddenly developed a taste for colonies, made a grab of as much African territory as they could safely acquire.

Thus it happens that the map of Africa is parti-coloured, and in this colour-scheme the Germans, French, Portuguese, Italians, and Belgians have a share, and, until recently, the Boers. But once again in the history of the world the British genius for colonisation has swept aside all competitors, and to-day we have the largest share of empire in Africa, and from Cape to Cairo British influence is predominant.

**The Early Colonists.**

South Africa is as yet the most important part of the great continent, and in this article I will confine myself to the story of our development in that region during the Victorian era. To do so, one must go back to the earliest days of its colonisation by Europeans.

The Dutch were the first in the field, and it was they who, in 1652, formed the first colony at Table Bay. It remained in the possession of Holland for nearly a century and a half. All the settlers were Dutch, with the exception of a few hundreds of French Protestants, who for liberty of conscience left their country for this new land. Their descendants adopted the Dutch language, and this strain of French blood gave the brightest intellects and most aspiring characters to the Boer nation.

In 1795 our country, which was then at war with France and her ally, Holland, seized Cape Colony by force of arms, but it was restored at the peace of 1803. Three years later, however, on the fresh outbreak of war, Great Britain once more captured the Cape, and at the second peace in 1814 the British Government paid nearly three millions sterling to the King of the Netherlands for the final possession of the Colony.

**British and Boers.**

The situation of Cape Colony when it became incorporated in the British Empire was very poverty-stricken. The Dutch Boers were, as they still are, a thrifty but by no means an enterprising race. They cultivated spices and other tropical products, and neglected the more familiar crops of the temperate zones, suitable for the climate of the Cape. Even the sheep-breeding industry was not pursued to any advantage. The British Government, however, saw huge possibilities in South Africa, and their first desire was to anglicise it. This they could only do by inducing large numbers of Englishmen to settle on the land. Every effort was made to encourage immigration, but it proceeded slowly, and even in 1856 the total white population only numbered one hundred and fifty thousand, as against one hundred and twenty thousand natives.

From the very beginning there was bitter antipathy between the British and Dutch, and when the slave trade was abolished this hatred on the part of the Boers was intensified to an unbearable point. They kept large numbers of slaves, and treated them worse than cattle. They regarded the efforts of Englishmen to alleviate the condition of the despised

Hottentots, and to treat them with some principles of kindness, not only as infringements of established rights, but as outrages against religion. Against the Kaffirs, who frequently stole the Boers' cattle, they considered it a sacred task to wage a war of extermination, as if they were no better than vermin. The British, on the contrary, though they sometimes had to fight with the natives, tried to civilise them when at peace—a theory which the Boers considered farcical.

**The Great Trek.** So, when slavery was absolutely put down within British dominions, the Boers regarded the event as the last straw of their burdens. Many thousands, with their Old Testament creed in a providential guidance of the chosen race they believed themselves to be, resolved to flee from the land of their oppressors, like the Israelites out of Egypt. They abandoned their homes, and “trekked” with their families and possessions beyond the Orange River, then, turning eastward, they settled in the adjacent district; and though they were not destined to retain their independence from British rule, they were the first to establish the colony of Natal.

Encamping on the site of Pietermaritzburg, they soon set up a republic; but their sojourn here was of short duration, for in 1843 the British Government claimed this region to be included under our jurisdiction, and after a slight resistance brought it under our dominion. Once again the most independent Boers trekked north, leaving a few of their more conciliatory brethren to amalgamate with the English arrivals. For a time Natal was a dependency of Cape Colony, but was made a separate establishment in 1856, and obtained responsible government in 1893.

**Self-Government.** Although the British were well disposed towards the Kaffirs if they subscribed to discipline, we had several hard tussles with them, and it was only in 1853, after our troops had sustained several severe losses, that we at length taught them to obey our rule. Meanwhile fresh immigration from Great Britain, and the departure of a considerable portion of Dutch population, made British interests popular in the Colony. Some friction occurred with the home Government owing to the decision of the Cabinet to substitute the Cape instead of Australia as a penal settlement.

The first transport conveying criminals was received by the citizens of Cape Town under arms, and the convicts were carried

back to England. This incident inspired the colonists with a new desire of political liberty, and, in response to their demands, the Governor was in 1850 instructed to call a constitutional convention. The local Parliament, however, was for a long time completely subordinate to the British Colonial Secretary, and it was only in 1874 that the Cape was granted a constitution similar to those of Canada and Australia, with power of local administration.

About the same time a second event happened which added largely to the prosperity of South Africa. This was the discovery of diamonds, and the consequent immigration of large numbers of adventurers from the old country.

**The Zulu War.** From then until recent years we have been engaged in warfare with the native tribes. In 1878 the Zulus under Cetewayo declared war against us, and the campaign began with the terrible British reverse at Isandlana on 12th January, when one convoy train, accompanied by nearly six hundred men, was annihilated, with an immense loss of ammunition and stores.

Our troops were reinforced, and after severe fighting Cetewayo was deserted by his troops, and captured by our own soldiers. He was brought to London, and was more than a nine days' wonder, but in 1883 he was reinstated over a part of his former dominions. Civil discord, however, broke out among the natives, and Cetewayo was obliged to take refuge in Natal, where a year later he died.

**The First Boer War.** I must now refer to the two independent Boer States called the South African Republic, or Transvaal, and the Orange Free State. These had been founded by the Boers who had trekked from Cape Colony after the abolition of slavery. Great Britain had acknowledged their independence, and established friendly relations with them. In the Transvaal, however, there was continual disorder owing to conflicts with the natives, and in 1876 an unusually serious uprising of the black tribes caused great trouble to the Boers, and gave the British Government just reason to intervene.

Because of the misrule and incapacity of the Boers, the country was declared a dependency of Great Britain, and immediately organised as a Crown colony. For a time the nation, exhausted by their recent difficulties, submitted on the advice of their

leaders. There was, however, continual smouldering animosity against the British, and an ever-present desire for independence.

In 1880 hostilities were declared, and with Paul Kruger, Pretorius the younger, and Joubert as leaders, the Boers fought for their freedom. The British Government was unprepared—alas! it is not the only time it has been unprepared—and British troops sustained a disastrous reverse at Majuba Hill. The war ended on 21st March 1881, when a treaty of peace was signed conceding everything asked for by the Boers. We recognised the independence of the South African Republic, subject to a vaguely defined suzerainty.

**Latest  
Phases.**

While these events were taking place the local colonial authorities were engaged in a war against the Basutos. It was an unjust and wretched business, that is a stain on the credit of those involved. The native race was peaceful and fairly civilised, and they aided us against the Zulus.

But the Cape citizens, getting into a panic on account of the Basutos possessing modern weapons of warfare, called upon them to surrender their rifles. Not perceiving the reason or justice of this demand, they refused. Ten thousand colonials invaded their country, but the enemy made no stand, and fled. The colonial troops were attacked by a worse foe than they had expected—disease—and after a short campaign the survivors withdrew, with no success and less glory. The treaty of 1881 left the Basutos with their firearms, and when the Cape Parliament abandoned their claims over Basutoland the British Colonial Office constituted it an independent State.

The British South Africa Company—a chartered company organised in 1889 for the purpose of trade, with Mr. Cecil Rhodes as chairman and moving spirit—have played the most important part in the development of British influence in South Africa. The increase in the trade of the colony may be seen from the following figures: In 1879 it totalled eleven million pounds, in 1891 eighteen millions, and in 1898 forty-two millions. In 1898 there were eighteen thousand miles of telegraph wires in Cape Colony.

The story of our troubles with the Dutch Republics has been so often told during the past two years, and has been so impressed in letters of blood upon all our hearts, that it is unnecessary to repeat it here.

PART VI

SOME GREAT FRENCH  
MASTERS



1. Alexander Dumas.

FROM time to time I have had something to say about the great masters of English literature, from Chaucer to men of recent renown, and it occurs to me that it is now time to give a few studies of those literary giants who have given France her glory.

Although he does not come first in date, and is in fact one of the last of the French immortals, I have chosen as my first subject Alexander Dumas—"Alexander the Great," as he is justly called—because Dumas is generally the first introduction, and the best, which young readers of this country get to the literature of France, and it is from his works far more than from any school text-book that they first become acquainted with the great personages and epochs of French history.

Dumas stands side by side with Scott as a great historical romancist. He it was in France who, as Scott in his own country, enabled modern people to realise life in the Middle Ages, with all its passion and turbulences, with all its poetry and chivalry, with its strange dramas full of tragedy and comedy and wild adventure. He, too, like our own Sir Walter, was a master portrait-painter. He had a wonderful genius for depicting the character of an historical personage with

such bold and cunning strokes, with such force and subtlety, that one's imagination is impressed with a sense of living reality as if one were actually in the presence of some great man or woman who played a big part in the drama of that time. I fancy that to most others, as well as to myself, the figures of Mazarin and Richelieu, of Henri IV. and Louis XII., and of many another historical character of France, is familiar and vivid in the mind because of their admirable counterfeits in the novels of Dumas.

**The Spirit  
of Old  
France.**

But apart from the actual historical character and the mere facts—not always accurate, perhaps—introduced by Dumas into his works, their value is immeasurable because they are so filled with the very spirit of old France, and their pages are crowded with the motion, the colour, the incident, the adventure, the healthiness, the passion, the heroism, the intrigues, the cruelties, the horrors, and the love which made up the life of those days.

Dumas was able to realise the fascination, and to live, as it were, in the element of this mediævalism because of the extraordinary range of his own character, which was unfettered by any of the restrictions placed upon the emotions by a more refined and more prosaic civilisation.

He was by inheritance endowed with two very different strains of blood, both of which coursed tumultuously through his veins: the blood of the old French nobility, with its heroic bravery, its licentiousness, its fondness of pomp and pageantry, its passion for passion itself, its love of the strategy and subtleties of love, coming to him through his father, General Alexander Davy-Dumas, a brilliant and dashing cavalry officer, who served under the great Napoleon, and from his grandfather, a French marquis of the old régime; and, on the other side, the rude health, the coarseness, the non-morality of his grandmother, a pure-bred negress of Hayti, through his mother, a peasant girl of France. The novelist, therefore, was what is known as a quadroon, with a strong touch of the "tar-brush," which was apparent in his swarthy skin and frizzly hair. As a boy he ran wild in the woods, playing truant from school with an audacity that defied the threats and thrashings of his masters, and afterwards as a youth he became feared by those of his own age for his prowess and pugnacity, as much as he was loved for his generosity and overflowing spirits.

He became an omnivorous reader, and at this time first realised the promptings of a boundless imagination which sought an outlet in literary composition. Coming up to Paris, a giant in body and strength, he obtained a clerkship in the household of the Duc d'Orleans (afterwards King Louis Philippe); but the drudgery of the desk was hateful to him, and he longed to break his fetters and to gain the liberty of a literary career. After airing his wings by a few short stories, he took full flight by a play called *Henri III. and his Court*, which was an immediate and triumphant success. He was at once, at the age of twenty-seven, one of the "lions" of Paris, and he quickly established his fame by other dramas, mostly of an historical character, which created a new epoch in the literary history of France. For some time until his advent there had been the reign of the "classical school," but Dumas and Victor Hugo founded together the "romantic school," which abandoned the sickly sentimentality, the formalism and convention and artificiality of their contemporaries for a new style of drama which at least had the merit of vigour and life.

The late W. E. Henley, one of the keenest of modern critics, summed up Dumas's characteristics in the following passage: "Dumas was the soundest influence in drama of the century. His dialogue is bright, appropriate, vivid, eminently constructive and explanatory; he never eludes or tampers with his situation, but faces his problem boldly, and wrings his interest from the clash of character, and the presentation of emotion in action; his plots are laid and condensed with admirable adroitness and lucidity; his expositions are models of clarity; his effects are brought off with surprising certainty and vigour."

"All I needed," he said of himself, "was four trestles, four boards, two actors, and a passion."

But it is as a novelist that Dumas takes highest rank, and where he found and still finds his greatest public. His versatility and his industry were amazing. He worked in a kind of passion of composition, often for sixteen hours at a stretch. And those who watched him at work were fascinated with a kind of awe as sheet after sheet of manuscript, written in a bold scrawling hand, fell to the floor wet from the pen of this giant of a man with tangled hair, sitting in his shirt-sleeves, evolving a narrative full of incident and character, the thoughts and words flowing from his brain like a stream of water

from some inexhaustible fount. It would take more space than I have at my disposal for this whole article to give even a bare list of the novels and short stories which Dumas put forth. But the best of them—best in the world of historical romances, if we except those of Scott, which, too, are of a very different character—is that sequence of tales belonging to his middle period, and including *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, *Vingt Ans Après*, *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne*, *La Fille du Régent*, *La Reine Margot*, *La Guerre des Femmes*, *La Maison Rouge*, *Les Mémoires d'un Médecin*, *Les Quarante-Cinq*, *La Tulipe Noire*, and *Monte-Cristo*.

**His Master-piece.** Undoubtedly, his masterpiece is *The Three Musketeers*. There never has been, and never will be, I think, a book of this class to equal it.

The fiery, audacious, shrewd, bombastic D'Artagnan; that noble, brave gentleman Athos; the subtle, amorous, scented, heroic Aramis; the lion-like, corpulent, gross-feeding, simple-minded giant Porthos, are a quartet of heroes unique in the whole range of fiction. I have read the book twenty times at the very least, and I should just like to take to my bed for a day for the privilege of reading it again. All the boyhood in me comes back again when I think of the delectable adventures of those musketeers, and their thrilling episodes with that scarlet woman "Milady."

**Dumas—the Man.** Dumas himself was one of the most extraordinary beings that has ever lived. He ran through five fortunes, and died in poverty. Yet he did not spend his money on himself alone, but was generous and prodigal to a degree of positive vice, keeping around him, and dependent upon him, a crowd of ne'er-do-wells and parasites and unfortunates, who sponged upon him and clung to him like leeches. No broken-down literary man, no young fellow starving upon his pen, ever asked him for a helping hand without having gold handed to him with both hands. Slovenly and Bohemian, Dumas surrounded himself with art treasures and curios from all parts of the world, heaped up in his rooms like the back parlour of an old curiosity shop. His morality was as loose as his dressing-gown, and he put it off with equal ease. Yet, though a sinner of a flagrant sort, his deeds of goodness and kindness were as numerous as the hours of his days, and in the final account, when we reckon the life and work of Alexander Dumas,

he must be numbered as one of the great forces of nature, as a distinguished Frenchman once called him, which have contributed to the world's best happiness.

## 2. Jean Jacques Rousseau.

Following my brief portrait-sketch of Alexander Dumas on the preceding pages, certainly no greater contrast could be found than the subject of this present discourse—Jean Jacques Rousseau. Alexander the Great was a giant in mind and body, robust, coarse, but every inch a man. Poor Rousseau was frail in body and weak in mind, a sentimentalist, and what Eton boys call a sop.

Yet, though Dumas had a great influence upon literature, Rousseau's claim is greater. He wrote one of the few books which has had a great moving influence upon human life. He was to some extent the founder of a new religion, or, to give it a better name, a new creed. The French Revolution was probably bound to have come sooner or later, but certainly Rousseau's *Social Contract* hastened its coming, and was the text-book of the revolutionaries. Its influence, indeed, has lasted to our own time, and modern socialism owes not a few of its principles and doctrines to the work of that extraordinary man whose character was in many ways so despicable, and in others so full of wisdom and natural philosophy.

**The Social Contract.** There are few people now, however, beyond those who carry the socialistic banner (not an inconsiderable population if one reckons the different nationalities of Europe), who have read the *Social Contract*. Indeed I am not sure that I would recommend anyone to read it except as a literary curiosity, for its teaching is largely outworn, and it is full of absurdities, though containing much that is undeniably true, and still more that at the time it was written—when the French Court was still flourishing in all its rottenness, and French society was artificial at the core and based on selfishness and cruelty—was needed as a salutary lesson in elemental righteousness and justness.

**Rousseau's Philosophy.** Rousseau's philosophy in this book is allied in many ways to Tolstoyism, of which in my former book I have given an outline. He maintained

that no laws were binding on a people unless they were sanctioned by every member of the nation ; that each individual citizen had a natural right to his own free will, and should be subject to no coercion ; that accumulated wealth was another name for robbery, and that a people should be bound together by an equal division and interchange of labour and the fruits of labour ; that as a logical conclusion kings were tyrants who should not be allowed to exist, and a titled and wealthy aristocracy were no better than vultures preying on the vitals of the poor.

There is nothing very startling or original in such dogmas nowadays. We have most of us heard them before, and we can see the weakness of the arguments as well as the absurdities of any practical attempt to carry them out. But it was different when Rousseau wrote. No heresy was more blasphemous to those who sat in high places. No creed was more stirring to those whose poverty was taxed to feed the rich, and who laboured that others might live in ease. It was a novel and audacious plea for the overthrow of existing society.

**His Confessions.** That is not the book, however, by which Rousseau takes his place among the great writers of French literature. It is the *Confessions* which has made him take rank as an author whose work will be read as long as the language lasts in which it was written. George Eliot declared, and shocked a good many people by so saying, that Rousseau's *Confessions* was the book that most fascinated and enthralled her—no insignificant a statement for one of the most powerful intellects and one of the most widely read women of modern times.

The fact is that this biography will always rank first among biographies for the absolute candour of its narration and for the exquisite style in which it is told—a combination of qualities irresistible in effect. If it had been merely imaginary, like Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon*, it would have captivated the reading world by its clear-cut cameo portraits, its charming descriptions of places, its strange tale of vagabondage, love, and domestic adventure, above all by the subtle delineation of its central character. But its value as "a human document," apart altogether from its surpassing merits as literature, is in the unsparring and naked way in which the soul of its author is laid bare, and in which all the mean, vicious, and vile actions of his

life are told in detail. It is well for the student of human nature, but not easy, to find such a complex character as that of Rousseau, with a fine and excellent warp crossing the frail and foolish woof, unravelled by the very possessor himself.

**His Strange Career.** As Rousseau's *Confessions* tell the story of his life, it will be well to give a brief summary of that strange existence. He was born at Geneva in the year 1712, the son of a dissolute dancing master, who left him to the care of an uncle when he was obliged to flee from the city to escape imprisonment after a drunken brawl. Rousseau had a miserable boyhood, and seems to have been kicked and cuffed by everybody who had anything to do with him. He was apprenticed to a notary, who sent him back with the verdict that he was a fool, and afterwards to an engraver, who during three years made him, he says, "stupid by tyranny, cunning from fear, and wretched from ill-treatment." Finally he ran away, and began a sort of "Gil Blas" life, wandering about, picking up odd jobs, as secretary, valet, and lacquey, keeping no place long on account of a stupid manner and quarrelsome temper. Then he entered the service of one of those many ladies who during his whole life exercised a kindly and hospitable but not very wholesome influence over him.

**A Benefactress.** Madame de Warens, one of the most famous of literary characters, a pretty, flighty, and sentimental young woman, seems to have been fascinated by the shy, self-conscious, somewhat mysterious lad, then nineteen years of age, and offered him a home whenever and for as long as it pleased him to read to her, to take down her correspondence, to listen to her music, and to discuss milk-and-water philosophy and sickly sentimentality. For a while he left her to seek his fortunes elsewhere; had some astonishing adventures as a lacquey to noblemen, abbés, and officers; posed as a teacher of music, though he could hardly play a tune; and as a composer, though he could not harmonise; and at last, in dire poverty, struggled back to his dearest "mamma," as he called Madame de Warens, with whom he lived through a brief and happy idyll for some four years, at a sylvan little place called Les Charmettes, which he immortalised in his autobiography.

**An Unfortunate Marriage.** Eventually, however, he quarrelled with his benefactress, and set off for Paris to "make his fortune," but where he only succeeded in keeping body and soul together by copying music at a few sous a day. Then he spent eighteen months in Venice as private secretary to the Ambassador, who finally kicked him out of doors for incompetence, so that he returned to Paris to resume his copying, and to do the most foolish thing of all the foolish things in his life.

This was his marriage with Therèse le Vasseur, a kitchen wench, ugly, coarse, ignorant, and as stupid as a beast of the field. They had five children, every one of which Jean Jacques Rousseau placed in the basket of the Foundling Hospital, never to see again—an unnatural crime that stains the story of his life most foully.

**A Literary Lion.** Up to this time he was unknown to fame, but he achieved considerable notoriety by winning a prize competition with an essay on Arts and Sciences, in which, already with a style perfect in lucidity and grace, he maintained the audacious theory that art in every branch was the cause of corruption in society.

A few years later he wrote an opera called the *Village Clergyman*, which attracted the public by its catchy tunes, and in the same year he won first rank among the literary lions of Paris by a work on the origin of inequality, in which he became the apostle of the creed of "getting back to nature" (still rather fashionable among a certain class of writers), arguing that the only perfect state of existence was that of the savage, and that civilisation, with its luxuries and complexities, was not progress but decadence.

**The Muse in Seclusion.** After a brief period of "lionising" in French society, in which he moved like a churlish boor among the polished wits of Paris, shocking his patrons by his uncouthness and rudeness, and quarrelling with those who would have been true friends to him, he accepted an offer from Madame d'Épinay of a little cottage in the forest of Montmorency, close to her own estate, and here he lived in seclusion for some time, disturbed only by the warmth of his passion for Madame d'Houdetot, the sister of Madame d'Épinay. During this period he wrote three of his most famous works—the *Social Contract*, the *New*

*Heloise*, and *Emile*. The last two were novels—the former of them a love-story filled with rapturous sentiment that dissolved thousands of French young ladies into sighs and tears; the latter a deductive book of considerable power and amazing sagacity, in which this unnatural father, who had deserted his own offspring, undertook to lecture parents in general upon their duties to their children and upon the true principles of child-education. It is a work seldom read nowadays, but of considerable influence at the time; and it directly inspired such educational reformers as Frobel and Pestalozzi to encourage a more humane and scientific system of training young minds, with results still apparent in the excellent “kindergarten” of Europe.

**His Decline and Fall.** Jean Jacques Rousseau afterwards got into hot water for heretical onslaughts against orthodox religion, and had to fly for his life from one town to another to escape persecution, finally coming to England at the invitation of the famous historian David Hume. He lived for eighteen months at Wootton, in Derbyshire, where he wrote his *Confessions*; but at length quarrelling with his good friend Hume, as he had quarrelled with all his friends, he returned to Paris, a moody, suspicious, and not altogether sane man. The remainder of his days were spent in poverty and misery and semi-madness. Occasionally a little gem of literature, calm and beautiful and chaste in style, came from his pen, but his work as a rule was now incoherent and uninteresting, and at length, prematurely worn out, he died suddenly, and not without some suspicion of suicide, on 2nd July 1778.

### 3. Victor Hugo.

To most English readers—I mean those who read nothing but English—Victor Hugo is known only as the author of *Les Miserables*, a book that has been translated into every European language, and is certainly one of the great prose masterpieces of the world.

It is long, in some parts very tedious, in others even absurd, but judged as a whole it is a tragedy of real life so profound in its painful truth, so masterly in its analysis of human suffering, so moving in its narration of humble heroism and self-sacrifice, that I am sure that to many people the reading of it has been a

kind of epoch in their lives, and they have been awakened to a new understanding of suffering and sorrow, to a broader sympathy with poverty and misfortune by this wonderful story.

**His Master-piece.** Some men make a boast that no book has ever moved them to tears, but I imagine that none save the utterly callous could read *Les Miserables* with dry eyes. Indeed it is a book, I think, to read in early life, before the painfulness of much that goes on in the world has come too close to one. Later on, when grief has sat by one's own pillow, and when one has seen the lacerating of living hearts, it is a good thing to avoid a harrowing of soul even by the story of fiction, and *Les Miserables* is not to be read without a throb.

Jean Valjean is one of the great characters of literature, looming larger in the imagination and memory than many historic personages who have really played their part in life's drama. Poor Valjean, criminal, convict, hero, saint and martyr, victim of an unjust justice, hunted, punished, tortured, for no other sin than poverty; simple, self-sacrificing, lion-hearted, tender, benevolent, and pitying to all poor devils, to little children, to those in trouble or in pain, he is perhaps the most Christ-like man described in modern fiction, and enables one to understand how the Christian ideal might be realised in modern life.

**Revelations of Misery.** *Les Miserables* is the Book of Revelations to the life of the poor as it was in the early nineteenth century in France, and although things have changed since then (owing not a little to this very book), and we who read it may be English, it is well to remember that the poor we have still with us, and the tragedies of the poor are still tragedies.

Victor Hugo's memory is revered by many people all over the world who know nothing of the man or his work but this one book, and strangers from far lands on a visit to Paris often go and place a wreath upon his tomb, and returning place a piece of money, large or small, in some poor-box at hand. This in itself is the best testimony not only to his genius, but to his power of moving men to kindly deeds.

**Hugo's Life-Work.** Yet *Les Miserables*, though his finest prose romance, does not represent a hundredth part of Victor Hugo's life-work, which he has left in a great

heritage to his nation. Plays by the dozen, novels by the score, poems by the hundred, were dashed off by a pen that was seldom idle during a lengthy life; and although many of the fruits of industry are now withered under the falling leaves of the tree of time, and others read when sentiments which once seemed fresh and fragrant are now as faded as last year's flowers, and ideals once taken very seriously seem now absurd, still there is in the great body of his work enough enduring literature, in drama, prose, and poetry, to justify that wonderful tribute of national love and enthusiasm which was associated with his recent centenary.

**As a Poet.** Hugo has an undoubted rank among the great poets of France, though not among the greatest. It is doubtful whether he taught any new truth, or revealed any of those mysterious and mystic beauties of the soul which such men as Coleridge or Goethe or Dante have given to the world. Nor had he the beautiful simplicity and tranquillity of Tennyson, nor the deep knowledge of the human heart of Shakespeare, nor the sweet moral light of Longfellow. But he was and is unsurpassed in many respects as a painter in words, as a musician in words also. His language was inexhaustible in its richness, magical in its harmonies. He played with words, and made them laugh and weep, and shudder, and sing and dance. The sound of them flowing through his stanzas is sometimes liquid melody, and sometimes like the sigh of wind through winter trees, and sometimes mournful as a woman's tears. Victor Hugo gave to the French language a new polish, a new glamour, a new flexibility of expression, and though we may find fault with his sentiment, and smile at his passion, or disapprove of his doctrine, those who may appreciate the "nuances" of word painting and expression must marvel and be charmed at lines which sparkle like gems, and glow with colour, and dazzle with the splendour of sunlight. *Les Chansons des Rues et des Bois* are little masterpieces of style, and his elegiac, reflective, and lyrical poems of *Les Contemplations* are the best of their kind in French literature.

**Victor Hugo—the Man.** Victor Hugo the man was a strange mixture of the charlatan, the genius, and the reformer. The greatest fault of his character, that of colossal conceit, was perhaps unavoidable under the circumstances of his life. Born in 1802, the son of a distinguished general under

the great Napoleon, at an early age he was the pride and wonder of his school, where he carried off the prizes in literature. At fourteen he produced a successful tragedy; at fifteen he was "honourably mentioned" in a competition of the French Academy; at twenty he won fame itself by his first edition of *Odes et Ballades*, followed two years later by a second set. At twenty-one he stepped into the ranks of successful novelists with *Hans d'Islande*, a romantic and wildly improbable but very sensational story. Then at twenty-five years of age he brought out the famous drama *Cromwell*—"a tragedy even then impossible to act, and now almost as impossible to read," but which made him the most conspicuous figure in France.

**Classicism  
v. Roman-  
ticism.**

In my sketch of Dumas I have briefly touched upon the great battle between the rival schools of classic and romantic style, then raging in France with a fierceness which nowadays seems incredible. *Cromwell* was hailed by the advocates of the new and romantic school as a triumphant vindication of a poet's right to be above all rules and convention, and to break through all the trammels which the classic school sought to maintain according to the "unities" of the old Greek drama. Still more, when Hugo produced his five-act poetical play of *Hernani* he was acclaimed on the one hand as the great leader and hero of romantic drama, and on the other as a debaser and violater of all that was noble and correct in literature. The war raged violently in the playhouses, coffee-houses, clubs, and salons of Paris, but Victor Hugo was the Napoleon of letters, and, having carried out his *coup d'état* with *Hernani*, the great body of the French nation flocked to his banner and paid unbounded homage to his genius.

**Egoism and  
Genius.**

It is no wonder, therefore, that Hugo should have posed as a demigod, that he should have uttered his opinions—not always very balanced in judgment—with the assertion of an oracle, that he should have demanded absolute faith in his followers, and brooked no contradiction. In course of time those who could not accept with entire patience his autocratic temper, nor smother their own convictions in the face of statements which they knew to be wrong, fell away from him, and dared to criticise his faults. His great forehead, "prone with excess of mind," was made to expand as prodigiously

as Mr. Gladstone's collars, and bulked huge in the caricatures of the time. Nevertheless, France was proud of him, and acknowledged him as one of her greatest masters ; and when he died, in 1885, and was carried to his grave, by his own wish in a pauper's hearse, a great concourse of all the best intellects of his country paid him the last honours.

Among the other novels best known to English readers are his strange, unbalanced, but extraordinarily fascinating historical romances *L'Homme Qui Rit* and *Notre Dame de Paris*.

#### 4. Emile Zola.

There are many English people, but no Frenchman, I think, who would dispute the right of Zola to rank among the great French masters.

I am not quite sure myself whether he will be read a century hence, as Dumas and Hugo and others undoubtedly will be.

Yet, judging the man's productions and their influence to-day, reviewing the long list of his novels and short stories, realising his tremendous industry, his ruthless truthfulness, his wonderful knowledge of certain aspects of human nature, one must admit that his was one of the most powerful brains that ever France produced.

One cannot approach Zola without a dozen thorny questions bristling up at one. Was he a great moral teacher or a writer of corruption and bestiality? Is it within the province of literature to depict the scenes of the operating theatre, of the shambles, of the dark horrors that lurk in the criminal and vicious purlieus of a great city? Is it a necessary part of knowledge to become acquainted with the most degraded, the most brutal, the most tragic phases of human nature? Is it, above all, the function of a novel to dissect the human heart when it is palpitating with vile passions, and the human brain tinged with hereditary disease, hereditary weaknesses, hereditary impulses of a morbid and monstrous kind? It is not for me to answer these questions. But at least I can to some extent, perhaps, reveal the character of the man who wrote the Rougon-Macquart novels, and the motives which inspired the work of his life.

**His Grim  
Probation.**

Emile Zola was born in 1840, the son of an Italian engineer domiciled in France. At an early age he became a publisher's clerk, but escaped from

what he considered the drudgery of the desk to the unfettered freedom of literature.

Freedom, however, is not always a bed of roses. Young Zola at least found it for some years a bed of thorns. Like many other great French writers, he lived in a Parisian attic next to the sky, with plenty of fresh air, plenty of enthusiasm, and not enough for breakfast. Often enough he went hungry, and learned the admirable philosophy of that proverb, "Qui dort, dine." Poverty is not an amiable bedfellow, and Zola very quickly knew the grim and grey side of a modern city. The iron ate into his soul. The tragedy of life seemed to him much more predominant than its comedy, and this impression prevailed with him even to the end.

**A Literary Vivisectionist.** Curiously, like many who have lived near to tragedy, he did not seek to escape from it to comfortable commonplace, which shuts its eyes to misery and finds contentedness in forgetfulness, but he became possessed with what was perhaps a morbid and unhealthy desire to lift the veil still further from the dark dramas enacted in everyday life. He sought them out, made excursions to the very haunts of human misery—to the morgue, to the madhouse, to the prison, to the pawnshop, to the houses in mean streets where murder lurked and horrid vice. He made friends with the sweated poor, the drunken poor, the besotted poor, the starving poor, the rotting, disease-stricken poor.

He went among them not as a philanthropist, by no means as a boon companion, but with grey, stern, keen, and searching eyes, studying them dispassionately, probing their nature with coldly analytical investigation, studying their vices and their virtues, their criminal instincts and their heroic impulses, with much the same scientific motive as causes a doctor to analyse the human body in sickness and in health, and to trace the origin of symptoms of disease.

**Zola's Philosophy.** Zola after years of study at last developed a philosophy, and in his extraordinary series of novels—the Rougon-Macquart series—gave to the world the results of this philosophy in a dogma which was not hidden, but rather more vividly revealed, because it was in the form of fiction.

Zola's philosophy does not make a pleasant afternoon sort of

reading. It is not for babes and sucklings, nor for those who like to turn their head away from the ugly realities of life—I do not blame them—to the brighter, cheerfuller aspects of human nature.

I think Zola was an unflinching fatalist. He believed very little in free will. To him it was appallingly clear that men had very little control over their own natural and native impulses. A man, to Zola, is not so much what he wishes to be, or makes himself, but what he is made by his father and his grandfather, his mother and his grandmother, and a long line of ancestors behind him. The doctrine of heredity was one from which Zola saw no escape.

**The Doom of Heredity.** All the crime, all the vice, all the madness in the world, was to him, if I interpret Zola rightly, due to an enormous extent to hereditary disease. On his father's side a man might inherit a refined and delicate soul, but from his mother he might possess certain animal instincts which at moments of crisis would well up in him with irresistible persuasion.

A man for half a lifetime might lead a respectable, commonplace, virtuous career, but suddenly, for no apparent reason, a wild beast within him might rise up and clutch him by the throat, and fill his brain with a horrid madness, and send a surging stream of the black mud of human depravity to drown his better nature, and sweep him along its tidal wave to moral destruction.

**The Power of Environment.** Hand in hand with Zola's philosophy of heredity went his philosophy of environment. The latter is a word which was first brought into common use by biologists and men of natural science. But I think Zola evolved his doctrine out of his own experience. He learnt to know only too well how difficult it is for a man to rise superior to his surroundings. In those gloomy back streets of Paris he saw how young boys and girls acquired a vicious and criminal nature in spite of themselves, with perhaps a natural bent towards virtue, which would break out now and again in odd freaks of self-sacrifice and heroism, but drifting all their life with the moving tide of men and women pressing around them and behind them to the gates of hell.

Zola did not confine his knowledge or his studies to the

under-world of French life, but he was equally observant of the bourgeoisie to whom he properly belonged. Here, again, his grey brooding eyes saw through the outer husk of social commonplace to the little dramas of the soul. Zola did not spare the bourgeoisie of France, but, with the usual courage which was really the greatest quality of the little man, he laid bare their vulgarities, their greed, their selfishness, their pettiness, their sordidness, and their viciousness.

**Realist but not Cynic.** Yet somehow, though Zola saw the worst side of life, he was not a cynic. At the very heart of him he ever had a strangely sweet fount of poetry and idealism. In his most brutal stories—*La Terre* and *La Bête Humaine*—in the midst of pages of quite revolting horror one comes across little character studies of exquisite delicacy and charm, and little biographies like beautiful cameos set in an ugly frame, and often in the very middle of some scene of squalid passion he will break off into a reverie filled with poetical imagery and exalted thought, his phrases flowing in liquid melody refreshing to the brain that has been sickening at his heated horrors.

**Fearless Worker and Versatile Teacher.** I have said that Zola's greatest quality was his courage—and certainly the man who wrote that famous letter, "J'Accuse," which shook the French nation to its very foundations and raised the Dreyfus case to the plane of a national crisis, showed a courage worthy to be called heroic—but I think, after all, that Zola's dominant quality was industry.

