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A Book of English Prose

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BY

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P. L.

October 1913

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{1}

SIR THOMAS MALORY 15th century

DEATH OF SIR GAWAINE

And so, as Sir Mordred was at Dover with his host, there came King Arthur with a great navy of ships, galleys, and carracks. And there was Sir Mordred ready waiting upon his landing, to let his own father to land upon the land that he was king of. Then was there launching of great boats and small, and all were full of noble men of arms; and there was much slaughter of gentle knights, and many a full bold baron was laid full low on both parties. But King Arthur was so courageous, that there might no manner of knight let him to land, and his knights fiercely followed him, and so they landed maugre Sir Mordred and all his power, and put Sir Mordred back, that he fled and all his people. So when this battle was done, King Arthur let bury his people that were dead. And then was the noble knight Sir Gawaine found in a great boat, lying more than half dead. When King Arthur wist that Sir Gawaine was laid so low, he went unto him; and there the king made sorrow out of measure, and took Sir Gawaine

in his arms, and thrice he swooned. And when he came to himself again, he said, "Alas! my sister's son, here now thou liest, the man in the world {2} that I loved most, and now is my joy gone. For now, my nephew Sir Gawaine, I will discover me unto your person. In Sir Launcelot and you I most had my joy and mine affiance, and now have I lost my joy of you both, wherefore all mine earthly joy is gone from me." "My uncle King Arthur," said Sir Gawaine, "wit you well that my death's day is come, and all is through mine own hastiness and wilfulness, for I am smitten upon the old wound that Sir Launcelot du Lake gave me, of the which I feel that I must die; and if Sir Launcelot had been with you as he was, this unhappy war had never begun, and of all this I myself am causer; for Sir Launcelot and his blood, through their prowess, held all your cankered enemies in subjection and danger. And now," said Sir Gawaine, "ye shall miss Sir Launcelot. But alas! I would not accord with him; and therefore," said Sir Gawaine, "I pray you, fair uncle, that I may have paper, pen, and ink, that I may write unto Sir Launcelot a letter with mine own hands." And when paper and ink was brought, Sir Gawaine was set up weakly by King Arthur, for he had been shriven a little before; and he wrote thus unto Sir Launcelot: "Flower of all noble knights that ever I heard of or saw in my days, I, Sir Gawaine, King Lot's son of Orkney, sister's son unto the noble King Arthur, send unto thee greeting, and let thee have knowledge, that the tenth day of May I was smitten upon the old wound which thou gavest me before the city of Benwick, and through the same wound that thou gavest me I am come unto my death day, and I will that all the world wit that I Sir Gawaine, Knight of the Round Table, sought my death, and not through thy deserving, {3} but it was mine own seeking; wherefore I beseech thee, Sir Launcelot, for to return again unto this realm and see my tomb, or pray some prayer more or less for my soul. And that same day that I wrote this letter, I was hurt to the death in the same wound the which I had of thy hands, Sir Launcelot, for of a more nobler man might I not be slain. Also, Sir Launcelot, for all the love that ever was between us, make no tarrying, but come over the sea in all the haste that thou mayst with thy noble knights, and rescue that noble king that made thee knight, that is my lord and uncle King Arthur, for he is full straitly bestood with a false traitor, which is my half-brother Sir Mordred, and he hath let crown himself king, and he would have wedded my lady Queen Guenevere, and so had he done, if she had not put herself in the Tower of London. And so the tenth day of May last past, my lord and uncle King Arthur and we all landed upon them at Dover, and there we put that false traitor Sir Mordred to flight. And there it misfortuned me for to be stricken upon thy stroke. And the date of this letter was written but two hours and a half before my death, written with mine own hand, and so subscribed with part of my heart-blood. And I require thee, as thou art the most famost knight of the world, that thou wilt see my tomb." And then Sir Gawaine wept, and also King Arthur wept; and then they swooned both. And when they awaked both, the king made Sir Gawaine to receive his Saviour. And then Sir Gawaine prayed the king to send for Sir Launcelot, and to cherish him above all other knights. And so at the hour of noon Sir Gawaine betook his soul into the {4} hands of our Lord God. And then the king let bury him in a chapel within the castle of Dover; and there yet unto this day all men may see the skull of Sir Gawaine, and the same wound is seen that Sir Launcelot gave him in battle. Then it was told to King Arthur that Sir Mordred had pight a new field upon Barendown. And on the morrow the king rode thither to him, and there was a great battle between them, and much people were slain on both parts. But at the last King Arthur's party stood best, and Sir Mordred and his party fled into Canterbury.

(Morte Darthur.)

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND

1533-1603

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH TO HER LAST PARLIAMENT, NOVEMBER 30, 1601

Mr Speaker,—We perceive your coming is to present thanks unto us. Know I accept them with no less joy than your loves can desire to offer such a present, and do more esteem it than any treasure or riches; for those we know how to prize, but loyalty, love, and thanks, I account them invaluable; and though God hath raised me high, yet this I account the glory of my crown, that I have reigned with your loves. This makes that I do not so much rejoice that God hath made me to be a queen, as to be a queen over so thankful a people, and to be the means under God to conserve you in safety, and {5} preserve you from danger, yea to be the instrument to deliver you from dishonour, from shame and from infamy, to keep you from out of servitude, and from slavery under our enemies, and cruel tyranny, and vile oppression intended against us; for the better withstanding whereof, we take very acceptable your intended helps, and chiefly in that it manifesteth your loves and largeness of hearts to your sovereign. Of myself I must say this, I never was any greedy scraping grasper, nor a strict fasting-holding prince, nor yet a waster; my heart was never set upon any worldly goods, but only for my subjects' good. What you do bestow on me I will not hoard up, but receive it to bestow on you again; yea, mine own properties I account yours to be expended for your good, and your eyes shall see the bestowing of it for your welfare.

Mr Speaker, I would wish you and the rest to stand up, for I fear I shall yet trouble you with longer speech.

Mr Speaker, you give me thanks, but I am more to thank you, and I charge you thank them of the Lower House from me; for had I not received knowledge from you, I might a' fallen into the lapse of an error, only for want of true information. Since I was queen, yet did I never put my pen to any grant but upon pretext and semblance made me that it was for the good and avail of my subjects generally, though a private profit to some of my ancient servants, who have deserved well; but that my grants shall be made grievances to my people, and oppressions to be privileged under colour of our patents, our princely dignity shall not suffer it.

When I heard it, I could give no rest unto my {6} thoughts until I had reformed it, and those varlets, lewd persons, abusers of my bounty, shall know I will not suffer it. And, Mr Speaker, tell the House from me, I take it exceeding grateful that the knowledge of these things is come unto me from them. And though amongst them the principal members are such as are not touched in private, and therefore need not speak from any feeling of the grief, yet we have heard that other gentlemen also of the House, who stand as free, have spoken freely in it; which gives us to know that no respects or interests have moved them, other than the minds they bear to suffer no diminution of our honour and our subjects' love unto us. The zeal of which affection tending to ease my people and knit their hearts unto us, I embrace with a princely care far above all earthly treasures. I esteem my people's love, more than which I desire not to merit: and God, that gave me here to sit, and placed me over you, knows that I never respected myself, but as your good was conserved in me; yet what dangers, what

practices, what perils I have passed, some, if not all of you, know; but none of these things do move me, or ever made me fear, but it's God that hath delivered me.

And in my governing this land, I have ever set the last judgment day before mine eyes, and so to rule as I shall be judged and answer before a higher Judge, to whose judgment seat I do appeal; in that thought was never cherished in my heart that tended not to my people's good.

And if my princely bounty have been abused, and my grants turned to the hurt of my people contrary to {7} my will and meaning, or if any in authority under me have neglected, or have converted what I have committed unto them, I hope God will not lay their culps to my charge.

To be a king, and wear a crown, is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it's pleasant to them that bear it: for myself, I never was so much enticed with the glorious name of a king, or the royal authority of a queen, as delighted that God hath made me his instrument to maintain his truth and glory, and to defend this kingdom from dishonour, damage, tyranny, and oppression. But should I ascribe any of these things to myself or my sexly weakness, I were not worthy to live, and of all most unworthy of the mercies I have received at God's hands, but to God only and wholly all is given and ascribed.

The cares and troubles of a crown I cannot more fitly resemble than to the drugs of a learned physician, perfumed with some aromatical savour, or to bitter pills gilded over, by which they are made more acceptable or less offensive, which indeed are bitter and unpleasant to take; and for my own part, were it not for conscience sake to discharge the duty that God hath laid upon me, and to maintain his glory, and keep you in safety, in mine own disposition I should be willing to resign the place I hold to any other, and glad to be freed of the glory with the labours, for it is not my desire to live nor to reign longer than my life and reign shall be for your good. And though you have had and may have many mightier and wiser princes sitting in this seat, yet you never had or shall have any that will love you better.

{8}

SIR THOMAS NORTH 1535-1601

DEATH OF CLEOPATRA

Shortly after Caesar came himself in person to see her, and to comfort her. Cleopatra being laid upon a little low bed in poor estate, when she saw Caesar come in to her chamber, she suddenly rose up, naked in her smock, and fell down at his feet marvellously disfigured: both for that she had plucked her hair from her head, as also for that she had martyred all her face with her nails, and besides, her voice was small and trembling, her eyes sunk into her head with continual blubbering: and moreover, they might see the most part of her stomach torn in sunder. To be short, her body was not much better than her mind: yet her good grace and comeliness and the force of her beauty was not altogether defaced. But notwithstanding this ugly and pitiful state of hers, yet she shewed herself within, by her outward looks and countenance. When Caesar had made her lie down again, and sat by her bedside, Cleopatra began to clear and excuse herself for that she had done, laying all to the fear she had of

Antoni^{us}. Caesar, in contrary manner, reproved her in every point. Then she suddenly altered her speech, and prayed him to pardon her, as though she were afraid to die, and desirous to live. At length she gave him a brief and memorial of all the ready money and treasure she had. But by chance there stood Seleucus by, one of her treasurers, who, to seem a good servant, came straight to Caesar to disprove {9} Cleopatra, that she had not set in all, but kept many things back of purpose. Cleopatra was in such a rage with him, that she flew upon him, and took him by the hair of the head, and boxed him well-favouredly. Caesar fell a-laughing, and parted the fray. "Alas," said she, "O Caesar, is not this a great shame and reproach, that thou having vouchsafed to take the pains to come unto me, and hast done me this honour, poor wretch, and caitiff creature, brought into this pitiful and miserable estate: and that mine own servants should come now to accuse me, though it may be I have reserved some jewels and trifles meet for women, but not for me (poor soul) to set out myself withal, but meaning to give some pretty presents and gifts unto Octavia and Livia, that they making means and intercession for me to thee, thou mightest yet extend thy favour and mercy upon me?" Caesar was glad to hear her say so, persuading himself thereby that she had yet a desire to save her life. So he made her answer, that he did not only give her that to dispose of at her pleasure, which she had kept back, but further promised to use her more honourably and bountifully than she would think for: and so he took his leave of her, supposing he had deceived her, but indeed he was deceived himself.