This was indeed amazing, and it is a matter of wonderment that any one brain could master the technicalities of so many professions as Zola did, to give a truthful and realistic picture of those engaged in them. This technical mastery is perhaps best shown in *La Débâcle*—in my opinion, and as far as I know, the greatest study of war in the world's literature. This book also is, I think, Zola's masterpiece, and the one least objectionable, or rather I would say the least unpleasant from the moral point of view.

Zola himself claimed to be a great moral teacher. He painted vice, not to pander to the coarse emotions of his readers, but as a solemn and awful warning; and he endeavoured to show the real life of the very poor and the very wretched in order to

arouse the sympathy of the nation for its submerged tenth and to encourage a progressive and civilising legislation. How far he succeeded in these aims it is for posterity to judge.

### 5. Erckmann-Chatrian.

One of the most famous literary partnerships in the history of letters is that of the two writers Erckmann and Chatrian, a partnership so close and intimate that it was rightly signified by the "double-barrelled" name of Erckmann-Chatrian, under which they wrote their world-renowned novels, thus merging themselves into one personality.

Emile Erckmann, born in 1842, and Alexandre Chatrian, born in 1846, both belonged to the beautiful borderland of Alsace-Lorraine, in their youth and early manhood a free province of France, but after the war of 1870, to their own great grief, and to the grief of thousands of Alsacians and Lorrainers, a conquered province of Germany. Erckmann came at an early age to Paris, where he studied and practised law. Chatrian was first a glass-blower, then a teacher, and afterwards a railway clerk.

**Literary Patriots.** Then the two men drifted together by a kind Fate which sometimes gives a mutual introduction to kindred souls, and a friendship grew up between them based upon early memories of a dear home-land, upon a common patriotism, upon a common love of literature and a desire that their imagination and their memories of old traditions might find a place upon the bookshelves of that beloved literature.

Beginning first with a few short stories scattered among various magazines and newspapers, it was not until eleven years later that they made a "hit" with a sensational novel called *L'Illustre Docteur Mathéus*.

Then followed quickly the series of novels to which they owe their lasting renown: *Le Fou Légot*, *L'Histoire d'un Conscrit de 1813*, *Waterloo*, *L'Ami Fritz*, *Madame Thérèse, ou les Volontaires de '92*, *Le Blocus*, and finally, in 1868, their finest masterpiece, *L'Histoire d'un Paysan*.

**The Revolution.** These books present a vivid history, from the people's point of view, of the wonderful, terrible, heroic turmoil which stirred the French nation into

a seething cauldron of passion, ferocity, bloodthirstiness, of noble ideals, of base desires, of strivings after the impossible, of strivings after the universal happiness in succession to universal misery, of folly, of madness, of crime, of heroism, and of glorious self-sacrifice.

Perhaps to some this may sound what is commonly called "tall talk," but not, I think, to those who have studied the great epoch of the French Revolution, beginning with the opening of the States General in 1789, and ending with the downfall of Napoleon after Waterloo.

It was the greatest, most enthralling period of French history. It was the bloody harvest of seeds sown, long centuries before, in the hearts of men and women who watered them with tears and with blood also, growing and flourishing rankly until they burst into fruit at the appointed time—seeds of tyranny, of vicious luxury, of callous cruelty, of robbery called taxation; fruit of revenge, of destruction, of savagery, reaped by that cunning gleaner called La Guillotine. The best way to understand the real meaning of the great Revolution is to read the novels of Erckmann-Chatrian.

**The  
Bour-  
geoisie.**

They are written, as I have said, from the people's standpoint. One is taken into the house-life of the peasants and bourgeoisie of France. One is introduced to the farmers, the millers, the blacksmiths, the road-menders of the provinces as they lived under the old régime when Louis XVI. was king and the nobility of France danced and fiddled, and lived in luxury and pomp, without dreaming that the poor patient people, who were taxed to the very verge of starvation, often beyond the verge of starvation, so that these others might be clothed in purple and fine linen, would one day protest, not feebly, and far from meekly, against what seemed the eternal and established order of things.

Erckmann-Chatrian had no sympathy with that *ancienne noblesse* of France. All their sympathies were with the sturdy fathers who worked from dawn to eve to feed their little ones, who even then went often hungry; with the simple, ignorant, large-hearted women who slaved for their children with heroic self-sacrifice that had none of the glamour of what the world calls heroism; and with the young men and women who grew up with new emotions of resentment unknown to their forebears, new hopes for freedom, new though secret resolutions to break the fetters of their oppression.

**A Retro-  
spect.**

“No one,” says one of the novelists’ old heroes, looking back upon his early days, “no one will make me believe that the peasants were happy before the Revolution. I have seen the ‘good old times,’ as they are sometimes called. I have seen our ancient villages when everything was taxed for the great lord or for the monastery. I have seen the serfs, haggard and lean, without sabots or shirts, wearing but a blouse and linen trousers, winter and summer, their wives so wrinkled, dirty, and ragged that they might have been taken for mere animals, their children gathered about the doors stark naked but for a little rag about their loins. Ah! the nobles themselves could not help writing in their books that ‘the poor brutes, bent over the soil, in sunshine and rain, to earn everybody’s bread, really deserved to have a little of it for themselves to eat!’ They wrote like this in moments of emotion, and then thought no more about it.”

**Literary  
Realism.**

The power of Erckmann-Chatrion lies in their truthfulness and in their realism. They were also masters of character study, and their portraits of the people who pass through their pages—revolutionaries risking their lives by smuggling treasonable books into every village of France, village politicians squabbling over the scandal of a new tax, young lads giving their hearts to young lasses in spite of poverty and suffering, educating themselves by candlelight and the aid of a few precious books after the long day’s work, humble parish priests ministering among miserable flocks, pompous and proud dignitaries of the Church violating the laws of Christ, fanatics burning with the lust of vengeance, patriots ready to die for a noble cause, great characters of history—Mirabeau, Danton, Robespierre, Marat, Napoleon—all were drawn with such conviction, yet seemingly with such simplicity, that the novels read like contemporary chronicles rather than works of imagination and romance.

**Old Paris.**

As it affected the simple, unimportant lives of the common citizens of France, we may realise more vividly the meaning to the individual and to the family life of that surging up of the nation’s dregs of humanity and that great revolt of the hard-working masses. Step by step, Erckmann-Chatrion take the modern reader through the great scenes which text-book histories tell not half so well.

The two novelists take him into the clubs of Paris and the provinces, where men of words, raised upon the platform of a tavern table, poured forth burning and dangerous eloquence into the ears of their comrades, who waited the appointed time to become men of action.

The reader is present at the storming of the Bastille, whose walls, clattering down before the fury of the population to whom the fortress had been the symbol of oppression, shook the very foundations of the nation, and brought down with their fall that "established order of things" which had been so fondly believed in by the aristocracy of France.

In following the fortunes of Erckmann-Chatrion's heroes and heroines of humble life, we may walk the streets of Paris, and meet the women of the markets streaming in a long and wild procession to Versailles, to shriek and wave their skinny arms at the fair, frightened Queen, and the fat, stupid, but not ignoble King.

We may meet also other processions, going not so far as Versailles, but to the nearest lamp-post with a once elegant aristocrat, torn and bleeding in their midst, who in a few minutes would swing by the neck in the centre of a wild, whirling dance of furies.

And with Erckmann-Chatrion we may attend the meetings of the Committee of Public Safety, and hear the fiery Danton speak, and the majestic Mirabeau, and the thin-voiced Robespierre, and the hoarsely croaking Marat.

We may stand with the crowd laughing and jeering round that "sharp-faced female," the dreadful guillotine, and watch the harvest of heads—old heads and young heads, golden-haired heads and grizzled heads—dropping one by one, all day long, week by week, month by month, into a blood-stained basket, until the people were satiated with this rich harvest of revenge.

Then Erckmann-Chatrion show us how a new lust overspread the people of France, not for mere civil bloodshed this time, but for "Glory"—glory on the battlefields of Europe against all the nations of Europe, under the great insatiable conqueror, whom his soldiers, his "children," as he called them, loved to talk of as *le petit caporal*.

So, through all the scenes of one of the greatest dramas of the world's history Erckmann-Chatrion laid out the plots of their splendid series of historical novels, with a detail of character and fact that stamps itself upon the brain of the reader as

if he had almost participated in the actions of this turbulent time.

Good Frenchmen and patriots, yet sane and judicious, not glossing over the crimes of their countrymen, not picturing the epoch with any false attributes, nor warping the facts of history for the purposes of romance, Erckmann-Chatrian have left a noble heritage of literature which should be read, and is read, by all Frenchmen, and by the people of other nations than their own.

## 6. Voltaire.

Half the population of Paris seems always to be poking about the bookstalls on the boulevards by the Seine. They are shabby old books, mostly books that have been read by many generations of students, and are stained by tobacco juice, by wine, and sometimes by tears. You may buy, if you feel inclined, a whole library for a few sous per volume; and you may get as motley a collection of works, ranging from the sublime to the obscene (an abominable variety of the latter), as any four walls could hold upon its shelves.

The cheap book vendors have a very accurate knowledge of what books are always sure of readers until they drop to pieces, and if you ask them what author, dead or living, has the best chance of being picked from the second-hand stall by the next passer-by, nine out of ten would probably give you one name—and that is Voltaire.

His books still sell by the tens of thousands. Young soldiers, young students, young authors, young workmen, will still deny themselves a *petit verre* or a cigar to buy a tattered old play, or poem, or satire, or history which has Voltaire's name upon the cover.

What a tremendous force, therefore, must that man's writings be in their influence upon French thought and character! What a tremendous vitality those works must have which still live and bear fruit when the hand that wrote them has been dust for one hundred and twenty-eight years.

If one were to analyse all that is best and all that is worst in modern French character, and to trace its modern tendencies to their source, it would be found that Voltaire was largely responsible for these qualities in their intellectual form.

**A Living  
Force.**

These qualities, I think, are at their worst a strange delight in the witticisms of obscenity, a strange tendency to the most brutal forms of blasphemy, a cruel pleasure in the shafts of satire with poisoned points; and, at their best, an extraordinary truthfulness of vision in the contemplation of human nature and abstruse problems, an exceptional power of exposing the sham and the false, a genius for subtle discrimination and balancing of judgment, a freedom from the prejudices and conventionalities of thought, a noble desire for intellectual liberty, a noble hatred of intellectual tyranny.

All these qualities were prominent in the character of Voltaire himself, and it is to these that he owed his supremacy in the literature of his nation.

**A Product of his Time.** Of course, like every other writer that ever lived, he was the product of his time. He lived at a period of history when the old Catholic religion was losing its hold upon the love and reverence of the French people; when the high dignitaries of the Church violated their sacred vows and lived in the world worldly; when after long centuries of religious oppression an intellectual upheaval threatened to break every bond of Christian restraint in its strivings for religious freedom.

All the old ideas of mediævalism—broken often enough in the Middle Ages, but still the great ideals which dominated the imagination of men—the sacred reverence for purity, the belief in a beneficent, redeeming, and self-revealing God, the law of self-sacrifice and bodily asceticism and restraint, were scorned, decried, and ridiculed.

The upper classes considered morality a very good thing for the poor, ignorant masses, and lived an absolutely non-moral life, in which religion was merely an excellent topic for jest and controversy. The poor people themselves, desperately struggling to preserve their species, began to wonder whether there was a God, after all, and whether they had not got the worst of the bargain in putting their faith in so gentle, self-abnegating a creed as Christianity, with troublesome virtues that did not seem to pay, and with promises which in the people's misery did not seem to be fulfilled.

**Early Career.** Voltaire started young as a sceptic. Born in 1697, François Marie Arouet, to give him his real name, had as his godfather a certain abbé de Chateau-

neuf, who was a type of those witty, frivolous, society-loving, and loose-living Churchmen who scandalised the pious and amused the impious.

It is not surprising that under his influence young Arouet, as he then called himself, should have soon been tempted to ridicule the doctrines of revealed religion. He got into trouble at the College Louis-le-Grand, where he was educated by Jesuits, and, leaving at the age of seventeen, proceeded to study the law. But, like many men of letters, he soon became disgusted by this dry-as-dust profession, and plunged into the wild gaities and idle companionship of a notorious association of noblemen and young bloods called the "Society of the Temple."

His parents, alarmed at this mode of life, packed him off to The Hague as a secretary to the Marquis de Chateauneuf, the brother of his irreverent godfather. He quickly got into disgrace, however, and was promptly sent back. He then began to dabble in literature, and burnt his fingers somewhat badly at the outset. He had the audacity to write a scurrilous lampoon revealing the private life of that infamous person, the Duke of Orleans, who had become Regent on the death of Louis XIV.

It was a dangerous thing in those days, when a *lettre de cachet* could send a man to a dungeon without trial or sentence, where he might rot to death without hope of escape. Young Arouet paid the penalty of his rashness by being hurried off to the grim Bastille, and was lucky in being released at the end of a year. His term of imprisonment was, however, not unprofitably spent, for during the long, lonely hours he composed the drama of *Œdipe*, which was afterwards a triumphant success when played in Paris, and commenced his great epic poem of *Henri le Grand*.

But he had not learned wisdom, and soon after regaining his liberty he again became an inmate of the Bastille, in consequence of a quarrel with an influential nobleman named the Chevalier de Rohan Chabot, who caused him to be maltreated by some hired ruffians, and then obtained a *lettre de cachet* to consign him once more to the fortress of revenge. He was liberated at the instance of powerful friends, on condition that he went to England, and in 1726, having now adopted the name of Voltaire, by which he was henceforth known, he made his appearance in London.

**Life in England.** His renown as a wit and a man of letters gave him an immediate introduction to the best circles of English society, and he became a friend of Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, and Peterborough, and other patrons of letters, by whom he was taken into the company of writers and poets like Thomson, Gay, and Pope.

These three years which he spent in England had a profound influence upon his character and opinions. He became a diligent student of English literature, science, and philosophy. The works of Shakespeare filled him with new ideas of dramatic art, and gave him a broader outlook upon human nature. Locke enchanted him by his genius of common-sense and his philosophy of thought. Pope gave him new weapons of satire. Sir Isaac Newton revealed to him the immensity and mystery of the universe. He was a keener observer also of English social and political life, which he contrasted in its principles of liberty and democracy with the tyranny and social injustice of his own country.

**In Disgrace.** Upon his return to France he made use of these experiences and studies in a series of "Letters on the English," but his praise of the traditional enemies of France, and his comparisons so little favourable to the vanity and principles of his own people, brought down upon him a perfect storm of abuse and greatly offended Louis xv. and his Court.

Once again he had to seek safety by flight, and this time he took refuge at Cirey in Champagne with a woman who was to be his most intimate companion, his intellectual comrade, his critic, consoler, and divinity for nearly twenty years. This was the famous Madame de Châtelet, a lady of great charm and wit, and extraordinary force of character and intellect.

**A Platonic Love.** "She was to him," says Mr. John Morley in his admirable critical biography, "that important and peculiar influence which, in one shape or another, some woman seems to have been to nearly every foremost man. In Voltaire's case this influence was not the rich and tender inspiration with which women have so many a time sweetened the lives and glorified the work of illustrious workers, nor was he bound to her by those bonds of passion which have often the effect of exalting the range of the whole of the nature that is susceptible of passion. Their inner relations hardly depended

on anything more extraordinary or more delicate than the sentiment of a masculine friendship. Voltaire found in the divine Emily a strong and active head, a keen and generous admiration for his own genius, and an eagerness to surround him with the external conditions most favourable to that steady industry which was always a thing so near to his own heart. 'They are two great men, one of whom wears petticoats,' said Voltaire, of her and Frederick the Great."

**Court Life.** At Cirey, Voltaire accomplished a prodigious amount of work. Drama, philosophy, poetry, and history received many lasting additions from his pen. As an historian he won his way to the first rank by his *History of Charles XII.*, his *Epoch of Louis XIV.*, and *The Morals and Character of Nations*.

Some years later he regained the favour of the French Court, but not for long. His outspoken courage and irrepressible gift of satire offended the Court party, and he had again to go into exile. He and Madame de Châtelet became the honoured guests of Stanislaus, the ex-King of Poland, who maintained a brilliant little Court at Lunéville.

This was the happiest time of Voltaire's life, and he became the leader of a little circle of wits and charming women, who spent their days in acting the plays he wrote for them and reciting his poems. His Oriental tales, in which, under the thin disguise of fiction, he satirised the people, manners, and institutions of his time, were read with avidity even by the people they most offended, and he became recognised as the most powerful and original thinker of his nation and time. The death of Madame de Châtelet broke up these busy and happy days, and Voltaire accepted the invitation of Frederick the Great, who had long been his admirer, to accept the office of King's Chamberlain at Berlin.

**Attacks the Church.** But, as was inevitable with a man of Voltaire's independence of character and plainness of speech, he eventually quarrelled with Frederick, and had to leave Berlin. He settled down at a little place called Ferney, near Geneva; but even here he did not find peace, for at this time the Catholic Church was organising a campaign against infidelity and free thought, and certain philosophical works of Voltaire and other advanced thinkers were ordered to be burned

by the public executioner. This was the spark needed for the explosion of Voltaire's mental gunpowder, and he declared war against the Church, which he nicknamed "L'Infame," or "The Infamous."

It was a literary warfare carried on single-handed by Voltaire with a bitterness, a violence, and an energy which must never cease to be an astounding chapter in the history of letters. Voltaire had a perfect command of polished and venomous satire, an amazing gift of destructive argument, an absolute and burning conviction in the law of intellectual liberty, a violent abhorrence of the supernatural.

It is no wonder, therefore, that at a time when Christianity in France was already being attacked by a universal scepticism he should have shaken the edifice of the Church to its very foundations, and bred a taint of Agnosticism in the blood of his countrymen, to which at the present day a blank Atheism has succeeded with the majority of Frenchmen.

**Voltaire's Deism.** Voltaire was not himself an atheist, but believed in what he called a natural deism, a certain mysterious and controlling influence of but vague metaphysical existence. Not a very consoling religion, this "deism"! As Morley says again—

"Are you going to convert the new barbarians of our Western World with this fair word of emptiness? Will you sweeten the lives of suffering men, and take its heaviness from that droning, piteous chronicle of wrong and cruelty and despair which everlastingly saddens the compassionating ear like the moaning of a midnight sea? Will you animate the stout of heart with new fire, and the firm of hand with fresh joy of battle, by the thought of a being without intelligent attributes, a mere abstract creation of metaphysics, whose mercy is not as our mercy, nor his justice as our justice, nor his fatherhood as the fatherhood of men?"

But what France wanted at that epoch was not so much consolation as an inspiration for destruction and revenge, a force to blind them to the light of charity and to nerve them to annihilation of existing institutions and of existing creeds. Before setting up a new building it is necessary to pull down the old one, and Voltaire's onslaught upon Christianity was one of the engines of destruction which composed the battery of the French Revolution, though he did not live to see the result of his own work.

It was after an exile of thirty-four years that Voltaire, then an old man of eighty-four, returned to his beloved Paris, upon the death of Louis xv., to see the performance of his last tragedy. It was then that the world recognised the prodigious influence of this man upon his nation.

He was received by the Parisians with a very delirium of enthusiasm. When he went to the Comedie Française, and sat there with his death's-head face crowned with laurels, it was hours before the tremendous applause subsided; and so great was the excitement of the old man himself, that it may truly be said he was killed with enthusiasm, being taken ill and dying soon after his return to Paris in 1778.

## PART VII

# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: AN OUTLINE HISTORY IN FIVE CHAPTERS



### The French Revolution—I.

**From Power to Decay.** To trace the origin of the Revolution, one must go back to the close of the reign of Louis XIV. With him the splendour of the French monarchy reached its summit. Continuing the policy of his predecessor's Ministers, the great statesmen Richelieu and Mazarin, he crushed under his heel the political liberties of the Parisian and provincial Parliaments, and reduced the feudal power of the aristocracy by the glamour of his Court as well as by his autocratic rule, so that they became courtiers instead of curbs to the omnipotence of the throne.

During the long sway of the Sun-King, as he was called, art, literature, and science flourished luxuriantly, and the nobles who made their home at the Court vied with each other in a magnificent and riotous luxury which Louis was pleased to consider a homage to his own greatness. His generals extended the boundaries of his kingdom, and his financiers developed the nation's resources with consummate skill. Yet beneath all this prosperity and splendour were the seeds of corruption. The insane revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which caused four hundred thousand Protestants to emigrate, drained the kingdom of a vast number of

industrious and skilful workers who were a source of steady revenue. As the King grew old, his bigotry, arrogance, and licentiousness increased with his years and alienated his people's affection, while the excessive war taxes goaded them into a smouldering discontent.

When Louis xv. succeeded to the throne the glory of the French nation was on the wane, and when he left it, after a life of swinish sensuality and a kingship devoid of all dignity, all ability, and all prudence, it had sunk to a low ebb. Dallying with his mistresses, the infamous Madame de Pompadour and the more infamous Madame du Barry, he dragged the honour of France in the dirt. His generals were defeated in Canada, and the wanton neglect of both fleet and army ended in the loss of his colonies. Thirteen hundred millions of francs had been spent, and only a series of disasters had been dearly purchased. The dishonourable Peace of Paris (1763) put an end to the expenditure, but left a feeling of burning rage and shame in the heart of every Frenchman who had possessed any national pride. "After me the Deluge," once said this monarch, with a callous cynicism that was a marked trait in his character. And when poor Louis xvi. ascended the throne, the first turmoil of the waters which were to end in a universal whirlpool was already apparent.

Society in France at that period was divided into three classes or estates. The first two were the Nobles and Clergy. Nobility and the Clergy, and the last was the Third Estate, or the lower order. Let us take a glance at each of them.

According to the historian Taine, the nobility in France just before the Revolution numbered one hundred and forty thousand, and the clergy about one hundred and thirty thousand. These two orders, who together numbered about one per cent. of the population, owned nearly half the land of France. Their wealth was enormous. The princes of the blood royal alone owned one-seventh of French territory. The Duke of Orleans had a yearly income of nearly twelve million pounds, and many of the other nobles could vie with him. As for the clergy, their property has been valued at four billions of francs, and their income reached the enormous yearly total of two hundred millions. These figures do not really represent the true value, for money was worth about twice as much then as now. The nobles and clergy contributed very little to the State funds. They were the

privileged classes, and, while the nobles were themselves allowed to appraise the few taxes due from them (a very pleasing arrangement, no doubt), the clergy were even better off, and paid no direct taxes whatever.

The bourgeoisie—represented by merchants, shopkeepers, and professional men—were able to obtain certain privileges of the nobles and clergy by purchase, while those who lived in the towns were exempt from many of the imposts which were enforced in the country.

**The Third Estate.** Upon the poor Third Estate, upon the humble tillers of the soil, the hard workers who made the wealth of the nation but kept none themselves, fell the burden of the taxes—taxes which robbed them of the fruit of their labour, which made their life a slavery, and kept them starving in the midst of plenty.

Worst of all was the salt tax, called the *gabelle*. Every person over seven years of age was bound to buy seven pounds yearly, and, as the sale of salt was a monopoly in the hands of the “farmer-generals” of taxes, the price was forced up to an infamous degree. Nor could this salt be used for anything but cooking. The farmer who wished to salt his pork, the fisherman who wished to salt his catch, had to buy more and get a certificate accordingly. It was death or the galleys to all who evaded the tax or smuggled the salt, and every year hundreds of victims were sacrificed to this oppressive law.

But the salt tax was only one of many—so many that hardly an article of daily need escaped, so many that goods which might have travelled from north to south of France in three weeks took three and a half months owing to delays for the imposition of the duties. Men who had to cross a river to get to their work often had to pay customs duties on the very food in their pockets.

**The Privileged Classes.** The nobles had it all their own way. The feudal system still existed so far that many of the lords were petty sovereigns over their own territory, and could levy and collect their own taxes, appoint their own officers, have their own prisons, and sometimes their own scaffolds. Their privileges were illimitable. To sell at the fairs on their land, to bake the bread in their great ovens, to turn grapes into wine, wheat into flour, and live stock into meat, at the winepresses, mills, and slaughter-houses (for no peasants could

do these things privately or independently), required a heavy payment for the privilege. In the hunting season the noble and his friends rode over the peasant's fields, reckless of the damage. Woe to the countryman bold enough to kill any game even on his own fields. Woe to the man who dared to kill any of the pigeons, which only the nobles had the right to own, and which fattened on the peasant's seed. Woe to the poor farmer who cleared his land of the encumbering fruit trees, which were annually let for the profit of the lord of the abbey, and whose dark shadows and spreading roots impoverished the soil and impeded his labour. Woe, soul-destroying woe, to a member of the Third Estate!

**"Why should these things be?"** No wonder, then, that the lower orders of France were gradually beginning to ask themselves questions—questions about the rights of man, about the teaching of Christ and the foundations of society—questions that boded no good to King or nobles. When they saw the riotous luxury of the aristocracy, when they heard of and saw the abandoned immorality of the majority of nobles, when they groaned under the daily tyranny of their masters, when their wives and children were starved to death so that the lord might have another diamond to his shoe-buckle and his lady a golden collar for her poodle, they began to ask themselves—not very loudly yet, nor with any certainty as to an answer—"Why should these things be?" It was that question which brought about the Revolution.

**The Social Contract.** But people long oppressed are not easily moved to shake off their fetters, and it took many other causes to co-operate towards this end. Among the causes was a delicate, sensitive, shrinking little man named Jean Jacques Rousseau. He was the son of a Geneva watch-maker, who died while he was a child. Left to his own resources, he became apprenticed to an engraver, a brutal fellow who made the lad turn liar and thief, until, terrified at a promised beating, he ran away, at sixteen years of age, to wander alone in the world without a friend or a penny piece.

Here is not the place to tell of the wanderings of this strange creature, who, as ordinary mortals go, was infamous, and who yet conceived ideals reaching to sublime heights, and put them into writings which for beauty of style are unsurpassed in any literature of any age or nation. It was

Rousseau who wrote the *Social Contract*, and it was the *Social Contract* which came as a message to the people, declaring their rights and privileges so convincingly that with the enlightenment came the spirit that broke the fetters of the "Ancien Régime," or the Old Order.

**The Protest of the Press.** There were other men who had messages for the people. Voltaire was one of them—Voltaire, the cynic and sceptic, who laughed, with a cold sneering laugh that made one shiver, at every institution of Church and State that had at one time been sacred beyond the breath of doubt. He satirised the follies and vices of the aristocracy and the follies and vices of the clergy, and the French have a proverb made by one who knew the nation's character—"C'est le ridicule qui tue" (It is ridicule which kills). Voltaire's pen was dipped in vitriol, which gave a biting attribute to his broadest humour, and it was he who dragged down from the high places to the level of popular criticism the two estates of Clergy and Nobles which had been above all such attacks.

Diderot, D'Alembert, and Grimm were others who introduced a new spirit of inquiry and criticism. These were the famous collaborateurs on the great "Encyclopædia," the "book that was to be all books." To this gigantic undertaking these three friends laboured with heroic enthusiasm and genius, and they were assisted by the best thinkers and students of the time. The Encyclopædia was a new Renaissance of French thought, and had a profound influence upon the minds of liberal Frenchmen.

**The King and Queen.** In the meantime, while philosophers, dreamers, and schemers were building up new theories of social life, and deluging the country with pamphlets which stirred the muddy waters of discontent, the Court itself was helping no less potently to bring matters to a crisis.

Louis XVI. was not a king to stem the tide of an approaching revolution. With quiet virtues that are a pleasing contrast to the hideous immorality of his predecessors, he was a weak, amiable man, with a fondness for mechanics and a hatred of the cares of kingship; a fat, hearty-appetited man, slovenly and undignified in appearance, and an easy butt for the ridicule of the people, who were beginning to dispute the divine right of kings.

His queen, strange as it may seem at first, was equally unsuited to gain the affection of the French people. Marie Antoinette was one of the most fascinating women the world has seen. Beautiful, graceful, witty, sweet-tempered, queenly in manner and nature, she was naturally the idol of the French nobles, who paid her a flattering and gallant homage. But she was terribly imprudent. Recklessly ignoring the rigid Court etiquette, which was a safeguard (though an irksome one) of a royal lady's good name and fame, she laid herself open to charges of licentiousness, which, though unfounded, yet turned the people's hearts against her. She was also a foreigner, and the people called her "the Austrian," and hated her. Even at the Court she was surrounded with spies and enemies, who construed all her girlish freaks into accusations against her moral character.

Then came the terrible scandal of the Diamond Necklace—a scandal in which the evidence of history seems to show that she was without guilt, but which caused the grossest calumnies to be circulated, smirching her reputation irretrievably, and goading the people into fury. This trouble made her proud and suspicious, and frequently she urged her husband to autocratic acts which might have had effect if he had been consistent, but which were rendered useless by his customary weakness.

It was the financial condition of the kingdom which caused the final crash. Louis xv. had left the country hopelessly involved in debt. Successive Ministers—Turgot, Necker, Brienne, Calonne—tried to accomplish the impossible and bring the national accounts to a state of solvency, but each was dismissed in turn, either for proposing reforms which alarmed the Court, or for sinking deeper into the mire of debt. The crisis was becoming acute. The Government was bound to get money somehow, and could not do so without appealing to the nation, unless they acted in a manner to bring about a revolution, which even the Court could no longer help anticipating.

Upon the advice of Necker, the King restored the Paris and provincial Parliaments; but this was not enough, and there was a loud clamour from many Liberal nobles, as well as from the people, for the assembling of the States-General—a general representation of the three orders, which had not

met since 1614. A party of nobles was in favour of certain limited reforms, which they considered necessary for the welfare of the country, though they were far from dreaming of the tide which was to sweep them along with a power they could not stem.

As for the people, it was with a joy amounting to frenzy that they looked forward to the States-General, which they were determined should ring the death-knell of absolute monarchism. After much opposition on the part of the King and Queen, the States-General met on 25th May 1789, and with its meeting, as will be seen, began the French Revolution.

### The French Revolution—II.

At Versailles, on the 25th of May 1789, the States-General assembled amidst the acclamation of the French nation, which looked forward with high hopes to the redress of old grievances and the inauguration of a new era of prosperity.

The three orders of the realm were all represented—the Nobles, the Clergy, and the Third Estate; but Minister Necker, who had called them into being for the purpose of pulling him out of the slough of national bankruptcy and to appease the clamour of the people, had left a vexed question unsettled until the eleventh hour. This was whether the voting should be according to order or individuals. In the first case, the two privileged orders would overbalance the Third Estate, and this was a contingency that the Third Estate was not prepared to accept.

A remarkable body of men were those six hundred deputies of the Third Estate. As yet the names of most of them were unknown except by local fame, but among them were men who before many days had passed would have earned the immortality of history. Plain professional men or business men of the middle class were they mostly, lawyers, merchants, farmers, who had been elected by the people to represent them because of their known adherence to the new ideas of liberty and rights of man.

Yet in this Third Estate there was one already famous, or infamous, one who by rank had a right to represent the privileged class. Gabriel, Count of Mirabeau, was his name. He had been rejected by his own class, which mistrusted him; but meeting his rejection

**Mirabeau,  
the Grand-  
iloquent.**

with a scornful arrogance, he had offered allegiance to the Third Estate, and was elected as a deputy of the people.

With a career of vice behind him, which, though exaggerated by popular rumour, had yet distinguished him in an age of vice, his massive face bearing the imprint of his debauchery, he was nevertheless a commanding personality, and one that impressed the nation with a sense of latent power. His lion-like courage and air, his burning eloquence, his ambition, which urged him forward, marked him out as a leader, and it was he who from the first meeting of the Third Estate became its mouthpiece.

Yet in his heart of hearts he was a Royalist by inherited tendency, and though it was he who championed the popular cause against the tyranny of feudal privilege, he was a supporter of a limited monarchy, and had none of those Republican ideals which were nourished in the hearts of such deputies as Robespierre and Marat.

**Lafayette and the New Liberalism.** Among the nobles there were many of a strong Liberal tendency, though none who dreamed of anything more advanced than a constitutional monarchy and the abolition of privileges. The Marquis de Lafayette was the representative of this class. As a young man he had carried his sword to the service of the American rebels. He had been in the councils of Washington, and had breathed the atmosphere of Republican ideals. Gallant soldier and gallant gentleman, he had returned to France covered with martial glory, and became a favourite of the Court, who as yet counted Liberalism no sin, as well as the idol of the people, who looked upon Liberalism as a very solid virtue.

But the Liberal nobles were naturally in a decided minority. A vast majority were jealous of their privileges, suspicious of the new Liberalism, which was very good as a drawing-room fad, but dangerous in practical politics; above all, scornful of the Third Estate, which gave itself, so they thought, such airs and impudence. The clergy as a whole were on the side of the people. The priests knew more of the people's sufferings than the nobles did. The duties of their vocation brought them in contact with the misery which hid in dark places, and they had compassion, and used their own privileges mercifully. Yet they also knew something of the wild beasts in those same dark places, which were as yet chained, but which one day perhaps might break loose—and then God help those who had kept them hungry!

So the majority of the clergy were Liberal in tendency, but Conservative from prudence.

Among the minority were those society sycophants who shamed their cloth, and others who hated the new Liberalism with a fierceness that knew no charity nor political insight. Out of these diverse elements was the States-General formed, and with these various ideals in antagonism it would have been a miracle if they had not clashed with violent effect.

**Class  
against  
Class.** The miracle did not happen. From the first hour of the assembling there was a friction that gradually smouldered, and finally burst into a general eruption. The nobles irritated the Third Estate by a hundred petty slights that goaded the deputies, proud of their office and stubbornly independent, into a sullen rage. The Court, ruled by Necker, invented innumerable causes of delay, and supported the nobles in their arrogance. The clergy as yet were afraid of throwing in their lot with the Third Order, and wavered between both parties. Days and weeks went by, and nothing was accomplished except futile discussion and antagonistic displays between class and class. Meanwhile the people clamoured for action, and the popular deputies grew tired of inaction. As yet they could do nothing, for the two privileged orders were still obstructing, and would not act in union with them, owing to differences of etiquette that seemed insoluble.

It was the Marquis de Lafayette who suggested the solution. "Let those," he said, "who have been elected to the States-General, and who wish to do their duty to the nation, form themselves into a National Assembly. Those who will not join may remain outside." The advice was taken, and the six hundred deputies of the Third Estate, with the Liberal nobles and clergy, constituted themselves into the famous National Assembly, and swore never to dissolve until the nation's grievances had been redressed. They proclaimed their inviolability against arrest; and when the Marquis de Breze came by the King's command to the Assembly, and ordered them to disperse, he was answered by Mirabeau, who sprang to his feet, and, in a trumpet voice that rang through the hall and echoed through the kingdom, spoke the words that will be for ever famous—

"If you have orders to remove us from this hall, you must also get authority to use force, for we shall yield to nothing but to bayonets."

**The Great Oath.**

In that tennis court, where the National Assembly had taken refuge, barred from the Hall of Deputies by royal troops, the men who defied the tyranny of a privileged order raised their right hands to heaven and swore with one voice to remain faithful to the people they represented, and to establish liberty and justice throughout the land. Their courage and spirit were successful, and the Court, with poor, amiable, weak King Louis at the head of it, knew not how to crush this hydra head which spoke with a thousand tongues but in one voice, and that a bold one. Large bodies of troops were massed round Paris and Versailles, threatening the existence of this self-styled National Assembly.

The Ministry which had brought the States-General into existence was dissolved, and Necker, who was to have been the saviour of the Court, and who was still the idol of the people, was dismissed. But these measures of retaliation against the Assembly only served to exasperate the people, and did not help the Royalists; for the King, horrified at the bare idea of bloodshed, would not give orders for the troops to be used either against the representatives of the people or the people themselves, who were now beginning to act of their own accord.

**The Might of the People.**

Indeed, from this date the National Assembly was to give place to a greater power—the citizens of Paris and their provincial brethren: while the deputies were drawing up elaborate constitutions, the people were howling for food and the blood of aristocrats. The harvest was a bad one. Flour was scarce, bread was dear, and the people were hungry. Hunger does not conduce to patience, and the butchers of the Faubourg St. Antoine, the scavengers of Montmartre, were getting very impatient. So much so, indeed, that on the 14th of July 1789 they decided to break the monotony and relieve their feelings.

Some thousands of them, joined by men of a better class, but all inflamed with one hatred for the old order and one longing to pull it down and all its symbols with it, marched towards the Bastille—that grim old building which was the type of feudal tyranny and an insult to a people's liberty. It was weakly defended by a weak governor—De Launay by name. It was attacked with the combined fury of a horde of passionate and desperate men. Before long the defence was broken down, an entrance effected, a surrender offered. But the crowd wanted no

surrender. They preferred blood. A few soldiers were killed, and the Governor's head was hacked from its body and set on a pike. The wild beasts had tasted human flesh, and they were ravenous.

The National Assembly rejoiced at the destruction of the Bastille—for it was quickly rased to the ground—but they were aghast at the violence of the mob. They might draw up ideal constitutions, but what were constitutions on paper against the actual might of a raging people? The Municipality of Paris regained for a while something of its old command, and convoked a new civic militia which they called the National Guard, and of which Lafayette was given the command. But Municipality and Commander-in-Chief were in the hands of the people, who had found their power at last. The army soon ceased to exist. The soldiers joined the people, to whom they belonged by creed as well as class, and the leaders of the people—men who sprang from the gutter into power—were the masters of France.

**The Lust  
of Blood.**

They showed their mastery by the wreaking of vengeance upon those who had made themselves specially obnoxious to the cause of "freedom." "À la lanterne!" (To the lantern!) was soon a well-known cry in the streets of Paris, though it was to be more often heard later on. Foulon and Berthier de Sauvigny, two Ministers who roused the fury of the mob, were the first to dangle from the iron brackets of the street lamps, which were so convenient for summary jurisdiction. Not Lafayette, of the National Guard, nor Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, both chosen favourites of the people, could hold the hands of their electors when it was a question of popular justice.

Then one day the women of Paris—the fishwives and market women—took it into their heads to help their husbands, brothers, and sweethearts in this business of revolution. In their thousands they thronged to the square of the Palais Royal, and at a word from some leader they were inspired with the exultant notion to march to Versailles, to see what that stupid National Assembly was about which talked so much but did not give the people bread. So to Versailles they tramped, getting dirtier and more bedraggled on the way, but filled with a madder enthusiasm as they neared their goal.

Like a horde of Amazons they invaded the Place of Assembly, and harangued the astonished deputies. One of them mounted

the presidential chair, others put their arms round the necks of respectable representatives of the nation, and gave them advice of a totally unconstitutional character.

Then a new idea seized this female concourse—to visit the King and Queen, to shake their fists in the face of these oppressors who lived in luxury while honest folk starved ; perhaps—who knows?—to strangle them or pluck their hearts out in their own palace. It was with some difficulty that these wild women were persuaded to send a deputation of twelve instead of going *en masse* to the palace. The twelve deputies were so kindly received by the King and Queen, His Majesty spoke to them so paternally, the Queen was so sweetly gracious, that they were all abashed, and neither shook their fists nor attempted any strangling. Indeed, they were all but strangled themselves by their revolutionary sisters when they returned to give an account of their mission, and confessed their conquest by the royal amiability.

By this time, however, the horde of wild women were joined by hordes of wilder men, and on the following night an assault was made on the palace. The Swiss Guards and the Royal Body Guard were massacred in their defence of the château. A few gallant officers guarded the entrance to the royal apartments at the expense of their lives, but allowing time for the King and Queen to retreat to another part of the palace, which as yet was free from attack. Fortunately—not a moment too soon—Lafayette, the commander of the National Guards, arrived with a regiment to defend their Majesties.

The appearance on the balcony of Marie Antoinette restored the King and Queen to comparative safety. The dramatic and striking picture of the Queen, beautiful and calmly courageous, with Lafayette, the popular favourite, bending his knee to her and kissing her hand in reverent homage, appeased their wrath for a while ; but with much yelling they made known their wish that the King and Queen and the little Dauphin should return with them to Paris. The demand could hardly be refused with safety, in spite of Lafayette and the National Guard. On 6th October, the Royal Family, accompanied by the National Assembly, guarded by Lafayette and his troops and escorted by thousands of uproarious people, travelled in procession from Versailles to Paris. Every yard of the route was made to the deafening roar of the mob, who were under the impression that when the King came to his capital bread would be easy to get.

“We have got the baker, the baker’s wife, and the baker’s boy!” they shouted, and the people of Paris met them with answering acclaim.

**The Down-fall of the Monarchy.** In the Palace of the Tuileries, to which the King and Queen were conducted, they found themselves practically prisoners, with every movement watched by spies, and subject to continual insult on the part of their jailers. The people, finding that bread was still not forthcoming, grew more inflamed against the monarchy, which they considered the cause of all evils. In the National Assembly, still busy in drawing up a constitution, the moderate men were being ousted for men of the hottest and fiercest Republican ideas. Robespierre, Danton, and Marat became the leaders by reason of their violent theories and proposals. Revolutionary clubs and revolutionary papers openly advocated the abolition of the monarchy; and the death of the Count of Mirabeau, the only Liberal Royalist who had had a hold upon the Assembly and the nation, was the last link severed that might have upheld the Crown a little longer.

It was clear to all that Louis and Marie Antoinette were in the gravest peril. They fully realised their own danger, and made one desperate and futile effort to escape. Aided by friends and bribery, they succeeded in leaving the Tuileries in disguise, and drove rapidly as far as Varennes on their way to the French border. But their agonising effort was in vain. By a series of misadventures they were recognised by enemies and arrested at Varennes, from which town they were brought back as captives to Paris, with every mark of ignominy and insult.

The end was not far off. The Constituent Assembly was succeeded in 1791 by the Legislative Assembly. The King was compelled to declare war against Austria in April 1792, and early defeats experienced by the French troops were put down against Louis, who was confined with his family in the Temple. The Assembly now dissolved itself, and was succeeded by the National Convention, which proclaimed the Republic. The King was accused of repeated acts of treason, and upon 21st January 1793 he met his death upon the guillotine with a courage and resignation that made the most heroic moments of his life. Marie Antoinette soon followed him, and a reign of blood made France a horror among civilised nations.

### The French Revolution—III.

Two great figures dominated the last acts of the Revolution. The man who ruled France by terror, who achieved his purpose by a very frenzy of bloodshed, was Maximilien Robespierre. The man who, after the death of this wretch, took advantage of the inevitable reaction of a nation sickened with a horrid satiety of blood, and who ruled France by the lust of military glory, was Napoleon Bonaparte. The life-stories of these men tell the tale of the Revolution through these two phases of terror and triumph.

Robespierre was born at Arras on 6th May 1758. He was the son of a lawyer of Irish descent, who died two years after Maximilien's birth. The child was brought up by his maternal grandfather, a brewer at Arras, who gave him a good education at his native town, and afterwards sent him to the college Louis-le-Grand at Paris, where he met the young Camille Desmoulins, who was afterwards to be the Revolutionary ally, and then, like so many of his allies, his victim.

Robespierre soon attracted notice by his penetrating wit and diligence in his studies. In 1781 he obtained his lawyer's degree, and the following year was appointed criminal judge, a rapid advancement of an unusual kind. He did not hold the post long. This man, who ten years later was to be so little squeamish that he fed the basket of the guillotine with a daily toll of heads of aristocrats, and of all whom he feared or hated, was so sensitive at the idea of passing the sentence of death upon a criminal who had violated the laws of God and man that he resigned his place to avoid this grim duty.

In the club of the "Rosati" at Arras Robespierre obtained popularity by the production of sentimental and mawkish verses based on the doctrines of Rousseau. When the States-General were convoked he was elected as member of the Third Estate. This slight, wizened creature, who always looked so eminently respectable, whose dress was always the same, and scrupulously neat, consisting invariably of powdered hair, a bright blue coat, white waistcoat, short yellow breeches, white stockings, and shoes with silver buckles, with thin rat-like face, spectacled and anxious-looking, attracted at first no notice by his personality, but

was soon to be the recognised leader of the extreme Revolutionary party.

During the disputes occurring between the three orders, before the oath in the tennis court of Versailles, the clergy invited the Third Estate to a conference on the distresses of the poor. The popular deputies, however, believing this to be a ruse to put them in the hands of the clergy, yet afraid to reject a proposal affecting the interest of the people, knew not how to answer. The story is told in the *Memoirs of Dumont*—

“One of the deputies then arose and thus addressed the ecclesiastical deputation: ‘Go tell your colleagues if they are so anxious to relieve the people, to hasten and unite themselves in this hall with the friends of the people. Tell them no longer to try to carry their point by such stratagems as this. Rather let them, as ministers of religion, renounce the splendour which surrounds them, sell their gaudy equipages, and convert their superfluities into food for the poor.’”

“At this speech, which expressed so well the passions of the moment, there arose a loud murmur of approbation. Everyone asked who was the speaker. He was not known; but in a few minutes his name passed from mouth to mouth; it was one which afterwards made all France tremble—it was Robespierre!” Mirabeau, with the penetration of genius, saw that this feeble, rather ridiculous-looking deputy, was a man to be studied. “That young man,” he said, “believes what he says; he will go far.”

**A Reign of Blood.** It was not long before Robespierre was the hero of the French people. The leading member of the Jacobin Club, which had branches in every province of France, his grandiloquent and canting speeches, his bourgeois respectability, his boasted incorruptibility, won the hearts of the mob. He was appointed Public Prosecutor, and afterwards first deputy to the National Convention, which succeeded the Legislative Assembly as the governing body of the country.

Though not the actual instigator, he was certainly an accessory to the horrible “September Massacres,” during which many hundreds of men, women, and children, guilty of no greater crime than gentle birth, were ruthlessly killed in the State prisons. He also was it—this sentimentalist who at one time had declined to pass sentence of death on a convicted murderer—who was the fiercest advocate of the King’s execution, to be followed by that of the Queen and the leading Royalists.

In 1793, after these abominations had been committed, the first Committee of Public Safety—a permanent Cabinet of Revolution—was inaugurated, to which Robespierre was appointed. He was now the ruler of France, and he used his power with the violence of a madman. His former friends, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Hebert, and others who tried to check his bloody orgies, were promptly despatched to the scaffold. Danton died with that lion-like courage that had distinguished his revolutionary career. On reaching the foot of the scaffold he was going to embrace his friend Herault Sechelles, who extended his arms towards him, when the executioner prevented him.

“What!” said Danton, with a smile. “Canst thou then be more cruel than death? At any rate, thou canst not prevent our heads from embracing presently at the bottom of the basket.” Before he died he said, with prophetic truth, “Robespierre will follow me: I drag down Robespierre.”

**The Power of Dread.** For the next three months, however, Robespierre’s power was undiminished. He nominated members of all the Government committees, filled important posts with his own creatures, controlled the Revolutionary Tribunal, and introduced an abominable rule into its procedure to the effect that neither counsel nor witnesses need be heard for or against a prisoner if the jury were already convinced of his guilt.

The result of this was soon seen in the swelling daily list of victims to Dame Guillotine. The average was no less than thirty per diem. But it was not to last. As long as Robespierre was the personification of terror he was safe, but there was an element of ridicule in his actions which was his ruin. The decree of the Convention which by Robespierre’s order complimented the Supreme Being with an acknowledgment of His existence, and arranged for the celebration of the “Consolatory Principle of the Immortality of the Soul” by thirty-six annual festivals, was too great an absurdity even to pass muster with the French people.

The moderate party, including Robespierre’s bitter enemies, attacked him violently at the Convention. For a while he was able to stand against them, but as popular favour gradually left him, sickened at the Feast of Blood, he became panic-stricken, and endeavoured to justify himself. But his voice was

drowned by cries of "Down with the tyrant!" He turned to the Right—the peace party—"I appeal to you whose hands are clean!" he cried. But the Right answered not a word. "President of Assassins, I demand to be heard," he shouted; but his words clave to his throat. "The blood of Danton chokes him," cried a deputy. Then another deputy moved that he should be arrested; and when this was agreed to by the Convention, his Dictatorship was at an end, his power in ruins.

He escaped from his guards, but was recaptured, and by his action placed himself at once beyond the law. In his bright blue coat and nankeen breeches he was driven to the scaffold in the Place of the Revolution. He had tried to commit suicide by blowing out his brains, but the bullet had only broken his jaw, and gave him excruciating pain. "When he ascended the fatal car," says Hazlitt, "his head was enveloped in a bloody cloth, his colour was livid, and his eyes sunken. When the procession came opposite his house it stopped, and a group of women danced round the bier of him whose chariot wheels they would have dragged the day before over a crowd of victims. Robespierre mounted the scaffold last, and the moment his head fell the applause was tremendous." The news spread with lightning rapidity through the country, and with the cry, "Robespierre is dead," people embraced each other and shed tears of joy, saying that the Reign of Terror was at an end.

**The** When Robespierre fell he dragged with him  
**Rising Sun.** those who had been faithful in their allegiance to him. Among those in danger for this reason was a young general of brigade named Napoleon Bonaparte, who had distinguished himself highly at the siege of Toulon. He was saved by powerful influence, and given the command of the army in the West.

But his growing ambition was not satisfied with an appointment which he thought would damage his career, and he neglected to obey the order. For this insubordination he was removed from the list of general officers; but the Republic could ill spare such soldiers, and on 23rd February 1796 the Directory gave him the command of the army of Italy. General Bonaparte was this time satisfied with his appointment. He had an army under his command of thirty-six thousand strong, holding the mountains from Nice to Savoy against twenty thousand Piedmontese and thirty-eight thousand Austrians.

With splendid audacity he gathered his scattered army together, forced it between the two armies opposed to him, and attacked them singly. Both were defeated with heavy loss, and retreated separately. Napoleon followed on the heels of the Piedmontese, and punished them again so severely that the King of Sardinia was forced to sign an armistice. This left Napoleon's hands free for the Austrians. He chased them across the Po at Piacenza, and beat them back to the Adda. On the 11th of May he swept through them to the Bridge of Lodi, and on the 15th entered Milan hailed by a people filled with Republican ideals.

The surrender of Milan was the signal for a free pillage by the French army, led and organised by Napoleon himself. Upon taking up his command he had issued a proclamation to his soldiers which departed from the lofty sentiments of pure patriotism which before had been the avowed principles of the Republic, and in its stead he appealed to the self-interest of his soldiers, and advocated with amazing effrontery the plunder of their enemies. From Milan, therefore, heavy contributions were exacted, and a stream of priceless treasures of art flowed into France. The Directory, demoralised by this wealth, were eager for further conquests, and encouraged Napoleon in his violence and rapacity.

**Host**  
**against**  
**Host.**

Napoleon now entered upon a masterly sequence of battles which demonstrated his prodigious military genius. With an army of about forty thousand he faced an Austrian force of seventy thousand under Wurmser.

With consummate strategy Napoleon attacked his enemy in detail, avoiding a general encounter, and by extreme rapidity succeeded time after time in throwing his whole weight upon the enemy's arms; and on 2nd February 1797, Wurmser, the Austrian general, who had made a gallant struggle against Napoleon's superior genius, capitulated at Mantua, and so ended the first Italian campaign.

Napoleon returned to France, and found it in the midst of a political crisis. The Directory was suspected of being undermined by "moderates" and Royalists, and there was heard the ominous cry, "The Republic is in danger!" Napoleon sent General Augereau to the assistance of the Directory, and the troops which surrounded its Place of Assembly were the first display of military despotism by which France was to be ruled.

The Austrians, who had hoped to benefit by the internal troubles of France, were grievously disappointed when they found the Directory more firmly established, and in the treaty of Campo-Formio, 17th October 1797, yielded Belgium and the Ionian Islands to the Republic.

**The  
Audacity  
of Genius.**

Napoleon now started on his disastrous Egyptian campaign, which, but for his never-failing audacity and utter want of scruple, might have ruined his career. In his brain floated visionary ideas of founding a glorious Eastern Empire, and so dominating the world. In May 1798 he sailed with an army to Malta, which he quickly captured, and, escaping by a stroke of luck the British fleet under Nelson, reached Alexandria, and disembarked in haste. He marched rapidly on Cairo, defeated the Mamelukes, and entered the city in triumph.

But his dreams of conquest were shattered by the news of the destruction of his fleet by Nelson at the Nile. He still thought it possible, however, to overthrow the power of the Turks, and to march back to Europe in triumph through Asia Minor and Constantinople. With twelve thousand men he entered Syria, but was brought to a sudden check by Sir Sydney Smith at the fortress of St. Jean d'Acre. His most desperate attacks failed to reduce this gallant garrison, and, foiled in his schemes, Napoleon returned to Egypt. Here he learnt that the French arms were suffering reverses in Europe, so, deserting his own army, he embarked secretly on 22nd August 1799, and returned to France, leaving Kleber in command of the army of Egypt.

**First Consul  
and  
Emperor.**

Things at home were very gloomy. The Government was in bad odour owing to the mismanagement of the wars, and Napoleon saw his chance, and took it. On 9th November the Legislature was abolished by an armed force, and a Provisional Executive was formed to draw up a new constitution. On 13th December the Executive was vested in three consuls — Bonaparte, Cambacère, and Lebrun, with Bonaparte as First Consul.

Napoleon's fellow-consuls were mere panderers to his own policy. He took all power into his own hands, and by his vigorous measures for the centralisation of government, and for the internal order of the nation, proved that he was no less great

as a statesman than as a soldier. By a system of conscription he made France a vast military camp, and he was able to concentrate army after army upon the frontiers, driving back the invaders with ferocious energy, and carrying the French colours in triumph over the borders. The Austrians had again massed a great army in northern Italy and Switzerland, but Napoleon left France once more to enter upon a second Italian campaign.

He had now consummate faith in his own "star," and dared risks which would have been termed madness if they had not been so amazingly successful. He swept all before him in one triumphant series of battles, in which each was a victory. The French nation forgot its revolutionary principles in the new madness of military glory. Europe trembled before the ambition of this new Alexander. Napoleon was the idol of the people. They looked back to the days of the guillotine as a horrid nightmare. Their high ideals of universal brotherhood were remembered only to be laughed at. "La Gloire!" Glory! That was now the exultant shout of a nation military mad.

The cold, calculating brain of Napoleon prepared the way carefully to mount upon this popular frenzy to the summit of personal ambition and power. He played the game well, and upon the 18th of May 1804 was proclaimed Emperor of the French by the people who but a few years before had sent their King to the scaffold.

### The French Revolution—IV.

"With me ended the Revolution," said Napoleon in one of those oracular epigrams he so much liked to utter. And he was right in so far that he put an end to the internal tumult of France and substituted a reign of military despotism for democratic devilities.

But he carried the principles of the Revolution across the borders of France, and rammed them down the throats of European nations at the end of his bayonets; and it was the impetus of revolutionary enthusiasm which recruited his grand army and hurled it with irresistible violence against the combined forces of his enemies. But his revolutionary ardour had little in common with the lofty ideals of the early revolutionists. It was rather the ferocious passion of a nation which had over-

thrown all authority except the despotism of a military chief, and who shouted "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!" while they destroyed the liberty of European nations, made them equal in misery, and fraternal in the relationship of blood.

I have now carried the story of the Revolution up to the period of Napoleon's assumption of the Imperial Crown. Europe now lay at his feet. Austria, Italy, Spain, Denmark, and Russia were conquered, or acknowledged the supremacy of the French Empire. One nation only dared to defy the might of France. In 1793 the French Republic had declared war against Great Britain, and for twenty-two years, with but a brief intermission, a death-struggle took place, which ended with Waterloo.

**The  
Struggle  
for the  
Seas.** As soon as Napoleon hurled defiance at "perfidious Albion" he realised that before he could subdue her he must wrest from her grasp the supremacy of the sea. He did not doubt for a moment but that he could do so. French armies were irresistible on land, and therefore French fleets must be irresistible on water.

But he forgot that in the veins of his enemies ran the blood of Vikings and sea-rovers, descendants of men who had first come to the shores of Britain in Northern keels, of men who had sailed with Drake round the world, of men who had fought with Blake and conquered with him, of men who were born within sound of the surf and breathed in their life with the salt winds. Nor did he yet know that on a certain day in 1758, in the little Norfolk village of Burnham Thorpe, was born one Horatio Nelson, a puling, sickly infant, who grew into a thin emaciated man, but in whose frail form burnt a spirit that no danger could quench, and which would destroy the vastest plans of the universal conqueror, Napoleon himself.

But in February 1797 this same Horatio Nelson commanded the British man-o'-war *Captain* with the fleet of Admiral Sir John Jervis, sailing off the south-west of Spain on the lookout for the Spanish fleet, which was then allied to France.

The enemy was sighted on the 15th of February, and, to quote an officer's description, the great fleet "loomed like Beachy Head in a fog." It numbered twenty-seven line-of-battle ships, including a monster of four decks, the *Santissima Trinidad*—the biggest ship afloat. Jervis had only fifteen ships

of the line, and these carried only 1332 guns as against 2292 of the Spanish—but he had Nelson! Horatio Nelson himself said he thought these Spanish ships “the finest in the world,” but he added, “the Spaniards, thank God! cannot build men.”

Nelson’s was the thirteenth ship in the order of battle, but with the quick eye of a naval genius he detected a weakness in the enemy’s disposition, and, disobeying his Admiral’s orders at the risk of life and reputation, altered his course, and broke the line of the Spanish fleet, bringing the brunt of the battle upon himself, and putting his own small vessel alongside the huge *Santissima*. His fire was so swift and deadly that he shattered the Spanish battleship in spite of its bulk, and then turned his attention to another vessel called the *San Nicolas*.

Meanwhile he himself sustained the combined fire of seven of the enemy’s biggest ships, and, when he was so crippled that not a sail or rope was left, boarded *San Nicolas*, and cheering on his men, and fighting his way from deck to deck, beat back the Spanish crew and took possession of the ship. He was now greeted with a volley of musketry from a huge Spanish vessel, the *San Josef*, which lay alongside the *San Nicolas*. With heroic audacity he ordered his men to board this second vessel. This feat of boarding one Spanish three-decker across the decks of another was afterwards celebrated as “Nelson’s patent bridge for boarding first-rates.”

The Spanish officers of the *San Josef* were dismayed by the vehemence of Nelson’s attack, and quickly surrendered to him. An extraordinary scene took place when Nelson stood on the quarter-deck of his prize receiving the officers’ swords one by one, and handed them to an old tar named William Fearnay, who tucked them under his naked arm with as much coolness as if he were collecting stumps on a cricket field.

By this time four Spanish ships had struck, and the remainder of the enemy’s fleet, thinking discretion the better part of valour, gathered up their disabled ships and fell back to Cartagena. It was not a great victory in the number of prizes taken, but it was a glorious feat on the part of the British fleet, which checked for a time the designs of Napoleon for an invasion of England, and put fresh courage into the hearts of our countrymen. Nelson had disobeyed orders, but his action had gained the victory, and when, all black with dirt and smoke, he stepped on the quarter-deck of the Admiral’s vessel, Sir John Jervis, grim, stern, and forbidding as he usually was, took the

little captain in his arms and hugged him. For his reward Nelson was created a Knight of the Bath and a Rear-Admiral of the British fleet.

**Hearts of Oak.** During those days of peril, when Napoleon was massing a great army, ready to hurl it on the English coast, the hearts of our countrymen were animated with a splendid confidence in their own fighting powers. It was an age when our forefathers fought with the gaiety of schoolboys, when they were ready to face any odds with a cheerfulness that betokened success, when they looked into the very jaws of death with a smile and a jest.

In the battle of the Glorious First of June, when Earl Howe shattered a great French fleet, the *Brunswick* drifted into the fight with all the ports on her lower deck closed, and the order was given that not a port was to be lifted nor a gun fired till the captain gave the signal. The officer who carried the order down to the lower deck found it in complete darkness, and as he stood on the ladder peering into the gloom, the answer came back in the rollicking voice of the junior lieutenant, "Tell the captain we do not mean to fire till we get the word, and that we are all as happy as princes singing 'Rule Britannia.'"

These men, "as happy as princes," were drifting in thick darkness into as desperate a fight as has ever been recorded in naval history. As an example of the temper of British jack tars may also be quoted the story of this ship the *Brunswick* during the same battle.

During the very height of the combat it was discovered that a cannon shot had robbed the ship's figurehead of its laced cap. Such an indignity in the presence of a Frenchman was not to be tolerated, and, while the desperate battle raged, a deputation came aft to Captain Harvey to lend them a cocked hat to replace the one shot away. The captain fetched out his best hat, and the ship's carpenter climbed out upon the jib-boom, and, ignoring the shots that shrieked round him, solemnly nailed the cocked hat on to the wooden skull of the figurehead. Decency and self-respect were again restored.

At the battle of Camperdown, which followed the victory at St. Vincent, Admiral Duncan defeated the Dutch fleet under De Winter with little of Nelson's strategic genius, but with a bull-dog courage which even the Dutch—the next best sailors in the world—could not match. His spirit was reflected throughout

his fleet, and there is a good story told of one of his captains. Inglis, a hard-fighting Scotsman, who commanded the *Belliqueux*, found himself bewildered by the signals at the Admiral's mast, and at last, flinging his signal-book on the deck, roared out, "Dang it! Up with the hellum, and gang into the middle o' it!"

Duncan himself, as calm and cool as cast-iron after a desperate fight and a glorious victory, sat down that same evening with his prisoner, Admiral De Winter, and together they played a friendly rubber of whist in Duncan's cabin. De Winter was beaten, upon which he observed with a smile, "It is rather hard to be beaten twice in one day by the same opponent." This is the chivalrous spirit which robs war of some of its grim horror.

**A Chain of Victories.** During an unsuccessful attack upon Santa Cruz Nelson lost his right arm, and was obliged to return to England, where he lay in great agony for several months. "I am become a burthen to my friends and useless to my country," he wrote; but as soon as he could struggle on board ship his restless energy was eager for fresh exertions.

In 1798 Napoleon set sail for Egypt with a great army, and Nelson was given the duty of intercepting the French fleet, and attacking it when and where he could find it. After long and fruitless search he discovered it in Aboukir Bay, near the mouth of the Nile, but not before the French army had been landed. Still, to destroy the fleet would be a glorious service to his country, and Nelson had no intention of letting it escape.

The French Admiral had ranged his battleships close to the shore, confident that no British fleet could pass inside his line without grounding. But Nelson knew not the word impossible. "Where a French ship can swing, a British ship can pass," he said; and without a moment's hesitation he gave the order for his fleet to bear down between the enemy and the shore. The *Culloden*, under Trowbridge, ran aground, but the others passed down the narrow channel majestically, each ship discharging its broadside upon the enemy in regular order and with terrible effect. All through the night the battle raged, and when morning broke thirteen out of seventeen French battleships were captured and destroyed.

This great victory had disastrous effects upon Napoleon's plans of conquest. His army had landed in Egypt, but with his

fleet destroyed he was caught like a rat in a trap. Deserting his troops with the selfishness of genius, the "Man of Destiny" returned to Paris, with the result we already know.

He now made one more great effort for the command of the sea, and concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Denmark. The Danish fleet was a powerful one, and the men who manned it had the same sea-roving blood as the British sailors. With their aid Napoleon hoped still to crush the naval power of "perfidious Albion."

But for once the British Government were equal to the occasion, and, although war had not been formally declared against Denmark, they realised that the safety of our country depended upon swift action. As soon as the news of the alliance was discovered they despatched Admiral Sir Hyde Parker with Nelson as second in command to attack the Danish fleet in its own harbour at Copenhagen. Parker was a man of red-tape, and Nelson chafed in mental agony under his hesitancy and want of dash.

During the council of war outside Copenhagen Parker was dismayed by the reports of the difficulties to face and the strength of the Danish harbour defences which reinforced the enemy's fleet. "Lord Nelson," says an eye-witness of that historic scene, "kept pacing the cabin, mortified at everything which savoured either of alarm or of irresolution." At last his bold measures prevailed, and Parker, with a wisdom and modesty that were to his credit, gave his impetuous subordinate full responsibility for the attack. The difficulties were supreme, owing to the shoals and currents, which threatened an attacking fleet with destruction.

Led astray by his pilots, Nelson was unfortunate in losing a fourth of his fleet, which ran aground before he had fired a gun. But with consummate seamanship he took advantage of this disastrous lesson to lead the remnant of his fleet into action, and was received with the fire of a thousand guns. The battle that followed was unsurpassed in naval history. On the evening of that day Nelson himself wrote, "I have been in one hundred and five engagements, but this is the most terrible of them all."

So desperate was the British position that Admiral Parker gave the signal, "Cease action." But Nelson was in no mood for retreat. For a while he was consumed with anger at the Admiral's order, but, calming himself with an effort, he turned to his captain and said, "You know, Foley, I have only one eye.

I have a right to be blind sometimes." Then with a grim smile he put his telescope to his blind eye and exclaimed, "I really do not see the signal!" Finally he dismissed the matter by a vehement protest of "Confound the signal! Keep mine for closer action flying!" So the battle continued more fiercely than before, and history tells us the great and wonderful victory that was gained by the little British fleet against such stupendous odds.

And now comes the story of that final victory which shattered the last resource of Napoleon's naval power, and made Great Britain mistress of the seas, with no one to dispute her sovereignty. Most of us know how Napoleon gathered together a vast army for the invasion of England, and how he waited for over two years until he could get but "one brief six hours" when the British fleet was off guard, and his own battleships lying in Toulon could slip out and join another fleet at Brest, and so conduct the army of Boulogne to the English shore.

For many weary months Nelson played the part of watchdog, and upon his vigilance depended our country's safety. The French plan nearly succeeded; but on the 21st of October 1805 Nelson, with twenty-seven men-o'-war, fell in with the combined French and Spanish fleets of thirty-three ships under Admirals Villeneuve and Gravina off Cape Trafalgar.

There are few so ignorant that they do not know the story of that battle: how Nelson attacked and fought with his gallant officers and men until the enemy's fleet was shattered; how also, in the hour of success, the great and heroic British Admiral was struck down mortally, and in the cockpit of the *Victory* breathed out his soul with the words that had been the motto of his life, "Thank God, I have done my duty!"

### The French Revolution—V.

I have now sketched out that great and glorious story of how our country, served by gallant hearts like those of Howe, Duncan, and Nelson, swept the combined fleets of Europe into chaos and gained the supremacy of the sea. But though Napoleon saw his naval combinations ruined, and raged with impotent fury against those British sailors who had checked his

world-ambitions, his master-mind had as yet met no peer upon dry land. Europe, save Great Britain and little Portugal, was beneath his iron heel; his armies were ever victorious. British sailors were indomitable, but British soldiers seemed to have lost their ancient prestige and British armies their ancient power. But in the hour of our country's need there arose one man with a military genius able to cope with that of Napoleon himself. It was Sir Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington.

**The Penin-  
sular War.** On 12th June 1808 Wellington (to call him by the name by which he is now known) set sail from Cork to the coast of Portugal. He had with him a little band of officers who were to win immortal fame under his command—Hill, Crauford, Fane, and Ferguson—and some regiments whose standards were to be carried through a hundred glorious actions—the 50th, the 71st, the 91st, and the 95th.

The British general had a task of terrible magnitude in front of him. It was true that Portugal defied the French, but it was with a spasmodic defiance that could not be counted on. Portuguese troops were apt to be more dangerous as allies than as foes, and Portuguese generals demanded British gold, British arms, and even British rations, but in return paid nothing but mulish pride or rank cowardice.

In Portugal itself was a force of twenty-five thousand French veterans, who had never known defeat, under Marshal Junot, one of Napoleon's finest generals. In Spain Napoleon's brother Joseph was upon the throne with one hundred and sixty thousand French troops under the most renowned marshals of France, exultant in the triumph of conquest, and contemptuous of the raw recruits who made up the little army which had the audacity to defy the might of Napoleon's Empire. Beyond the Pyrenees there were four hundred thousand veterans ready to be launched into Spain against any intruder.

Wellington, too, had to contend with more than the enemy. The British Government supported him with lax loyalty. His troops were badly fed, worse shod, with payment in arrears. His demand for reinforcements was refused, his strategy misunderstood and criticised ignorantly. In addition to the duties of a soldier he had to combine those of a statesman, for the Portuguese Treasury was exhausted and its Government paralysed, so that Wellington was called upon to bring order from chaos.

**The Iron Duke.**

He was, though he had not yet won his laurels, the one man in Europe fitted for the task. His early training in India had taught him statecraft, and at Assaye, in 1803, where with four thousand five hundred troops he had defeated and crushed an army of thirty thousand men, he had learnt confidence in himself. He was a man of iron resolution, nerves like adamant, a piercing vision, a genius for strategy, and a Roman sense of duty.

He was not a man of sympathy, but, though he did not inspire his men with love or enthusiasm, he filled them with confidence. "That long-nosed beggar who beats the French," they called him; and wherever he led them they felt that he knew what he was doing, and meant to do it. "Well, old 29th," he said as he visited the hospital after bloody Albuera, "I'm sorry to see so many of you here." "There would have been fewer of us here if you had been with us," was the reply; and it was a soldier's testimony to the confidence of the rank and file in their general.

Wellington was always most cool in the heat of battle. "You seem quite at your ease," said a Spanish general to him in the midst of a critical situation; "why, it's enough to put a man in a fever!" "I have done, according to the best of my judgment, all that can be done," said Wellington. "Therefore I care neither for the enemy in front nor for anything they may say at home."

Once in a dense fog a British division, with Wellington at the head, got separated from the main army, and suddenly learnt that the whole French army was in their immediate front. Everybody was flustered except Wellington, who said calmly, "Oh, they are all there, are they? Well, we must mind a little what we are about, then!"

Wellington never talked in heroics, and when he said a thing he meant it, neither more nor less. Without vanity, but with sober good sense, he summed up his own qualities in contrast with the generals opposed to him. "The French marshals," he said, "plan their campaigns just as you might make a splendid set of harness. It looks very well, and answers very well, till it gets broken, and then you are done for! Now, I made my campaign of ropes: if anything went wrong, I tied a knot and went on." Another time he attributed his success to "always being a quarter of an hour earlier than he was expected." Such was the man whom the British Government, in a flash of rare inspiration, chose to command the army of the Peninsula,

**The First  
Great  
Battle.**

After two or three hot skirmishes, when he tried the mettle of his soldiers, Wellington entered upon his first great Peninsula battle at Vimiera, when Junot, with a large and splendid army, marched from Lisbon to meet him. The news that the enemy was on the move came at midnight, when Wellington, with his entire staff, were found like so many schoolboys—sitting back to back on a long table in the rough quarters they occupied, “swinging their legs!”