There was a young gentleman Cornelius Dolabella, that was one of Caesar's very great familiars, and besides did bear no evil will unto Cleopatra. He sent her word secretly as she had requested him, that Caesar determined to take his journey through Syria, and that within three days he would send her away before with her children. When this was told Cleopatra, she requested Caesar that {10} it would please him to suffer her to offer the last oblations of the dead, unto the soul of Antonius. This being granted her, she was carried to the place where his tomb was, and there falling down on her knees, embracing the tomb with her women, the tears running down her cheeks, she began to speak in this sort: "O my dear Lord Antonius, not long sithence I buried thee here, being a free woman: and now I offer unto thee the funeral sprinklings and oblations, being a captive and prisoner; and yet I am forbidden and kept from tearing and murdering this captive body of mine with blows, which they carefully guard and keep, only to triumph of thee: look therefore henceforth for no other honours, offerings, nor sacrifices from me, for these are the last which Cleopatra can give thee, sith now they carry her away. Whilst we lived together, nothing could sever our companies: but now at our death, I fear me they will make us change our countries. For as thou, being a Roman, hast been buried in Egypt: even so, wretched creature I, an Egyptian, shall be buried in Italy, which shall be all the good that I have received by thy country. If therefore the gods where thou art now have any power and authority, sith our gods here have forsaken us, suffer not thy true friend and lover to be carried away alive, that in me they triumph of thee: but receive me with thee, and let me be buried in one self tomb with thee. For though my griefs and miseries be infinite, yet none hath grieved me more, nor that I could less bear withal, than this small time which I have been driven to live without thee." Then, having ended these doleful complaints, and crowned the tomb with garlands and sundry {11} nosegays, and marvellous lovingly embraced the same, she commanded they should prepare her bath, and when she had bathed and washed herself, she fell to her meat and was sumptuously served.

Now whilst she was at dinner there came a countryman, and brought her a basket. The soldiers that warded at the gates, asked him straight what he had in his basket. He opened the basket, and took out the leaves that covered the figs, and shewed them that they were figs he brought. They all of them marvelled to see so goodly figs. The countryman laughed to hear them, and bade them take some if they would. They believed he told them truly, and so bade him carry them in.

After Cleopatra had dined, she sent a certain table written and sealed unto Caesar, and commanded them all to go out of the tombs where she was, but the two women; then she shut the doors to her. Caesar, when he received this table, and began to read her lamentation and petition, requesting him that he would let her be buried with Antonius, found straight what she meant, and thought to have gone thither himself: howbeit he sent one before in all haste that might be, to see what it was. Her death was very sudden. For those whom Caesar sent unto her ran thither in all haste possible, and found the soldiers standing at the gate, mistrusting nothing, nor understanding of her death. But when they had opened the doors, they found Cleopatra stark dead, laid upon a bed of gold, attired and arrayed in her royal robes, and one of her two women, which was called Iras, dead at her feet: and her other woman, called Charmion, half dead, and trembling, trimming the diadem which {12} Cleopatra wore upon her head. One of the soldiers, seeing her, angrily said unto her: "Is that well done, Charmion?" "Very well," said she again, "and meet for a princess descended from the race of so many noble kings." She said no more, but fell down dead hard by the bed.

(Plutarch's Lives.)

SIR WALTER RALEGH 1552-1618

THE VANITY OF GREATNESS

By this which we have already set down is seen the beginning and end of the three first monarchies of the world; whereof the founders and erecters thought, that they could never have ended. That of Rome, which made the fourth, was also at this time almost at the highest. We have left it flourishing in the middle of the field, having rooted up or cut down all that kept it from the eyes and admiration of the world. But after some continuance, it shall begin to lose the beauty it had; the storms of ambition shall beat her great boughs and branches one against another; her leaves shall fall off, her limbs wither, and a rabble of barbarous nations enter the field and cut her down.

Now these great kings and conquering nations have been the subject of those ancient histories which have been preserved and yet remain among us; and withal of so many tragical poets, as in the persons of powerful princes and other mighty men have complained against {13} infidelity, time, destiny, and most of all against the variable success of worldly things and instability of fortune. To these undertakings these great lords of the world have been stirred up, rather by the desire of fame, which plougheth up the air and soweth in the wind, than by the

affection of bearing rule, which draweth after it so much vexation and so many cares. And that this is true, the good advice of Cineas to Pyrrhus proves. And certainly, as fame hath often been dangerous to the living, so it is to the dead of no use at all, because separate from knowledge. Which were it otherwise, and the extreme ill bargain of buying this lasting discourse understood by them which are dissolved, they themselves would then rather have wished to have stolen out of the world without noise, than to be put in mind that they have purchased the report of their actions in the world by rapine, oppression, and cruelty, by giving in spoil the innocent and labouring soul to the idle and insolent, and by having emptied the cities of the world of their ancient inhabitants, and fitted them again with so many and so variable sorts of sorrows.

Since the fall of the Roman Empire (omitting that of the Germans, which had neither greatness nor continuance) there hath been no state fearful in the east but that of the Turk; nor in the west any prince that hath spread his wings far over his nest but the Spaniard; who, since the time that Ferdinand expelled the Moors out of Grenado, have made many attempts to make themselves masters of all Europe. And it is true that by the treasures of both Indies, and by the many kingdoms which they possess in Europe, they are at this day the most {14} powerful. But as the Turk is now counterpoised by the Persian, so instead of so many millions as have been spent by the English, French, and Netherlands in a defensive war and in diversions against them, it is easy to demonstrate that with the charge of two hundred thousand pound continued but for two years, or three at the most, they may not only be persuaded to live in peace, but all their swelling and overflowing streams may be brought back into their natural channels and old banks. These two nations, I say, are at this day the most eminent and to be regarded; the one seeking to root out the Christian religion altogether, the other the truth and sincere profession thereof; the one to join all Europe to Asia, the other the rest of all Europe to Spain.

For the rest, if we seek a reason of the succession and continuance of this boundless ambition in mortal men, we may add to that which hath been already said, that the kings and princes of the world have always laid before them the actions, but not the ends, of those great ones which preceded them. They are always transported with the glory of the one, but they never mind the misery of the other, till they find the experience in themselves. They neglect the advice of God, while they enjoy life or hope it; but they follow the counsel of Death upon his first approach. It is he that puts into man all wisdom of the world, without speaking a word; which God with all the words of His law, promises or threats, doth not infuse. Death, which hateth and destroyeth man, is believed; God, which hath him and loves him, is always deferred. *I have considered* (saith Solomon) *all the works that are wider the sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of* {15} *spirit*: but who believes it, till Death tells it us? It was Death, which, opening the conscience of Charles the fifth, made him enjoin his son Philip to restore Navarre; and King Francis the first of France, to command that justice should be done upon the murderers of the Protestants in Merindol and Cabrieres, which till then he neglected. It is therefore Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but abjects, and humbles them at the instant, makes them cry, complain, and repent, yea, even to hate their forepassed happiness. He takes the account of the rich and proves him a beggar, a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness, and they acknowledge it.

O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet*.

(History of the World.)

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RICHARD HOOKER 1554-1600

THE LAW OF NATIONS

Now besides that law which simply concerneth men as men, and that which belongeth unto them as they are men linked with others in some form of politic society, there is a third kind of law which toucheth all such several bodies politic, so far forth as one of them hath public commerce with another. And this third is the Law of Nations. Between men and beasts there is no possibility of social communion, because the well-spring of that communion is a natural delight which man hath to transfuse from himself into others, and to receive from others into himself especially those things wherein the excellency of his kind doth most consist. The chiefest instrument of human communion therefore is speech, because thereby we impart mutually one to another the conceits of our reasonable understanding. And for that cause seeing beasts are not hereof capable, forasmuch as with them we can use no such conference, they being in degree, although above other creatures on earth to whom nature hath denied sense, yet lower than to be sociable companions of man to whom nature hath given reason; it is of Adam said that amongst the beasts "he found not for himself any meet companion." Civil society doth more content the nature of man than any private kind of solitary living, because in society this good of mutual participation is so much larger than otherwise. Herewith notwithstanding we are not satisfied, but we covet {17} (if it might be) to have a kind of society and fellowship even with all mankind. Which thing Socrates intending to signify professed himself a citizen, not of this or that commonwealth, but of the world. And an effect of that very natural desire in us (a manifest token that we wish after a sort an universal fellowship with all men) appeareth by the wonderful delight men have, some to visit foreign countries, some to discover nations not heard of in former ages, we all to know the affairs and dealings of other people, yea to be in league of amity with them: and this not only for traffic's sake, or to the end that when many are confederated each may make other the more strong; but for such cause also as moved the Queen of Saba to visit Solomon; and in a word, because nature doth presume that how many men there are in the world, so many gods as it were there are, or at leastwise such they should be towards men.

(Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.)

FRANCIS BACON 1561-1626

OF STUDIES

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots, and the marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in {18} studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study: and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others: but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books: else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend: *Abeunt studia in mores*. Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought {19} out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the school-men; for they are *Cymini sectores*. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

(*Essays.*)

WILLIAM DRUMMOND 1585-1649

MEDITATION ON DEATH

If on the great theatre of this earth among the numberless number of men, *to die* were only proper to thee and thine, then undoubtedly thou had reason to repine at so severe and partial a law. But since it is a necessity, from which never any age by-past hath been exempted, and unto which they which be, and so many as are to come, are thrall'd (no consequent of life being more common and familiar), why shouldst thou with unprofitable and nought-availing stubbornness, oppose so inevitable and necessary a condition? This is the high-way of morality, and our general home: Behold what millions have trod it before thee, what multitudes shall after thee, with them which at that same instant {20} run. In so universal a calamity (if Death be one) private complaints cannot be heard: with so many royal palaces, it is no loss to see thy poor cabin burn. Shall the heavens stay their ever-rolling wheels (for what is the motion of them but the motion of a swift and ever-whirling wheel, which twineth forth and again uprolleth our life), and hold still time to prolong thy miserable days, as if the highest of their working were to do homage unto thee? Thy death is a pace of the order of this *All*, a part of the life of this world; for while the world is the world, some creatures must die, and others take life. Eternal things are raised far above this sphere of generation and corruption, where the first matter, like an ever flowing and ebbing sea, with divers waves, but the same water, keepeth a restless and never tiring current; what is below in the universality of the kind, not in itself doth abide: *Man* a long line of years hath continued, *This man* every hundred is swept away. This globe environed with air is the sole region of Death, the grave where everything that taketh life must rot, the stage of fortune and change, only glorious in the inconstancy and varying alterations of it, which though many, seem yet to abide one, and being a certain entire one, are ever many. The never agreeing bodies of the elemental brethren turn one into another; the earth changeth her countenance with the seasons, sometimes looking cold and naked, other times hot and flowery: nay, I cannot tell how, but even the lowest of those celestial bodies, that mother of months, and empress of seas and moisture, as if she were a mirror of our constant mutability, appeareth (by her too great nearness {21} unto us) to participate of our changes, never seeing us twice with that same face: now looking black, then pale and wan, sometimes again in the perfection and fulness of her beauty shining over us. Death no less than life doth here act a part, the taking away of what is old being the making way for what is young.

(*A Cypress Grove.*)

THOMAS HOBBES 1588-1679

PRIMITIVE LIFE

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man, the same is consequent to the time, wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force; no

knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and, which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

It may seem strange to some man that has not well weighed these things, that nature should thus dissociate, and render men apt to invade and destroy one another: and he may therefore, not trusting to this inference, {22} made from the passions, desire perhaps to have the same confirmed by experience. Let him therefore consider with himself, when taking a journey, he arms himself, and seeks to go well accompanied; when going to sleep, he locks his doors; when even in his house he locks his chests; and this when he knows there be laws and public officers, armed, to revenge all injuries shall be done him; what opinion he has of his fellow-subjects, when he rides armed; of his fellow-citizens, when he locks his doors; and of his children and servants, when he locks his chests. Does he not there as much accuse mankind by his actions, as I do by my words? But neither of us accuse man's nature in it. The desires and other passions of man are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions that proceed from those passions, till they know a law that forbids them; which, till laws be made, they cannot know; nor can any law be made, till they have agreed upon the person that shall make it.

It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of war as this; and I believe it was never generally so over all the world; but there are many places where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before. Howsoever, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be, where there were no common power to fear, by the manner of life which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government used to degenerate into in a civil war.