There is no space here to describe the battle of Vimiera in detail. Wellington, with a flash of genius, saw the weak point in his enemy's disposition, and took advantage of it with lightning speed. His men fought, everyone, like a hero. A single company of the 26th Dragoons charged the entire French army when it was broken by the stubborn onslaught of Kellerman's Grenadiers. Ferguson, a fiery Scotsman, led the 36th, 40th, and 71st Regiments in a bayonet charge, which broke a French column into fragments. Prodigies of valour were performed on both sides, but the French army, never beaten before, tasted the bitterness of defeat utter and irremediable. It would have been more complete had it not been for the fact that Wellington, in the hour of victory, was superseded by another general, Sir Henry Burrard, who had been appointed chief-in-command, and arrived on the scene in time to stop the pursuit of the retreating army in spite of Wellington's protests.

Burrard himself was superseded the following morning by Sir Hew Dalrymple, and thus in the course of thirty hours the astonished British army had undergone three changes of command! The French made proposals for a truce, which Dalrymple, who had more caution than energy, accepted. It resulted in the Convention of Cintra, by which the French were to evacuate Portugal, and with all artillery, arms, and baggage to be transported in British ships to France.

The news of this convention was received with a storm of wrath by Great Britain. Dalrymple, Burrard, and Wellington were court-martialled, with the result, however, that Wellington himself came through it with a heightened reputation.

**A Glorious  
Retreat.**

It was upon General Moore that the brunt of the war was now to fall. This gallant soldier, with a force of some thirty thousand troops, was ordered to advance into Spain and to co-operate with the Spanish generals

who led the national armies against the forces of France. Advance he did, but he found Spanish generals and Spanish armies to be as much use in warfare as Spanish onions.

Moore found himself at Salamanca absolutely alone in the very lion's jaws. Napoleon himself, with an enormous French army, was ready to pounce upon him with irresistible and annihilating force, and from the other directions other French armies were converging upon him under Marshals Soult, Junot, and Lefevre. There was nothing to do save retreat, but Moore's retreat was more glorious than many a victory.

From 25th December to 22nd January, from Salamanca to Corunna, he fought a rearguard action against superior forces, marching through a track of savage hills, with incessant tempests raging, with every stream swollen and every ravine choked with snow, marching by day and night, never pausing, never resting, starving, sleepless, frozen, with bloody feet and fever-stricken bodies, leaving the dead and dying on the way, but marching ever onwards, and fighting always with the enemy that thundered in their rear.

At Corunna Moore made a stand, and Soult attacked him with twenty thousand troops and a strong body of artillery, against his fourteen thousand half-starved men with only nine six-pounders. The battle was a terrible one, but Soult's army was shattered by the ferocious onslaughts of the British. Moore was mortally wounded in the hour of victory, but died happy at having struck a hard blow at Napoleon's army and saved his own from destruction.

Napoleon had pledged himself "to plant his eagles on the towers of Lisbon," but having to turn aside to crush Moore, his plans had been hindered, and, tired of a war which did not suit his particular genius, he left Spain in the hands of his marshals while he went to gain more dazzling triumphs in Austria.

For six months the British Government remained inactive, ruefully considering the vast sums of money and enormous war supplies with which they had aided the Spaniards to make headway against the French, but with practically no result. In a memorandum dated 9th March 1809 Wellington stated that Portugal "might be defended, whatever the result of the contest of Spain." He advised that Portuguese troops should be subjected to a rigorous training under British leadership, and with thirty thousand British troops not only could Portugal be held, but the French power in Spain be shaken. Wellington's judgment

was accepted, and on 22nd April 1809 he landed at Lisbon, to begin a fresh and glorious campaign.

**The Great Campaign.** There is now but one long record of British victories gained by Wellington's consummate generalship, but no less by the bull-dog courage of Tommy Atkins and the chivalrous, gallant leadership of British officers. At Talavera, Wellington, with a force of twenty-one thousand, and thirty guns, joined by twenty-eight thousand Spaniards, faced an army of fifty thousand French veterans, with another army of equal proportions on his rear and flank.

The Spaniards behaved as usual with a mingled display of arrogance and cowardice, so that Wellington ran imminent risk of being crushed between two armies numbering together over one hundred thousand men. The battle was one of the fiercest in the annals of war. The British infantry, who for the most part had been recently drafted from the Militia, were found to surpass the finest French veterans in dash and fighting qualities. The story of the battle is replete with heroic episodes on either side, but Wellington was victorious, although he lost in killed and wounded nearly a third of his men, while the French army, under the Emperor Joseph himself, was shattered into impotency.

But though one army was defeated, the French could still hurl overwhelming forces against the British, and Wellington needed all his strategy to escape annihilation. In a retreat, during which he fought a prolonged and gallant rearguard action, he fell back on the lines of Torres Vedras, pursued closely by the French army under Massena.

These famous "lines" had been constructed by Wellington on the basis of two ranges of rugged hills which stretch across the Peninsula, at the top of which stands Lisbon. For nearly a year previously British soldiers, under expert engineers, had been constructing successive lines of defence until they formed a stupendous and impregnable citadel. So silently and secretly had the work been done that no whisper of it had reached the enemy, and when Massena found himself checked by these fortifications, behind which Wellington's army had taken cover, he was as full of surprise as of rage.

For many weeks Massena waited and watched outside the lines of Torres Vedras, hoping to starve out his enemy. But his own troops were being starved at the same time, for Wellington had desolated the country. At last, by the grim

logic of empty stomachs, the French army was forced to raise the siege and retreat to Santarem.

Wellington had triumphed, and he was quick to follow up his advantage. There is no space to give even an outline of this great Peninsula campaign, but the names of Albuera, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, and Vittoria comprise the roll-call of great victories which one by one shattered Napoleon's armies, which gave to Spain its freedom, and broke the fetters of Europe.

Encouraged by these British triumphs, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, Portugal and Spain rallied round Great Britain against the common foe. More speedily than he had risen to power Napoleon fell from his high estate, and at last, after his irreparable defeat at Leipsic, he found himself without resources, and was forced to resign his throne. The "Golden Eagle" was sent to fret in banishment on the Isle of Elba, and for a while there was peace. But it did not last long. In March 1815 Napoleon escaped from Elba and landed at Cannes, in the south of France. In a short time the Emperor gathered round him a great army of veterans whom he had led to victory in a hundred fights, and who were ready once more to face the combined armies of the world in his defence.

On 18th June 1815 took place the last act in the great drama. It was at Waterloo, near Brussels, that Napoleon made his last stand, and the army to oppose him in his last desperate attempt to coerce Europe under his iron heel was under the command of Wellington. On that famous Sunday the great battle began which was to decide the destiny of nations. The "Iron Duke" was as calm as if he were on the parade ground, and his undaunted courage and resolution inspired his officers and men with equal confidence.

The French army numbered seventy-one thousand nine hundred men, whereas Wellington had under his command sixty-seven thousand men, of whom more than half were Belgians, Dutch, and other foreigners. Many of these Belgian troops fled from the field at the first whiff of grape-shot, but the British regiments, composed though they were of many young soldiers who had never been under fire before, fought with superb bravery. The officers led their men with a gallantry which has never been surpassed, and every soldier did his duty that day with the consciousness that his country depended on him.

**"King-  
making  
Waterloo."**

Nor were the French less courageous. With unabated ardour they attacked the British infantry time after time, to be beaten back by the volleys of British musketry, the fire of British cannon. Again and again the French cavalry who had won glory in a hundred fights charged with fury upon the British squares, but time after time they were shattered against the impenetrable ranks of the British infantry.

At last the Emperor, with one more desperate effort, ordered a final attack to be made by the whole of his Old Guard, the flower of his army. With glorious valour these hardy veterans strove to turn the tide of battle, but they could not prevail against the British squares, and they too were shattered and driven back.

Then Wellington saw that victory was within his grasp, and he ordered an advance of the whole army. The British cavalry swept upon the disordered masses of the retreating French, and the British infantry drove home with the bayonet. At this point of the battle Marshal Blucher arrived with his Prussians, and the French defeat was completed.

Napoleon escaped from the field of battle, but was afterwards captured and sent to the island of St. Helena, where he was confined till his death. All his mighty conquests had crumbled into nothingness, and the great forces which had been let loose by the French Revolution, and diverted into the overmastering ambition of one man, were pressed back and kept within bounds by the dauntless courage of British sailors and British soldiers, supported by the indomitable spirit of the nation behind them.

In rejoicing over Napoleon's downfall, however, it must not be forgotten that in the beginning the Revolution was the righteous uprising of a people against aristocratic and monarchical tyranny, and that Europe, in spite of the Napoleonic wars, and in some countries because of them, owes not a little of what democratic liberty it possesses to the spirit of the French Republic.

PART VIII

THE SCIENCE OF MIND



1. The Meaning of Psychology.

I HAVE devoted much space, not only in this volume but in my previous book, *Knowledge is Power*, to many branches of thought applied to literature, science, and art, with now and again a little homely philosophy wedged in, and it is now time, I think, to put before my readers a few facts which lie behind all these things, and which relate to thought itself. In other words, I propose to give a few explanations of the science of mind.

**The Importance of the Science.** Psychology, which means neither more nor less than what I have called "the science of mind," is of extreme value as a study, not only because it is highly interesting to understand some of the laws which govern the world of thought, but because this understanding leads to practical results of importance to the advancement of mankind, especially as regards methods of education and the deep problems of religion and morality.

It can hardly as yet be called an exact science, because, being still in the experimental stage, there are many gaps in our knowledge which require filling in, and controversialists are still waging war over the very foundations upon which any future structure must be built. Nevertheless, although, as in the case of evolution, much is doubtful and much remains to be discovered, we have explored enough to reveal many things that

were formerly mysteries regarding the workings of the mind, and to give encouragement for the future of a science upon which depends the extent to which the veil can be drawn aside which hides "me" from myself.

**The Body and the Mind.** To a considerable extent the study of psychology is dependent upon a knowledge of physiology—the science of mind upon the science of body. One of the extreme difficulties when beginning the study of psychology is to realise how absolutely the laws of mind are dependent upon those of the body, and yet how absolutely distinct they are; or, in other words, that what we call the mind is dependent upon, but not the same thing as, the brain.

Experiment teaches us that there are three great laws which govern the workings of the mind. Or, to put it in another way, before one can be said to think, three stages in the process are necessary. The first of these is sensation, which in scientific knowledge is called knowing; the second, sensibility, or consciousness of pleasure and pain; and the third, willing. Neither of these stages of thought is independent of the other, and each is of immensely complicated character, as we shall see hereafter. But if we consider sensation, without which no thought is possible, we shall find that it is dependent entirely upon physiological conditions, of which the nervous system is the chief factor.

**The Nervous System.** The human brain consists of a group of compact masses known as nerve centres lying within the bony covering of the skull, connected with outlying parts of the body by thread-like ramifications known as the nerves. These nerves consist of bundles of minute white fibres, and are divided into two classes with different functions. The first kind are connected at the end farthest from the brain with some sensitive structure like the skin, the mucous membrane of the stomach, or the membrane of the eye, etc. By outward agencies, such as light, heat, pressure, and so on, these nerves are excited, or, in scientific language, stimulated, and they convey this nervous action to the nerve centre of the brain. They are therefore called "afferent" or in-carrying nerves, and sometimes by another term easier to remember—sensory nerves.

The nerves of the second class are connected, not with any exterior structure of the body but with the muscles, and it is

their duty to convey nervous action from the nerve centres to those muscles, thereby directing, or, as it were, ordering their movements. They are therefore called "efferent," or out-carrying nerves, or, to use a simple term, by which they are sometimes known, motor nerves.

Now, all nervous energy makes a complete circuit. **The Nerve-Circuit.** The end, or what is known as the peripheral point, of the sensory nerve is stimulated, and that stimulus is carried to a nerve cell, from which it emerges down a motor nerve to produce an action in one of the muscles. Or, to give an illustration by means of a parable: The nervous system is like a man-of-war in action, surrounded by signalling cruisers. These cruisers are like the sensitive ends of the nerves, which record certain impressions of the outer world. By means of signals they convey these impressions to the captain in the conning tower, which represents the brain. That officer presses an electric button, which conveys a message down the wire (corresponding to a motor nerve) to the engine rooms or the gun battery (representing the muscles). The message is then translated into immediate action, either in the firing of a gun or the manœuvring of the vessel. But, to carry the parable still further, it is not always necessary for the signals to go direct to the captain. They may be received by the first-lieutenant on the quarter-deck, and by him the orders may be transmitted to the engine room. That is to say, the nerve-circuit may be a short one, as in the case of certain nervous actions which do not require any brain power to direct them. It has been proved, for instance, that shortly after an animal has had its head cut off its nerves are capable of being excited or stimulated with the effect of creating muscular action.

This elementary notion of the nervous system is **The Child-Mind.** sufficient to help one to understand that impressions or sensations of the mind are dependent upon the nerves. And these impressions are the first foundations of thought. A new-born child is a mere pulp compounded of flesh and nerves, and its first education is the registering of impressions which have no meaning. Light, sound, movement, touch, taste, stimulate the sensory nerves, are carried to the nerve centres, and are converted into action through the medium of the motor nerves by the contraction or expansion of muscles.

But along with these sensations there is sensibility. That is to say, the child feels pleasure or pain in regard to certain sensations. Warmth, light, soft touches, sweet sounds, are pleasing; the natural food, above all, is a pleasure soon realised, and lack of it, or hunger, a pain.

**The Will.** Therefore volition, or willing, is also quickly learnt in its elementary form; for the child learns to wish for, or to will, those things which give it pleasure, and when it has reached this stage is on its road to thought. For, as I have said, to know (or to receive impressions, which scientifically is the same thing), to feel, and to will, comprise the three stages necessary for thought.

But whereas the first of these stages is to a certain extent involuntary, the last is a matter of complicated evolution, and has a profound influence upon the second stage—that of sensibility.

**Analysis and Attention.** It is the will or the desire which is the chief stimulus to thought, and its first effect is to cause the mind to analyse its emotions or sensations. A child, for instance, desires to be warm, to be fed, to be caressed. It does not desire, or, to make the verb active, it dislikes to be cold, to be hungry, or to be roughly handled. This teaches it discrimination or analysis. By frequent repetition of sensations it learns to distinguish the pleasurable from the painful.

The will also teaches attention, which is a very necessary element of thought. A sweet taste, or a sweet sound, or a pretty colour, is attended to because the mind wishes its continuance. The impression received is therefore far stronger, and a strong impression is but another name for memory.

**Reflection.** Another stage is reached in a child's development when it possesses memory, for the process of analysis between its sensations as they happen is now adapted to the analysis of the images of those sensations. In other words, the child has learnt to reflect.

For instance, he sees a woman in the same room with him. Repeated impressions of a woman with fair hair, blue eyes, pale cheeks, soft white hands, a low voice, and with many other attributes that have been impressed upon the child's mind, tell him that this is she whom later on he will learn to call by the

name of mother. Therefore, when another woman is presented to him, by a process of analysis which he has now reached he decides that as this person's attributes are quite different to those with which he is familiar, she cannot possibly be the one whom he will afterwards know as mother.

In the same way, by slow analysis of emotions, the child first learns his own "ego," his own individuality. **Knowledge of Self.** Having registered a number of elementary impressions of sound, sight, touch, etc., without having any notion of his own personality, the child gradually learns to connect these impressions with one being. He sees that when he stretches out a little hand it touches a little foot, and the foot feels that touch; thereby he receives two impressions—that of touching and being touched. If he touches something outside himself he only receives one impression. So with tasting and smelling, and other actions of the senses, which by degrees reveal the child to himself.

The experiences which the child goes through are elaborated and multiplied to an almost illimitable extent as its mind develops, and it is with the examination of that elaboration that psychology is concerned.

In these preliminary pages I have but given the vaguest notion of the science, and have taken much for granted that will need further explanation, but I have cleared the ground sufficiently to follow on with a more detailed study of the subject.

## 2. The Structure of Thought.

In my last little study on this subject I think I made it clear that the mind is dependent upon the body. There can be no thought if there are no sensations, and these are caused by what I may call the mechanism of the body. It cannot be too clearly understood that the mind is not a mysterious "thing" located in the brain and above all laws of nature, but that it is intimately connected with the working of the body.

**Objective and Subjective.** Nevertheless, the laws of the mind are above those of the body although dependent upon them. In studying psychology we have to deal mainly with subjective questions, and have but little to do with

things of objective interest. To explain this distinction, a simple example will suffice. For instance, if I see a little gutter-urchin clamber behind a cab, and wait to see the cabby respond to the "Whip behind!" of a passer-by, I am merely regarding that episode from an objective point of view. But if I inquire why a gutter-urchin should desire to perch in a very uncomfortable position behind a passing vehicle, and why the cabman should get into a rage about it, I am considering the subjective side of the episode. The objective world is made up of things, causes, actions; the subjective world, of sensations, thoughts, feelings, motives, and moods.

Having in our last study got a fairly clear idea of the functions of the body, the nervous system, and the methods by which sensation of sights and sound, etc., are communicated to the brain, we may occupy ourselves by inquiring into the use to which the brain puts them, and by following out this inquiry we are able to trace the structure of thought.

**Per-  
ceptions.** The first use to which sensations are put is to form what in scientific language are called perceptions. A perception, although an elementary mental process, is one requiring some experience. A new-born child, looking at an orange, we will say, is affected by certain sensations of form and colour, but does not "perceive" the orange.

Again, when it hears a bell ring, it is affected by the sensation of sound, but does not "perceive" the sound. When we are able to refer a sensation of sound to a particular direction in space, say, for example, at our left hand, and to a particular object, say to a bell, and when we are able to refer sensations of colour and form to a certain object, say an orange, in a certain place, then we are said to have perceptions of those objects.

Although it is difficult for us to realise that a perception is considerably in advance of a sensation, so immediately, so instantaneously, does it come to us, it is, as I have said, acquired only by considerable experience. As Professor Sully says, "An infant in the first weeks of life betrays no sign of recognising the bodily seat of his sensations of hot and cold, or the direction of sounds. Perception is probably aided from the first by definite inherited tendencies; but it is only fully developed through the processes of individual experience."

Simple though it may seem to us when we hear the sound of a bell and are able to localise it with a particular bell on a

particular table, a great deal of knowledge is necessary to help us to this conclusion.

In the first place, we recognise the direction of the sound, and to do so necessitates a lengthy experience, during which a child is analysing, comparing, and experimenting with a multitude of sound-sensations that are constantly reaching us from every direction. Secondly, we "objectify" the bell itself, or, in other words, perceive it, and this also requires an experience in the measurement of space, in colour-sensations, and shape.

**The Knowledge of Space.** The idea and knowledge of space require in themselves a considerable experience and training. They are acquired only by the senses of touch and sight, the first being most important in the early stages of knowledge, and the latter being infinitely more extensive in scope, and better adapted for most purposes, as soon as the elementary lessons of space have been learnt. But in early life touch is one of the most valuable of senses, teaching the bulk, figure, hardness, and actual characteristics of things, as well as their position in space.

To a very young child space is almost an unknown quantity. It will stretch its hands out for a thing ten feet away, not knowing that it is beyond its reach, and it is only by continually finding that some things are beyond and other things within its reach that it begins to learn the relations of space.

To return, then, to our explanation of a perception, this experience of space is of considerable importance in relation to the faculty of perception. When we perceive a bell, among other things which experience teaches us is that if we move our arm in a certain direction or move our body in that direction we shall touch the object we are perceiving.

**Visual Perception.** It is more difficult to explain the process of visual perception, because the eye is governed by the most delicate of physiological conditions, and its mechanism and nervous system would require lengthier exposition than is possible here; but it may be said that by the various nervous sensations and muscular movements of the eyes one acquires a knowledge of space and direction.

For instance, to see an object to the left of us, the eyes have to practise a distinct and perceptible muscular exertion in that direction. Again, objects at a distance do not affect either the

nervous senses or the muscular control of the eyes so intensely as those near at hand, and an experience of these differences helps one to get a more or less accurate notion of spacial relations.

Having got so far, we can now reach another stage in the structure of thought, and one which we may call reproductive imagination. To understand this, it is necessary to learn one of the laws of the mind which is accepted by all psychologists as founded on experience—namely, that all perceptions, whether of sight, hearing, touch, or any other kind, tend to persist beyond the moment when the sensory stimulus ceases.

For instance, if we look fixedly at a bright object and then shut our eyes, we have a distinct “after-image” of that object. And if we listen with attention to some clear sound, it “rings in our ears,” to use a popular but quite scientific expression, some moments after the sound-waves have ceased. By this means many sights and sounds become impressed upon our brain more clearly than if the visual or auditory impression were, to use a colloquialism, wiped out directly the stimulus to the nervous system, or, in other words, directly the actual hearing or seeing, had stopped. This is a great aid to memory, or, to use a more comprehensive phrase, to reproductive imagination.

**Laws of Association.** In my introduction to this subject I gave a few explanatory words on the meaning of memory, and showed how it was built up by sensation, attention, repetition, and analysis. But another great factor of memory is suggestion. It is held by all psychologists that the revival of images or ideas is dependent in all cases upon certain laws of suggestion, or, as they are often termed, laws of association.

It is an interesting experiment to prove these laws by introspective study; that is to say, examine into the origin of a number of ideas that pass or have passed through your brain, and you will find that in nearly all cases one idea has been suggested by or associated with another. In those cases where the association may not be recognised it is often because it is not so apparent.

For instance, here is a train of associated ideas. I look in a jeweller's shop and see a string of pearls. I immediately think of Queen Elizabeth, who was so fond of that gem. My thoughts then fly to Haddon Hall, where I saw Queen Elizabeth's bedroom two summers ago.

That reminds me how a crowd of Cockney tourists disturbed

my pleasure by their facetious rowdiness, and I find myself wishing that the English language were better taught in the London Board Schools. From that reflection I pass on to a consideration of the new Education Bill for London. Now, unless this association of ideas were traced out step by step, it would at first seem impossible that the sight of a string of pearls should cause me to ponder over an Education Bill.

**Analysis of Association.**

The laws of association are analysed into certain processes which need not detain us, such as the law of contiguity, as, for instance, the remembrance of a person's presence called up by the sound of his name; the suggestion of similars, where a likeness of one thing to another suggests that other, as, for instance, if we meet a man with a scar on his right cheek he may remind us of someone else with the same disfigurement; and suggestion by contrast, when, for instance, as it is said, black suggests white, poverty makes us think of wealth, and so on.

So much, then, for reproductive imagination, that is, the bringing back of images to the mind which have once been stimulated by the perceptions of the actual objects.

**Thought-Conception.**

We now come to a higher stage of the thought process—that of conception. Previously we have been occupied with the perception, imagination, and reproduction of particular objects. But higher than this is the abstract thought of general ideas, scientifically called “concepts.”

Those who read my articles on Language will remember how I made it clear that long before mankind learnt to express abstract ideas they were able to give names to particular things. In certain languages, for instance, there are terms for many kinds of trees, but none for “tree” itself; names for different animals, but none for “animal” as a general idea.

So it is in the science of mind. Children are familiar with particular things and persons long before they can think of them in the abstract. And it is only the most highly trained brains who are able to think in the general ideas such as are necessary for exact scientific study. To do so requires still further analysis and comparison of sensations, perception, or reproductions (or memory-images). It is necessary to have an acute comprehension of likenesses, contrasts, and differences, and subtle complexities of likeness-in-differences, and contrast-in-

resemblance, so that by experience of a number of particular objects conceptions are formed in which a general idea sums up all differences.

### 3. The Emotions.

So far in my examination of our thought-processes I have left out of account one of the most important elements of all grades of thought from the comparatively simple conceptions of the child to the most advanced reasoning of the philosopher.

**Sense-Emotions.** Emotion may be divided into the two general terms of pleasure and pain. In their simpler states they are what we may call sense-emotions. That is to say, our physical organism is affected by certain outward conditions which react upon our nervous system. Hunger and thirst are simple sense-emotions, a deprivation of food and water causing certain changes in our vital forces and muscular system, which have an irritating action upon our nerves, and are interpreted by our brain as painful sensations.

Heat and cold when excessive cause certain familiar sense-emotions of a painful character. A pinch, a blow, a sting, a sudden physical shock, are other sensations of pain with which everyone becomes acquainted very early in his life experience, and, according to that popular wisdom which very often expresses in familiar language subtle truths which advanced science confirms, the terms for these elementary sense-emotions are used for emotions of more purely mental character, as when we talk of a "striking" truth, or of "cold" criticism, or of a "heated" debate, the emotion in each case containing a distinct reproductive image of the primary emotion implied.

In the same way the simpler forms of pleasure are entirely sensuous. Warmth of body, soft caressing touches, bright colours, glittering objects, agreeable tastes, "sweet" sounds, etc., are states of emotion which commend themselves most strongly to the primitive intelligence.

**Complex Emotions.** At first sight (to use a convenient colloquialism) it does not seem that the higher emotions, such as fear, love, hate, etc., have any connection with the primary sense-emotions, but if we analyse them carefully we find that to a very considerable extent they owe their origin to the former.

Take the case of fear. There would be no such emotion but for previous experience of pain. "The burnt child dreads the fire." On the other hand, young children who have been carefully guarded from painful experiences of this character would plunge their hands into a bright flame with an anticipation of delight. Some children are utterly fearless with animals, the reason being in most cases that they have never been bitten, and have never been taught to anticipate being bitten when approaching dogs and other creatures. The child who is afraid of a dog has either experienced the pain of a bite, or his imagination, prompted by suggestions of his guardians, conjures up such a pain.

Fear, therefore, in these cases is anticipation of pain based on experience or imagination (which, as I have explained previously, is a product of experience), in each case the anticipation causing a sense-emotion corresponding, however faintly, to the original experience of pain.

Of course there are other and more complicated forms of fear, such as the fear of disgrace, the fear of losing a friend, etc. ; but whatever form fear may take it is never without a basis of sense-emotion, and actually causes a painful change in our physiological conditions, the outward signs of which may take the form of weeping, clutching of the hands, palpitation of the heart, hard breathing, etc.

In the same way, love is primarily based upon sense-emotions of a pleasurable character. The child's love for its mother is a complex emotion based upon experience of nutrition, caressing warmth, gentle words, and general attention to its physical needs.

**Pleasure and Pain.** If we examine into the conditions of sense-emotion productive of pleasure and pain, we shall find a general rule which may almost be formulated into a law. It is this: that pleasure is only to be had when sense-emotion is moderate, and that all excess of emotion, and the lack of it when desired, results in pain.

A light may be pleasurable at a certain degree of brightness, but becomes distinctly painful when increased in intensity. So also with a sound, which if of moderate loudness may be agreeable, but if increased in volume is literally overwhelming. Excess of emotion resulting in pain also includes a prolongation of emotion beyond the moderate limit. To listen to music for

two or three hours may be delightful, but after that period there comes—to most persons, at least—a dulness of sensation entailing a loss of interest; and if prolonged considerably, this weariness of mind becomes a positive pain. The same effect is often to be noted in visiting a picture gallery. One enters the first few rooms with extremely pleasurable emotion, but after a while there comes that dulling of one's sensations, so that after a couple of hours many a visitor leaves the gallery a mental "wreck."

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the pain produced by an unsatisfied desire for emotion. To feel hungry and to have no food, to want to smoke and to have no "baccy," to crave an hour's read and to have no book, to desire to see a friend and to know that the ocean divides you, are various forms of pain.

**The Value of Contrast.** Contrast of emotion is one of the chief causes of pleasure and pain. Some of the old philosophers made out that pleasure is merely absence of pain, and in some cases this is true enough. For instance, the mere cessation of toothache after a period of nerve-torture produces a state of mental bliss.

When a barrel organ, which has been grinding out "The last rose of summer," goes round a corner to rack your neighbour's nerves, your self-satisfaction is extremely pleasurable. Still there is such a thing as active pleasure for music, and all forms of art are not merely "cessation of pain," but are the expression and the presentation of pleasurable emotion.

Contrast of pleasure, however, is as valuable as the contrast between pleasure and pain, and it is the opposite, and the practical remedy of the prolongation of emotion previously alluded to. This rule of psychology should be remembered by educationists and students. The dulling of sensations by excess of one class of sensation is the sign for a new class of sensations to be brought in which will stimulate the brain again.

**The Strength of Habit.** There is, however, another antidote to this excess of sense-emotion. And that is habit. Habit is often productive of strength to the nervous and muscular system, and therefore the mental sensations produced thereby may be longer supported.

In the same way that after a week's training a man may walk twenty miles with ease when at the outset ten tired him out, so

a habit of reading, or painting, or listening to music, develops the strength of the sensory nerves, so enabling his mind to give its full attention to such occupations for a considerable time without that dulness of sensation which such a prolongation of labour would have at first occasioned.

**Emotion  
and the  
Will.**

Having now, I hope, gained some idea of the laws of emotion, the next consideration is their effect upon what we call abstract thought.

Even the highest forms of thought are dependent upon the will. That is to say, if I think out a problem, or a poem, or an oration, it is because I "will" to do so. If I think out a scheme which results in noble action, or one resulting in ignoble action, it is because I "will." Now, what is Will? It is mainly classified emotion. The human mind is the battleground of conflicting emotions, and what we call Will is the conquering emotion which treads the others under its heel.

Love of pleasure, hatred of pain, are the two most prominent emotions of the human mind. But one man's pleasure is often another's pain. For instance, it might be very painful to me to steal a watch out of a jeweller's shop. The fear of punishment in this world and the next, the fear of self-shame and of public degradation, would deter me. But another man might be filled with extreme pleasure if he stole the same watch. In his case the emotion conjured up by the thought of a good dinner or a long drink would defeat the emotion of fear of detection and of punishment, while the fear of moral degradation is not an emotion which enters into his brain at all.

The man who climbs the mountain in spite of cold and hunger and fatigue, does so because the anticipated emotions of pleasure at the feat conquer the present emotions of suffering. So also the student who eschews delights and lives laborious days, does so partly because the anticipated pleasure of the future is a stronger emotion than the pain of severe study, partly also because by habit study becomes in itself a pleasure, and indolence a pain.

#### 4. Emotion and Human Nature.

It is no doubt a little humiliating to the person who has been apt to consider that his intellect is supreme over the mechanism

of the mind to realise how profound is the influence of the emotions. In my last study on this subject I sketched out some of the principles by which the emotions operate, but in concluding this short series on psychology I find it necessary to elaborate my statements.

**Emotional Appetites.** It is indisputable that all our thought-processes are tinged with emotion. The greatest psychologists of modern times, men widely differing in their views in many respects—Descartes, Schopenhauer, Bain, and Spencer—are unanimous in stating that the human mind is subject to many emotional cravings or appetites. In their elementary stages they are merely sensuous, but they are developed by habit (education) and hereditary instinct into complex emotions of a high order, involving many abstract thought-processes of which the chief are memory, imagination, and “intellection” (by which is meant analysis, comparison, and classification), having for their ultimate object the avoidance of pain and the procuring of pleasure.

**The Craving for Activity.** One of the most important emotional appetites is that of activity. Human nature has an abundance of energy, which seeks to express itself in action. Self-repression is always painful, self-expression pleasurable.

In children and savages we see the effect of this inherent emotion in its elementary forms. A healthy child is always noisy. It expresses its pleasurable emotions by shouting, laughing, jumping, running, for no other motive than to find an outlet for its abundant energy. And its painful emotions are expressed in an equally noisy manner, though in different style. The mere expression of such painful emotion is often in itself a pleasure, as when women find intense relief in shedding tears, and an enjoyment in witnessing a tragic piece at the theatre, so that they may have “a good cry.”

**Art and Passion.** It is desire for active expression which is the motive of all forms of play, and art—which to a large extent is a development of play. Dancing, singing, painting, acting, and so on, have all originated from the desire of expressing sensuous emotions. Even in their higher stages, the pleasure derived from them is very largely due to the activity of thought and emotion excited by them.

Passion, which is intense emotion, is often exceedingly pleasurable for the time being, because it arouses activity of mind and body. Anger, hatred, love, and joy set in motion certain organic forces, and their excited action is distinctly enjoyable. The nervous energy of the body acts upon the mind, which is stimulated by the sudden access of activity.

It has often been remarked that people generally unintelligent become suddenly quick-witted and eloquent when moved by these emotions of love, anger, etc. Yet if indulged in to excess human nature pays the penalty of reaction, and habitual fits of passion are generally followed by languor and exhaustion. For this reason "demonstrative" people are generally condemned as having no great depth of character, because their emotions are almost exhausted by the vigorous expression of them; and, on the other hand, people of reserved nature have a store of pent-up energy which, when roused by some sudden stimulus, such as hate or love, may sometimes break bounds and sweep everything before them.

**The Selfishness of Sympathy.** Among the emotions of most benefit to humanity is that of sympathy. In its origin it is egotistic, the individual craving attention, appreciation, and help from those about him. But it is developed by imagination, which permits a person to understand the sufferings, joys, and needs of his neighbour.

But even at this stage there is a large element of selfishness. Imagination of another person's suffering is sufficiently disagreeable to ourselves to induce us to alleviate those sufferings not for the sake of the sufferer but for our own, and the pleasure we get in imagining somebody else's joy is a sufficient inducement for us to share, as it were, the mental condition of that person. This is very exactly expressed in the derivation of the word to "sympathise," which means "to feel with." Sympathy, therefore, is to a certain extent selfishness—of the right kind.

**Religious Emotions.** Another emotion of immense importance to the human race is the religious state of mind. It is a very complex emotion, which, reduced to its primary stage, is based on the emotion of fear. The earliest forms of religion invariably have evil spirits for their deities, which have to be appeased by sacrifice and offerings, or tricked by charms and incantations.

But, later on, the element of love enters into the religious emotion. The naked, miserable savage sees only the awfulness of Nature, and his soul is affrighted ; but as he advances in culture of mind and body the beauty and the blessings of life fill him with gratitude. By the law of activity previously considered both fear and love must find expression, and the various forms of expression may be studied in the history of religion, with which I have now nothing to do.

The religious state of mind is not in itself moral. It is merely an emotion uncontrolled to any considerable extent by intellect. It is a well-known fact that grossly immoral people are often religiously emotional. And there have been and are many primitive religions actually inculcating the duty of immorality.

**Æstheticism.** Next in importance is the æsthetic emotion. The love of things beautiful is a part of our nature, though it varies enormously according to the organic characteristics, environment, and training of the individual.

The child and the savage love bright colours, tinkling sounds, the rhythm of the drum, simple and striking combinations of patterns, etc. Æstheticism is very largely sensuous even in its highest manifestations. A reverie by Chopin, an oil-painting by Raphael, a statue by Michael Angelo, a cathedral by Christopher Wren, a song by Albani, a court dress by Worth, a dinner at Prince's, are all essentially sensuous in their effect. The sight of a beautiful woman or of a handsome man is sensuous likewise—sensuous because proportion, form, colour, and movement have certain harmonies which appeal direct to the senses and create pleasurable emotions.

But in its higher stages æstheticism calls into play many other processes of thought and emotion, such as sympathy, imagination, introspection, and reflection, and sometimes arouses such states of mind as pity, grief, amusement, fear, or love. The emotion of beauty has as one of its elements the love of truth. Beauty is, indeed, but the expression of truth. A thing perfectly appropriate to its purposes is always beautiful.

**The Education of Emotion.** Without analysing further examples, I have said enough to show how human nature is largely made up of emotions. These are capable of being educated, and, to a certain extent, controlled. Being based upon the senses, they require the exercise of those senses

for their development. And they require also a wide range of experience for the purpose of comparison. People can have but rudimentary æsthetic emotions if they have seen but few things of beauty. Shakespeare expressed truth when he made Prospero chide his daughter for her admiration of the young stranger just landed on the island.

“Thou think’st there is no more such shapes as he,  
Having seen but him and Caliban : foolish wench !  
To the most of men this is Caliban,  
And they to him are angels.”

Emotions being largely sensuous in their origin, habit produces intensity of emotion just as it strengthens the senses. A person, therefore, who would desire not to be overmastered by passion—such as hatred or anger—must avoid the frequent exercise of that emotion. And, on the other hand, a habit of being cheerful produces a joyous disposition, which becomes a “second nature” in spite of “the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.” To a certain extent, therefore, we are masters of our emotions.

## PART IX

# ANCIENT RELIGIONS



### 1. Nature-Worship and Primitive Religion.

IN these days of ultra-civilisation, when even religion is apt to be a little too complex in its doctrines and too subtle in its arguments, it is refreshing, and not without profit, to look back at the earliest known spiritual beliefs of mankind, and to study the characteristics and evolution of primitive religion.

I think my readers will not grumble if, in the space of a few chapters, I put before them some facts about the ancient mythologies, and gossip a little about the folk-lore of nations. To my mind it is a most interesting branch of knowledge, not lacking in poetry and romance.

It will be well to begin with a few general remarks about the origin of Nature-worship, which is probably the first form of spiritual belief, and can be traced far back in the history of almost every race.

It is easy enough to see why this was so. The early men of the world were not without imagination. Indeed, like children, imagination was the form of intelligence soonest developed in them. A child feeds upon imagination. It endows everything around it with a spiritual personality. Its doll is not a dead thing. It gets tired, and wants putting to bed. It feels cold, and wants dressing. It even has moral qualities, and is sometimes a "bad doll" and sometimes a "good doll," and is punished or rewarded accordingly.

And so it is with other things. To a child a ball has a

wonderful and delightful gift of bouncing, and the quality of bounce is as much a part of its nature and endows it with as much life as a horse that neighs or a bird that sings. To a small child a boiling kettle, a ticking clock, a puffing train, is a thing as much alive and self-controlling as a human being.

**The Nursery of Early Man.** The psychology of the early man was much of the same kind, and he had not the advantage of wise grown-ups to teach him the truth about things. Only in the case of the early man, whom you may call a "savage" if you like, the objects around him were bigger and more impressive than those in the surroundings of the modern child, whose imagination is often bounded by the nursery door and his intelligence restricted by trivialities such as I have said—the ticking clock or the boiling kettle.

The nursery of the early man was in a little clearing open to the sky and bounded by great dark woods. Instead of the ticking clock his mind was directed to a golden ball of fire, which, as it rose above the woods upon the hillside, sent down shafts of quivering light which chased the dark shadows of night into the very heart of the forest, where they would hide until that glorious fire ball had made its daily journey through the sky, and went to bed somewhere on the other side of the hill.

As it disappeared the black bogies of the night would creep out of their lair, skulking from tree to tree, crawling up the hillside with long arms and feet, ready to rush back again if some last ray of the fire ball gave them chase, but finally filling the air and crowding into the plain in one dense mass of blackness.

**Terrors of the Darkness.** The early man was afraid of the shadows of night, and, like the modern child who hides his head beneath the bedclothes when the candle goes out, he would crawl into his mud hut, shuddering at unknown fears, or beneath the shelter of leaves and twigs.

But as soon as the first greyness of dawn announced the coming of a new day of light he would crawl out again, thrusting back all the horrors of the night, and he would stand with head erect gazing towards the east, stretching out his long hairy arms to welcome the messengers of the great ball of fire, his naked body rejoicing in the warmth which gradually stole through his veins as the sky glowed with quivering rays of gold and red and palest pink, a shout of joy coming from him as, at length, the

bright magnificence of the sun rose majestically above the forest.

And so, like the child with the ticking clock or the boiling kettle, it seemed to him that this ball of fire must have a living, intelligent, beneficent personality. And in course of time he called it the Sun-God, and gave to this glorious, all-powerful god the love and homage of his simple heart.

And those shadows of the night seemed also to be alive, and because he was afraid of them he hated them, and called them nasty names, such as bogies or devils; but being afraid of them, and knowing their power to fill his mind with black thoughts, did homage to them also with words of respect.

There were other things in the Nature-world which impressed the imagination of the early man. One of them was the wind, or rather the winds; for it seemed to him there were hundreds of thousands of wind creatures. He could hear them calling each other in the woods. Sometimes they were very angry, and seemed to be quarrelling with each other.

As he lay in his mud hut the hair upon his body would bristle as he heard them howling and growling, snarling and wailing, shrieking and screeching. Suddenly one of them, with a great and threatening roar, would bound through the forest, breaking down branches as he passed, sometimes tearing whole trees up by the roots, and a whole legion of winds would follow in his track, with wild and furious yells, until they would bound through the woods into the clearing, where the early man stood and shivered with fear. True, he could not see these winds; they were invisible. But he could see, too well, the wreck of his mud cabin when they had passed.

But there were other kinds of winds, amiable and gracious. They would sing little love-songs down among the rushes. They would gambol with each other playfully and gently, sometimes a little boisterously, but still good-humouredly.

They would scamper over the heads of the tall grasses with trailing skirts of invisibility. They would set all the leaves in the forest fluttering. They would whisper little secrets to the flowers, who would put their heads together listening intently, and they would steal a little of the flowers' fragrance to give it to the next passer-by.

And there were other winds, mournful and melancholy, who

**The Furies  
of the  
Wind.**

all night long would wail piteously, like maidens weeping for their dead lovers, or mothers moaning after the first-born infant buried beneath the mound of stones.

So the early man's imagination was stirred with each passing wind, and as he learnt their different characters he gave them different names, and they became to him furies, or goddesses, or devils.

**Water-Nymphs and Wood-Nymphs.** Then there was the river, with its water ever flowing from some unknown source to some unknown sea. What mysterious life was in it which kept it ever thus moving onwards? What beautiful being was it who lived beneath its crystal roof? Perhaps it was peopled with many water-creatures, some of them cruel and some kind.

Sometimes cruel hands would rise out of the river to drag some man or woman into its depths, never to yield them up, or, if to yield them up, then dead as the floating log. But often the river would be smiling and every little ripple would be merry. And the early man, plunging in shoulder-deep, would love the liquid embrace of those laughing waters, and coming out would love to see their gem-like drops glistening in the sun upon his hair.

But it was not good to go down to the waters' edge at twilight or in the early morning. For then one would often see pale, white ghost-forms rising out of the river and creeping away to the woods. Ah! surely there were many strange beings in the flowing water of the river! The spirit-world of the early man did not lack inhabitants.

It must not be forgotten, too, that he was very much nearer to Mother Earth and the children of Mother Earth than we are. He knew nothing of botany, but he did know how wonderful and beautiful and mysterious are the ways of plant-life. He saw the little seed shoot out its green leaf and grow into a sapling, and how this would wax strong and big and become a tall powerful tree with great far-stretching branches, and how it in turn would give forth seeds from which other generations of trees would be produced.

The early man did not see very much difference between himself and a tree. It had blood, it had skin, it had life itself. How was he to know that it had no intelligence, no soul as we call it now? To him it seemed—how could it help seeming?—

that whoever could live and die and bring forth children had indeed a mind and a will.

So the people of his imagination included the spirits of all things that grew, and wood-nymphs were no less real to him than water-nymphs. Lastly, there was the animal world.

**Worship of Animals.** The early man was not nearly so much the "lord of creation" as we may boast ourselves to be. He was not very far above the wolf, and perhaps a little lower than the lion. To live, he had to become one of the warriors in the battle of the woods, in which the bear, the snake, the wild boar, and many another savage beast could fight as well as he. He had to measure his courage against theirs, and did not always come out on top. He had to pit his wits against theirs, and often was outwitted. He knew them too well to despise them.

He knew the power of a bear's hug and the sharpness of a wolf's teeth, and the keenness of their smell, and the quickness of their hearing. He had learnt the laws of the woods. He had listened, hidden beneath the undergrowth, to the councils of the beasts. Here again he saw not very much difference between himself and them. They all belonged to the great family of Nature.

And so it seemed no loss of dignity to his manhood to give his respectful homage to the bear, or to indulge in hero-worship with a wild boar for his hero. He was, in fact, only too glad to get the protection of some great family of beasts, and to make a compact with them, which, under the name of "totemism," is in fact exactly what he did, as I shall have occasion to explain hereafter.

So now, in this short space, I have endeavoured to show the state of mind and the conditions of environment which resulted in the most ancient form of religion. In the next pages I will show how a great and complex pagan creed was built upon this primitive foundation.

## 2. The Greek Mythology.

In my preliminary discourse on this subject I endeavoured to show some of the influences which induce the uncultured mind of primitive man to believe in a world of Nature-gods. I

will now try to explain in a brief way some of the mysteries which underlie the elaborate myths of the ancient Greek religion.

This religion perplexed the minds of scholars for many centuries. Indeed, the Greek philosophers themselves, like Plato and Socrates, were at a loss to account for the origin and inner meaning of those extraordinary narratives of gods and goddesses which had been long enshrined in the popular imagination, and whom they were bound, by the laws of their State, to believe in as real spiritual beings. These wise old Greeks knew well enough that the adventures of Zeus and Apollo, of Aphrodite and Eros, of Orpheus and Eurydice, and of all the thousand and one characters of the old religion, were in some way or other allegories hiding some natural or spiritual truth, and were not to be accepted literally. But they had lost the key to them and could only dimly guess their significance. It was only the simple, ignorant Greeks who accepted as faithful religious history the host of tales about immortal—and in many cases exceedingly immoral—gods and goddesses who were said to people the heavens, the woods, the streams, and the mountains.

**Old Theories.** Modern scholars long sought in vain for a clue to the labyrinth of the old Greek mythology. There were some who thought that they were the mere fantastic inventions of poets and story-tellers handed down from generation to generation and at last believed in as actual facts. Others, thought that they were legends which had gradually grown about the memories of men and women who had lived and loved and fought and died in the very early days of Greece, and who by a process of ancestor-worship had been converted into "gods" and "goddesses" with the rank of immortality. Others, again, astonished and disgusted at the absence of morality and decency in the fictitious lives of these fictitious beings, who indulged in such extremely mixed marriage relations, who were often so full of lust and cruelty, and who committed crimes appalling to the minds of the most primitive intelligence, came to the conclusion that at some period far back in the history of Greece the imagination of the people must have been tainted by a wave of vicious sentiment, and that the animal nature being let loose, and all the base passions surging upwards, a religion of horrid profanities and indecencies had been evolved, at a later date somewhat refined with many beautiful and poetical additions, by more cultured and spiritual minds.

All these theories, however, have been dispelled in the light of modern research. It is due to that great scholar, the late Professor Max Müller, that we now know not a little about the evolution of the Greek mythology; and many of the stories which appear at first sight so gross and immoral are seen to be natural and beautiful allegories in their first conception.

Max Müller traced the history of the Greeks back to the source of their own and other sister races—to that Aryan people who in the early ages of the world lived a simple pastoral life in Asia Minor. By his wonderful system of comparison of living and dead languages, he identified the names of many of the gods and goddesses of Greece with those occurring in the Vedas or sacred writings in Sanskrit of the ancient Hindus; and further back still with root-names belonging to that mother of European languages, the Aryan tongue itself.

In the light of Max Müller's learned revelations, it becomes perfectly clear that the great gods and goddesses of Greece had their origin in the personification of those great powers of Nature, the Sun, the Moon, and the Wind, and in the changing characteristics of Nature, such as the Dawn, the Twilight, and the Sunset, which most impressed the imagination of primitive men.

**Language and Religion.** The laws of language had a remarkable influence upon early religion. Some time ago, when I gave a series of studies on Language, I pointed out how speech in its primitive forms is very simple and matter-of-fact, containing few words expressing abstract qualities or actions, but combining two names of common objects having different characteristics to denote some newly observed thing—such, for instance, as hippopotamus, the “river-horse.” In the same way, when language had progressed far enough to express human emotion and actions, such as loving and embracing, running and dancing, kissing and child-bearing, killing and dying, the same words were used in hundreds of cases where the same ideas were at all present.

This is the reason why primitive people always speak in an allegorical manner. Indeed, however refined and elaborate a language may become, it never wholly loses this characteristic. Even nowadays, for instance, we speak of a “dying” day, of “killing” time, of the sun “sinking to rest,” of water “running” downhill.

But, as I have said, in the early ages of the world these

“figures of speech,” as we call them, were far more numerous. They were, in fact, the only way in which early people thought and spoke of abstract ideas and states of nature.

**Early Metaphors.** Thus, for instance, when the first ray of sunlight flashed across the sky, and the faint half-lights of the early morning disappeared before the glory of the coming day, they said that “Apollo (the Sun) gave chase to Daphne (the Dawn), who died in his warm embrace”; or when the moon rose in the evening sky and the sun went down, they said that “the Moon rose upon her couch to greet the great Sun-God with a smile.” So also because the Dawn came after the darkness they said that it was “the daughter of Night,” and because the light of the sun dispelled the violet twilight of the morn the sun was said to have “devoured its mother, the Dawn.”

It is very easily imagined, therefore, that although this form of language was at first used as mere poetical imagery, it was a powerful incentive to the superstitious mind of the primitive man to people his world with spiritual beings. All he had to do, and what in course of time he could not help doing, was to interpret this language in a literal and concrete manner. This, then, is the key which to some extent unlocks the mysteries of mythology. Those extraordinary marriages between mothers and sons, sisters and brothers, those very complicated matrimonial establishments of the old gods which seem so devoid of morality, really meant nothing more in the first instance than the imagined relationship of one phase of nature to another, such as the hours being children of the day, the stars of the night, each day being born of the darkness and killing its own parent, and so on.

**The Meaning of Myths.** Thus, for instance, the Greeks said that Nyx (the Night) was the mother of the gloomy god Moros (Fate), and of the dark Ker (Destruction), of Thanatos (Death), of Hypnos (Sleep), of all the tribe of the Oneiroi (Dreams), of Mōmos (Blame), of Nemesis (Vengeance), of Philotes (Lust), of Eris (Strife), and of many other passionate and mighty gods. But this was merely the figurative way of saying that in the night the mind of man is prone to evil desires, and that he chooses the night for deeds of death and destruction; that the night also is the time of sleep, when the drowsy imagination is filled with strange dreams,

When the Greeks said that Uranus (heaven) covered the whole earth with his body when he lay down to sleep, it was a figurative way of describing the great dome of the sky, and the very word Uranus, derived from the Sanskrit Varuna, from an Aryan root, means nothing more or less than a "cover."

Some of the most beautiful Greek myths may be explained in this way.

Such a one is the pretty story of Endymion, the handsome boy who fell into a perpetual sleep upon Mount Latmos. His beauty was so surprising that it melted the cold heart of the goddess Silene, and every night she would come down to him and lie by his side, kissing him in his slumbers.

Now Endymion meant originally the setting sun, and Silene was the moon. Can we not imagine how the early Greeks used to watch with wonder and awe how the sun's last rays would flash their burnished gold upon the wooded heights of the Latmos hill, and how gradually fading away the sun would seem as it were to fall asleep? Then the pale moon would rise with trailing skirts of silver light, and the Latmos woods would shimmer in the soft effulgence, so that it would seem as if the moon were really caressing the sleeping sunset cradled in the trees. There is another myth, how Pan, the great god of flocks and shepherds, he with the horns and the goat's legs, was wooing the wood-nymph Pitys, when the furious Boreas, jealous of Pan, hurled Pitys from a rock, where falling she changed into a pine tree.

Now Pan was the personified character of the earth itself. Boreas was the north wind, and Pitys is the Greek name for a pine tree; so that the myth was really nothing more than the description of what might be seen any gusty day along the seashore of Greece.

**A Nature-story.** The beautiful myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is another Nature-story. It will be remembered how Eurydice, the beautiful wood-nymph, died from the bite of a serpent, and went to Hades, and how Orpheus, her husband, inconsolable at her loss, followed her into the dark abodes of the dead, playing his lyre, of which he was the first great master, with such ravishing strains that he soothed the torments of the damned and won back his wife from the most inexorable of all deities. But his prayer was only granted on one condition—that he should not look back upon his wife

until they regained the upper world. At the very moment, however, when they were about to pass the fatal bounds, the anxiety of love overcame poor Orpheus, and, looking round to see that Eurydice was following him, he beheld her caught back into the infernal regions.

Now the interpretation of this poetical myth is easily seen when one finds that Eurydice was one of many different names for the twilight, and that Orpheus was originally one of the Greek names for the "breaking day."

The serpent that killed Eurydice was the serpent of darkness, and Orpheus, going in search of her, brought her back for a few moments at that hour when the dark shadows of night are first dispelled by the early shimmering light of day. But as this morning twilight disappears in the blaze of the sun's glory, so Eurydice was dragged back into the eternal shades of death when Orpheus turned to look upon her.

### 3. The Spirit of Greek Mythology.

In the last pages on this subject I endeavoured to trace the origin of the old Greek religion to the influence of language upon ideas, the names of Nature objects and characteristics becoming personified in the popular imagination. This was an easy transition, because, as I have previously pointed out, the mind of primitive man was prone to invest with a spiritual character those natural phenomena such as light and darkness, mists and shadows, flowing water and growing plants, which to him were so marvellous and inexplicable.

The few examples I have already given are, however, insufficient to give a just idea of the natural basis upon which the Greek mythology was built, and the subject is so fascinating that I think my readers will consider it worth some further consideration.

**History and Legend.** If one analyses the classical mythology one finds that it divides itself into two very distinct parts, and what for sake of better names I may call early and late idealism. The late idealism is characterised by legends which could only have been evolved by a people having behind them some centuries of simple civilisation and heroic history. One finds a great number of gods and goddesses

presiding over the arts and sciences—such as Clio, the muse of History; Thalia, the muse of Comedy; Euterpe, the muse of Lyric Poetry; Melpomene, of Tragedy; Terpsichore, of Choral Dance and Song; Erato, of Erotic Poetry; Polymnia, of the Sublime Hymn; Urania, of Astronomy; and Calliope, of Epic Poetry. One finds also an immense number of mythical heroes, such as Hercules, Achilles, Paris, Agamemnon, Ulysses, Bellerophon, Perseus, and so on, who go through marvellous adventures under the protection of the gods.

But beneath and behind all these later legends there is an earlier idealism, simple and more beautiful, which really forms the foundation of the Greek religion. It is purely and simply a Nature-worship, the adoration of the great powers and beauties of Nature.

**The Early Greek.** The early Greek lived a pastoral and agricultural existence. He tended his flocks upon the hillside, he cultivated the golden corn in the plains. Mother Earth in the beautiful climate of Greece was kind to him, and gave him her fruits—the vine and the olive, the apple and the fig. Like all pastoral people, these early Greeks were often alone with Nature, and Nature is best studied and best loved in loneliness. The shepherd with his flock on the slopes of Olympus was filled with reverence and awe at the rising and setting of the sun. The winds played about him with pleasant music, and he loved to lie and listen to the silver trickling of a stream down the hillside. It pleased him also to stand and shout down into the valley to hear the echo answer him with mocking voice. Sitting solitary, while his goats and sheep wandered from tuft to tuft, he mused upon the great mysteries of life. He felt that this wonderful earth of his, this great and beautiful sky above him, must be governed by some great all-wise and all-powerful god, controlling other great gods in his service, sending down the blessed dews and the kindly rain when the earth was dry and thirsty, quickening to life the little seed planted down below, and sending the sun to smile upon the harvest. A living spirit seemed to move in the earth itself, for through all the winter this earth would sleep as if it would never wake again, yet always at the appointed time it would stir from its slumbers with a fresh and joyous awakening, and, lying with his ear upon the ground, the shepherd could hear the panting bosom of the great mother, and would drink in the fragrance of her breath.

If we study the great gods and goddesses of ancient Greece, we see how they were all the personified ideals of a people filled with the beauties and joys and mysteries of the Nature-world.

**The Great Gods.** First, there was Zeus, whom the Romans called Jupiter or Jove, the greatest of the Olympian gods, the father of gods and men, the most high and powerful among all the immortals, whom all others obey; the supreme ruler who with his council manages everything in heaven and on earth; the founder of kingly power, and of law and order; from him comes everything good and bad; he assigns good or evil to mortals, and Fate itself is subordinate to him. He is armed with thunder and lightning, the shaking of his ægis produces storm and tempest, and the seasons are subject to his laws. He is called "the Thunderer," "the Gatherer of the Clouds," and other names of might and awfulness.

In the *Iliad* of Homer the prayers to Zeus read like Christian hymns to the Almighty, and, in spite of the many gods of the Greeks, they always realised that the universe was controlled by one great "Master Mind."

Rhea, the oldest of Greek goddesses, who was said to be the mother of Zeus, was the Earth herself, old "Mother Earth," and her rites were celebrated with dances of a wild and enthusiastic character, representing the free unfettered joyousness of the "earth-born" or natural man, corresponding to that exhilaration of animal spirits which the French call *joie de vivre*.

The story of the goddess Demeter (whom the Romans called Ceres), who was the daughter of Rhea, and shared her power and attributes, illustrates the natural philosophy of the Greeks with beautiful symbolism. She was the protectress of agriculture and fruit, and the story is told that Zeus, her husband, promised their daughter Persephone (or Proserpine) to Aidoneus (or Pluto), the guardian of the infernal regions, without the knowledge or consent of Demeter, the mother. One day, while the unsuspecting maiden was gathering flowers in the Nysian plain, the earth suddenly opened, and she was carried off by Aidoneus. After wandering about some days in search of her daughter, Demeter learnt from the Sun who it was that had eloped with poor Persephone. Thereupon she left Olympus in anger, and dwelt upon earth among men, conferring blessings wherever she was kindly received, and severely punishing those who repulsed her. As the goddess continued angry for a long while,

and did not allow the earth to produce any fruits, Zeus sent Hermes (the Roman "Mercury") into the lower world to fetch back Persephone. Aidoneus consented to let her go, but gave Persephone part of a pomegranate to eat. Demeter thereupon returned to Olympus with her beautiful daughter, and the earth once more brought forth fruits. But as the maiden had eaten in the lower world, she was obliged to spend one-third of the year with Aidoneus, continuing with her mother the remainder of the year.

Now the meaning of this myth is this: Persephone, who is carried off to the lower world, is the seed-corn which remains concealed in the ground during the winter months, and when she returns to her mother it is the corn which rises from the ground and nourishes men and animals. Later philosophical writers explained the disappearance and return of Persephone to be the burial of the body of man and the immortality of the soul.

**Natural Personification.** The scenery of Greece, lovely as it is in the plains and on the seacoast, is yet in its mountainous districts very awful and impressive, and the imaginative mind of the early Greek personified this character into beings of monstrous size and fearful attributes, such as the Titans, or giant children of Heaven and Earth.

Atlas was one of these, and when he made war with his brothers against Zeus, being conquered by the great god of Olympus, he was changed into a mountain and condemned to bear heaven on his head and hands. It is easy to see how this myth originated from the idea that lofty mountains support the heavens.

The monstrous one-eyed creatures called Cyclops, of whom Polyphemus, slain by Ulysses, was the most famous, provided Zeus with his thunderbolts and lightning. They dwelt round about Mount *Ætna*, and were the assistants of the god *Haphæstus* (whom the Romans called *Vulcan*), making metal armour and ornaments for gods and heroes. These one-eyed and round-eyed giants were none other than volcanoes, with their one round eye, or crater, at the summit, who at times of eruption vomited forth fiery bolts and molten metal.

To the same origin is doubtless due that fire-breathing monster, the famous *Chimæra*, who made such havoc in *Lycia* and the surrounding countries, and was at length killed by *Bellerophon*. There is still a volcano of the same name in the district of *Lycia*,

**The Vasty Deep.**

Greece having such an extensive seacoast, with so many creeks and bays upon its indented shores, it is not surprising that the old mythology should have been full of sea-monsters and ocean gods and goddesses. To the early Greek, standing upon the cliffs watching the breakers thundering upon the reefs, it was no great effort of the imagination to convert them into angry monsters, or to change the white foaming surf into sea-horses.

Hence arise the old legends of Poseidon (the Roman "Neptune"), the god of the Mediterranean, who dwelt in a palace with a golden roof in the depths of the sea, near Ægæ, in Eubœa, where he kept his horses with brazen hoofs and golden manes. With those horses he rode in a chariot over the waves, which became smooth as he approached, while the monsters of the deep played around him. Some of us even on the shores of Britain may still catch glimpses of old Neptune with his trident and his horses with their golden manes, as the sun glistens upon the rolling waves and sparkles in the white surf.

The trident of Poseidon (or Neptune), a spear with three points, was the symbol of his power, with which he used to shatter rocks, to shake the earth, and to call forth or subdue storms. He was the husband of the beautiful nereid Amphitrite, the goddess of the Mediterranean and the father of the Tritons, whose trumpets, made of shell, could soothe the restless waves.

Venus herself, or, as the Greeks called her, Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, was said to have sprung from the foam of the sea, whence her name is derived; and the Greek mind, in which the ideal of womanly loveliness reigned supreme, could imagine no more fitting origin for the lovely goddess than the soft white foam of the sea, suffused perhaps by the pink rays of the rising sun.

So it will be seen that the old Greek mythology was founded entirely upon the idealism of the beauties and marvels and blessings of Nature, and their gods and goddesses represented in personal form those qualities which to the Greeks were the most glorious, perfect, and powerful things in life.

#### 4. The German Mythology.

I have now, I think, given a general idea of the real meaning which lies behind many of the Greek myths, and shown how

they were based upon the mysteries of Nature. It will now be interesting to see how the same ideas were present in the primitive religion of the old Germans and Norsemen, the forefathers of the Anglo-Saxon race.

It is not surprising, however, that the character of this Teutonic Nature-worship should be very different to that of the Greeks, for Nature itself was very different in North Europe and South. In Greece the climate was, as it is now, soft and balmy. The earth was prodigal of its fruits, and the husbandman and the shepherd had no great struggle for existence. The sky was blue, the sea was more often beautiful in its peacefulness than lashed in fury, and the winds were more languorous with sweet fragrance than rude and tempestuous.

So it is that the Greek mythology contains the highest heathen expression of sensuous beauty, and its gods and goddesses are as a rule more graceful and adorable than gruesome and terrible. There are exceptions, of course, for Greece has its thunderstorms, its volcanic eruptions, and other terrors of Nature, which were duly personified in its mythology, and the Greeks knew well enough the awfulness and majesty of God and Fate. But, broadly speaking, the early religion of the Greeks was expressive of the beauty and blessings of Nature rather than of its terrors.

**Northern  
Nature.**

Nature in the northern latitudes of Europe in the old pagan days had not the same smiling face as on the shores of the Mediterranean. She was a grim hard mother, and her sons were brought up in a rigorous school of life.

Before they could attain that home-life which was the later characteristic of the Germans, the Northmen, as they were first called, had to hew their way through the great and gloomy forests of Northern Europe. Their life was a stern struggle, a hard-fought battle. They were surrounded by many enemies. In the forests there were wolves and bears and wild boars, hungry and menacing. Beyond the stockade there were other foes more dangerous, fierce tribes who knew no friendship one with another, who found joy in slaughter, who laughed when the blood-smell was in their nostrils, whose great business of life was warfare, whose one great virtue was heroic courage—rough men, strong and cruel.

Rough and strong and cruel was Nature also. For six months in the year the earth was ice-bound. Mournful and

melancholy were the woods, through which dark mists crept like ghosts, and the winds moaned and howled horribly. Great tempests shattered the branches of the trees, tearing their way through the forests like a legion of invisible demons, and from the black canopy of the clouds torrents of rain would lash down and sodden the leaf-laden soil. No wonder the old Germans were coarse brutal men, whose chief joys in life were animal pleasures, gross eating and gross drinking in the warmth of roaring fires, and whose chief intellectual amusement was the recital of battle songs and the great fights of god and man.

**Gloomy Myths.** It is natural, therefore, as I have said, that German mythology should be very different to the Greek. It is grim, gloomy, and grotesque, filled with monstrous beings, huge, ungainly, and unshapen as the mountains of Scandinavia, violent as the storm-clouds, fierce as the thunderbolt, awful as the shadows of the primeval forests. Their virtues are those of pagan warriors, and their glory that of the battlefield. Yet, coarse and crude as it is, the old German mythology personified the great forces of Nature, and beneath the allegories of the old legends we may find a golden thread of eternal truth.

Much of our knowledge of these things is derived from the ancient epic of the Norsemen called *The Song of Edda* (the Great-Great-Grandmother), which describes the origin of the world, the birth of the gods, their adventures and attributes, the warfare between the powers of light and darkness, the creation of man, and the abode of the spirit after death.

**The Great Unknown.** It is remarkable that in the German mythology, as in the Greek, there is, in spite of the many gods, an acknowledgment of one great supreme Deity presiding over the universe with omniscience and omnipotence. Thus we read in the *Edda* that after the birth of the great gods of Nature—

“ Then one is born  
 Greater than all ;  
 He becomes strong  
 With the strength of earth.  
 The mightiest king  
 Men call him,  
 Fast knit in peace  
 With all powers,  
 But him I dare not  
 Venture to name.”

Throughout the *Edda* there are allusions to the Unknown God whom no man dared to name.

According to these old Teutonic legends, in the beginning of time there were two worlds—one called Niflheim, the "Vapour World," and the other Muspelheim, the "Fire World." Between these two there was a vast chasm called the Gingangap, the "Yawning Gap." Now from the world of vapours towards the world of fire there flowed twelve rivers of ice, and when the hot blast from Muspelheim met the frozen vapour from Niflheim it melted the ice into drops, "and," says the *Edda*, referring again to the Unknown God, "by the might of him who sent the heat" these drops were quickened into life, and were endowed with the form of a man. Thus was born the first great monster Ymer, the Old Frost Man. Thus says the *Edda*—

" It was Time's morning  
When Ymer lived,  
There was no sand, no sea,  
No cooling billows;  
Earth there was none,  
No lofty heaven;  
Only the Yawning Gap."

Now when Ymer, the Frost Man, lay down in the Vapour World, a monstrous man and woman were born under his armpits, and when he put his two feet together another monster sprang from them. From these children of Ymer came the whole race of gods, Odin, Thor, Balder, and the other deities being his grandchildren. But Odin had no love for the Old Frost Man, and with the help of his brothers he slew Ymer, and together they dragged his body into the Yawning Gap. This was the origin of the world. For, as the *Edda* says—

" Of Ymer's flesh  
Was Earth created,  
Of his blood the sea,  
Of his bones the hills,  
Of his hair trees and plants,  
Of his skull the heavens.  
And of his brows  
The gentle powers  
Formed Midgard for the sons of men,  
But of his brain  
The heavy clouds  
Are all created."

The Old Frost Man was a remarkably useful old creature, especially when he was dead ; because not only were the above-mentioned things made from him, but out of the corruption of his flesh came a swarm of dwarfs, like human maggots. Four of these, named Austre (East), Vestri (West), Nordre (North), and Sudre (South), were appointed to hold up the corners of the sky.

**The German Gods.** This sky was inhabited by two great gods called Maane and Sol (the Moon and the Sun), and to those familiar with Greek mythology it seems strange that the first should be a man and the other a woman, instead of the other way about. Sol sat in a golden chariot, and drove horses with fiery manes ; but always before her she carried a cold shield. Says the *Edda*—

“ Svalin the shield is called  
Which stands before the Sun,  
The refulgent deity.  
Rocks and ocean must, I ween,  
Be burnt,  
Fell it from its place.”

In Jotunheim, the abode of Giants, dwelt a monster named Norve, who became the father of a female named Nott (Night). In course of time Nott married Dilling (Daybreak), and they became the parents of Day. The god Odin gave two horses and two cars to Night and Day, and he bade them ride round the heavens in twenty-four hours. Night's steed was called Rimfax, the Frosty Mane, and Day's steed was called Shinfax, the Shining Mane.

One day when Odin and his two brothers Hœner and Loder were walking on the seashore they saw an ash tree and an elm, and the spirit moved them to create out of these trees two beings in their own likeness, but of infinitely smaller size and power. Thus the *Edda* describes the origin of man—

“ And then there came  
Out of the rank  
Three gods  
Powerful and fair  
And found on shore,  
In helpless plight,  
Ask and Embla  
Without their fate.

They had not yet  
 Spirit or mind,  
 Blood or beauty,  
 Or lovely hue.  
 Odin gave spirit,  
 Hoener gave mind,  
 Loder gave blood  
 And lovely hue."

**The All-Father.** Odin, who created man in this manner, was called the All-Father because father of nearly all the great gods and heroes of the German mythology. He was also called the Valfather, or father of the slain, and presided over the abode of spirits called Valhalla, or the Halls of the Slain. To this place came the brave warrior who died on the battlefield, and here for all eternity he sat in the great hall of Odin, with its roof of shields supported by spears, quaffing great goblets of mead and listening to ghostly minstrels who sang of heroic battles.

Odin himself was an old man with one eye and a long beard. He wore a broad-brimmed hat which made the sky, and a striped cloak of many colours made of all the plants of the earth. On his shoulders perched two ravens, who were always whispering into his ears, and they were named Memory and Reflection. In his hand he carried a great spear, the symbol of supreme power, with which he could split rocks and shake the earth and send forth thunderbolts.

It was said that every day Odin used to visit a sacred well called Mimer's Fountain, in order to drink of its waters, which were the source of all wisdom, and to gaze into the depths of the water to read its mysteries. But this was merely another way of saying that the sun (Odin's eye) looked down every day upon the great ocean, exploring its mysteries and revealing its wonders. And when it was said that Mimer's white fountain changed to golden mead when the shining-maned horse of Dilling rode by, it was a figurative way of describing the brightness which shone upon the sea at the approach of dawn.

Mimer's Well stood at the foot of a great tree called Ygdrasil, whose roots stretched deep down into the kingdom of Hela (Death), whose trunk reached to the top of high heaven, and whose branches covered the whole universe. Its roots were guarded by a brood of serpents, and close by dwelt three wise women called Urd, Verdande, and Skuld (Present, Past, and Future), who fixed the lifetime of men and women, and were like the Parcæ, or Fates, of the Greeks. By the side of the

fountain the gods themselves sat in judgment, and every day rode over to this place from the Jotunheim over the great bridge called Bifrost (the rainbow).

Odin, the All-Father, presided at the judgment seat, but next in power to him was Thor, the Thunderer. He was a mighty god and terrible. He wore a flaming red beard like a great forest on fire. He was girded with a belt called Strength; in his right hand he swung a monstrous hammer; he rode in a chariot drawn by two goats, from whose hoofs and teeth flashed sparks of fire; his fiercely rolling eyes cast a scarlet light upon the clouds; over his head and ears he wore a crown of stars, and under his feet rested the earth, which showed the footprints of his mighty steps.

But best beloved of the gods was Balder, the Shining One, the god of Light and Goodness, gentle and full of love. He was the favourite of Odin and Thor, and when he died by the hands of Loke, the Evil One, their grief was inconsolable.