{23} But though there had never been any time, wherein particular men were in a condition of war one against another; yet in all times, kings and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies, and in the state and posture of gladiators: having their weapons pointing, and their eyes fixed on one another; that is, their forts, garrisons, and guns upon the frontiers of their kingdoms; and continual spies upon their neighbours; which is a posture of war. But, because they uphold thereby the industry of their subjects, there does not follow from it that misery which accompanies the liberty of particular men.

To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent, that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law: where no law, no injustice. Force and fraud are in war the two cardinal virtues. Justice and injustice are none of the faculties, neither of the body nor mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his senses and passions. They are qualities that relate to men in society, not in solitude. It is consequent also to the same condition, that there be no propriety, no dominion, no *mine* and *thine* distinct; but only that to be every man's, that he can get; and for so long as he can keep it. And thus much for the ill condition, which man by mere nature is actually placed in: though with a possibility to come out of it, consisting partly in the passions, partly in his reason.

(*Leviathan.*)

{24}

JOHN EARLE 1601?-1665**CHARACTER OF A PLODDING STUDENT**

A Plodding Student is a kind of alchemist or persecutor of Nature, that would change the dull lead of his brain into finer metal, with success many times as unprosperous, or at least not quitting the cost, to wit, of his own oil and candles. He has a strange forced appetite to learning, and to achieve it brings nothing but patience and a body. His study is not great, but continual, and consists much in the sitting up till after midnight in a rug gown and a nightcap, to the vanquishing perhaps of some six lines: yet what he has, he has perfect, for he reads it so long to understand it, till he gets it without book. He may with much industry make a breach into logic, and arrive at some ability in an argument; but for politer studies, he dare not skirmish with them, and for poetry, accounts it impregnable. His invention is no more than the finding out of his papers, and his few gleanings there; and his disposition of them is as just as the book-binder's, a setting or glueing of them together. He is a great discomforter of young students, by telling them what travail it has cost him, and how often his brain turned at philosophy, and makes others fear studying as a cause of duncery. He is a man much given to apothegms, which serve him for wit, and seldom breaks any jest but which belonged to some Lacedaemonian or Roman in *Lycosthenes*. He is like {25} a dull carrier's horse, that will go a whole week together, but never out of a foot-pace: and he that sets forth on the Saturday shall overtake him.

(*Microcosmography*.)

SIR THOMAS BROWNE 1605-1682**CHARITY**

Now for that other virtue of charity, without which faith is a mere notion and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity. And, if I hold the true anatomy of myself, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue; for I am of a constitution so general that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humour, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but, being amongst them, make them my common viands; and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a churchyard as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander; at the sight of a toad or viper, I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I discover in others: those national repugnances do not touch me, {26} nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch; but, where I

find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honour, love, and embrace them, in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate, but seem to be framed and constellated unto all. I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs, make unto me one country; I am in England everywhere, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep in a tempest. In brief, I am averse from nothing: my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence, but the devil, or so at least abhor anything, but that we might come to composition. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do condemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude; that numerous piece of monstrosity, which, taken asunder, seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God, but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra. It is no breach of charity to call these *Fools*; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of *multitude* do I only include the base and minor sort of people: there is a rabble even amongst the gentry; a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as these; men in the same level with mechanics, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But, as in casting account three or four men {27} together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant *Dorados* of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person, whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians; there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity, whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and pre-eminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times, and the bias of present practice, wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well-ordered polities: till corruption getteth ground; ruder desires labouring after that which wiser considerations condemn; every one having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a licence or faculty to do or purchase anything.

(*Religio Medici*.)

JOHN MILTON 1608-1674

THE DANGER OF INTERFERING WITH THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

First, when a city shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance and battle oft rumoured to be marching up, even to her walls and suburb trenches; that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and {28} most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues first a singular good will, contentedness and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, lords and commons; and from thence derives itself to a gallant bravery and well grounded contempt of

their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was who when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate, whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment. Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in a body when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and condition the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, by casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at {29} the full midday beam; purging and unsealing her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

What would ye do then, should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city? Should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? Believe it, lords and commons! they who counsel ye to such a suppressing, do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves; and I will soon show how. If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and free speaking, there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild and free and humane government; it is the liberty, lords and commons, which your own valorous and happy counsels have purchased us; liberty which is the nurse of all great wits: this is that which hath rarified and enlightened our spirits like the influence of Heaven; this is that which hath enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up our apprehensions degrees above themselves. Ye cannot make us now less capable, less knowing, less eagerly pursuing of the truth, unless ye first make yourselves, that made us so, less the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary and tyrannous, as they were from whom ye have freed us. {30} That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that, unless ye reinforce an abrogated and merciless law, that fathers may despatch at will their own children. And who shall then stick closest to thee and excite others? Not he who takes up arms for coat and conduct, and his four nobles of Danegelt. Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace better, if that were all. Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

(Areopagitica.)

EARL OF CLARENDON 1609-1674

DEATH OF FALKLAND

In this unhappy battle was slain the Lord Viscount Falkland, a person of such prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging a humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life, that if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity.

Before this parliament his condition of life was so happy that it was hardly capable of improvement. Before he came to be twenty years of age, he was master of a noble fortune, which descended to him by the gift of a {31} grandfather, without passing through his father or mother, who were then both alive, and not well enough contented to find themselves passed by in the descent. His education for some years had been in Ireland, where his father was Lord Deputy; so that, when he returned into England to the possession of his fortune, he was unentangled with any acquaintance or friends, which usually grow up by the custom of conversation; and therefore was to make a pure election of his company, which he chose by other rules than were prescribed to the young nobility of that time. And it cannot be denied, though he admitted some few to his friendship for the agreeableness of their natures, and their undoubted affection to him, that his familiarity and friendship for the most part was with men of the most eminent and sublime parts, and of untouched reputation in point of integrity; and such had a title to his bosom.

He was a great cherisher of wit and fancy and good parts in any man, and, if he found them clouded with poverty or want, a most liberal and bountiful patron towards them, even above his fortune; of which, in those administrations, he was such a dispenser, as, if he had been trusted with it to such uses, and if there had been the least of vice in his expense, he might have been thought too prodigal. He was constant and pertinacious in whatsoever he resolved to do, and not to be wearied by any pains that were necessary to that end. And therefore, having once resolved not to see London, which he loved above all places, till he had perfectly learned the Greek tongue, he went to his own house in the country, and pursued it with that indefatigable {32} industry, that it will not be believed in how short a time he was master of it, and accurately read all the Greek historians.

In this time, his house being within little more than ten miles of Oxford, he contracted familiarity and friendship with the most polite and accurate men of that university; who found such an immenseness of wit and such a solidity of judgment in him, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination, such a vast knowledge, that he was not ignorant in anything, yet such an excessive humility, as if he had known nothing, that they frequently resorted, and dwelt with him, as in a college situated in a purer air; so that his house was a university in less volume; whither they came not so much for repose as study, and to examine and refine those grosser propositions, which laziness and consent made current in vulgar conversation. . .

From the entrance into this unnatural war, his natural cheerfulness and vivacity grew clouded, and a kind of sadness and dejection of spirit stole upon him, which he had never been

used to: yet being one of those who believed that one battle would end all differences, and that there would be so great a victory on one side, that the other would be compelled to submit to any conditions from the victor (which supposition and conclusion generally sunk into the minds of most men, and prevented the looking after many advantages that might then have been laid hold of) he resisted those indispositions. But after the King's return from Brentford, and the furious resolution of the two houses not to admit any treaty for peace, those indispositions, which had before touched {33} him, grew into a perfect habit of uncheerfulness, and he, who had been so exactly easy and affable to all men that his face and countenance was always present and vacant to his company, and held any cloudiness and less pleasantness of the visage a kind of rudeness or incivility, became on a sudden less communicable, and thence very sad, pale, and exceedingly affected with the spleen. In his clothes and habit, which he had minded before always with more neatness and industry and expense than is usual to so great a soul, he was not now only incurious, but too negligent; and in his reception of suitors, and the necessary or casual addresses to his place, so quick and sharp and severe, that there wanted not some men (strangers to his nature and disposition) who believed him proud and imperious, from which no mortal man was ever more free. . .

When there was any overture, or hope of peace, he would be more erect and vigorous, and exceedingly solicitous to press anything which he thought might promote it; and sitting among his friends, often, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, would, with a shrill and sad accent, ingeminate the word *Peace, peace*; and would passionately profess that the very agony of the war, and the view of the calamities and desolation the kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart. This made some think, or pretend to think, that he was so much enamoured on peace that he would have been glad the King should have bought it at any price; which was a most unreasonable calumny. As if a man that was himself the most punctual and precise in every circumstance {34} that might reflect upon conscience or honour, could have wished the King to have committed a trespass against either. And yet this senseless scandal made some impression upon him, or at least he used it for an excuse of the daringness of his spirit; for at the leaguer before Gloucester, when his friend passionately reprehended him for exposing his person unnecessarily to danger (for he delighted to visit the trenches and nearest approaches, and to discover what the enemy did) as being so much beside the duty of his place that it might be understood rather to be against it, he would say merrily, that his office could not take away the privileges of his age, and that a Secretary in war might be present at the greatest secret of danger; but withal alleged seriously, that it concerned him to be more active in enterprises of hazard than other men, that all might see that his impatience for peace proceeded not from pusillanimity or fear to adventure his own person.

In the morning before the battle, as always upon action, he was very cheerful, and put himself into the first rank of Lord Byron's regiment, then advancing upon the enemy, who had lined the hedges on both sides with musketeers; from whence he was shot with a musket in the lower part of the belly, and in the instant falling from his horse, his body was not found till the next morning; till when, there was some hope he might have been a prisoner, though his nearest friends, who knew his temper, received small comfort from that imagination. Thus fell that incomparable young man, in the four and thirtieth year of his age, having so much despatched the true business of life, {35} that the eldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocency. Whosoever leads such a life needs be the less anxious upon how short warning it is taken from him.

JOHN BUNYAN 1628-1688

THE END OF THE PILGRIMAGE

After this I beheld until they were come unto the land of Beulah, where the sun shineth night and day. Here, because they were weary, they betook themselves a while to rest. And because this country was common for pilgrims, and because the orchards and vineyards that were here belonged to the King of the Celestial Country, therefore they were licensed to make bold with any of his things.

But a little while soon refreshed them here, for the bells did so ring, and the trumpets continually sound so melodiously, that they could not sleep; and yet they received as much refreshing as if they had slept their sleep never so soundly. Here also all the noise of them that walked the streets was, More pilgrims are come to town. And another would answer, saying, And so many went over the water, and were let in at the golden gates to-day. They would cry again, There is now a legion of shining ones just come to town, by which we know that there are more pilgrims upon the road; for here {36} they come to wait for them, and to comfort them after all their sorrow. Then the pilgrims got up and walked to and fro; but how were their ears now filled with heavenly noises, and their eyes delighted with celestial visions! In this land they heard nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing, smelt nothing, tasted nothing, that was offensive to their stomach or mind; only when they tasted of the water of the river, over which they were to go, they thought that tasted a little bitterish to the palate, but it proved sweeter when 'twas down.

In this place there was a record kept of the names of them that had been pilgrims of old, and a history of all the famous acts that they had done. It was here also much discoursed, how the river to some has had its flowings, and what ebbings it has had while others have gone over. It has been in a manner dry for some, while it has overflowed its banks for others.