**The Evil One.** This Loke was a dreadful fellow. He took a malicious delight in making things miserable for everybody. He would put bad thoughts into the minds of men—sowed discord among the gods themselves. In fact, he was the very Devil. Once, for mere sport, this mischief-maker cut off the hair of the goddess Sif; but the gods compelled him to provide her with new hair, so he got ten dwarfs to forge a golden wig for her. Of course there is another meaning to this story. Loke was another name for fire, and Sif was the earth. Her hair was the grass that was sometimes scorched up by the heat, and the golden wig was the ripe harvest of corn.

I have not space, however, to narrate the grotesque adventures of the gods, nor to describe the great struggle which took place at the Ragnarok, on the Doomsday of the gods. But I think I have shown how this old pagan religion was a true form of Nature-worship, exactly in the same way as the Greek mythology personified the forces of Nature.

**Old Creeds and Customs.** What makes the German mythology especially interesting to us is that the old creeds lingered in the hearts of the Anglo-Saxon people for centuries after their conversion to Christianity, and may still be traced in many popular superstitions and old-fashioned customs. In the words of Grimm, to whom students of

mythology owe their greatest debt, there has been "a gradual transformation of the gods into devils, of the wise women into witches, of their worship into superstitious customs. The names of the gods have found a last lurking-place in disguised ejaculations, curses, and protestations. Heathen festivals and customs were transformed into Christian ceremonies, and spots which heathenism had already consecrated were sometimes retained for churches and courts of justice."

Grimm's Fairy Tales themselves, those ever-delightful treasures of German folk-lore, are in many cases survivals of the old Nature-worship, though it may not be easy to recognise the Dawn as a beautiful prince, nor Loke, the Spirit of Evil, in the wicked old wizard.

But, to realise how closely the history of the Anglo-Saxon race is connected with this old paganism, we have only to remember the days of the week, in which the names of the great gods Odin and Thor, of Freya, Odin's wife, of the lesser-known Tiw, and of those two great forces of Nature, the Sun and Moon, round which the whole of the German mythology revolved, are perpetuated by Sunday and Monday (Sun's day and Moon's day), Tuesday (Tiw's day), Wednesday (Woden or Odin's day), Thursday (Thor's day), and Friday (Freya's day).

## 5. Buddhism.

The student of the world's wisdom must not omit an inquiry into the great religious faiths which for many centuries, and over vast regions of the globe, have been the rule of life and the hope after death of millions of human beings. Whether or no they be mixed up with superstition, whether or no they may be founded on many errors, there must be in each of them a golden vein of true philosophy to have given so many souls a patience and courage to suffer the burden of the body, to have illumined the life's darkness of so many with faith and hope to pass the gate of death.

I propose, therefore, in this and the next two or three chapters to give a glimpse into the greatest religious systems of the East, to give a brief narrative of their foundation and some insight into their living force as the guiding principles and faith of great nations. I am beginning with Buddhism, which is, I think, the most beautiful of the Eastern religions, and the

one which nearest approaches the moral code and ideals of Christianity.

**The En-  
lightened  
One.** About the middle of the sixth century before the coming of Christ, there was born to a royal couple in that part of India which is now called Oudh, a son, who brought joy to them. As he grew up he was observed to possess a rare and inquiring intellect, as well as a lovable and engaging disposition. His parents destined him for a great career. They themselves were powerful, but they looked forward to their son extending their dominions and acquiring great glory and splendour. He was taught by the wisest teachers, and trained in all the learning of the time as applied to the duties of princes and the science of war.

But, to the grief of the royal pair, Gaudama fell into a strange melancholy when he was still a youth. He avoided the pomp and luxury of the Court, and loved to spend his days inquiring into the mysteries of the old Brahmanical religion, and in reading the literature of Eastern philosophy. As for soldiering, he showed the strongest loathing for such a career, and when he reached young manhood openly expressed the desire to retire altogether from the Court and to live the life of a recluse.

His parents forbade him, and banished all religious teachers and philosophers from his neighbourhood, seeking to win him to the world by a round of gaiety. They also thought it well that he should marry, and under their impulse he took to himself a young princess for whom he had a great fondness named Yathabaya. But this was no cure to his heartache. His wife, who loved him passionately, encouraged him in his aspirations after the perfect life—though, poor soul, she perhaps would rather have bitten her tongue out had she known what would come of them.

**The Great  
Renuncia-  
tion.** More and more grew his soul-weariness. He saw nothing but misery and evil in the world. Man-kind seemed to him as wandering in the dark without a guide. He longed for knowledge—knowledge of why we are here and whither we go, of wherefore the misery and how to get happiness, of the way of escape from evil and pain, of the path to the perfect life leading to perfect peace. He found that he could not get an answer to this questioning in his

present surroundings, and yet he must find their solution or go mad.

So one night he made up his mind to cut himself away from the roots of his early life, and to begin a new life where he might learn wisdom. His wife, whom he loved with a great passion, had just borne to him a son. He bent over the bed as she lay there sleeping with the child nestled on her bosom. Not yet had he looked upon his little son's face, and his heart yearned within him. But to do so he must wake the sleeping wife, and she would plead with him and hold him back, and her tears would melt him into weakness. So with a great sob he turned and crept out into the night, riding fast from his father's domain with one faithful friend and servant. And this episode in his career is called by his followers the "Great Renunciation."

**Seeking  
for Light.** Now for several years he lived the life of a hermit, mortifying his body by the most terrible asceticism, living in filth and misery and nakedness, because he had been taught that in this way he might obtain light and peace. He gained a fame for special sanctity, and many disciples came to him to sit at his feet.

But gradually into his heart stole the conviction that he was no nearer to the goal than before, that indeed he was farther from it; for all this uncleanliness and mutilation of body was but to plunge his soul farther into darkness. So once more he donned decent clothing, washed, and fed sufficiently, by which he lost his disciples, who were scandalised at his fall from grace, as they thought it to be. Perhaps at this time there was no unhappier mortal living than the one-time Prince Gaudama. He had tried, and failed. He had sought for light, and plunged deeper into darkness.

**The  
Enlighten-  
ment.** He wandered about into the desert, and there had long and lonely wrestlings of spirit. And gradually, as the first glimmerings of light steal into the eastern sky of dawn till the canopy of night is lifted and reveals the clear light of day, so into the mind of this lonely sorrowing man came a new wisdom, which lifted his pall of gloom and doubt and flooded his being with what seemed to him the perfect truth, the light of life. Once more he came into the world, and, preaching as he went, he announced to all who would hear him, "I am the Buddha, the Enlightened One," and

to all he said, "Come to me. I teach a doctrine which leads to deliverance from all the miseries of life."

This wandering preacher with the massive, calm face—calm with the peace of the sea after a great storm, this man with the deep glowing eyes, who spoke words of beauty and wisdom that seemed to burn into the very hearts of his hearers—was hailed as the Buddha by great numbers, and they believed what he taught them. A brotherhood gathered round him, and he drew up rules for them and explained to them in detail the great doctrine which in loneliness and agony of mind he had discovered, as he thought, for the good of the world.

**The Teaching of Buddha.** Strange but very beautiful is the religion which his teaching has handed down to generations of followers who have called themselves, after its founder, Buddhists. Gaudama Buddha believed and taught that what we call life is evil, that in this material existence of flesh and blood and bodily desires there is nothing but misery, trouble, and disease. Were we, therefore, to have eternal life in the body, we should but possess eternal wretchedness.

Fortunately, there is hope. Beyond the gate of life is death, and by this death comes freedom from all the miserable fetters that chain a human being to earthly hell. This is Nirvana, or the Great Peace, and to this prospect a weary soul may look forward with infinite consolation. But this Great Peace does not come to all when the breath of the body expires. Only the few Perfect Ones may enter Nirvana at the end of one earthly existence. The majority of mankind must work their way forward to Nirvana by slow and painful stages. One life on earth in bodily form leads on to another and yet another, and almost countless tenures of material existence.

That spirit, that indefinable essence which Christians call a soul and Buddhists consciousness, passes out of one body into another, until, if in each tenement its possessor reaches a higher scale of moral attainment, he may at last reach that perfection which entitles him to enter the Great Peace. Here there is no matter. The spirit shuffles off this mortal coil. There is no taste, no touch, no smell, no sight, no sense of any kind. Consciousness alone survives, and in Nirvana has eternal joy.

In Buddhism there is no God, no personal all-wise and all-beneficent Spirit to control the destinies of mankind. Matter

has existed for all time, and will exist for ever, subject to continual change, to periodical destruction and reconstruction. It is subject only to the fixed and eternal law which is called Karma, and which is the law of cause and result. A human being must work out his own salvation. He will get no help from anything outside himself. Prayer will avail him nothing, for there is no one to hear. In himself is his only way of escape from misery to eternal bliss. His sole endeavour must be to raise himself in the moral scale, so that in the next existence he may have reached a higher rung of that ladder which leads to Nirvana.

**The Path to  
Peace.**

The religion of Buddhism is self-culture, for, says Buddha, "Self is the lord of self; self is the refuge of self. Therefore curb thyself as the merchant curbs a good horse." A man who seeks Nirvana must cultivate all virtues that lift him above his brute nature. He must crush out all the passions that he shares with the beasts. He must be kind and gentle and courteous, honest, pure, and generous. Then he will gain the reward of a good life, and his consciousness in the next life will pass into some body such as that of a monk, or wealthy gentleman, who suffers less of life's misery and is as much at peace as possible, till, if he persevere, the Great Peace will at last come to him.

If, on the other hand, he gives free rein to the bad passions of his nature, he will drop in the scale of beings, and perhaps in another life his consciousness will descend into some animal form till he gradually gets lower and lower, and countless lives must be lived before he rises again to reach the goal of Nirvana.

For what does Buddha say: "The passions of a thoughtless man grow like a creeper; he runs from life to life like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest." And again: "As rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, so passion will break through an unreflecting mind." But "he who overcomes this fierce passion, suffering falls off him like water drops from a lotus leaf." On the other hand, says Buddha, the virtuous man rejoices in his virtue: "If a man does what is good, let him do it again; let him delight in it. Happiness is the outcome of good." And this is the perfect life: "Not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the law, to be moderate in eating, to sleep and sit alone, and to dwell on the highest thoughts,—this is the teaching of the awakened."

**The Brotherhood.**

Buddha formed in his lifetime a brotherhood of men who believed in his doctrine, who vowed to live according to his rule, and who were to convert the world by missionary preaching, and to hand down the truth to future generations. That brotherhood still exists. The Buddhist monks still keep the rules of their founder, living lives of chastity and poverty and meditation. They are the teachers of the people upon whose bounty they live, and their monasteries are the free schools of their country.

Though they are not priests in any sense of the word, and have no authority whatever over the conscience of a layman, they consider it their duty to show their affection to a layman by dissuading him from vice, by exhorting him to virtue, by feeling kindly towards him, by instructing him in religion, by clearing up his doubts, and by pointing the way to Nirvana. The Buddhists proclaim four virtues of surpassing merit—almsgiving, affability, kindness, and loving others as ourselves. They also denounce ten sins—taking life, theft, incontinence, falsehood, slander, abusive language, vain conversation, covetousness, anger, scepticism.

Such is a brief outline of the religion preached ***The Soul of a People.*** by Gaudama Buddha and the religion which is the rule of life of millions of human beings at the present day. Though in many parts of the East the teachings of its founder have been degenerated by the introduction of superstition, yet in Burma and Ceylon, in parts of Japan and China, its beautiful moral code still has a profound influence upon the life of its believers.

I cannot omit to recommend to my readers one of the most interesting and delightful books written during the last ten years or more, entitled *The Soul of a People*, and describing the influence of Buddhism upon the people of Burma. Its author, Henry Fielding, was British Commissioner in Burma, and has a more intimate knowledge of the Burmese than perhaps anyone living. His book reveals a people of many-sided charm and a religion which permeates the whole life of the nation with a beneficent influence.

One cannot but admire the laughing happiness of those Burmans, their exquisite courtesy, their kindness of heart, their love of peace and simplicity, their fondness and fellowship for animals, their profound love and reverence for the memory of

Gaudama the Buddha. And here, by the way, I must point out the error of the popular belief that Buddha is worshipped by his followers. This is not so, for they do not believe that anyone who has reached Nirvana has any further interest in the world or mankind, and prayer or worship is not part of their creed. They merely, as I have said, honour and reverence the memory of their founder.

**The Books of Buddha.** The sacred books of Buddhism, as we may now read them, were committed to memory by the first disciples of Buddha, being handed down in this way until they were put into writing some four hundred years after the death of the "Enlightened One." Though many fabulous stories had by that time surrounded the personality of Buddha, and take up a large part of the books, the writings contain much that is supremely beautiful and wise. Many of their passages are remarkable for their similarity to lines in the Christian Scriptures, and others prove how wonderful was the genius and how excellent the virtue of the great Buddha. With a few of these gems of moral teaching I will conclude this glimpse of a great religion.

**The Words of Buddha.** "Let a man overcome anger by love, and let him overcome evil by good."

"If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, yet if another conquer himself he is the greatest."

"The gift of the law exceeds all gifts. The sweetness of the law exceeds all sweetness. The delight in the law exceeds all delights."

"Whatever a hater may do a hater, or an enemy an enemy, a wrongly directed mind will do greater mischief."

"Do not have evil-doers for friends; do not have low people for friends. Have virtuous people for friends; have for friends the best of men."

"A man who has learned little grows old like an ox; his flesh grows, but his knowledge grows out."

"He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise—who, though young and strong, is full of sloth—whose will and thought are weak,—that lazy and idle man will never find the way to knowledge."

"As the bee collects nectar and departs without injuring the flower, or its colour, or scent, so let a wise man dwell in his village."

## 6. Confucianism.

The religion which is rather erroneously called after the philosopher Confucius cannot be said to rank with the spiritual and moral elevation of Buddhism or Mohammedanism, nor does Confucius himself, who did not originate, but perpetuated the ancient religion of the Chinese, reveal those highest attributes which glorify the names of Buddha and Mohammed.

Nevertheless, there must be to Western minds something intensely interesting and worthy of study in a religion which reaches back with absolute continuity to no less than two thousand years before the Christian era, and of which dim traces may be found in further and remoter periods of the world's history. This continuity, however, is less wonderful than the unchanging character of the religion through all those ages. The Chinese of to-day worship the same God and in the same manner, and, to a large extent, in the same words, as their forefathers more than a thousand years before our Christian era.

In the ancient books of the religion, the Shû and the Shih, among the oldest books in the world, we have a very clear account of the way in which the Chinese worshipped, and these books as explained by Confucius are the text-books, the gospel, of the modern Chinese faith.

**The Master.** Confucius is the Latinised version of Kung-Futsze, which means Kung, the Master, the latter title being given to him when his reputation as a philosopher was established. The sage was born in the year 551 B.C. in the village of Chueh in the State of Lu, which is now in the modern province of Shantung. He was the son of a soldier renowned for his strength and courage, and descended from a noble family tracing their lineage back to the great sovereign Ti, whose reign commenced in the year 2697 B.C.

The father of Confucius—to give him his Latinised name—died when his child was three years old, and the mother was left poor.

We know very little of the philosopher's childhood, but, describing his mental growth throughout life, he tells us that at fifteen his mind was set on learning, and at thirty he was firm in his convictions, while at seventy he "could do whatever

his heart prompted without transgressing what was right." He was what is known now as "an all-round man," being accomplished in sports and games and music, as well as in learning, and when his future disciples expressed surprise at this, he said deprecatingly, "When I was young my condition was low, and I acquired my ability in many things; but they were mean matters." He married when he was only nineteen, and the following year had a son whom he called Li, two daughters being afterwards born to him. At this time he was employed in a humble capacity, being in charge of the public stores of grain and guarding the public herds, fulfilling his duties with diligence and conscientiousness.

**The Teacher.** This time was probably the transition period of his character, when he passed from the trivial thoughts of youth to the great problems of life and eternity. We do not know the struggles or the strivings which filled his next three years, but after this period had elapsed we next find him as a teacher, to whose house came many inquiring spirits for guidance and enlightenment. His fees were small, and to those who wished for knowledge but could not pay for it he gave his teachings free, asking only in return an ardour in the pursuit of learning and a certain standard of ability which would reward his trouble.

A great grief befell him at this time in the death of his mother, for whom he had a profound affection. He gave instructions for her to be buried in the same grave as his father, and for a tomb to be erected to mark the spot. It is related of him by his disciples that upon hearing that this tomb had been swept away by a sudden and violent storm, the calmness of his sorrow could no longer be maintained, and he wept long and bitterly. This episode brings one a little closer to the nature that lay hidden under the rather hard and impassive character of the sage.

In the State of Lu the fame of Confucius was steadily increasing. Great ministers sent their sons to sit at his feet, and the younger scholars of China acknowledged him as their master. In the year 517, however, an insurrection broke out in the State, and Confucius followed the defeated Duke Chao into the exile of a neighbouring province. Order being restored, Confucius returned to Lu and remained there, peacefully pursuing his studies, and teaching for sixteen years, when Duke Ting, who

had succeeded his brother, the former Duke, summoned the philosopher to be Governor of the town of Ching-Tu.

**The States-  
man.**

Confucius now put into practice the theories of good government, morality, and religion which he had thought out in the solitude of his study. Unlike most dreamers who try to make their dreams come true and fail, Confucius succeeded.

So great was the reformation effected in the manners and morals of the Ching-Tu people that the Duke, astonished beyond measure, inquired whether the same principles might be applied to a whole kingdom. Assured that this was possible, Duke Ting gave Confucius the office of Assistant-Superintendent of Works, in which capacity he greatly improved the agricultural condition of the country, and afterwards Minister of Criminal Law, when he succeeded in abolishing every kind of crime.

We are told that "there was no necessity to put the penal laws in execution. No offenders showed themselves."

Confucius now became the most important statesman in the kingdom, and greatly strengthened the power of the ruling house by keeping in check the chiefs of the great clans, who held the same position in China as the barons in the feudal days of England. In the words of the historian, "A transforming government went abroad. Dishonesty and dissoluteness were ashamed and hid their heads. Loyalty and good faith became the characteristics of the men, and chastity and docility those of the women. Strangers came in crowds from other States. Confucius was the idol of the people, and flew in songs through their mouths."

**The Power  
of Char-  
acter.**

His power came solely from the purity of his life and the nobility of his character, which so impressed those who came in contact with him, or into whose hearts his winged words found their way, that by a kind of wizard's spell, the spell of a good man, the vicious became purified, the base elevated, and the rebellious reconciled.

Unfortunately, human nature is weak, and people often lead for a time good and even noble lives under a kind of religious excitement, which gradually wears off, leaving the old vices to rear their heads rampantly.

So was it with the Duke Ting. He wearied of pure thought

and high endeavours, and his enemies, wishing to destroy the power of his State, which now dominated the surrounding provinces, tempted him into base vices and passions, and so separated him from Kung, the Master, to whom purity and honour were the first essentials of government. Seeing that the Duke was abandoning his counsels, and having no further sympathy with him, Confucius retired from his offices and journeyed into neighbouring States, hoping to find another ruler who would be glad to govern in accordance with his principles.

He was followed about by a number of disciples, and to them he expounded the ancient religion and taught them the philosophy of life as learnt by himself. These conversations were noted down by his followers, and are now embodied in a collection of writings called the Confucian Analects, or Memorabilia.

Here we find a very detailed picture of Confucius in his personality and intellect. Minute particulars are given of his methods of eating and dressing and sleeping and studying and teaching. It must be admitted, the picture one gets of the sage is not wholly an impressive one. He had not the divine fire which glows in the soul of a prophet. He was too calm, too cold, too hard, too limited in his vision. His mind was far more occupied with the relation of man to man than of man to God, and with the things of this world than the things of the next, and therefore he cannot rank as one of the world's greatest religious teachers.

**The End of a Life.** The latter part of his life was not peaceful, but nevertheless not unhappy. In his wanderings he and his followers were often in danger of death from lawless bands, but even in the moment of peril he never lost his calm dignity. Attacked by a bandit named Hwan Tui, who threatened to kill him, he comforted his trembling disciples by saying quietly—

“Heaven has produced the virtue that is in me: what can Hwan Tui do to me?”

Once in a moment of light chat he smilingly described himself as “a man who in his eager pursuit of knowledge forgets his food, who in the joy of its attainment forgets his sorrows, and who does not perceive that old age is coming on.”

Yet stealthily death approached him, and one day he became

aware that his hour was nigh. His disciples saw him dragging his withered old body up and down, leaning heavily on his staff, and they heard him muttering the words, "The great mountain must crumble, the strong beam must break, and the wise man wither away like a plant."

When his favourite disciples questioned him, the philosopher told them of a dream he had had forewarning him of death. Then he added, with a deep melancholy, "No intelligent monarch arises; there is no prince in the kingdom who will make me his master. My time has come to die." His words were true, and seven days later he was dead.

Mourned with loud and prolonged grief by his disciples, his fame was greater dead than living. The philosophers and scholars who followed him revered him as their master, and proclaimed his teachings as the perfect wisdom which all men should learn and whose principles should govern the world. The sovereigns of the empire acknowledged his greatness and raised him to a pinnacle of glory, perpetuating his memory for all time. Twice a year the present Emperors of China do homage to him in the temple at Peking, acclaiming him as "the philosopher Kung, the ancient Teacher, the perfect Sage, in virtue equal to Heaven and Earth, whose doctrines embrace both time past and present, who did digest and transmit the six classics, and did hand down lessons for all generations!"

**The Chinese Faith.** The religion which Confucius received from his ancestors in common with all the Chinese people was a monotheism associated with subordinate spirits.

In simpler words, the Chinese believed in one God, creator of heaven and earth, to whom was due homage, adoration, and sacrifice—sacrifice not for the atonement of sin or the propitiation of an angry God, but as a love offering and symbol of worship to Him by whom the gifts of the earth have been so lavishly provided; and below the Great Spirit they believed in a host of attendant spirits, of fire and air and water, of woods and fields and hills, doing the bidding of their heavenly Master, and punishing or rewarding mankind according as their lives were blameless or blameworthy.

The ordinary mortal might hold no converse with God, nor even so much as name His name. When He was spoken of, it must be with the impersonal title of Heaven or by the joint title of Heaven and Earth.

**Ancestor-Worship.** This great gulf between man and God was bridged over by the comforting doctrine of ancestor-worship. To the Chinese, the family is bound together by a tie which nothing can break. A man's greatest duty on earth is to obey and love his father. A man's father and forefathers watch over their descendant with never-ceasing tenderness and vigilance. They are the intermediaries between him and God. If he wishes to live well and happily he must remember them, conjure up their spirits upon the family altar, which is the sacred place of every Chinese home, live in their presence with an absolute faith that they are really around and about him.

**Faith in our Fathers.** This ancestor-worship is not altogether ignoble. It is a good thing to remember the good deeds of the dead. It is a good thing to reverence the memory of those to whom we owe our being. Family affection and the careful keeping of family honour beget homely and kindly virtues. Even the idea that the spirits of the departed are always with the living is a preventive of a gross materialism which deadens the heart of man. The evil of the Chinese superstition is the lack of discrimination between the good and bad characters of the departed ancestors. To a Chinese, a dead sinner is as worthy of a place in the family temple as a dead saint.

Such was the religion which Confucius believed and taught, and which is now identified with his name. He left it exactly as he found it, and his claim to honour is not so much in his religious dogma as in his moral code. By this he added to the stock of Chinese wisdom and philosophy. "Do not do unto others what you would not have done to yourself." This—though not so noble as the positive command with which we are more familiar—was a revelation to his contemporaries, and the foundation of a new moral order.

**The Path of Nature.** Another great item in his teaching was his doctrine of the fulfilment of nature. God gave us our nature. When we first received it it was perfect, and we ourselves have defaced it, hidden it, buried it. What we must strive for is to get back to nature, to achieve a resurrection of nature. It was not everyone who could find the way to this pure and undefiled nature; but he, by the favour of God, had done so, and it was his mission to teach it to others.

He was nothing more than man, but he knew the Only Way. Such was his teaching, and as such it is perpetuated in the Chinese sacred writings called the Chung Yung, which begin with the words: "What Heaven has conferred is the Nature; an accordance with this nature is what is called the Path; the regulation of this path is what is called the Teaching."

For more than a thousand years many thousands of millions of human beings have endeavoured to follow the Path of Nature under the guidance of Kung, the Master, whom we know as Confucius, and to-day in China he is still revered with profound and adoring homage. To European minds the character of the teacher may seem idealised by tradition and reduced to meaner proportions when sifted in the light of truth. Nevertheless, though he was not so great as the greatest in religious conception and spiritual ascendancy, he was wiser and better than the majority of mankind, and as such is deserving of all honour.

Having given this brief outline of Confucianism, I will pass on to another religion of the East.

## 7. Brahmanism.

**The Old Faith.** Brahmanism is one of the oldest and one of the newest religions of the world. Unlike the three religions I have previously dealt with, it has had no founder whose teaching has been handed on through the ages, and whose life and person are revered or worshipped by the faithful. Its roots reach back to the early ages of the world, for it is literally "as old as the hills," and it has grown into a great tree (sheltering two hundred millions of human souls at this present day), whose branches embrace almost every kind of Eastern creed, both new and old, gathering nourishment and new form from Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and even Christianity itself.

It is an interesting thought that our own forefathers—a very long way back, it is true—possessed this Hindu faith, very much the same in its elemental characters as the Brahmans of to-day. Because the oldest form of Brahmanism known to the historian of the world's religions was the faith of the Aryan race, and few of my readers will need reminding that this great race was the family from which we ourselves originally sprang.

Strictly speaking, no religion such as Brahmanism exists. The word is not recognised by the Brahmans themselves, who call their religion Arya-Tharma, "the religion of the Aryas."

In the early days—fifteen centuries B.C.—when the Aryan race dwelt in the land of the seven rivers, now known as the Punjab, their religion was a pure form of Nature-worship. The thinkers among these pastoral people were impressed by the great forces of Nature, and in their minds there was a vague consciousness of one all-powerful, all-wise, and all-pervading essence. By degrees they came to recognise and to worship the signs of this unknown deity in the sky, the sun, fire, air, water, and earth, and these great forces were personified as gods, to whom they did homage. But they continued to feel the presence of that mysterious essence of which these gods were but the servants, however great and powerful in themselves. They felt that this spirit was, as it were, the breath of life, was indeed life itself, the cause, the creator of all things on earth, whether animate or inanimate, and that gods, men, animals, and things were but so many manifestations of the Great Spirit. This breath of life was at length called by the name of Brahman, from the Aryan word which means to expand, because it was expanded through all space.

**The Veda.** The poets and teachers of the Aryans composed a great number of hymns and prayers addressed to this Divine Essence, and to His manifestations, which were supposed to have been revealed to them through and by the spirit. This Divine knowledge was called the Veda, and the one thousand and seventeen hymns, or "mantras," included in the Rig-Veda, or Book of Hymn Knowledge, comprise the oldest Bible of the Hindu religion, which in this early form is known as Vedism.

These Veda hymns are among the oldest and the grandest literature of the world, and although addressed to the personified deities of the Sun-God, the Sky-God, the Rain-God, and other typified forces, they are full of a primitive Nature-wisdom, and attain a height of religious aspiration and of moral idealism that may compare not unfavourably with the early books of our own Old Testament.

The Brahmans still regard the Veda as the source of their religious system, but a vast and elaborate structure has been built upon that early foundation.

**The Three  
Branches.**

The religious energy of the Brahmans has worked in three different directions throughout the ages. First, the highest thinkers among them have soared into the realms of abstract thought and have evolved the philosophy of Brahmanism.

Secondly, the great mass of the Hindu people, seeking to satisfy their desire for a closer knowledge of and a closer union with the Great Spirit and its manifestations, have built up a complicated ritual of prayer and sacrifice.

Thirdly, in the order of evolution there was a great yearning among the unlearned Hindus for more human manifestations of the Divine Essence than the awful and superhuman gods of Sky and Sun and Earth.

And this new religious sentiment was satisfied by the incarnation into three great godheads of the Divine Spirit, and found further vent in the hero-worship of national worthies—kings, warriors, and the sages, who became worshipped as superior beings whose spiritual and corporeal nature was pervaded by the presence of the "Brahman," or Breath of Life.

**The Scale  
of Evolu-  
tion.**

The philosophy of Brahmanism is deeply interesting, because two thousand years before Darwin was born, and two thousand years before modern thinkers had begun to teach what was thought to be the "new" science of evolution, those Hindu sages had built their whole philosophy upon the basis of a universal evolution, by which all things are subject to a law of continual change. But whereas modern evolution stops short at the bridge of death, the Hindus believed, and still believe, that death is but the beginning of a new existence, and of innumerable existences divided from each other by innumerable deaths, and according to the life of one existence so will the next life be higher or lower in the scale of evolution.

In the Hindu philosophy this evolution is so all-embracing that there is a close relationship between every kind and class of matter, whether it be so low in the scale as stocks and stones, or higher, as plants and animals, or higher still, as men and gods. For the Great Spirit or Divine Breath pervades every part of Nature, and a stone, a flower, a man, and a god were all different manifestations of the Almighty, and all of them are worthy of being worshipped by reason of this participation in Brahman, or Breath of Life.

This philosophy is the key which unlocks all the mysteries

of the Hindu faith, and from which all its subtle and complicated doctrines have been evolved.

**Brahma,  
Vishnu,  
and Siva.** The scale of these Divine manifestations reaches as high as the highest heaven of countless heavens, and as low as the lowest hell of countless hells. At the top of the scale the Great Spirit is revealed in the three godheads—Brahma, the creator ; Vishnu, the pervader ; and Siva, the god of change.

The two latter are the great deities worshipped all over India, and to whom most of the great temples have been erected. Because to Vishnu everything that exists owes its common union with the Supreme God, and to Siva everything owes the blessed hope of change from one state in the scale of evolution to another and higher scale, until at last, mounting always higher—a thing, a plant, a beast, a man, a god—may at length reach the highest state of all, when the spirit becomes absorbed with the Great Spirit, where there is no more change, but only perfect peace and perfect rest.

**The Divine  
Relation-  
ship.** It will easily be seen that this religion is very broad and catholic. A Hindu does not refuse his sympathy to any kind of worship, and will give a welcome to the gods or heroes of every nation, whether it be Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Christianity, or fetish-worship. The man who bows down before a stone is doing homage to the Spirit of God in that stone. Christ and Buddha were undoubtedly high manifestations of the same spirit.

The demon-worshippers of Ceylon are right in propitiating the evil influences of those countless devils who, in spite of being plunged into the lowest depths of the spirit-world on account of their sins in previous states of existence, are yet related to the Divine Being. For the same reason, say the Hindus, it is perfectly right to worship such animals as the cow, whom Brahma has created to be a blessing to mankind ; the monkey, whose sagacity is one phase in the evolution of man himself ; the serpent, who is typical of that death which is the stepping-stone to a higher life.

**The Female  
Force.** One other great factor of Hinduism to which I have not yet alluded is the acknowledgment of the dual force throughout creation which is but dimly

expressed in the words Male and Female. The three gods, Brahma (who must not be confused with the Supreme Being), Vishnu, and Siva, were considered incomplete without a female side to their divinity, and each of them was endowed with a spouse, who represented one-half of their character and power.

The wife or Spouse of Siva—Sati, as she is called—is naturally the most popular, because she and her lord preside over the births and deaths which fulfil the law of change. In most of the temples of India, therefore, we see great images of Siva and Sati, carved out of stone or in the solid rock, and represented as two in one, one half of the figure being in the shape of a man, and the other in that of a woman. This female element of creation is known as Sakti, meaning Energy, or Force, and the great mystery of sex which it comprises is a matter of such reverence and awe among the Hindus that it pervades many of their religious ceremonies and observances.

Although it leads to the grossest and lowest forms of Brahmanical practices among ignorant and degraded sects, it is not without a high moral value among those of more advanced culture, and teaches them a reverence for womanhood, and, above all, motherhood.

Every Hindu mother has a certain divine right, and may in a manner be worshipped by her children. The “matris” or “mothers” of India have in fact a great influence in the family life, and both parents when they are dead have a claim to that ancestor-worship which is one of the most cherished sentiments of the Hindu people.

**The Effect of Faith.** If we examine as to the practical effect of this great religion upon the character of its disciples, we find that it is adapted to almost every temperament and to every grade of intellect.

Among the ignorant fear is the predominant influence—the fear of those millions of devils whose pleasure it is to torment mankind, and who are the cause of famine, plagues, and all sickness and misfortune. These must be propitiated by peace-offerings, and their evil influences averted by prayers and sacrifices to Vishnu or Siva. And in the hour of death the only way to escape being dragged down to hell by these demons is for one’s family and friends to observe all the rites and ceremonies of the funeral until the cleansing fire has liberated the spirit from the body of its late existence, and by offerings

of rice and water it is able to clothe itself in another and more exalted frame.

Among the higher intellects, however, the fear of the devil-world is not so strong as the intense craving to attain the ultimate reabsorption with the Great Spirit, and the educated Hindu strives with all the force of his soul, by prayer, meditation, and fasting, and at length by cancelling his human nature and annihilating every desire of the flesh, of the senses, and of the intellect, to reach so near to the Divine Presence that when the end comes with the blessed death, the spirit is, as it were, burnt up in the fire of Brahman, the eternal and the universal Breath of Life.

**Caste.** The system of Caste which prevails among the Hindus is to a certain extent a part of their religious doctrine, and when one finds that there are no less than one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six different classes among the Brahmans themselves so distinct that they cannot intermarry nor eat food cooked by each other, one is able to realise what an extraordinary complicated system this is. But in these pages I have confined myself to a broad outline of the Brahmanical faith rather than to the tangled overgrowth of its social code.

### 8. Mohammedanism.

I have said that in my opinion Buddhism is the most beautiful of the Eastern religions, and I think it is equally true that Mohammedanism is the most powerful, and from the Christian as well as from the historian's point of view the most deeply interesting. We can trace its development from its beginning with the fullest light upon every detail of historical fact, and we can learn the life-story of its founder, unclouded by that myth and haziness which surrounds the origin of most religious leaders of long ago. The wonderful personality of the Prophet stands revealed to us as clearly, more clearly perhaps, than such a modern character as Napoleon Bonaparte. In the great book—the Koran—dictated from his lips, he has laid his soul bare to the gaze of the reverent and of the irreverent. We can see his weaknesses and his surpassing strength, his pitiful errors and his superb genius. And next to Christianity, Islam (meaning Resignation), as the religion of Mohammed is properly called,

has done more for the forward progress of civilisation and morality than any other faith which has animated the souls of men since the creation of the world. Through many centuries and at the present day it has been and is a power for good among hundreds of millions of the human race, and without its high moral code there is no doubt that the blackest barbarism and the most idolatrous worship would reign omnipotent where now one God and a faith of much nobility lead men to the light.

Wonderful, I say, is the personality of Mohammed. **The Camel-Driver.** Born in Mecca about the year 570 A.D., the son of poor parents, he was early left an orphan, and was adopted by his uncle Abu Tâlib. When a young man he found employment with a prosperous widow named Kadijah. As a camel-driver, he took her caravans on long journeys through the desert to Syria, and on these lonely rides there came to his soul those first questionings on the mysteries of life and death. He lived in an environment that might well produce a poet and prophet. Jogging along through the desert, the great silence was unbroken save by the creaking of the camels' saddles and their panting breath; above him the great vault of heaven stretched in endless blue, and around him the eye had room to roam to the farthest stretch of sight. The fierce sun beat down in unrelenting heat, so that the parched soul, in its weariness, conjured up longings of green meadows and babbling waters, and the shadow of the great rock was joy and peace unutterable. Then would the night come—the clear, diaphanous night of the East—when the stars gleamed down with a pale steely light, and the camels cast great shadows on the plain, and the cool breeze revived the fainting spirit of the traveller. In such scenes as this the human soul finds out its loneliness. No distractions are there as in the noisy din of cities; man is thrown upon himself, and the greatness, the awfulness, of Nature leads his thoughts beyond the world below.