In this place, the children of the town would go into the King's gardens, and gather nosegays for the pilgrims, and bring them to them with much affection. Here also grew camphor, with spikenard, and saffron, calamus, and cinnamon, with all its trees of frankincense, myrrh, and aloes, with all chief spices. With these the pilgrims' chambers were perfumed while they stayed here; and with these were their bodies anointed, to prepare them to go over the river when the time appointed was come.

Now while they lay here and waited for the good hour, there was a noise in the town that there was a post come from the Celestial City with matter of great importance to one Christiana, the wife of Christian the {37} pilgrim. So inquiry was made for her, and the house was found out where she was, so the post presented her with a letter; the contents whereof was,

Hail, good woman, I bring thee tidings that the Master calleth for thee, and expecteth that thou should stand in His presence, in clothes of immortality, within this ten days.

When he had read this letter to her, he gave her therewith a sure token that he was a true messenger, and was come to bid her make haste to be gone. The token was an arrow with a point, sharpened with love, let easily into her heart, which by degrees wrought so effectually with her, that at the time appointed she must be gone.

When Christiana saw that her time was come, and that she was the first of this company that was to go over, she called for Mr Great-heart, her guide, and told him how matters were. So he told her he was heartily glad of the news, and could a' been glad had the post come for him. Then she bid that he should give advice how all things should be prepared for her journey.

So he told her, saying, Thus and thus it must be, and we that survive will accompany you to the riverside.

Then she called for her children, and gave them her blessing; and told them that she yet read with comfort the mark that was set in their foreheads, and was glad to see them with her there, and that they had kept their garments so white. Lastly, she bequeathed to the poor that little she had, and commanded her sons and her daughters to be ready against the messenger should come for them. . . .

{38} Now the day drew on that Christiana must be gone. So the road was full of people to see her take her journey. But behold, all the banks beyond the river were full of horses and chariots, which were come down from above to accompany her to the city-gate. So she came forth, and entered the river with a beckon of farewell to those that followed her to the riverside. The last word she was heard to say was, I come, Lord, to be with thee, and bless thee.

So her children and friends returned to their place, for that those that waited for Christiana had carried her out of their sight. So she went and called, and entered in at the gate with all the ceremonies of joy that her husband Christian had done before her.

At her departure her children wept, but Mr Great-heart and Mr Valiant played upon the well-tuned cymbal and harp for joy. So all departed to their respective places. . . .

Then it came to pass, a while after, that there was a post in the town that inquired for Mr Honest. So he came to his house where he was, and delivered to his hand these lines: Thou art commanded to be ready against this day seven-night, to present thyself before thy Lord at His Father's house. And for a token that my message is true, "all the daughters of music shall be brought low." Then Mr Honest called for his friends, and said unto them, I die, but shall make no will. As for my honesty, it shall go with me; let him that comes after be told of this. When the day that he was to be gone was come, he addressed himself to go over the river. Now the river at that time overflowed the banks {39} in some places. But Mr Honest, in his life-time, had spoken to one Good-conscience to meet him there, the which he also did, and lent him his hand, and so helped him over. The last words of Mr Honest were, Grace reigns. So he left the world.

After this it was noised abroad that Mr Valiant-for-truth was taken with a summons by the same post as the other; and had this for a token that the summons was true, that his pitcher was

broken at the fountain. When he understood it, he called for his friends, and told them of it. Then said he: I am going to my Father's, and though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my Rewarder.

When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the river-side; into which as he went he said, Death, where is thy sting? And as he went down deeper he said, Grave, where is thy victory? So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side. . . .

But glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the pilgrims as they went up, and followed one another in at the beautiful gate of the city.

(Pilgrim's Progress.)

{40}

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE 1628-1699

POETRY AND MUSIC

But to spin off this thread, which is already grown too long; what honour and request the ancient poetry has lived in, may not only be observed from the universal reception and use in all nations from China to Peru, from Scythia to Arabia, but from the esteem of the best and the greatest men as well as the vulgar. Among the Hebrews, David and Solomon, the wisest kings, Job and Jeremiah, the holiest men, were the best poets of their nation and language. Among the Greeks, the two most renowned sages and lawgivers were Lycurgus and Solon, whereof the last is known to have excelled in poetry, and the first was so great a lover of it, that to his care and industry we are said (by some authors) to owe the collection and preservation of the loose and scattered pieces, of Homer in the order wherein they have since appeared. Alexander is reported neither to have travelled nor slept without those admirable poems always in his company. Phalaris, that was inexorable to all other enemies, relented at the charms of Stesichorus his muse. Among the Romans, the last and great Scipio passed the soft hours of his life in the conversation of Terence, and was thought to have a part in the composition of his comedies. Caesar was an excellent poet as well as orator, and composed a poem in his voyage from Rome to Spain, relieving the tedious difficulties of his march with the entertainments {41} of his muse. Augustus was not only a patron, but a friend and companion of Virgil and Horace, and was himself both an admirer of poetry and a pretender too, as far as his genius would reach, or his busy scene allow. 'Tis true, since his age we have few such examples of great Princes favouring or affecting poetry, and as few perhaps of great poets deserving it. Whether it be that the fierceness of the Gothic humours, or noise of their perpetual wars, frightened it away, or that the unequal mixture of the modern languages would not bear it; certain it is, that the great heights and excellency both of poetry and music fell with the Roman

learning and empire, and have never since recovered the admiration and applauses that before attended them. Yet, such as they are amongst us, they must be confessed to be the softest and sweetest, the most general and most innocent amusements of common time and life. They still find room in the courts of Princes and the cottages of shepherds. They serve to revive and animate the dead calm of poor or idle lives, and to allay or divert the violent passions and perturbations of the greatest and the busiest men. And both these effects are of equal use to human life; for the mind of man is like the sea, which is neither agreeable to the beholder nor the voyager in a calm or in a storm, but is so to both when a little agitated by gentle gales; and so the mind, when moved by soft and easy passions and affections. I know very well that many, who pretend to be wise by the forms of being grave, are apt to despise both poetry and music as toys and trifles too light for the use or entertainment of serious men. But, whoever find {42} themselves wholly insensible to these charms, would, I think, do well to keep their own counsel, for fear of reproaching their own temper, and bringing the goodness of their natures, if not of their understandings, into question; it may be thought at least an ill sign, if not an ill constitution, since some of the fathers went so far as to esteem the love of music a sign of predestination, as a thing divine, and reserved for the felicities of heaven itself. While this world lasts, I doubt not but the pleasure and requests of these two entertainments will do so too: and happy those that content themselves with these, or any other so easy and so innocent; and do not trouble the world, or other men, because they cannot be quiet themselves, though nobody hurts them!

When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child, that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over.

SAMUEL PEPYS 1633-1703

A DAY IN THE COUNTRY

July 14th (Lord's Day), 1667. Up, and my wife, a little before four, and to make us ready; and by and by Mrs Turner come to us, by agreement, and she and I staid talking below, while my wife dressed herself, which vexed me that she was so long about it, keeping us till past five o'clock before she was ready. She ready; and taking some bottles of wine, and beer, and some {43} cold fowl with us into the coach, we took coach and four horses, which I had provided last night, and so away. A very fine day, and so towards Epsom, talking all the way pleasantly. The country very fine, only the way very dusty. We got to Epsom by eight o'clock, to the well; where much company, and there we 'light, and I drank the water. Here I met with divers of our town, among others with several of the tradesmen of our office, but did talk but little with them, it growing hot in the sun, and so we took coach again and to the town, to the King's Head, where our coachman carried us, and there had an ill room for us to go into, but the best in the house that was not taken up. Here we called for drink, and bespoke dinner. We all lay down after dinner (the day being wonderful hot) to sleep, and each of us took a good nap, and

then rose; and Tom Wilson come to see me, and sat and talked an hour. By and by he parted, and we took coach and to take the air, there being a fine breeze abroad; and I went and carried them to the well, and there filled some bottles of water to carry home with me. Here W. Hewer's horse broke loose, and we had the sport to see him taken again. Then I carried them to see my cousin Pepys's house, and 'light, and walked round about it, and they like it, as indeed it deserves, very well, and is a pretty place; and then I walked them to the wood hard by, and there got them in the thickets till they had lost themselves, and I could not find the way into any of the walks in the wood, which indeed are very pleasant, if I could have found them. At last got out of the wood again; and I, by leaping down the little bank, coming out of {44} the wood, did sprain my right foot, which brought me great present pain, but presently, with walking, it went away for the present, and so the women and W. Hewer and I walked upon the Downs, where a flock of sheep was; and the most pleasant and innocent sight that ever I saw in my life—we find a shepherd and his little boy reading, far from any houses or sight of people, the Bible to him; so I made the boy read to me, which he did, with the forced tone that children do usually read, that was mighty pretty, and then I did give him something, and went to the father, and talked with him; and I find he had been a servant in my cousin Pepys's house, and told me what was become of their old servants. He did content himself mightily in my liking his boy's reading, and did bless God for him, the most like one of the old patriarchs that ever I saw in my life, and it brought those thoughts of the old age of the world in my mind for two or three days after. We took notice of his woollen knit stockings of two colours mixed, and of his shoes shod with iron shoes, both at the toe and heels, and with great nails in the soles of his feet, which was mighty pretty: and, taking notice of them, "Why," says the poor man, "the downs, you see, are full of stones, and we are fain to shoe ourselves thus; and these," says he, "will make the stones fly till they sing before me." I did give the poor man something, for which he was mighty thankful, and I tried to cast stones with his horn crook. He values his dog mightily, that would turn a sheep any way which he would have him, when he goes to fold them: told me there was about eighteen score sheep in his flock, and that he hath four shillings {45} a week the year round for keeping them: so we posted thence with mighty pleasure in the discourse we had with this poor man, and Mrs Turner, in the common fields here, did gather one of the prettiest nosegays that ever I saw in my life. So to our coach, and through Mr Minnes's wood, and looked upon Mr Evelyn's house; and so over the common, and through Epsom town to our inn, in the way stopping a poor woman with her milk-pail, and in one of my gilt tumblers did drink our bellyfulls of milk, better than any cream: and so to our inn, and there had a dish of cream, but it was sour, and so had no pleasure in it; and so paid our reckoning, and took coach, it being about seven at night, and passed and saw the people walking with their wives and children to take the air, and we set out for home, the sun by and by going down, and we in the cool of the evening all the way with much pleasure home, talking and pleasing ourselves with the pleasure of this day's work, Mrs Turner mightily pleased with my resolution, which, I tell her, is never to keep a country-house, but to keep a coach, and with my wife on the Saturday to go sometimes for a day to this place, and then quit to another place; and there is more variety and as little charge, and no trouble, as there is in a country-house. Anon it grew dark, and as it grew dark we had the pleasure to see several glow-worms, which was mighty pretty, but my foot begins more and more to pain me, which Mrs Turner, by keeping her warm hand upon it, did much ease; but so that when we come home, which was just at eleven at night, I was not able to walk from the lane's end to my house without being helped, which did trouble {46} me, and therefore to bed presently, but, thanks be

to God, found that I had not been missed, nor any business happened in my absence. So to bed, and there had a cere-cloth laid to my foot and leg alone, but in great pain all night long.

(Diary.)

DANIEL DEFOE 1660-1731

CAPTAIN SINGLETON IN CHINA

In the meantime, we came to an anchor under a little island in the latitude of 23 degrees 28 minutes, being just under the northern tropic, and about twenty leagues from the island. Here we lay thirteen days, and began to be very uneasy for my friend William, for they had promised to be back again in four days, which they might very easily have done. However, at the end of thirteen days, we saw three sail coming directly to us, which a little surprised us all at first, not knowing what might be the case; and we began to put ourselves in a posture of defence: but as they came nearer us, we were soon satisfied, for the first vessel was that which William went in, who carried a flag of truce; and in a few hours they all came to an anchor, and William came on board us with a little boat, with the Chinese merchant in his company, and two other merchants, who seemed to be a kind of brokers for the rest.

{47} Here he gave us an account how civilly he had been used; how they had treated him with all imaginable frankness and openness; that they had not only given him the full value of his spices and other goods which he carried, in gold, by good weight, but had loaded the vessel again with such goods as he knew we were willing to trade for; and that afterwards they had resolved to bring the great ship out of the harbour, to lie where we were, that so we might make what bargain we thought fit; only William said he had promised, in our name, that we should use no violence with them, nor detain any of the vessels after we had done trading with them. I told him we would strive to outdo them in civility, and that we would make good every part of his agreement; in token whereof, I caused a white flag likewise to be spread at the poop of our great ship, which was the signal agreed on.

As to the third vessel which came with them, it was a kind of bark of the country, who, having intelligence of our design to traffic, came off to deal with us, bringing a good deal of gold and some provisions, which at that time we were very glad of.

In short, we traded upon the high seas with these men, and indeed we made a very good market, and yet sold thieves' pennyworths too. We sold here about sixty ton of spice, chiefly cloves and nutmegs, and above two hundred bales of European goods, such as linen and woollen manufactures. We considered we should have occasion for some such things ourselves, and so we kept a good quantity of English stuns, cloth, baize, &c., for ourselves. I shall not take up any of the little {48} room I have left here with the further particulars of our trade; it is enough to mention, that, except a parcel of tea, and twelve bales of fine China

wrought silks, we took nothing in exchange for our goods but gold; so that the sum we took here in that glittering commodity amounted to above fifty thousand ounces good weight.

When we had finished our barter, we restored the hostages, and gave the three merchants about the quantity of twelve hundredweight of nutmegs, and as many of cloves, with a handsome present of European linen and stuff for themselves, as a recompense for what we had taken from them; so we sent them away exceedingly well satisfied.

Here it was that William gave me an account, that while he was on board the Japanese vessel, he met with a kind of religious, or Japan priest, who spoke some words of English to him; and, being very inquisitive to know how he came to learn any of those words, he told him that there was in his country thirteen Englishmen; he called them Englishmen very articulately and distinctly, for he had conversed with them very frequently and freely. He said that they were all that were left of two-and-thirty men, who came on shore on the north side of Japan, being driven upon a great rock in a stormy night, where they lost their ship, and the rest of their men were drowned; that he had persuaded the king of his country to send boats off to the rock or island where the ship was lost, to save the rest of the men, and to bring them on shore, which was done, and they were used very kindly, and had houses {49} built for them, and land given them to plant for provision; and that they lived by themselves.

He said he went frequently among them, to persuade them to worship their god (an idol, I suppose, of their own making), which, he said, they ungratefully refused; and that therefore the king had once or twice ordered them all to be put to death; but that, as he said, he had prevailed upon the king to spare them, and let them live their own way, as long as they were quiet and peaceable, and did not go about to withdraw others from the worship of the country.

I asked William why he did not inquire from whence they came. "I did," said William; "for how could I but think it strange," said he, "to hear him talk of Englishmen on the north side of Japan?" "Well," said I, "what account did he give of it?" "An account," said William, "that will surprise thee, and all the world after thee, that shall hear of it, and which makes me wish thou wouldst go up to Japan and find them out." "What do you mean?" said I. "Whence could they come?" "Why," says William, "he pulled out a little book, and in it a piece of paper, where it was written, in an Englishman's hand, and in plain English words, thus; and," says William, "I read it myself:—'We come from Greenland, and from the North Pole.'" This indeed, was amazing to us all, and more so to those seamen among us who knew anything of the infinite attempts which had been made from Europe, as well by the English as the Dutch, to discover a passage that way into those parts of the world; and as William pressed as earnestly to go on to the north to rescue those poor men, so the ship's {50} company began to incline to it; and, in a word, we all come to this, that we would stand in to the shore of Formosa, to find this priest again, and have a further account of it all from him. Accordingly the sloop went over; but when they came there, the vessels were very unhappily sailed, and this put an end to our inquiry after them, and perhaps may have disappointed mankind of one of the most noble discoveries that ever was made, or will again be made, in the world, for the good of mankind in general; but so much for that.

William was so uneasy at losing this opportunity, that he pressed us earnestly to go up to Japan to find out these men. He told us that if it was nothing but to recover thirteen honest poor men from a kind of captivity, which they would otherwise never be redeemed from, and where,

perhaps, they might, some time or other, be murdered by the barbarous people, in defence of their idolatry, it were very well worth our while, and it would be, in some measure, making amends for the mischiefs we had done in the world; but we, that had no concern upon us for the mischiefs we had done, had much less about any satisfactions to be made for it, so he found that kind of discourse would weigh very little with us. Then he pressed us very earnestly to let him have the sloop to go by himself, and I told him I would not oppose it; but when he came to the sloop none of the men would go with him; for the case was plain, they had all a share in the cargo of the great ship, as well as in that of the sloop, and the richness of the cargo was such that they would not leave it by any means; so poor William, much to {51} his mortification, was obliged to give it over. What became of those thirteen men, or whether they are not there still, I can give no account of.

(Captain Singleton.)

JONATHAN SWIFT 1667-1745

THE ART OF CONVERSATION

I have observed few obvious subjects to have been so seldom, or, at least, so slightly handled as this; and, indeed, I know few so difficult to be treated as it ought, nor yet upon which there seemeth so much to be said.

Most things, pursued by men for the happiness of public or private life, our wit or folly have so refined; that they seldom subsist but in idea; a true friend, a good marriage, a perfect form of government, with some others, require so many ingredients, so good in their several kinds, and so much niceness in mixing them, that for some thousands of years men have despaired of reducing their schemes to perfection. But, in conversation, it is, or might be otherwise; for here we are only to avoid a multitude of errors, which, although a matter of some difficulty, may be in every man's power, for want of which it remaineth as mere an idea as the other. Therefore it seemeth to me, that the truest way to understand conversation, is to know the faults and errors to which it is subject, and from thence every man to form maxims to himself whereby it may be regulated, because it requireth few talents to which most men are {52} not born, or at least may not acquire without any great genius or study. For nature hath left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company; and there are an hundred men sufficiently qualified for both, who, by a very few faults, that they might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.

I was prompted to write my thoughts upon this subject by mere indignation, to reflect that so useful and innocent a pleasure, so fitted for every period and condition of life, and so much in all men's power, should be so much neglected and abused.

And in this discourse it will be necessary to note those errors that are obvious, as well as others which are seldomer observed, since there are few so obvious, or acknowledged, into

which most men, some time or other, are not apt to run.

For instance: Nothing is more generally exploded than the folly of talking too much; yet I rarely remember to have seen five people together, where some one among them hath not been predominant in that kind, to the great constraint and disgust of all the rest. But among such as deal in multitudes of words, none are comparable to the sober deliberate talker, who proceedeth with much thought and caution, maketh his preface, brancheth out into several digressions, findeth a hint that putteth him in mind of another story which he promiseth to tell you when this is done; cometh back regularly to his subject, cannot readily call to mind some person's name, holding his head, complaineth of his memory; the whole company all this while in {53} suspense; at length says, it is no matter, and so goes on. And, to crown the business, it perhaps proveth at last a story the company hath heard fifty times before; or, at best, some insipid adventure of the relater.

Another general fault in conversation is, that of those who affect to talk of themselves: Some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives; will relate the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in love, or in law. Others are more dexterous, and with great art will lie on the watch to hook in their own praise: They will call a witness to remember, they always foretold what would happen in such a case, but none would believe them; they advised such a man from the beginning, and told him the consequences, just as they happened; but he would have his own way. Others make a vanity of telling their faults; they are the strangest men in the world; they cannot dissemble; they own it is a folly; they have lost abundance of advantages by it; but, if you would give them the world, they cannot help it; there is something in their nature that abhors insincerity and constraint; with many other insufferable topics of the same altitude.

Of such mighty importance every man is to himself, and ready to think he is so to others; without once making this easy and obvious reflection, that his affairs can have no more weight with other men, than theirs have with him; and how little that is, he is sensible enough.

Where company hath met, I often have observed {54} two persons discover, by some accident, that they were bred together at the same school or university, after which the rest are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades.

I know a great officer of the army, who will sit for some time with a supercilious and impatient silence, full of anger and contempt for those who are talking; at length of a sudden demand audience, decide the matter in a short dogmatical way; then withdraw within himself again, and vouchsafe to talk no more, until his spirits circulate again to the same point.

There are some faults in conversation, which none are so subject to as the men of wit, nor ever so much as when they are with each other. If they have opened their mouths, without endeavouring to say a witty thing, they think it is so many words lost: It is a torment to the hearers, as much as to themselves, to see them upon the rack for invention, and in perpetual constraint, with so little success. They must do something extraordinary, in order to acquit themselves, and answer their character, else the standers-by may be disappointed and be apt to think them only like the rest of mortals. I have known two men of wit industriously brought

together, in order to entertain the company, where they have made a very ridiculous figure, and provided all the mirth at their own expense.

I know a man of wit, who is never easy but where he can be allowed to dictate and preside: he neither expecteth to be informed or entertained, but to display {55} his own talents. His business is to be good company, and not good conversation; and, therefore, he chooseth to frequent those who are content to listen, and profess themselves his admirers. And, indeed, the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life was that at Will's coffeehouse, where the wits (as they were called) used formerly to assemble; that is to say, five or six men, who had writ plays, or at least prologues, or had share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling composures, in so important an air, as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or that the fate of kingdoms depended on them; and they were usually attended with an humble audience of young students from the inns of court, or the universities, who, at due distance, listened to these oracles, and returned home with great contempt for their law and philosophy, their heads filled with trash, under the name of politeness, criticism and *belles lettres*.

By these means the poets, for many years past, were all overrun with pedantry. For, as I take it, the word is not properly used; because pedantry is the too frequent or unreasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it; by which definition, men of the court or the army may be as guilty of pedantry as a philosopher or a divine; and, it is the same vice in women, when they are over copious upon the subject of their petticoats, or their fans, or their china. For which reason, although it be a piece of prudence, as well as good manners, to put men upon talking on subjects they are best versed in, yet that is a liberty a wise man could hardly take; {56} because, beside the imputation of pedantry, it is what he would never improve by.

(*Polite Conversation.*)

JOSEPH ADDISON 1672-1719

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE

There is no place in the town which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange. It gives me a secret satisfaction, and in some measure gratifies my vanity, as I am an Englishman, to see so rich an assembly of countrymen and foreigners, consulting together upon the private business of mankind, and making this metropolis a kind of *emporium* for the whole earth. I must confess I look upon high-change to be a great council, in which all considerable nations have their representatives. Factors in the trading world are what ambassadors are in the politic world; they negotiate affairs, conclude treaties, and maintain a good correspondence between those wealthy societies of men that are divided from one another by seas and oceans, or live on the different extremities of a continent. I have often been pleased to hear disputes adjusted between an inhabitant of Japan, and an alderman of London, or to see a subject of the Great

Mogul entering into a league with one of the Czar of Muscovy. I am infinitely delighted in mixing with these several ministers of commerce, as they are distinguished by their different walks and different languages. Sometimes I am jostled {57} among a body of Armenians; sometimes I am lost in a crowd of Jews; and sometimes make one in a group of Dutchmen. I am a Dane, Swede, or Frenchman at different times; or rather fancy myself like the old philosopher, who upon being asked what countryman he was, replied that he was a citizen of the world. . . .