To such a man as Mohammed, the camel-driver, this was a life that taught him the wisdom which books and men could not have given. Unlettered, low-born, roughly nurtured as he was, he had in him that spark of poetry and prophecy that would one day leap into flame. Alone with his own soul, he was always thinking, thinking, thinking. He was a man of strong emotion, subject even to fits and hysteria, his thoughts turning to madness and frenzy when that delicate brain of his throbbed at too fast a

pace. Things beautiful stirred his heart-strings with a subtle touch, moving him to tears. He loved love, and craved it. In his loneliness he learnt a great sympathy for other lonely souls, his heart ached for the vice and misery of the world, and gradually it was borne in upon him that he, Mohammed, had a mission from the Great Spirit above to make the world see the beauties that he saw, to know the truth that he had learnt, to practise the virtues which alone could bring happiness. Kadijah, the widow, was fascinated with this servant of hers, and offered him her hand in marriage. Though she was rich and he poor, though she was old, as women count, and he young, love broke down the barriers of age and wealth, and Kadijah and Mohammed lived in conjugal communion and felicity, blessed with children who came as the years passed by. But marriage was no impediment to meditation, and Mohammed was still the man of thought, his thoughts turning always to religion.

**The Visionary.** Arabia at that time was in a state of religious degradation. The great mass of the people were idolaters, fetish-worshippers, and star-worshippers, though these old superstitions were losing their grip to a certain extent on the educated and the intelligent. In various districts Christianity prevailed, but by no means a true and orthodox faith, being perverted by heresies and pagan superstitions. The old Judaism was more extended in its influence, the northern part of Arabia being dotted over with small Jewish colonies which had taken refuge there after the destruction of Jerusalem. These different religious beliefs all acted upon the impressionable nature of Mohammed. The old pagan fairy tales of genii and demons had entered too much into his early life to be altogether banished. The glorious history of the Jewish people was also known to him, though vaguely and inaccurately, and he had a deep reverence for Abraham and Moses, Isaac and Jacob, and other great prophets. Many a time, too, he had heard the story of Christ, and though he disbelieved the tale of His crucifixion, and denied that He was the Son of God, he considered Jesus to be the greatest of all the prophets, saving himself, who was to follow Him. For this truth, as he thought it, was revealed to him one day in a vision. He had a kind of trance—one of those fits when prolonged brooding over great problems wrought him into a frenzy, when he is said to have roared like a camel and to have streamed with sweat, when his eyes turned bloody

and his mouth was covered with foam—and in this excited state it seemed to him that the angel Gabriel appeared to him, and in the name of God commanded him to preach the true faith which should be revealed to him. He was to be the new prophet to lead the world to the light, and in this great task God would be always with him.

Mohammed told this wonderful vision to his wife Kadijah—and she, strange to say, believed him, and in his mission. Surely this fact, and the fact also that Mohammed's closest friends and relatives were the first to have faith in his Divine appointment, are proofs of the sincerity and greatness of the man. For those who are with us every day, who know all our blemishes and weaknesses, who possess that perfect familiarity which is said to breed contempt, are not as a rule the first to give us credit for any unusual qualities. But not so with Mohammed. At this time, and all through his life, those who knew him most loved him best. So when he proclaimed the startling words, "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His prophet," he found a little band of friends who believed, and were willing to maintain their belief even to the death.

**The Prophet.** Mohammed was not merely a dreamer. He was a man also of fiery word and quick action, a man of warm passions and restless energy. His appearance impressed the beholder with his strength of body and mind. He was a man of middle height, lean but broad-shouldered, fair-skinned for an Arab, with curling black hair covering a square well-set head, and coal-black lustrous eyes that burned with a glowing light in their depths. He had long black eyelashes and a long beard that gave him an air of dignity, and his prominent nose, rather hawk-like, was a sign of his indomitable will. So have his friends described him, and such was he who set out to convert the world. With words of fiery eloquence he denounced the old pagan faith in many gods, the old idolatrous practices, superstitions, and vices. To the Meccans he preached the truth of one all-wise, all-merciful, all-powerful God, whose favour could only be obtained by the practice of virtue, of honesty and purity and charity, who would reward the good with everlasting happiness in heaven, the wicked with everlasting misery in hell. The virtues leading to heaven were to be obtained chiefly by fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, and earthly happiness was only to be obtained by an absolute faith in the

goodness, an absolute resignation to the will of the great God. Such, in brief, was the message delivered by Mohammed, and such is the meaning of that short creed which has always been the watchword of the faith: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His prophet."

**The Sword of God.** This message was rejected by the great body of the Meccans, who clung to their many gods and their old idols. The tribe of Koreish, to which Mohammed belonged, persecuted his followers, and would have killed the prophet himself had he not been under the powerful protection of his uncle Abu Tâlib. As time went on Mohammed obtained many adherents from the city of Medina, and when the persecution in Mecca became unbearable he fled secretly to join his faithful friend Abu Bekr, who with about one hundred families of Mecca had preceded him to the place which was in future to be called Medinat-Aoabi, the City of the Prophet. Here he gathered round him a strong following, and from this year dates the Mohammedan era, called the Hegira. From this time forward Mohammed had no doubt as to his Divine mission and his Divine inspiration. At this time also was forced upon him the righteousness (as he thought) of the sword as the messenger of faith. As the heroes of the old Jewish faith had led their people against the unbelieving, and had conquered through the strong arm of the God of Battles, so also would he, by the power of God, conquer the infidels and lead them to the truth. Mohammed, with this conviction, attacked the Meccans, and defeated them heavily. His success resulted in his gaining many new followers, and with these he gained new victories. After a while the Meccans arranged a truce with him, and during this period he sent missionaries into all parts of Arabia, preaching his faith and converting the people. Then the Meccans commenced war again, but Mohammed, marching swiftly on to Mecca with ten thousand men, besieged the city before preparations had been made for the defence. The city surrendered, and Mohammed was acknowledged as chief and prophet.

**The Spread of the Faith.** The fall of Mecca, the shrine of the old pagan faith, to which every year a great pilgrimage had come to do homage to the idols, secured the victory of Mohammedanism throughout Arabia. Mohammed made that his base, and defeated one after another

the few tribes who concentrated against him. Then he sent to the kings of Persia and Abyssinia, and the chiefs of Arabia, commanding them to accept the faith; and from all parts deputations came to do homage to him as prince and prophet. At length, in the eighth year of the Hegira—that is, as I have said, the Mohammedan era—after a last pilgrimage to Mecca (in which he kept up the old pagan custom, but adapted it to the new faith), Mohammed was seized with an illness which he knew to be mortal. He spent his last days in bidding his followers continue in the practice of virtue, exhorting them to be merciful to the weak, to be generous to the poor, to protect women and children, and to spread the religion of the true God throughout the world, handing it down, as it had been revealed to him, and as he had taught it, to future generations. The news that the Prophet was dead could not be believed by his faithful friends. The greatest excitement and tumult reigned for a while, many announcing that he was still alive, and refusing to believe the truth. But Abu Bekr, who had always been most intimate with Mohammed from the earliest time, calmed the distress of the multitude by saying to them, “Whoever among you has served Mohammed, let him know that he is dead; but he who has served the God of Mohammed, let him continue in His service, for He is still alive, and never dies.” And truly, though the Prophet was no more, his words lived in men’s hearts, and as set down in the great book dictated from his lips have carried on that religion from then till now, when two hundred millions of the human race profess the faith of Islam.

**The Koran.** In the Koran, dictated by Mohammed, there is much that is fantastic, much that is superstitious, something even that is immoral. Mohammed was an Oriental, with hot blood and hot passions, and his conception of heaven is a sensual and material one. Many of the beliefs expressed in his writings are a curious mixture of paganism, Judaism, and Christianity. Many of his statements are self-contradictory, showing how as years went on his opinions on many problems altered and developed. Yet in spite of all this there is infinite poetry, truth, and beauty in the Koran, which reveals a soul of surpassing genius. This camel-driver indeed had the gift of golden speech! Some of his verses are almost as fine as passages in the Psalms. Is not this a sublime definition of his Master?—

“God! there is no god but He—the living, the eternal. Slumber doth not overtake Him, neither sleep; to Him belongeth all that is in heaven and in earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him, but by His own permission? He knoweth that which is past and that which is to come unto them—they shall not comprehend anything of His knowledge, but so far as He pleaseth. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the upholding of both is no burden to Him. He is the Lofty and the Great.”

The strength of Mohammedanism has lain in its moral code, which has elevated every nation over which it has predominated. The laws which forbid any indulgence whatever in intoxicating spirits, which forbid gambling for money in any form, which command frequent fasts, but not excessive ones, to correct and not to weaken the body, which ordain five periods of prayer every day, when the soul is to be raised<sup>n</sup> for a few brief moments to the Creator—above all, the great pervading spirit of the religion, that of resignation to God’s will—necessarily have been a source of power and order among the peoples who have followed them, and still follow them, with an obedience which is an object-lesson to other religions of the world. True that there is a good deal of fatalism in Islam (though Mohammed himself was not a fatalist), but even this leads men to do heroic deeds, to meet death fearlessly, believing that man’s hour has been appointed by God beforehand, and that nothing can hasten or retard it. In our own days we have seen how brave men die, and how at Omdurman the Mohammedan hosts found death even at the cannon’s mouth with still the cry that went up long before when Crusader met Saracen: “Allahu Akbar—Allahu Akbar! God is great; there is no god but God, and Mohammed is His prophet.”

PART X

THE ROAD TO BUSINESS  
SUCCESS

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1. The Value of Character.

IN the following chapters I propose to deal with some of those qualities and qualifications which are most necessary for successful business life. And I want to avoid if possible the laying down of platitudes and elementary principles, as if they were so many truths newly discovered. It does not need a prophet, for instance, to say that an idle man will seldom succeed in business, or that a stupid man will seldom be likely to set the Thames on fire. Nor do I write now for mere office lads and others who need to be told that good spelling and good writing, clean faces and clean nails, are amongst the best testimonials for employment. I want rather to address men and women who have got out of the nursery of business, so to speak, and who find themselves in the rough-and-tumble of commercial life.

**The Weak to the Wall.** I will begin by saying a word or two about the most crucial element of modern business—and that is competition. In the old days business people in this country could get along comfortably enough in a quiet jog-trot fashion, and build up their business very nicely, with quiet jog-trot methods and manners.

But nowadays this is not so. There are few businesses of

any kind—I doubt whether there are any—in which it must not be a constant struggle against competition, or else a quiet lethargic death before that same force. There is no alternative, and no standing still. It is either sink or swim on the sea of competition, which not only girdles our shores and is astir in home waters, but comes like a huge Atlantic roller from the United States, from Germany, from Belgium, and other parts of the world, to swallow up the industries of Britain.

This is no mere figure of speech or rhetorical exaggeration. It is plain fact proved by the bitter experience of too many British tradesmen, by the reports of H.M. Consuls, by statistics in Blue-books, by the head-shakings of many a shrewd and patriotic citizen, who has seen with his own eyes how rapidly we are being outstripped by foreign competitors. But, apart from foreign competition, there is a keen struggle nowadays in the commercial world, between firm and firm, between man and man. It is a struggle in which those who are not well equipped by education and character will inevitably go under.

It would be well, therefore, I think, that every man in business should ask himself two or three questions: "Do I want to succeed, or do I want to be a business failure? If the former, what qualities of mind and character are most likely to help me in my ambition?" It is not everyone who has the experience or the knowledge to answer these queries. It is not everyone, indeed, to whom the queries would occur, or who would take any trouble in solving them. But as they have occurred to me, and as I have taken some trouble in working out these practical problems of life, it may be useful, as well as interesting, to my readers if I put my thoughts into words.

**Sir Oracle.** First, then, I think that if a man wishes to succeed in business he must clear his head of cobwebs. He must have a regular "spring clean," and see that no "flue," as housewives call it, remains in the corners. Conceit is a cobweb that wants clearing out. The man who thinks he knows everything he ought to, and that what he doesn't know isn't knowledge (there are plenty of such folks about), will never be a success in business life. Neither will he if he admits his ignorance and is satisfied with it, thanking God for his humility and common-sense. Neither again will he if, admitting that he has a good deal to learn, he thinks that he can teach himself all

things necessary, and that he does not want other folk to poke their fingers in his private educational pie.

These are various kinds of conceit which in one form and another may be found rampant in any company of male bipeds. The most obnoxious to his followers is, of course, the one who in his arrogance exclaims, "I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my lips let no dog bark." It is a full-blooded conceit that a man only attains as a rule when he is in a position of importance—an employer, or a petty officer of some sort, "dressed," as Shakespeare says, "in a little brief authority."

Such are the employers who lay down the law to their employees, disdaining or never dreaming to consult their opinion, closing their ears to new ideas expressed by their subordinates, dictating hard-and-fast rules from the lofty pinnacle of their own conceit. Such are the employers whose businesses are getting wiped out (deservedly, too, though hard luck on their employees) by more modest, and therefore successful, competitors.

The second class of conceit I mentioned above  
**"No Non-sense about him."** —that of the man who glories in his ignorance—though not so personally objectionable, is the more dangerous to trade. He is a common kind of individual, and it does not need a day's march to meet him. He affects the hearty blunt manner of a "true-born Englishman." "What do I want with all this book-learning, this science, and this tommy-nonsense the papers are gassing about?" Thus he asks between his cigar puffs.

"Bless your heart, my dear sir, we don't want theories and new-fangled ideas, we want good practical workmanship. All those technical schools and science classes don't turn out workmen. Foreigners may learn all the 'ologies' under the sun, for all I care. Give me fellows who can't do much more than read their daily paper (and don't read too much of that), and British trade will go on gaily."

Thus he argues, with entire satisfaction at his own logic and smug complacency at his own ignorance. A man would never dare to speak like this in the United States. They have learnt that rule-of-thumb practice is worth a hundred times less than practice with scientific theory behind it. They believe in education; they give their children a better education than they had themselves, and rapidly their country has forged right ahead to the premier place in the world of commerce.

**Pride of  
Intellect.**

And now there is that third kind of conceit—the conceit of allowing no teacher but oneself. It is the commonest of all. You will find very clever men touched with it, and therefore limited by it. Their pride will not let them stoop to subordinates to learn from their experience, will not even let them exhibit their honourable ignorance to equals, so as to get helped on the road by friendly counsel. No; they must lock themselves up in the reserve of their own soul, and acquire their own knowledge and experience laboriously and painfully, because singly.

What waste of time! What business folly! Clear your heads of these silly cobwebs if you want to succeed. A business man must have an open soul, open eyes and ears. He must always be eager to learn, no matter from whom, whether superior or subordinate; no matter how, in the privacy of his own chamber or in frank converse in public. He must banish prejudice, and always be ready to abandon old ideas in favour of new ones if they satisfy his judgment. He must be ready, nay eager, to admit himself wrong if he can only get or be set right.

**Vocation  
versus  
Duty.**

Now I'll presume all cobwebs to be in the dust-pan. The next thing necessary for business success is, I am sure, pride of work. If a man dislikes his work, if the sooner his day's labour is over the gladder he is, then he will never go far in it. I am one of those who advocate a change of work if it proves uncongenial. A square peg in a round hole never did fit, and never will. Therefore, if a man is single, he does well to strike out in a new direction when his present state is unsatisfactory. I don't believe over-much in that byword, "A rolling stone gathers no moss," if moss is equivalent to success. If the stone rolls in a right direction, it is better than resting stock still in a barren spot.

But, on the other hand, there is a good deal of virtue and wisdom in that homely old counsel, "To do my duty in that station of life to which it has pleased God to call me." There are many people who have no vocation for any special work whatever. Genius does not say to them Write or Paint, does not command them to abandon the sure path of daily drudgery for the more uncertain and the more glorious pursuits of creating out of their imagination things of beauty, or out of their brains things of profit to mankind. There are too many who find their

daily work hopelessly uncongenial, and yet have no true vocation to any other labour. This is mere natural laziness, and such persons are skulkers.

**Pride of Work.** Pride of work—it is the touchstone of success. It is the only virtue by which work may be made enjoyable, for naturally man is a slothful animal. “Show me a man diligent in his business,” said Solomon, “and he shall stand before kings.” Better still, he will stand before his own self-judgment with head high and unabashed. “Thank Heaven, I have done a good day’s work.” That is a good and healthy appetiser for a man to go home to tea with; especially so if he has worked to satisfy his own conscience rather than merely to gain credit from his employer, or merely to gain gold for his till.

I believe—I know from experience—that work ordinarily tedious, that work which some would call horrible drudgery, may be made not only tolerable, but enjoyable and even exciting, if the worker does it with a determination to beat his own record. But there are few kinds of work in which one cannot find an interest; few which, with a high ideal in view, may not tax a man’s energy and intellect to the utmost; few in which the strenuous, ambitious worker may not learn to take a pride. Let me close these introductory words on the Road to Business Success by a quotation from George Eliot’s great novel, *Adam Bede*.

**Workers and Skulkers.** Sturdy Adam was busy in his workshop absorbed in his task, and heedless of the clatter of his fellow-craftsmen. Suddenly the clock strikes six, and immediately tools are thrown down and there is a general scramble to be off.

Adam alone had gone on with his work as if nothing had happened. But, observing the cessation of the tools, he looked up and said, in a tone of indignation—

“Look here, now! I can’t abide to see men throw away their tools that way the minute the clock begins to strike, as if they took no pleasure in their work and were afraid o’ doing a stroke too much.”

Seth looked a little self-conscious, and began to be slower in his preparation for going, but Mum Saft broke the silence and said—

“Ay, ay, Adam lad, ye talk like a young man. When y’are

six-an'-forty like me, istid o' six-an'-twenty, ye wanna be so flush o' workin' for nought."

"Nonsense," said Adam, still wrathful. "What's age got to do with it, I wonder? Ye arena getting stiff yet. I reckon I hate to see a man's arms drop down as if he was shot before the clock's fairly struck, just as if he'd never a bit o' pride and delight in's work. The very grindstone 'ull go on turning a bit after you loose it."

There is some healthy morality in this that we should do well to take to heart: "The very grindstone 'ull go on turning a bit."

## 2. Between Master and Man.

I am now going to discuss the relations between employers and employees. Upon this relationship depends to a great extent business failure or success. It is a subject more important to the employer than to a man in his employ, for if the former acts ignorantly and foolishly towards his subordinates he ruins his business and all belonging to it, whereas the latter only ruins himself. But to the individual employee the question is also one of huge personal importance. If he works out the solution satisfactorily, and moulds his character accordingly, he may command success.

To do so is not easy. To attain this standard of character requires a high ideal and a rigid self-discipline. It demands no mean knowledge of human nature, and the power of putting that knowledge into practice. It brings out a man's strength of character or his weakness, and just so much as it is one or the other, so will be the measure of his success. Business tests a man's virtue to the uttermost. It brings out all that is paltry, sordid, mean, deceitful, grasping, and, on the other hand, all that is generous, upright, and magnanimous. Let me see a man's system of business, let me see the relations he holds to his superiors or subordinates, and I will tell you what manner of man he is, and whether he is worth his salt.

### **The Best Policy.**

The first fundamental quality essential between employer and employee is frankness. There are some employers who adopt the policy of secrecy towards their subordinates. They are afraid of trusting them. They will not give them a full insight into their plans, but only

a peep at the mere surface of them, so that they have to work in the dark.

Foolish policy! As if reasonable beings will take an interest or a pride in work that is mere drudgery to them, because they do not know to what end it is done or the scheme of which it is but an item.

The employer who knows his business will take as many men into his confidence as possible, not only with a view to getting their ideas and advice, though this would be of immense value, but also for the purpose of explaining his ideas and ambitions to them, so that they may take an intelligent interest and pride in furthering them to the best of their ability.

**Discipline and Criticism.** But frankness is not only due from the employer, it is due also from the employee. The man who dares to speak his mind on all occasions, even though it is liable to give offence or to prove unacceptable to his chief, is the one who will become most trusted and respected.

If an employer orders a certain piece of work to be done in a certain way, and his subordinate considers that a wrong way, in my opinion it is the latter's bounden duty to speak out and give his reasons for disputing his superior's orders. A blind servility, an unquestioning obedience, is not nearly so valuable to a business man as frank, bold criticism.

This, of course, does not get rid of the obligation to obey orders readily. There cannot be two masters, and a subordinate must not take upon himself the responsibility of deviating from or rebelling against superior command. Nevertheless, discipline may still be maintained in conjunction with healthy advice and criticism, and the man who does not give it in time of need, as well as the man who will not receive it amiably, neither knows how to obey nor how to rule.

**Magna Charta in Business.** Frankness should not stop at interchange of opinions, but should go as far as the pointing out of faults—on either side. An employee should have his rights well defined, and stand up for them manfully, resisting every encroachment upon them. I would not give a fig for a subordinate who would tamely submit to tyranny, injustice, or discourtesy. And remember this, an employer—especially an employer of many—may wish to be the justest man alive, and yet fail in justice; may wish to treat all his employees

with perfect sympathy, and yet fail in courtesy. Mistakes, misapprehensions, slandering tongues, crop up frequently in every big business, and how is an employer to avoid them if he does not get frankness from his employees?

I say to all young men, Be bold and speak out. If your chief is trampling on your privileges, if he is treating you badly in any way, tell him so face to face and without mincing matters. Take my word for it, if he has a spark of natural goodness (and there are few men without it) he will mend his ways. Ten chances to one, he acted through some mistake, and is glad to be put right. Or if the one chance turns up, and he acted out of malice prepense, he will be checked quickly by a sturdy protest from his victim.

On the other hand, the employer has a right to equal frankness, and if he sees faults in those in his employ he is failing in courage and duty if he hesitates to point them out. Let him drop down on them at once, not exaggerating them, not with any bullying bluster, but quietly, courteously, and showing determination to have them nipped in the bud.

**The Gold of Silence.** In return for an employer's confidence there must be trustworthiness on the part of the employee. The man who cannot hold his tongue when need be is a fool, and deserves no confidence. In most businesses there are certain trade secrets, and an employer has every right to demand that they should be respected.

Even if one of his subordinates should leave him and go to a rival firm, that man would have no right, and his sense of honour should not allow him, to divulge secrets which he learnt when he was receiving pay from his former chief. Those confidences were given him as a member of the firm, and as soon as he resigns his membership he must also relegate those trade secrets to the hidden chambers of his mind.

Scores of men have been ruined by the foolish blabbing of their employers' confidences. There are some men who no sooner possess a secret than they feel a burning desire to share it with someone "in the strictest confidence." When once these fellows have been found out, they rarely get a second chance. If an employer finds his trust betrayed, he takes care that he does not trust again. The man to succeed in business is he who can keep his own and his employers' counsel, who will not be "drawn," however friendly and genial the inquirer, and

who will succumb neither to the melting influences of hot toddy nor to "butter" well laid on.

**Time by the Forelock.** The qualities next in value to those I have mentioned are energy and resource. Don't rust, don't rest on your laurels, don't put on the jog-trot pace. The man of energy always sees fresh openings, he is always pushing his own or his master's business in new directions; he never takes "forty winks," but is continually furbishing up his brains for new ideas, and, having found them, works them "for all he knows."

Prompt in thinking, prompt in acting, those are excellent characteristics of a business man. Rashness is dangerous, but over-deliberation is not less so. I know a great firm which has fallen slowly but surely into ruin through over-caution.

With a big board of directors, they were continually deliberating and discussing, and, by the time they had made up their minds to put a certain thing on the market, found, to their surprise—oh yes, they were very surprised!—that they were fore-stalled completely by rival firms.

What those gentlemen wanted was a man in their midst who could arrive at a decision without weighing the pros and cons to a hair's breadth, without trembling at the probable risk and shaking his head at the possible gain, and who, having made up his mind fairly and squarely, would carry the work out to a speedy completion. "Bis dat qui cito dat," say our Latin scholars. He gives twice who gives quickly. This is a nugget of wisdom, and it is not less true to say in business that he gets twice who acts quickly.

**The Labourer's Hire.** Of course there is one item in the relationship between employer and employee that is more important than any. I mean the question of payment. There are plenty of employers who would agree cordially with all the remarks I have hitherto made. Oh yes, they believe that confidence should exist between themselves and their subordinates, and they are ready to smile approval to all my statements as to an employee's best qualifications. But when it comes to a question of remuneration, many of them would tighten their lips and mentally cry "Heresy!" to the remarks I am about to make.

And yet I am merely going to say that the labourer is worthy

of his hire. That being interpreted means that if an employee furthers his chief's business interests with untiring energy, with absolute fidelity, with all that is best of brain and heart, he has a right to share in the prosperity of that business he so loyally helps to sustain, and to receive more than a mere living wage. An employer, if he is wise, will pay his subordinates generously. And "generously" does not mean cutting them down to the lowest figure they will accept without rebelling, but giving them a little more if possible than they demand or have the bare right to demand.

On the other hand, the employee should treat his chief with equal generosity as regards his work. He should give him "good measure pressed down, and flowing over." He should not demand payment to the last farthing for every fraction of work he does beyond the stipulated amount. There are plenty of employees who act on the principle of Shylock demanding his pound of flesh. If they stop for half an hour's overtime during a time of pressure they demand extra payment. Rather than work without payment after the clock has struck six they would hand in their resignation at once. Let there be generosity on both sides—generosity of payment, generosity of work. The successful employer is he who gives the one, and the successful employee he who gives the other.

There is one other quality which is enormously valuable to a business man. That is sympathy. A man will be doubly well served by his subordinates if he regards them as something more than mere machines, if he has a frequent friendly inquiry for them, if he takes a kindly interest in their lives outside business hours. There are some employers who are so well aware of this that they simulate an interest in the personal welfare of their employees. They ask with a bland smile or an oily voice how their wives and children are, etc., but the hollowness of it is very apparent, and they merely get laughed at and despised for their pains.

No ; sympathy to be effective must be real. Then, as I have said, it is vastly valuable. A man will do a lot for a little sympathy, and it may sometimes be esteemed better payment than gold.

### 3. Traders and their Customers.

I shall now deal with the relations between business man and customer, or, in other words, with business ethics. This is just

as important a subject as those I have previously mentioned, for, although a man's business prosperity depends a great deal upon the way he treats his employers or his superiors, it depends also very largely upon his methods towards his customer.

Now there are some who think that the relations between the business man and his customers are on a footing with those between a spider and a fly. He erects a little cobweb, all nice and sticky, and entices a simple being by means of advertisements, circulars, and tempting lies. Like the spider, when once he gets the deluded wretch within his clutches, he squeezes him dry. This little game has been played pretty often, especially in the old days when, for instance, many a lawyer was a "shark," and when company promoters posed as philanthropists. But the game is nearly played out. The flies have got more wary, and the spider often comes a cropper out of his own cobweb.

But enough of Natural History! What I started to say was that if a man wants to succeed nowadays in business he must get rid of the idea of imposing upon his customer. The best gentleman is the most successful business man; and a gentleman is a fellow who doesn't do dirty tricks. In every business—at least every business I know anything about—there are constant temptations to gain a little more profit on a transaction by playing a double game, or by an underhand move, trusting to luck in not being found out. Now Dame Fortune is a fickle jade, but in one thing she is fairly constant. She rarely plays into the hands of a trickster. In ninety-nine out of a hundred cases he always is found out. He made his little pile out of his trick, but he loses in the long-run, for once bit is twice shy, and the customer tricked is the customer lost.

A business man's first ambition should be to establish a good reputation, and having got it, to keep it. It is a far more steady source of income than big profits spasmodically gained. Such a reputation can only be built up by fair dealing with customers. Now the question, of course, is, What is fair dealing? I do not want to lay down an exaggerated code of business honour. Business is not philanthropy. It is not even a friendly interchange. It is keen rivalry. In many cases even it is a duel between business man and customer. But the duel must be fought according to the rules—with buttons on the foils, and with every honourable courtesy. In plain words, although one man wants to make a

**"What's in  
a Name?"**

profit, and another to buy a thing cheap, the bargain must be conducted fairly and squarely.

It is not always necessary for a business man to show all his cards, but those he does show should not have come down his sleeve like those of Bret Harte's Heathen Chinee. A business man should do all he can to win the trust of his client—"client" is a more fashionable word than "customer" nowadays!—and should never abuse that trust. "So-and-so's is a good house. When they say a thing is first-rate it is not second-rate. When they say that no one else could supply this article cheaper, they are not lying. When they undertake to do a job well, they do not scamp it, or trim it, but they give good value." Now that is the sort of testimonial a man should wish every customer to give.

So important is it that a business reputation should not suffer blemish, that a good business man should be ready to sacrifice his profits and sell his goods at less than cost price if they do not come up to the standard. Or he should even go the length of wasting a stock rather than put it into the market under his patronage.

**Manners  
maketh  
Money.**

I have said the best gentleman is the best business man. For one reason, he makes friends, and friends are good business assets. A pleasant manner, frank, genial, above-board, is an excellent introduction to new customers and a business cement with old ones. Other things being equal, I would rather give my business to a real good fellow, who has a hearty hand-grip, a cheery smile, and a jest at his tongue-tip, than to a surly boor, who finds it hard to say a civil word.

To the commercial traveller a pleasant personality is essential. Many a fortune has been built up to a very great extent owing to the breezy enthusiasm of a "knight of the road," whose periodical visit is welcomed by his clients, who has the latest joke to crack, and who books his orders with jovial insistence that will never take a nay. "Ah, he is a good sort; give the job to him," says many a client who but for a friendly personal feeling would have been likely enough to have turned to another firm. But not only should pleasant manners be cultivated by the traveller, they are just as important to the head of the firm—doubly important, in fact; for, after all, the traveller's geniality is known to be part of his stock in trade, but upon the chief's character rests the reputation of the firm.

**Take it  
or  
leave it.**

Though in some trades bargaining between business man and client is a recognised practice, it is often damaging to the prestige of a firm. It is generally best for a man to make up his mind what his price is, and then to stick to it like grim death, even though to do so may lose him an order. To shilly-shally on a price is often a fatal mistake, for if a business man is open to pressure to reduce his terms, a customer naturally adopts the plan of systematically cutting down the quotations. Now and again, of course, there may be adequate reasons advanced by a customer why a certain price should be lowered, and in that case a business man may acquiesce gracefully; but it should be his standing maxim never to budge from his first quotation without giving a just and adequate reason.

**To Mutual  
Advantage.**

Between the business man and his client there should exist a reciprocity of interest. The client should desire to get good value and to pay a fair price for it when he gets it; the business man should desire to please his client as well as sell to him. Both should take a mutual pride in the work bought and sold.

There are many business men who think that if they supply what is asked for they have done all that is necessary, and ought to make their fortunes accordingly. Fudge! A business man who wants to succeed must not only supply what is asked for, but he must create a demand. He must produce goods or manufacture articles, whatever his business may be—whether books or boots, haberdashery or fine art—which will strike a customer as being “the very thing” he wanted, if he had only thought of it. To be very successful, he must lead the market in ideas. To be moderately successful, he must keep pace with the ideas in the market.

The good business man must consult his client's tastes and whims and prejudices. We Britishers have a brutally insular way of thrusting our goods before customers' noses. To take an instance. According to many Consular reports, contracts have been lost to this country, not because the prices quoted were higher than opponents', nor because the quality was inferior, but merely because the estimates were given in our ridiculous system of weights and measures, whereas other contractors quoted in the simple Metric system, which was understood by those considering the tenders.

**The Secret of Success.** - But though a business man does well to consult his client's prejudices, he may often educate his client's taste and overrule his unreasonable objections. In that is the pride and the prosperity of the successful business man. He is always launching out, going one better, and carrying his customers along with him. His ambition is to stimulate the ambitions of his clients. He persuades them to do big things, and his profits and his satisfaction are so much bigger accordingly.

This is, indeed, the secret of success. Bring your goods to the notice of your customer. Please him, inspire him. This is the day of advertisement—a great pity, no doubt, for one's soul is apt to be tortured by the eternal jingle of some catchy poster, the eternal garishness of some flaunting placard. But the fact remains: the business man must get to his clients, and this he can only do by advertising. In my opinion, one of the most effective ways is by a good catalogue with illustrations. Nothing vulgar and shoddy, but dainty, attractive, artistic. Print and paper nowadays are cheap, and a nicely got-up catalogue is an excellent trade expense. If it is pretty and original it pleases a client, it does not jar upon him as an impertinence, and he keeps it by him for reference.

**The Art of Advertising.** Advertising, of course, is an art. The advertiser is born, not made. You may see all the difference in the world between a skilful advertisement in a paper composed by a man who knows how to get an effect, and one by a mere unintelligent amateur. The latter wants to cram as much into a square inch as he can, on the principle of putting a quart into a pint pot. Or he writes a bald, plain statement, entirely uninteresting, and not in the least likely to catch the eye.

Now the advertising expert does things differently. He uses the space at his disposal artistically. He relies on a few terse sentences standing out in bold relief against a white surface, inviting perusal by a striking headline, and sticking in the reader's memory by some quaintness, humour, or power of phraseology. If he occupies the same space in a paper week by week he changes his style every time, reiterating by means of variety. Of course one cannot put the art of advertising in a nutshell, for it is a big subject, but the key to its success is originality. Be original, and you will attract notice. Be commonplace, and you will be ignored.

**Pictures that Please.** Illustration plays a great part in modern advertising, and a good thing too; for although one may not want a new brand of tobacco or a new soap, a well-drawn picture is pleasing even though it advertises somebody's wares. Fortunately, advertisers are beginning to employ good artists, and some of the work produced is really worth looking at.

If a man has the money to develop his business, he will find it a profitable investment to pay a good price for good ideas in artistic advertising. Some dainty little sketch in the papers, which makes people pause to look at it and leaves them with a pleasant memory, some topical caricature drawn by a bold hand which raises a laugh, is often a little gold mine to a business and brings in a crowd of customers.

**Small Bait for Big Fish.** Another good business maxim is, Send a sprat to catch a whale. Some firms owe their success to being widely generous in the matter of specimens. Others have been cut out because they have been grudging and stinting. In some trades—I have one particularly in my mind—it is next to impossible to get orders without sowing the ground, so to speak, with a goodly store of samples. It is an expensive business, but it is bad policy to spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar, and to save a few shillings now is to lose a few pounds later on.

Once again I say, get your goods before your clients, and then, by the quality of these goods, by the reputation of your firm, by your own personality, by your enthusiasm, persistence, and judgment, get in and win.

#### 4. The Model Young Business Man.

In the preceding pages I have summed up what to my mind are the fundamental principles which should guide a man in business life; but there are matters in connection with his character and work which I have left unsaid, and the picture of the perfect business man will not be complete till I have filled in those details. Let us take such a man and follow him in his career.

He starts humbly—an office-boy with legs dangling half-way down his high stool. At the same desk are three or four lads of his own age, and before he has been in the office half an hour he

sees that their favourite maxims are, "Don't do to-day what you can do to-morrow." "Never do yourself what you can get others to do." "England expects every (other) man to do his duty." These are not our fellow's principles. Young as he is, he has made up his mind never to be a stick-in-the-mud, and he has already made a few maxims of his own. Here are some of them—

1. Never say "I think so." Either know or not know.
2. Inaccuracy is the root of business evil.
3. Be ready to go anywhere and do anything.
4. Don't grumble at work, but only when there's nothing to do.
5. Keep your eyes and ears open.
6. A closed mouth catches no flies.