Nature seems to have taken a particular care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, with an eye to this mutual intercourse and traffic among mankind, that the natives of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest. Almost every degree produces something peculiar to it. The food often grows in one country, and the sauce in another. The fruits of Portugal are corrected by the products of Barbadoes, and the infusion of a China plant is sweetened with the pith of an Indian cane. The Philippic islands give a flavour to our European bowls. The single dress of a woman of quality is often the product of an hundred climates. The muff and the fan come together from the different ends of the earth. The scarf is sent from the torrid zone, and the tippet from beneath the pole. The brocade petticoat rises out of the mines of Peru, and the diamond necklace out of the bowels of Indostan.

If we consider our own country in its natural prospect, without any of the benefits and advantages of commerce, what a barren and uncomfortable spot of earth falls to our share! Natural historians tell us, that no fruit grows originally among us, besides hips and haws, acorns and pig-nuts, with other delicacies of the {58} like nature; that our climate of itself, and without the assistance of art, can make no further advances towards a plum than to a sloe, and carries an apple to no greater a perfection than a crab; that our melons, our peaches, our figs, our apricots and cherries, are strangers among us, imported in different ages, and naturalised in our English gardens; and that they would all degenerate and fall away into the trash of our own country, if they were wholly neglected by the planter, and left to the mercy of our sun and soil. Nor has traffic more enriched our vegetable world, than it has improved the whole face of nature among us. Our ships are laden with the harvest of every climate. Our tables are stored with spices and oils and wines. Our rooms are filled with pyramids of China, and adorned with the workmanship of Japan. Our morning's draught comes to us from the remotest corners of the earth. We repair our bodies by the drugs of America, and repose ourselves under Indian canopies. My friend Sir Andrew calls the vineyards of France our gardens; the spice-islands, our hot-beds; the Persians our silk-weavers, and the Chinese our potters. Nature indeed furnishes us with the bare necessities of life, but traffic gives us a great variety of what is useful, and at the same time supplies us with everything that is convenient and ornamental. Nor is it the least part of this our happiness, that whilst we enjoy the remotest products of the north and south, we are free from those extremities of weather which give them birth; that our eyes are refreshed with the green fields of Britain, at the same time that our palates are feasted with fruits that rise between the tropics.

{59} For these reasons there are not more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the rich, and magnificence to the great. Our English merchant converts the tin of his own country into gold, and exchanges its wool for

rubies. The Mahometans are clothed in our British manufacture, and the inhabitants of the frozen zone warmed with the fleeces of our sheep.

When I have been upon the change, I have often fancied one of our old kings standing in person, where he is represented in effigy, and looking down upon the wealthy concourse of people with which that place is every day filled. In this case, how would he be surprised to hear all the languages of Europe spoken in this little spot of his former dominions, and to see so many private men, who in his time would have been the vassals of some powerful baron, negotiating like princes for greater sums of money than were formerly to be met with in the royal treasury! Trade, without enlarging the British territories, has given us a kind of additional empire. It has multiplied the number of the rich, made our landed estates infinitely more valuable than they were formerly, and added to them an accession of other estates as valuable as the lands themselves.

(The Spectator, No. 69.)

{60}

RICHARD STEELE 1672-1729

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY'S ANCESTORS

I was this morning walking in the gallery, when Sir Roger entered at the end opposite to me, and advancing towards me, said he was glad to meet me among his relations, the De Coverleys, and hoped I liked the conversation of so much good company, who were as silent as myself. I knew he alluded to the pictures, and as he is a gentleman who does not a little value himself upon his ancient descent, I expected he would give me some account of them. We were now arrived at the upper end of the gallery, when the knight faced towards one of the pictures, and as we stood before it he entered into the matter, after his blunt way of saying things as they occur to his imagination, without regular introduction, or care to preserve the appearance of chain of thought.

"It is," said he, "worth while to consider the force of dress; and how the persons of one age differ from those of another, merely by that only. One may observe also that the general fashion of one age has been followed by one particular set of people in another, and by them preserved from one generation to another. Thus the vast jetting coat and small bonnet, which was the habit in Harry the Seventh's time, is kept on in the Yeomen of the Guard; not without a good and politic view, because they look a foot taller, and a foot and a half {61} broader: besides, that the cap leaves the face expanded, and consequently more terrible, and fitter to stand at the entrance of palaces.

"This predecessor of ours, you see, is dressed after this manner, and his cheeks would be no larger than mine were he in a hat as I am. He was the last man that won a prize in the Tilt-Yard (which is now a common street before Whitehall). You see the broken lance that lies there by his right foot; he shivered that lance of his adversary all to pieces; and bearing himself, look you, sir, in this manner, at the same time he came within the target of the gentleman who rode

against him, and taking him with incredible force before him on the pommel of his saddle, he in that manner rid the tournament over, with an air that showed he did it rather to perform the rule of the lists, than expose his enemy; however, it appeared he knew how to make use of a victory, and with a gentle trot he marched up to a gallery where their mistress sat (for they were rivals) and let him down with laudable courtesy and pardonable insolence. I don't know but it might be exactly where the coffee-house is now.

"You are to know this my ancestor was not only of a military genius, but fit also for the arts of peace, for he played on the base-viol as well as any gentleman at court; you see where his viol hangs by his basket-hilt sword. The action at the Tilt-Yard you may be sure won the fair lady, who was a maid-of-honour, and the greatest beauty of her time; here she stands, the next picture. You see, sir, my great-great-great-grandmother has on the new-fashioned petticoat, except that the {62} modern is gathered at the waist; my grandmother appears as if she stood in a large drum, whereas the ladies now walk as if they were in a go-cart. For all this lady was bred at court, she became an excellent country-wife, she brought ten children, and when I show you the library, you shall see in her own hand (allowing for the difference of the language) the best receipt now in England both for an hasty pudding and a whitepot.

"If you please to fall back a little, because it is necessary to look at the three next pictures at one view; these are three sisters. She on the right hand, who is so very beautiful, died a maid; the next to her, still handsomer, had the same fate, against her will; this homely thing in the middle had both their portions added to her own, and was stolen by a neighbouring gentleman, a man of stratagem and resolution, for he poisoned three mastiffs to come at her, and knocked down two deer-stealers in carrying her off. Misfortunes happen in all families. The theft of this romp and so much money, was no great matter to our estate. But the next heir that possessed it was this soft gentleman, whom you see there. Observe the small buttons, the little boots, the laces, the slashes about his clothes, and above all the posture he is drawn in (which, to be sure, was his own choosing); you see he sits with one hand on a desk writing, and looking as it were another way, like an easy writer, or a sonneteer. He was one of those that had too much wit to know how to live in the world; he was a man of no justice, but great good manners; he ruined everybody that had anything to do with him, but {63} never said a rude thing in his life; the most indolent person in the world, he would sign a deed that passed away half his estate with his gloves on, but would not put on his hat before a lady if it were to save his country. He is said to be the first that made love by squeezing the hand. He left the estate with ten thousand pounds' debt upon it, but however by all hands I have been informed that he was every way the finest gentleman in the world. That debt lay heavy on our house for one generation, but it was retrieved by a gift from that honest man you see there, a citizen of our name, but nothing at all akin to us. I know Sir Andrew Freeport has said behind my back, that this man was descended from one of the ten children of the maid-of-honour I showed you above. But it was never made out; we winked at the thing indeed, because money was wanting at that time."

Here I saw my friend a little embarrassed, and turned my face to the next portraiture.

Sir Roger went on with his account of the gallery in the following manner: "This man (pointing to him I looked at) I take to be the honour of our house, Sir Humphrey de Coverley; he was in his dealings as punctual as a tradesman, and as generous as a gentleman. He would have thought himself as much undone by breaking his word, as if it were to be followed by

bankruptcy. He served his country as knight of this shire to his dying day. He found it no easy matter to maintain an integrity in his words and actions, even in things that regarded the offices which were incumbent upon him, in the care of his own affairs and relations of life, and therefore dreaded (though he had great talents) {64} to go into employments of state, where he must be exposed to the snares of ambition. Innocence of life and great ability were the distinguishing parts of his character; the latter, he had often observed, had led to the destruction of the former, and used frequently to lament that great and good had not the same signification. He was an excellent husbandman, but had resolved not to exceed such a degree of wealth; all above it he bestowed in secret bounties many years after the sum he aimed at for his own use was attained. Yet he did not slacken his industry, but to a decent old age spent the life and fortune which was superfluous to himself, in the service of his friends and neighbours."

Here we were called to dinner, and Sir Roger ended the discourse of this gentleman, by telling me, as we followed the servant, that this his ancestor was a brave man, and narrowly escaped being killed in the Civil Wars. "For," said he, "he was sent out of the field upon a private message the day before the Battle of Worcester." The whim of narrowly escaping, by having been within a day of danger, with other matters above mentioned, mixed with good sense, left me at a loss whether I was more delighted with my friend's wisdom or simplicity.

(The Spectator, No. 109.)

{65}

HENRY FIELDING 1707-1754

PARTRIDGE AT THE PLAY

In the first row, then, of the first gallery did Mr Jones, Mrs Miller, her youngest daughter, and Partridge, take their places. Partridge immediately declared it was the finest place he had ever been in. When the first music was played, he said, "It was a wonder how so many fiddlers could play at one time, without putting one another out." While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs Miller, "Look, look, madam, the very picture of the man in the end of the Common-Prayer Book before the gunpowder-treason service." Nor could he help observing, with a sigh, when all the candles were lighted, "That here were candles enough burnt in one night, to keep an honest poor family for a whole twelve-month."

As soon as the play, which was Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break silence till the entrance of the ghost; upon which he asked Jones, "What man was that in the strange dress; something," said he, "like what I have seen in a picture. Sure it is not armour, is it?" Jones answered, "That is the ghost." To which Partridge replied with a smile, "Persuade me to that, sir, if you can. Though I can't say I ever actually saw a ghost in my life, yet I am certain I should know one, if I saw him, better than that comes to. No, no, sir, ghosts don't appear in such dresses as that, neither." In this mistake, which caused much {66} laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue, till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr Garrick, which

he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling, that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage? "O la! sir," said he, "I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of anything; for I know it is but a play. And if it was really a ghost, it could do one no harm at such a distance, and in so much company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only person." "Why, who," cries Jones, "dost thou take to be such a coward here besides thyself?" "Nay, you may call me coward if you will, but if that little man there upon the stage is not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay: go along with you: Ay, to be sure! Who's fool then? Will you? Lud have mercy upon such fool-hardiness!—Whatever happens, it is good enough for you.—Follow you? I'd follow the devil as soon. Nay, perhaps it is the devil—for they say he can put on what likeness he pleases.—Oh! here he is again.—No farther! No, you have gone far enough already; farther than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions." Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried, "Hush, hush! dear sir, don't you hear him?" And during the whole speech of the ghost, he sat with his eyes fixed partly on the ghost and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open; the same passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeding likewise in him.

When the scene was over Jones said, "Why, Partridge, {67} you exceed my expectations. You enjoy the play more than I conceived possible." "Nay, sir," answered Partridge, "if you are not afraid of the devil, I can't help it, but to be sure, it is natural to be surprised at such things, though I know there is nothing in them: not that it was the ghost that surprised me, neither; for I should have known that to have been only a man in a strange dress; but when I saw the little man so frightened himself, it was that which took hold of me." "And dost thou imagine, then, Partridge," cries Jones, "that he was really frightened?" "Nay, sir," said Partridge, "did not you yourself observe afterwards, when he found it was his own father's spirit, and how he was murdered in the garden, how his fear forsook him by degrees, and he was struck dumb with sorrow, as it were, just as I should have been, had it been my own case?—But hush! O la! what noise is that? There he is again.—Well to be certain, though I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder, where those men are." Then turning his eyes again upon Hamlet, "Ay, you may draw your sword; what signifies a sword against the power of the devil?"

During the second act, Partridge made very few remarks. He greatly admired the fineness of the dresses; nor could he help observing upon the king's countenance. "Well," said he, "how people may be deceived by faces! *Nulla fides fronti* is, I find, a true saying. Who would think, by looking in the king's face, that he had ever committed a murder?" He then inquired after the ghost; but Jones, who intended that he should be surprised, gave him no other satisfaction, than, "that {68} he might possibly see him again soon, and in a flash of fire."

Partridge sat in a fearful expectation of this; and now, when the ghost made his appearance, Partridge cried out, "There, sir, now; what say you now? is he frightened now or no? As much frightened as you think me, and, to be sure, nobody can help some fears. I would not be in so bad a condition as what's his name, squire Hamlet, is there, for all the world. Bless me! what's become of the spirit? As I am a living soul, I thought I saw him sink into the earth." "Indeed, you saw right," answered Jones. "Well, well," cries Partridge, "I know it is only a play: and besides, if there was anything in all this, Madam Miller would not laugh so; for as to you, sir, you would not be afraid, I believe, if the devil was here in person.—There, there—Ay, no

wonder you are in such a passion, shake the vile wicked wretch to pieces. If she was my own mother, I would serve her so. To be sure all duty to a mother is forfeited by such wicked doings.— — Ay, go about your business, I hate the sight of you."

Our critic was now pretty silent till the play, which Hamlet introduces before the king. This he did not at first understand, till Jones explained it to him; but he no sooner entered into the spirit of it, than he began to bless himself that he had never committed murder. Then turning to Mrs Miller, he asked her, "If she did not imagine the king looked as if he was touched; though he is," said he, "a good actor, and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not have so much to answer for, as that wicked man there hath, to sit upon a much higher {69} chair that he sits upon. No wonder he runs away; for your sake I'll never trust an innocent face again."

The grave digging scene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who expressed much surprise at the number of skulls thrown upon the stage. To which Jones answered, "That it was one of the most famous burial-places about town." "No wonder, then," cries Partridge, "that the place is haunted. But I never saw in my life a worse grave-digger. I had a sexton, when I was clerk, that should have dug three graves while he is digging one. The fellow handles a spade as if it was the first time he had ever had one in his hand. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe."— Upon Hamlet's taking up the skull he cried out, "Well! it is strange to see how fearless some men are: I never could bring myself to touch anything belonging to a dead man, on any account.—He seemed frightened enough, too, at the ghost, I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.*"

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play, at the end of which Jones asked him, "Which of the players he had liked best?" To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question, "The king, without doubt." "Indeed, Mr Partridge," says Mrs Miller, "you are not of the same opinion with the town; for they are all agreed, that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage." "He the best player!" cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer, "why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then, {70} to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me, any man, that is, any good man, that had such a mother, would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me; but indeed, madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country; and the king for my money; he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other.—Anybody may see he is an actor."

While Mrs Miller was thus engaged in conversation with Partridge, a lady came up to Mr Jones, whom he immediately knew to be Mrs Fitzpatrick. She said, she had seen him from the other part of the gallery, and had taken that opportunity of speaking to him, as she had something to say, which might be of great service to himself. She then acquainted him with her lodgings, and made him an appointment the next day in the morning; which, upon recollection, she presently changed to the afternoon; at which time Jones promised to attend her.

Thus ended the adventure at the play-house; where Partridge had afforded great mirth, not only to Jones and Mrs Miller, but to all who sat within hearing, who were more attentive to what he said, than to anything that passed on the stage.

He durst not go to bed all that night, for fear of the ghost; and for many nights after sweated two or three hours before he went to sleep, with the same apprehensions, and waked several times in great horrors, crying out, "Lord have mercy upon us! there it is."

(Tom Jones.)

{71}

SAMUEL JOHNSON 1709-1784

A JOURNEY IN A STAGE-COACH

In a stage coach the passengers are for the most part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever meeting again when their journey is at an end; one should, therefore, imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the rest should form concerning him. Yet so it is, that as all think themselves secure from detection, all assume that character of which they are most desirous, and on no occasion is the general ambition of superiority more apparently indulged.

On the day of our departure, in the twilight of the morning, I ascended the vehicle with three men and two women, my fellow travellers. It was easy to observe the affected elevation of mien with which every one entered, and the supercilious civility with which they paid their compliments to each other. When the first ceremony was dispatched, we sat silent for a long time, all employed in collecting importance into our faces, and endeavouring to strike reverence and submission into our companions.

It is always observable, that silence propagates itself, and that the longer talk has been suspended, the more difficult it is to find any thing to say. We began now to wish for conversation; but no one seemed inclined to descend from his dignity, or first to propose a topic of discourse. At last a corpulent gentleman, who had equipped himself for this expedition with a scarlet surtout {72} and a large hat with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looked on it in silence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I suppose, understood by all the company as an invitation to ask the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture; and his desire to be talking so far overcame his resentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was past five, and that in two hours we should be at breakfast.

His condescension was thrown away; we continued all obdurate; the ladies held up their heads; I amused myself with watching their behaviour; and of the other two, one seemed to employ himself in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes and counterfeited a slumber. The man of benevolence, to shew that he was not depressed by our neglect, hummed a tune and beat time upon his snuff-box.

Thus universally displeased with one another, and not much delighted with ourselves, we came at last to the little inn appointed for our repast; and all began at once to recompense ourselves for the restraint of silence, by innumerable questions and orders to the people that attended us. At last, what every one had called for was got, or declared impossible to be got at that time, and we were persuaded to sit round the same table; when the gentleman in the red

surtout looked again upon his watch, told us that we had half an hour to spare, but he was sorry to see so little merriment among us; that all fellow-travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himself one of the company. "I remember," says he, "it was on just such a morning as this, that I and my lord Mumble and the {73} duke of Tenterden were out upon a ramble: we called at a little house as it might be this; and my landlady, I warrant you, not suspecting to whom she was talking, was so jocular and facetious, and made so many merry answers to our questions, that we were all ready to burst with laughter. At last the good woman happening to overhear me whisper the duke and call him by his title, was so surprised and confounded, that we could scarcely get a word from her; and the duke never met me from that day to this, but he talks of the little house, and quarrels with me for terrifying the landlady."

He had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the veneration which this narrative must have procured him from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a distant part of the table, began to remark "the inconveniences of travelling, and the difficulty which they who never sat at home without a great number of attendants found in performing for themselves such offices as the road required; but that people of quality often travelled in disguise, and might be generally known from the vulgar by their condescension to poor inn-keepers, and the allowance which they made for any defect in their entertainment; that for her part, while people were civil and meant well, it was never her custom to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a journey all that one enjoyed at one's own house."

A general emulation seemed now to be excited. One of the men, who had hitherto said nothing, called for the last news-paper; and having perused it a while with deep pensiveness, "It is impossible," says he, "for any man to guess how to act with regard to the stocks: last {74} week it was the general opinion that they would fall; and I sold out twenty thousand pounds in order to a purchase: they have now risen unexpectedly; and I make no doubt but at my return to London, I shall risk thirty thousand pounds amongst them again."

A young man, who had hitherto distinguished himself only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diversion of his eyes from one object to another, upon this closed his snuff-box, and told us, that "he had a hundred times talked with the chancellor and the judges on the subject of the stocks; that for his part he did not pretend to be well acquainted with the principles on which they were established, but had always heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, uncertain in their produce, and unsolid in their foundation; and that he had been advised by three judges, his most intimate friends, never to venture his money in the funds, but to put it out upon land security, till he could light upon an estate in his own country."

It might be expected, that upon these glimpses of latent dignity, we should all have begun to look round us with veneration; and have behaved like the princes of romance, when the enchantment that disguises them is dissolved and they discover the dignity of each other: yet it happened, that none of these hints made much impression on the company; everyone was apparently suspected of endeavouring to impose false appearances upon the rest; all continued their haughtiness, in hopes to enforce their claims; and all grew every hour more sullen, because they found their representations of themselves without effect.

{75} Thus we travelled on four days with malevolence perpetually increasing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in superciliousness and neglect; and when any two of

us could separate ourselves for a moment, we vented our indignation at the sauciness of the rest.

At length the journey was at an end; and time and chance, that strip off all disguises, have discovered, that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furnished a shop with the money he has saved; the man who deals so largely in the funds, is a clerk of a broker in 'Change-alley; the lady who so carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cook-shop behind the Exchange; and the young man, who is so happy in the friendship of the judges, engrosses and transcribes for bread in a garret of the Temple. Of one of the women only I could make no disadvantageous detection, because she had assumed no character, but accommodated herself to the scene before her, without any struggle for distinction or superiority.

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practising a fraud, which, as the event shewed, had been already practised too often to succeed, and by the success of which no advantage could have been obtained; of assuming a character, which was to end with the day; and of claiming upon false pretences honours which must perish with the breath that paid them.

But, Mr Adventurer, let not those who laugh at me and my companions, think this folly confined to a stage coach. Every man in the journey of life takes the same advantage of the ignorance of his fellow travellers, disguises himself in counterfeited merit, and hears those {76} praises with complacency which his conscience reproaches him for accepting. Every man deceives himself, while he thinks he is deceiving others; and forgets that the time is at hand when every illusion shall cease, when fictitious excellence shall be torn away, and all must be shown to all in their real estate.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
VIATOR.

(The Adventurer.)

LAURENCE STERNE 1713-1768

HOW UNCLE TOBY AND CORPORAL TRIM FOLLOWED MARLBOROUGH'S CAMPAIGNS

If the reader has not a clear conception of the rood and the half of ground which lay at the bottom of my uncle Toby's kitchen-garden, and which was the scene of so many of his delicious hours,—the fault is not in me,—but in his imagination;—for I am sure I gave him so minute a description, I was almost ashamed of it.

When *Fate* was looking forwards one afternoon, into the great transactions of future times, —and recollected for what purposes this little plot, by a decree fast bound down in iron, had been destined,—she gave a nod to *Nature*:—'twas enough,—Nature threw half a spadeful of

her kindest compost upon it, with just so *much* clay in {77} it as to retain the forms of angles and indenting,—and so *little* of it too, as not to cling to the spade, and render works of so much glory, nasty in foul weather.

My uncle Toby came down, as the reader has been informed, with plans along with him, of almost every fortified town in Italy and Flanders; so let the Duke of Marlborough, or the allies, have set down before what town they pleased, my uncle Toby was prepared for them.

His way, which was the simplest one in the world, was this: as soon as ever a town was invested—(but sooner when the design was known) to take the plan of it (let it be what town it would) and enlarge it upon a scale to the exact size of his bowling green; upon the surface of which, by means of a large roll of packthread, and a number of small pickets driven into the ground, at the several angles and redans, he transferred the lines from his paper; then taking the profile of the place, with its works, to determine the depths and slopes of the ditches,—the talus of the glacis, and the precise height of the several *banquettes*, parapets, etc.—he set the Corporal to work; and sweetly went it on.—The nature of the soil,—the nature of the work itself,—and, above all, the good-nature of my uncle Toby, sitting by from morning to night, and chatting kindly with the Corporal upon past done deeds,—left *labour* little else but the ceremony of the name. . .

When the town, with its works, was finished, my uncle Toby and the Corporal began to run their first parallel,—not at random, or anyhow,—but from the same points and distances the allies had begun to run {78} theirs; and regulating their approaches and attacks by the accounts my uncle Toby received from the daily papers,—they went on, during the whole siege, step by step, with the allies.

When the Duke of Marlborough made a lodgment,—my uncle Toby made a lodgment too;—and when the face of a bastion was battered down, or a defence ruined,—the Corporal took his mattock and did as much,—and so on;—gaining ground, and making themselves masters of the works, one after another, till the town fell into their hands.