**A Head screwed on the Shoulders.** With these principles in working order, our lad finds certain things take place. He finds that his employer picks him out to do jobs which require special care. In a little while he is raised from the rank of office-boy to more responsible work.

By this time he has made enemies. Not because he is bad-tempered—for, on the contrary, he is of a cheery disposition—but because he has been successful, and is therefore hated by some of those he has left behind. He is also regarded as a dangerous item by those immediately above him, for there is no knowing when he is going to stop, and one must keep such a fellow in his place.

Among his equals, on the contrary, he is rather popular. They think him a bit of a prig, for he doesn't see the fun of washing his hands three times a morning in the lavatory, where the others meet for a gossip. He is always in the office at five minutes to nine, and doesn't put his books away at ten minutes to six, waiting for the clock to strike to rush off home. Then he doesn't care to talk of the latest murder case, or to discuss a big football match. In fact, he's rather a dull dog all round.

Still, in spite of these defects, he is not a bad fellow, for one can always get him to do a bit of one's work on mornings one feels slack. Strangely enough, he always seems to have time on his hands, though when one used to do his work it kept one busy enough all day long. He is an inquisitive sort of beggar, too. He always wants to know things. "What's this for?" or "Why do you do that?" or "How do you do so and so?"

**"A Man's a Man for a' that."** Some of the juniors think he is inclined to put on side. For instance, he doesn't say "sir" at the end of every sentence to his chief, and he doesn't get into a flurry when the "boss" comes in and asks him a question. He is as cool as a cucumber, and answers up with a straight look out of the eyes. If, too, he hasn't got any work to do when his chief happens to come into the office for a moment, he goes on reading the paper or studying his French grammar, instead of scurrying it into his desk, and going through a pantomime of being busy by scribbling hieroglyphics on a scrap of paper.

It is quite a treat to his fellow-juniors when he makes an awkward blunder. He is always so methodical and accurate as a rule that to find him tripping is pleasant to human nature. Just to make sure that the mistake is not hushed up, one of the juniors takes occasion to mention it to "the boss," but—hang the fellow!—he has been forestalled by the culprit himself, and gets a reprimand for putting in his spoke where it wasn't wanted.

**In the Mud and out Again.** However, he is not impeccable. For one day, in a moment of temptation, he tells a lie to his employer to shield himself. His fellow-juniors wink at him knowingly, and feel quite friendly towards him afterwards. They won't blab, bless you! They often do the same thing themselves, for one can't be too high and mighty in this world. But it is rather amusing to see how uncomfortable the fellow is.

Then it leaks out (through Bob, the office-boy, who had his ear to the keyhole) that there was quite a scene in the chief's room next day when the fellow actually went and confessed having told a lie. What happened? Why, instead of blazing out like the old man sometimes does, he got up without a word and wrung him by the hand. In fact, the "boss" seemed to take a special fancy to him after that, for he got a rise next month, and was entrusted with work that only a much older man had been allowed to do before.

Naturally, this didn't make him more popular among those over whose heads he passed. "By Jove! what airs he will put on now!" said the juniors. However, this feeling tones down after a while, when it is seen his simple, frank manner hasn't changed. As a matter of fact, our young business man has been speaking to himself on this subject. "Don't get a swelled head,

my boy," is a sing-song that jangles through his brain pretty often. "You are getting on fairly well, but don't get too big for your boots!"

Now our friend's ambition grows with what it feeds on. He is not content with being the head of a clerical department. He wants to know things and do things that will add to the commercial prosperity of the firm, and his present education is not equal to this. So, instead of smoking cheap cigarettes in the music halls or reading the latest detective story with his slippers on the fender, he attends a Polytechnic Institute, and goes in for a course of practical study.

Sometimes his spirit fails him. After all, he says, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Sometimes, too, the thought of a pair of bright eyes, and a tongue that trips out a deal of merry chatter, comes between him and his evening studies. It is a great temptation to stay at home like other fellows, or perhaps have a walk with Mary across the common. And then again comes another thought. "One day Mary may walk with me farther than across the common—through life itself. Therefore, to that end, I must work now. For that I must eschew delights and live laborious days."

So the young man studies and wins, for his **More Haste, less Speed.** increased knowledge gives him increased power, and he finds himself well on the road to success. But though he has won, he nearly lost. He misjudged his pace and strength, and came a cropper. He forgot that the body and brain have their limits. He forgot that both want rest at times, or the works will run down. Run down they did, so that he has a nasty illness from which he picks himself up slowly, adding a few more maxims to his store—

1. Hurry slowly.
2. Fresh air and exercise are as necessary to the body as food and clothing.
3. He who wants health wants everything.

It cost a hard lesson to work out this wisdom, but having got it, our business friend acts upon it, and does not repeat his folly. He still studies in the evening, but reserves two hours a day for exercise, getting up before breakfast and taking a walk before going to bed. His business success does not suffer. On the

contrary, he is able to come to his work with calmer nerves and a clearer judgment, so that he is doubly valuable, and remunerated accordingly.

**The  
Glamour  
of Social  
Success.**

But after a while comes fresh temptation, to which he succumbs. Being a single man and a nice fellow, with an excellent income, he naturally becomes much sought after. Numerous mammas of the neighbourhood are eager to invite him to dinner, and their daughters are so fond of singing duets with him. Their brothers, too, call him "dear old chap," and are even condescending enough to borrow half a sovereign from him now and then, which they forget to pay back. The best houses in the town are open to him, and in the season he gets plenty of invitations to dances, ping-pong parties, and the like.

Now popularity is seductive, especially to the young man who has climbed the ladder. He feels that it is a pleasant return for his hard days of toil. It makes his heart beat a little quicker to see how pleased Mary is with his social success. One day, perhaps—

But our business friend suddenly pulls himself up before a precipice. He finds his business suffering. Late nights and gay nights tell on him in the morning, and he comes to the office fagged and irritable, unable to tackle difficult jobs with his old ease, without new ideas springing into his brain spontaneously, with his judgment balance seriously disturbed. His chief is watching him a little anxiously, not saying anything, but making mental notes. Perhaps that partnership won't be offered to him, after all.

**When a  
Man's  
Married.**

However, a miss is as good as a mile. The edge of a precipice is better than the bottom of it. So our friend draws in his horns, stops singing duets with pretty sisters and lending half-sovereigns to young fools. Instead he marries Mary, and finds that the quiet pleasures of married life do not damage his business ambitions as he sometimes thought, but settle him down into a more regular life, advantageous to his soul, body, and worldly advancement.

He gets the partnership, and when the old man dies becomes head of the business where he was once office-boy. Now you think he sits down and rests on his laurels? Not a bit of it.

He is more ambitious than ever. Next year he takes his wife for a holiday in the United States, and has a look round. He comes back with new ideas and new methods, which increase the prosperity of his business. He is not such a fool as to think that New York contains the exclusive gospel of business, but he knows a good thing when he sees it. Afterwards he goes to Germany, and learns a thing or two there.

**At the Top  
of the  
Ladder.** By this time he is getting on towards middle age, and is what one may call an established man. Having acted on the principles quoted in the previous pages, he is liked by his employees and well served. He is respected by his fellow-townsmen, who know him to be a just man, but not so just (as some men call justice) as to harden his heart to more tender feelings. His hand is often in his pocket to help those in distress, and he rejoices most in his business success because he can bring comfort and pleasure to a good many fellow-creatures.

He is a successful business man with all the characteristics of such a man—alertness, quick perception, energy, level-headedness, a hatred of slovenliness of character and speech, a capacity of picking out the right man for a job.

But he is not the successful business man only. Having been born with a fair amount of wisdom, or the capacity for receiving it, he has kept his soul as broad and large as possible, not allowing it to be cramped and narrowed by mere sordid aims. He has an eye and ear for things beautiful. He has not been so busy that he is ignorant of English literature, and in his den are some well-thumbed books that teach him the right values of things, books that have come from the hearts of men greater than he. In the company of the immortals he often forgets his worldly goods, but still, looking back on his life, he sees no cause of regret in that journey, past many stumbling-blocks, along the Road to Business Success.

## PART XI

# THE ART OF THE NATIONS



### 1. Italian Art.

THE subject of Art is one which I have more than once discussed with my readers, but it has so many branches, each possessing abundance of material for study, that I may be more than pardoned for broaching it again. Each nation has its own schools of art and its own great artists, with its own peculiarities and its own separate life-history. Thus Italy, Spain, Holland, France, and Flanders have distinctive glories of their own.

**The  
Atmosphere  
of Art.**

One naturally turns to the South for the true home of art. Italy is the country where art is inhaled in the very breath of the nostrils—Italy, the land of sunny skies, the land of love and laughter, the land where every object of Nature is a thing of beauty, and serves to animate the artist to greater zeal and perfection.

The clear azure of the skies; the wonderful sunshine with its sharp, deep shadows; the transparent atmosphere, through which one sees for miles and miles panoramas of glorious scenery; the distant hills, merging from the green of the vines into the blue of the heavens; the calm, placid lakes, with colour vying with that above, are all the most perfect models which Nature can give an artist to work from. No wonder, then, that when the spirit of art first stirred the souls of Italian citizens the painter was imbued with a passion for his art productive of such glorious pictures as no other nation has been able to boast of.

**Bred in the Bone.** To go back to the dim and distant ages of the Romans, all readers of history will remember that this nation, whilst excelling in the practical arts of building, legislature, and warfare, were also artistic. This may be seen from various examples of their armour, pottery, and intricate mosaic work.

In the so-called Dark Ages a fresh impetus was given to pictorial art by the growth of Christianity. Various pictures of the disciples and saints of the Church found from time to time in the honeycombed labyrinths of the Catacombs are not without considerable grace and beauty, although seemingly a little crude to the untrained eye. There came a time when, unfortunately, the dull conventional style of Byzantine art prevailed; indeed, such was the case for many centuries, until the time of Cimabue. The pictures of this period are chiefly characterised, as are those of the Byzantine artists, by expressions of pain and sorrow. A triumphant return to Nature marked the renaissance of pictorial art. "See things as they are," was the rule of the master Giotto, and such was the rule of succeeding generations of painters.

**Chivalry and Art.** In the Middle Ages chivalry was the moving spirit of the time. Woman in the abstract, not always in the flesh, was the almost worshipped ideal of man. A halo of love and reverence surrounded this ideal, and to win even the smile of his lady-love a knight was bound in honour to do mighty deeds of prowess and difficult tasks of virtue, if called upon.

In art, as in everything else, woman occupied the first place in the minds of artists, and the most perfect of women was taken as the subject of many a beautiful painting. Early Italian art centred in the Virgin Mary, whilst numbers of female saints were constantly being idealised by the brush of many a master. SS. Cecilia, Agnes, Mary Magdalene, and Catherine were among the favourites. Eve, Susannah, Judith, and sundry Old Testament heroines came in for an ample share of attention, and, in spite of the fact that the dress of the period was used to drape these ancient and historic personages, some masterpieces of expression and form were produced.

**The Female Form Divine.** Classical models, such as Venus, Juno, Minerva, Helen, and the Graces, were next studied, and a great advance was made in graceful outlining of the female form. The struggle for the graceful and

beautiful in the representation of womanhood is to be seen in the works of Sandro Botticelli and Filippo Lippi. Artists loved to study especially one human form and its features, as may be seen in the Virgins of Andrea del Sarto. Wives and relatives were wont to act as models for many a sacred picture, the same face being constantly repeated in the works of the same artist.

Those of my readers who have the advantage of visiting the National Gallery in London will notice that each Italian school of painting had its own characteristics. For instance, all Italians studied drapery, but the Venetian school more particularly, as may be seen by Morone's and Morelli's portraits in the National Gallery. Intelligent lovers of art will perceive similar characteristics in the other Italian schools.

**The Great Masters.** Thus through each succeeding century art was studied and beloved with increasing zeal and increasing success. At last Raphael reached the zenith of perfection, above which art has failed to soar. After the death of this greatest of masters the decline of art commenced. Like victorious warriors, artists became careless, and more or less copyists. Michael Angelo and Raphael were the two great masters which artists after 1530 loved to copy. But they copied unfaithfully, and allowed formalism to become rife. Mannerism prevailed, as one can see by the pictures of Caracci and Domenichino.

The student of art can learn much from the National Gallery. Even without the aid of books, his native artistic perception will enable him to detect the beauties of the various Italian schools, and to note their individual peculiarities. More fortunate is the art lover who has the opportunities to visit the city of Rome and to revel in its abundant stores of art treasures.

There he will find material that will interest him for more than a lifetime. Even a short visit will enlarge the area of his artistic vision, and will enable him to read the numerous works now written on art in Rome and elsewhere with a keener interest and a livelier intelligence. The study of the various examples of Italian art in the National Gallery will have been a preparation for the greater glories of the Roman galleries and churches.

I have mentioned Raphael as having reached the zenith of artistic perfection. Michael Angelo was also a very great

genius in many ways. But he was always more or less of an exaggerator. His men are giants, and his women giantesses. The exaggerations of Michael Angelo may be well seen in the world-famous frescoes in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican. After his day Italian artists became exaggerators of the master exaggerator, and there was a further decadence of art.

**The Three Ages of Art.** Like everything else in Nature, art goes through the ages of youth, manhood, and old age; decay comes, and then resuscitation to a fresh life. A great genius like Raphael does what no human effort can surpass; other succeeding artists descend to copying, and from copying to slackness of exertion and a diminution of talent, until a time of decay arrives. The political and religious affairs of nations also tend to affect the growth of art, as may be noted by the influence of the religious wars in Europe and that of the Reformation for a time. The varying wealth of nations will act upon the rise and fall of art.

No man, even if an artist to the finger-tips, can afford to make art a profession if there is no money to buy his pictures when painted. Even such a worldly cause as the mania for gold-seeking in the New World has helped the decay of art.

## 2. Dutch Art.

Any tourist who has spent only a few weeks or days in Holland will not fail to remark what home-birds the Dutch are with regard to their choice of subjects for painting. Dutch art is, in fact, for the most part a series of illustrations of the country of Holland—portraits, landscapes, towns, churches, market-places, canals, cattle, fruit, flowers, still life, shipping, etc., being the chief matters to which the old masters especially devoted their talents.

A few Dutch artists turned their attention to biblical subjects, but the majority confined themselves to depicting home-life. No school of painting is so characteristic of the fatherland. One has only to gaze at a Dutch picture to be forthwith transported to Holland.

One of the chief characteristics of this school of painting is the infinite capacity for pains-taking. In the whole world of art the most perfect works on a small scale have so far been those

of Dutch painters, such as Teniers, Terburg, Mayks, Peter de Hooch, and several others of the same school.

In the pictures of these artists every detail is elaborated, no one part of the picture is worked up to greater perfection than another, the meanest details receive as minute care and consideration as the prominent and important points. An old Dutch master spent as much care upon painting a cabbage as upon the portrait of a "Stadtholder." If genius is the art of taking pains, then without doubt the Dutch painters were great geniuses.

Their method of painting was almost always to begin with a transparent brown monochrome, on which the shadows were painted thinly and more substance was given to the lights. Confining themselves to the reproduction of what lay close at hand, and endeavouring by patient study to understand the secrets of light and colour, they thus attained the technical excellence for which they are so famous. One can almost see the warp and the woof of their dress fabrics.

There is in the National Gallery a portrait of an old lady by Rembrandt (No. 775). The wrinkles of the face, the minute detail of the ruff, the exquisite grace of the white cap, are so inimitably reproduced that one can easily imagine the original to be before one.

There is another picture by the same artist in the Dresden Gallery (No. 1559). It represents Rembrandt with his wife Saskia on his knee. The fidelity of execution in the wife's dress and necklace are really marvellous. The wine sparkles in the glass, and the countenance of the artist is mirthful. This was painted before monetary troubles overtook Rembrandt.

To each individual Dutch painter belongs certain characteristics of subject and colouring which enable the connoisseur to tell at a glance to whom he must ascribe the production. With ordinary intelligence, a painting by Rembrandt, Terburg, Netscher, Gerard Dow, Schalken, Brouwer, Ostade, Wouvermann, Van der Velde, Weenix, Hondecoter, Cuyp, Wynauts, Ruysdael, Hobbema, Van Huysum, and Van der Werff, cannot well be mistaken.

Rembrandt among Dutch painters is *facile princeps*. His portraits are speaking likenesses, equalled only by those of Van Dyck. The two I have already mentioned are excellent examples of this fact. Rembrandt was very fond of introducing a flood of light into the midst of his pictures, and this especially in his

scriptural paintings. The chief subjects in these pictures are represented in a powerful light, whereas the other figures are in comparative darkness.

It is difficult to find out where the light comes from in many cases. There is, for instance, a picture in the National Gallery (No. 45) of "The Woman taken in Adultery." There we behold the Saviour, the guilty woman, and her accuser in a strong light, the distant figures being more or less in shadow.

The same effect may be seen in Rembrandt's portrait of his wife Saskia, in the Dresden Gallery and in his "Holy Family" at Munich. One of the finest pictures the artist ever painted is "The Bittern Shooter," which is in the Dresden Gallery. The sportsman is holding up the dead bird in triumph. The wings and feathers of the animal are a marvel of exquisite workmanship and finish, the light falling upon the bird's breast.

To study this artist thoroughly the galleries of Amsterdam, Dresden, Munich, Berlin, and Cassel should be visited. Rembrandt was great in imagination and great in his technique. The manner in which he represents the Saviour in all his pictures is very impressive in its deep sense of truthfulness. Here are no rich garments, no costly jewels, but a soiled threadbare cloak, befitting a poor man.

A few words on the characteristics of some of the greatest painters will be of service to the student. Adrian Brouwer, who was an artist of great humour, generally selected satirical and comical subjects for his paintings.

There is in the Munich Gallery the picture of a surgeon removing a plaster from a patient's arm which moves the spectator to laughter. The pain exhibited in the face of the patient, the interest of the onlooker, and the seriousness of the operator, are admirably depicted. There is also in the same gallery another painting by the same artist, where much reality and irresistible humour is combined in a scene where a village barber is dressing the damaged foot of a labourer.

The old Dutch masters are great realists. They did not scruple to paint the grosser and coarser sides of life with as much careful handling of the brush as they would paint the delicate features of the wife of some rich merchant.

Gerald Terburg is famed for the realistic manner with which he painted female dress—especially satin and silk. There are admirable examples of his skill in this respect in the National Gallery and in the galleries of Amsterdam and Dresden.

There is a graceful picture in the National Gallery of children blowing soap bubbles. This is by Netscher, whose cabinet pictures are all perfect gems of art.

The great Wouvermann's painting can always be identified by the white horse which he manages to place in all his works, which consist of military and hunting scenes. The cattle of Cuyp are familiar to most of us. Ostade is noted for interiors of inns and festive scenes, and Schalken for his candlelight effects. Van der Werff indulges in rich colouring, and more especially in blue; his subjects are chiefly scriptural and classical. Paul Potter, like Cuyp, painted cattle, and Weenix took dogs, birds, and game to be the themes of his masterpieces. Ruysdael had a great liking for waterfalls, whilst Hobbema succeeded best in landscapes; his trees are graceful, and generally illuminated by a silver light. Bakhuizen is famous for sea pieces and naval engagements, and Frank Hals for his portraits.

Van der Neer painted some beautiful moonlight scenes of Dutch towns and canals. Peter de Hooch is a wonderfully realistic artist. His manner of depicting houses, courtyards, and walls is truly marvellous. There is an excellent specimen in the National Gallery (No. 794), consisting of a Dutch courtyard scene, which shows this great artist's skill.

Early in the eighteenth century Dutch art began to decline. The little country of Holland went through a period of vicissitudes consequent upon a series of wars and times of armed peace, which naturally affected the prosperity of art.

But the glory of Dutch art does not lie only in the past. There are now in Holland a band of painters of the first rank, who verify by their work the remark that Professor Richard Muther made in his *History of Modern Painting*, that "so far from stagnating, Dutch art is now as fresh and varied as in the old days of its glory."

Among the men who are still living or are but recently dead are the three brothers Maris, H. W. Mesdag, Mauve, Josef Israëls, Bosboom, Bisschop, J. Toroop, Voeman, Verster, Camerlingh, Onnes, Bauer, and Hoytema.

Of the three brothers, Jacob, Willem, and Thys Maris, the latter commands the largest prices, and is perhaps the greatest among modern Dutch painters. His pictures are obscure and suggestive in a misty, hazy manner which does not appeal to everyone.

Mesdag is a celebrated sea painter. He paints the vast ocean with its unceasing roll in so splendid a spirit that one seems to hear the roar of the league-long roller thundering on the shore and the plaintive cry of the seagulls as they swoop and swerve in and out of the great breakers.

Toroop's style is Oriental rather than Dutch. He is a symbolist. Although best known as a painter, Toroop also excels in the arts of etching, pastel and water-colour drawing, wood-cutting, lithography, clay modelling, silver, copper, and brass work. Another mystic is Onnes who succeeds marvellously in his light effects in glass and pottery painting. He is fond of depicting church choirs in a dim, religious light.

Other names might be mentioned, but I have given more than sufficient to show that art is to be found in the flat country of prosaic Holland as well as in the hills and valleys of sunny Italy.

In Holland the painters are appreciated by their own people, who are a nation of picture lovers. There are good public galleries, which are much frequented by the public. Dutch art is also productive of the most beautiful wood-carving, famous all the world over. Pottery, too, in the shape of the well-known Delft ware, is as much appreciated as ever.

### 3. French Art.

Notwithstanding the height at which Italian art arrived early in the sixteenth century, and the artistic element which pervades the people of Italy, there can be no doubt of the fact that it is the French who are the most artistic race in the world. They are artistic to the finger-tips.

In France art is visible everywhere: go where you may, in the cities, in the villages, in the mansions of the wealthy and in the cottages of the poor, everywhere you will find traces of the artistic temperament of the French more or less in evidence. Even the inns, the hotels, the waggons, the harness, the dove-cots, the farmhouses, the fishing-boats, the wayside crosses, all display artistic tastes of the highest order. It is in "La belle France" that the Celtic talent for art has her throne. It is here that her gifts are showered in greatest profusion and with the utmost generosity.

**France—  
the Land  
of Art.**

Matthew Arnold asserts that the French are artistically one hundred per cent. above the English. And that this fact is recognised by English artists is shown by the numbers of art students who go to Paris to study under French masters in the famous Quartier Latin.

In art as in music the vivacious Celt gains an easy victory over the practical English man of business. The Teuton is not naturally an artist, however great his talents may be in other respects, whereas the Celt is a "born artist." Do we not go to Paris for our fashions? Are not Paquin and Worth greater than all our London dressmakers?

Compare the city of Paris with the city of London. Put the Place de la Concorde side by side with Trafalgar Square. Contrast the Opera House at Paris with a London theatre, and the great gulf which divides them is at once apparent.

Let us go farther. Wimpole Street—a typical London street—could never have been designed by a French architect; the National Gallery—can anyone deny that it is hideous?—could never have been the production of a Gallic builder. The dreary monotony of the houses in the West End is oppressive; the charming variety of the houses in the neighbourhood of the Champs Elysées is enlivening. To gaze at the bridges which cross the Thames—with the exception, perhaps, of Waterloo Bridge—could never afford pleasure to an artistic soul, whilst those, on the contrary, which span the Seine are things of beauty.

**Art made  
in London.**

Where in London is to be found a public fountain of any artistic merit? The lions in Trafalgar Square are very unrealistic lions. Look at our public statues, and grow faint. Behold Gladstone, arrayed in a suit of clothes made seemingly at some East End shop. Regard, if you can, with gaze uplifted, Nelson, a stony St. Simeon Stylites, perched on the top of a column one hundred and fifty feet high. Grow dizzy at the view of the Duke of York on his proud elevation, and say, Is all this Art? No; and any casual visitor to Paris cannot deny that from an artistic point of view the open spaces, parks, gardens, railway stations, shops, and even the tramways, omnibuses, and cabs, are all vastly superior to those found in London.

There is perhaps one school of art—namely landscape—in which English artists are superior to French. Even here there is a grand exception to prove the rule. Claude Lorraine is

France's greatest landscape painter. The immortal Turner recognised Lorraine's genius in this respect, and he bequeathed one of his best pictures to the nation, provided it were hung side by side with one of the French artist's *chef d'œuvres*. A placid peacefulness pervades Claude Lorraine's landscapes. His trees are natural, his skies are perfect, his mountains and rivers are true to Nature. His figures in the foreground are in perfect harmony with the scenes he depicts. Aerial perspective is one of Lorraine's chief points, a point in which Marie Baskirtscheff also greatly excelled. (See Nos. 2, 6, 19, 58, and 61 in the National Gallery.)

**The French Masters.** French art is a subject of such vast importance, and one which is so rich in material, that it is impossible to enumerate more than a few of her greatest artists in one brief article. I intend to take Watteau, Greuze, Louis David, Guerin, Gericault, Prudhon, Ingres, Baudry, Millet, and Meissonnier as specimens of the various French schools of art.

In the days of Louis XIV., when royalty was supreme, pictures of Court life were rife. Watteau was never tired of painting aristocratic groups of shepherds and shepherdesses, a manner of portraiture greatly in vogue in those days. I do not remember any Watteaus in the National Gallery, but there are some fine specimens in the gallery at Dresden, namely "A Garden Party" and "Lovers in a Park," which show to the fullest extent Watteau's daintiness.

Greuze is a delightful artist, and his pictures are perhaps better known to the British public than those of any other French artist. We can boast of some specimens of his art in the National Gallery (Nos. 206, 1019, 1020, 1154). Greuze's favourite theme is lovely women. He paints faces of girls expressing every emotion of the heart. Here we have joy, there grief; here excitement, there remorse, admirably portrayed. His colouring is excellent. A favourite subject of his is female frailty, which he represents by repeated similes of "the broken pitcher," "the broken necklace," and so forth.

The French being a military race, rejoice in military pictures. The artists of this school are numerous, including among others Louis David and Gericault. Napoleon naturally gave a great impetus to this warlike style of art. After the Revolution Roman warfare had a great attraction for French artists.

**The Classic Style.**

Louis David's pictures are inspired with the genius of Rome, and his style is termed classicism. His "Oath of the Horatii" and "Rape of the Sabines" are spirited productions. Gericault's "Wounded Cuirassier" in the Louvre is one of the most perfect pictures of the modern military school (1830). The prancing charger restrained by the soldier on foot is of the grandest execution. The cuirassier is looking back on the field of battle he has just left with an expression of anxiety and yet of hope in his face. His sheathed sword is in his right hand.

Guerin was a classicist, and his "Æneas and Dido" in the Louvre is an excellent specimen of the school which he favoured. Here we see Dido reclining on a couch, whilst Æneas is speaking to her with a large Greek helmet on his head. The boy Ascanius is at Dido's side, and his sister Anna behind Dido.

**The Romanticists.**

Of the romantic school, Prudhon takes an easy first. There is a lovely picture by this artist in the Wallace Collection, which is somewhat similar to another by the same artist in the Louvre. Psyche asleep is borne by cupids in mid-air. The form of the sleeping Psyche is perfect, her pose most graceful, her features most beautiful. Another very different style of picture of Prudhon is "Justice and Divine Vengeance pursuing Crime."

This is a splendid conception, and recalls to mind the murder of Abel by Cain. The countenance of the murderer is a masterpiece. Beginning to flee, he must have one last look at his victim on the ground. Two angels of vengeance with torch and sword in hand float in the air above the murdered man and pursue the murderer. This picture is awe-inspiring. The artist who could paint this gruesome picture and the joyful "Psyche" must be a genius of the first order. It is much to be regretted that there are none of this artist's pictures in the National Gallery.

The female form divine is much studied by French artists. "The Source," a painting by Ingres, is a beautiful picture. A perfectly shaped woman holds a pitcher in her hands from which water flows. I believe this picture is in the Luxembourg. Baudry is another artist belonging to this same school. His "Pearl and the Wave" is an exquisite production.

Millet depicts rustic scenes in the most realistic manner. Some well-known specimens of this artist's work are "The

Gleaners," "The Angelus," and "The Wood Sawyers," all of which are admirable.

Meissonnier painted scenes of all descriptions, and is especially noted for small pictures executed with exquisite finish and a perfect truthfulness to every detail.

#### 4. Spanish Art.

Spain cannot be looked upon as an artistic country in the same light that Italy and France can be viewed. Like all Latin races, the Spaniards have artistic instincts, which are evidenced in their architecture, their costume, and their armoury.

Still, in respect of art generally, and of pictorial art in particular, with which we are now concerned, Spain cannot be considered as essentially a land of artists. The Christian religion, which has been a stimulus to the genius and talent of art in every country, played her part bravely in Spain.

Notwithstanding, however, the sunny nature of the Spaniard, many of the artists of the land of Spain have dealt rather with the dark and gloomy side of life than with the bright and happy scenes which fall to every man's lot.

Perhaps the history of Spain, which has been an unutterably sad one, has something to do with this fact. Indeed it is a history to make the heart ache. Some unkind destiny seems to have brought disaster whenever the nation seemed on the verge of happiness. The expulsion of the Moors from the land was a blow to Spain's prosperity, from which she has never recovered. With the Moors went most of their arts and industries; large tracks of country became arid wastes. Science and learning went with the Arab and the Jew.

**Religion and Art.** Saints, martyrs, monks, nuns, and hermits are what many Spanish artists delighted to paint. Ribera the painter has left behind him a picture which hangs now in the Dresden Gallery (No. 683), of St. Agnes. Her long hair covers her to her knees, and an angel wraps her in a white sheet. The expression of the saint's countenance is a mixture of thankfulness and piety. This picture is an exceedingly beautiful one.

Another picture by the same artist, and in the same gallery (No. 682), shows, as an example of what has been said, the

morose view of life. This picture is called "Diogenes with his Lantern." One sees the half-length figure of a sombre-looking man with black hair and whiskers, holding a lantern in his left hand. Many consider this to be a portrait of Ribera himself. This artist painted the martyrdom of St. Bartholomew in the Berlin Gallery, and the martyrdom of St. Andrew in the Munich Gallery, both gloomy subjects. Indeed, one gets very weary of the constant repetition of monks and martyrs which the Spanish artists so loved to depict.

Zurbaran is another artist of the same school and period. There is in the National Gallery a picture by this painter which represents a Franciscan monk, clothed in the habit of his order, kneeling on the ground with eyes turned heavenwards, his hands clasping a human skull in token of that certain death which awaits us all. This rather melancholy subject makes a favourite theme of Ribera, and he has painted St. Francis of Assisi in the same attitude. This last picture hangs in the Munich Gallery (No. 2191).

There is, however, a bright side in Spanish pictorial art in contrast to the somewhat morbid asceticism of Ribera and Zurbaran, and this is found in the works of Murillo and Velasquez.

Murillo's religious pictures are natural and beautiful. There is in the National Gallery (No. 176) a picture entitled "St. John and the Lamb," which is full of joyful life. The youthfulness of St. John makes the picture of happiness; he clasps the animal to his cheek, and appears supremely joyous. Youth, contentment, love, and felicity are depicted in the lad's face. A glance at this picture may be worth a sermon.

Murillo's Madonnas are unconventional, and appeal to us strongly. Here the village maiden in all her innocence and beauty comes to the front. His infants, angels, and cherubim are charming. His peasant boys are drawn from real life. The Dulwich Gallery has some of this great artist's pictures. Boys eating fruit and playing among themselves are favourite themes of Murillo. His "Assumption of the Blessed Virgin" is sublimely treated, and oftentimes repeated. There is no doubt that Murillo ranks as one of the world's greatest artists.

Few portrait painters have surpassed Velasquez. Without expending much care or time on his work, he produced lifelike portraits. Like Sargent, he was

**Velasquez  
the Master.**

**The Joyous-  
ness of  
Murillo.**

successful by his impressionistic genius more than by minuteness of detail. This artist is so infinitely above all other artists in Spain that a special study of his life may be made with benefit.

Velasquez was born at Seville in 1599. His full name was Diego de Silva Velasquez. His father, Ivan Rodriguez de Silva, was a cadet of the noble Portuguese family of Silva, but, like many others, our artist gave preference to his mother's name of Velasquez.

Strictly speaking, Velasquez was self-taught. He studied under one or two masters, but his great genius quickly enabled him to learn all that they had to teach. Herrera el Viego taught him to teach himself. This master used to set his pupils to make studies of meat, fish, loaves, melons, and similar still-life studies, and they thus acquired the capacity of painting things as they saw them.

Another master of Velasquez was Pacheco, who, although himself an inefficient artist, recognised from the first the genius of his pupil. This Pacheco had the honour of giving his daughter in marriage to his pupil. Meanwhile Velasquez had passed on to life models, and was particularly happy in the striking likeness of his portraits to the originals. Of Philip iv. of Spain he has executed some forty portraits in various attitudes and stages of life, so that he is the best-known monarch by sight of all history.

**The Great Impressionist.** There is a charm about Velasquez entirely his own. A good specimen of his work hangs in the National Gallery (No. 1315). It is the "Portrait of the Spanish Admiral Pulido-Pareia." Dignity, self-confidence, and strength of will are there portrayed. This, like most of his greater works, was painted with brushes so long that he could stand at work at the distance at which they were meant to be seen. His "Philip iv. hunting the Wild Boar" is a grand painting, full of life, vigour, and earnestness.

No wonder that in the late war between Spain and America a lover of art sided with the former, "because," said he, "Spain gave us Velasquez." Few great artists have been able to produce such wonderful effects with apparently such little effort. It has been remarked that Velasquez seems to have painted with his will only, without the aid of his hand.

Velasquez spent some years studying art in Venice, Rome, and Naples. On returning to Spain he was heaped with honours. A

studio was placed at his disposal in the royal palace, and the King would spend hours watching him work. In 1652 Velasquez was given a post of high honour, the duties of which took him from his work, and were also unfortunately the means of his contracting tertian fever, which carried him off quickly in 1660.

Until the nineteenth century Velasquez was a comparatively unknown artist. Most of his pictures were the property of royalty, and it was only when, after some one hundred and fifty years, the pictures of the royal palace were transferred to the Museo del Prado at Madrid, that collectors began to seek him eagerly. There are now about one hundred and twenty paintings by Velasquez in the United Kingdom, out of some two hundred and seventy attributed to him altogether.

It is sometimes said that Velasquez lacked imagination, and that he could only paint what he actually saw before him. Yet his "Crucifixion," in the Prado, and his "Surrender of Breda," are thoroughly sympathetic as well as dramatic. He is a master in every branch of painting excepting the marine.

**Modern Painters.** After the deaths of Ribera, Murillo, and Velasquez, there are no great names in the history of art for some time, if we except Goya, who founded no school. The modern Renaissance was begun by Don José Madrazo, who studied in the studio of David, and became Court painter. Later, Fortuny the elder, who married Cecilia Madrazo, headed the Spanish Renaissance with his "Mariage Espagnol."

In 1901 an exhibition of Spanish art was held at the Guildhall, and brought to the eyes of the British public many Spanish artists hitherto unknown to them. Aranda, Bilbao, the Beulluire brothers, Carbonero, Domingo, and Gallegos, are some of the names known to Spain and collectors in lands foreign to Spain.



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