To one who took pleasure in the happy state of others, there could not have been a greater sight in the world than on a post-morning, in which a practicable breach had been made by the Duke of Marlborough in the main body of the place,—to have stood behind the horn-beam hedge, and observed the spirit with which my uncle Toby, with Trim behind him, sallied forth;—the one with the Gazette in his hand,—the other with a spade on his shoulder, to execute the contents.—What an honest triumph in my uncle Toby's looks as he marched up to the ramparts! what intense pleasure swimming in his eye as he stood over the Corporal, reading the paragraph ten times over to him, as he was at work, lest, peradventure, he should make the breach an inch too wide,—or leave it an inch too narrow!—but when the *chamade* was beat, and the Corporal helped my uncle up it, and followed with the colours in his hand, to fix them upon the ramparts,—Heaven! Earth! Sea!—but what avail apostrophes?—with all your elements, wet or dry, ye never compounded so intoxicating a draught.

{79} In this track of happiness for many years, without one interruption to it, except now and then when the wind continued to blow due west for a week or ten days together, which detained the Flanders mail, and kept them so long in torture, but still it was the torture of the happy:—in this track, I say, did my uncle Toby and Trim move for many years, every year of

which, and sometimes every month, from the invention of either the one or the other of them, adding some new conceit or quirk of improvement to their operations, which always opened fresh springs of delight in carrying them on.

(Tristram Shandy.)

HORACE WALPOLE 1717-1797

THE FUNERAL OF GEORGE II

Horace Walpole to George Montagu

ARLINGTON STREET,

November 13, 1760.

Even the honeymoon of a new reign don't produce events every day. There is nothing but the common saying of addresses and kissing hands. . . For the King himself, he seems all good nature, and wishing to satisfy everybody; all his speeches are obliging.

I saw him again yesterday, and was surprised to find the levee-room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. This sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of {80} German news: he walks about, and speaks to everybody. I saw him afterwards on the throne where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity and reads his answers to addresses well; it was the Cambridge address, carried by the Duke of Newcastle in his doctor's gown, and looking like the *Médecin malgré lui*. He had been vehemently solicitous for attendance for fear my Lord Westmoreland, who vouchsafes himself to bring the address from Oxford, should outnumber him. Lord Litchfield and several other Jacobites have kissed hands; George Selwyn says, "They go to St James", because *now* there are so many Stuarts there."

Do you know, I had the curiosity to go to the burying t'other night; I had never seen a royal funeral; nay, I walked as a rag of quality, which I found would be, and so it was, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight. The Prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands, had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber.

The procession, through a line of foot-guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse-guards lining the outside, their officers with drawn sabres and crape sashes on horse-back, the drums muffled, the fifes, bells tolling, and minute guns,—all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the abbey, where we were received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches; the whole abbey so illuminated, that one saw it to greater advantage than by {81} day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof, all appearing

distinctly, and with the happiest *chiaroscuro*. There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct; yet one could not complain of its not being catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were not very accurate, and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older, to keep me in countenance. When we came to the chapel of Henry the Seventh, all solemnity and decorum ceased; no order was observed, people sat or stood where they could or would; the Yeomen of the Guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the bishop read sadly and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter, *Man that is born of woman*, was chanted, not read; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards.

Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which has affected, too, one of his eyes; and placed over the mouth of the vault into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend; think how unpleasant a situation! He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke {82} of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle; but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand, and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold; and the Duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round, found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It is very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin was, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bed-chamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the King's order.

I have nothing more to tell you, but a trifle, a very trifle. The King of Prussia has totally defeated Marshal Daun. This, which would have been prodigious news a month ago, is nothing to-day; it only takes its turn among the questions, "Who is to be the groom of the bedchamber? What is Sir T. Robinson to have?" I have been to Leicester Fields to-day; the crowd was immoderate; I don't believe it will continue so. Good night.

(*Letters.*)

{83}

OLIVER GOLDSMITH 1728-1774

THE CREDULITY OF THE ENGLISH

It is the most usual method in every report, first to examine its probability, and then act as the conjuncture may require. The English, however, exert a different spirit in such circumstances; they first act, and when too late, begin to examine. From a knowledge of this disposition, there are several here, who make it their business to frame new reports at every

convenient interval, all tending to denounce ruin, both on their contemporaries and their posterity. This denunciation is eagerly caught up by the public: away they fling to propagate the distress; sell out at one place, buy in at another, grumble at their governors, shout in mobs, and when they have thus for some time behaved like fools, sit down coolly to argue and talk wisdom, to puzzle each other with syllogism, and prepare for the next report that prevails, which is always attended with the same success.

Thus are they ever rising above one report, only to sink into another. They resemble a dog in a well, pawing to get free. When he has raised his upper parts above water, and every spectator imagines him disengaged, his lower parts drag him down again and sink him to the nose; he makes new efforts to emerge, and every effort increasing his weakness, only tends to sink him the deeper. . .

{84} This people would laugh at my simplicity, should I advise them to be less sanguine in harbouring gloomy predictions, and examine coolly before they attempted to complain. I have just heard a story, which, though transacted in a private family, serves very well to describe the behaviour of the whole nation, in cases of threatened calamity. As there are public, so there are private incendiaries here. One of the last, either for the amusement of his friends, or to divert a fit of the spleen, lately sent a threatening letter to a worthy family in my neighbourhood, to this effect:

"Sir,—Knowing you to be very rich, and finding myself to be very poor, I think proper to inform you, that I have learned the secret of poisoning man, woman, and child, without danger of detection. Don't be uneasy, Sir, you may take your choice of being poisoned in a fortnight, or poisoned in a month, or poisoned in six weeks; you shall have full time to settle all your affairs. Though I am poor, I love to do things like a gentleman. But, Sir, you must die. Blood, Sir, blood is my trade; so I could wish you would this day six weeks take leave of your friends, wife, and family, for I cannot possibly allow you longer time. To convince you more certainly of the power of my art, by which you may know I speak truth, take this letter; when you have read it, tear off the seal, fold it up, and give it to your favourite Dutch mastiff that sits by the fire; he will swallow it, Sir, like a buttered toast: in three hours four minutes after he has taken it, he will attempt to bite off his own tongue, and half an hour after burst asunder in twenty pieces. Blood! blood! blood! So no more at present from, {85} Sir, your most obedient, most devoted humble servant to command, till death."

You may easily imagine the consternation into which this letter threw the whole good-natured family. The poor man to whom it was addressed was the more surprised, as not knowing how he could merit such inveterate malice. All the friends of the family were convened; it was universally agreed that it was a most terrible affair, and that the government should be solicited to offer a reward and a pardon: a fellow of this kind would go on poisoning family after family; and it was impossible to say where the destruction would end. In pursuance of these determinations, the government was applied to; strict search was made after the incendiary, but all in vain. At last, therefore, they recollected that the experiment was not yet tried upon the dog; the Dutch mastiff was brought up, and placed in the midst of the friends and relations; the seal was torn off, the packet folded up with care, and soon they found, to the great surprise of all—that the dog would not eat the letter. Adieu.

(Citizen of the World.)

EDMUND BURKE 1729-1797

DECAY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY

We may amuse ourselves with talking as much as we please of the virtue of middle or humble life; that is, we may place our confidence in the virtue of those who {86} have never been tried. But if the persons who are continually emerging out of that sphere be no better than those whom birth has placed above it, what hopes are there in the remainder of the body, which is to furnish the perpetual succession of the state? All who have ever written on government are unanimous that among a people generally corrupt liberty cannot long exist. And indeed how is it possible? When those who are to make the laws, to guard, to enforce, or to obey them, are by a tacit confederacy of manners indisposed to the spirit of all generous and noble institutions.

I am aware that the age is not what we all wish. But I am sure that the only means of checking its precipitate degeneracy is heartily to concur with whatever is the best in our time: and to have some more correct standard of judging what that best is than the transient and uncertain favour of a court. If once we are able to find and can prevail on ourselves to strengthen an union of such men, whatever accidentally becomes indisposed to ill-exercised power, even by the ordinary operation of human passions, must join with that society, and cannot long be joined without in some degree assimilating to it. Virtue will catch as well as vice by contact, and the public stock of honest, manly principle will daily accumulate. We are not too nicely to scrutinise motives as long as action is irreproachable. It is enough (and for a worthy man perhaps too much) to deal out its infamy to convicted guilt and declared apostasy.

This, gentlemen, has been from the beginning the rule of my conduct; and I mean to continue it as long as such a body as I have described can by any possibility {87} be kept together, for I should think it the most dreadful of all offences, not only towards the present generation but to all the future, if I were to do anything which could make the minutest breach in this great conservatory of free principles. Those who perhaps have the same intentions but are separated by some little political animosities will I hope discern at last how little conducive it is to any rational purpose to lower its reputation. For my part, gentlemen, from much experience, from no little thinking, and from comparing a great variety of things, I am thoroughly persuaded that the last hope of preserving the spirit of the English constitution, or of re-uniting the dissipated members of the English race upon a common plan of tranquillity and liberty, does entirely depend on their firm and lasting union, and above all on their keeping themselves from that despair which is so very apt to fall on those whom a violence of character and a mixture of ambitious views do not support through a long, painful, and unsuccessful struggle.

There never, gentlemen, was a period in which the steadfastness of some men has been put to so sore a trial. It is not very difficult for well-formed minds to abandon their interest, but the separation of fame and virtue is a harsh divorce. Liberty is in danger of being made unpopular to Englishmen. Contending for an imaginary power we begin to acquire the spirit of domination and to lose the relish of an honest equality. The principles of our forefathers become suspected to us, because we see them animating the present opposition of our children.

The faults which grow out of the luxuriance of freedom appear much more shocking to us than the {88} base vices which are generated from the rankness of servitude. Accordingly, the least resistance to power appears more inexcusable in our eyes than the greatest abuses of authority. All dread of a standing military force is looked upon as a superstitious panic. All shame of calling in foreigners and savages in a civil contest is worn off. We grow indifferent to the consequences inevitable to ourselves from the plan of ruling half the empire by a mercenary sword. We are taught to believe that a desire of domineering over our countrymen is love to our country, that those who hate civil war abet rebellion, and that the amiable and conciliatory virtues of lenity, moderation, and tenderness of the privileges of those who depend on this kingdom are a sort of treason to the state.

It is impossible that we should remain long in a situation which breeds such notions and dispositions without some great alteration in the national character. Those ingenuous and feeling minds who are so fortified against all other things, and so unarmed to whatever approaches in the shape of disgrace, finding these principles, which they considered as sure means of honour, to be grown into disrepute, will retire disheartened and disgusted. Those of a more robust make, the bold, able, ambitious men who pay some of their court to power through the people, and substitute the voice of transient opinion in the place of true glory, will give in to the general mode; and those superior understandings which ought to correct vulgar prejudice will confirm and aggravate its errors. Many things have been long operating towards a gradual change in our principles. {89} But this American war has done more in a very few years than all the other causes could have effected in a century. It is therefore not on its own separate account, but because of its attendant circumstances that I consider its continuance or its ending in any way but that of an honourable and liberal accommodation as the greatest evils which can befall us. For that reason I have troubled you with this long letter. For that reason I entreat you again and again neither to be persuaded, shamed, or frightened out of the principles that have hitherto led so many of you to abhor the war, its cause, and its consequences. Let us not be among the first who renounce the maxims of our forefathers.

(Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the affairs of America.)

WILLIAM COWPER 1731-1800

THE CANDIDATE FOR PARLIAMENT

To the Rev. John Newton.

March 29, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It being his majesty's pleasure that I should yet have another opportunity to write before he dissolves the parliament, I avail myself of it with all possible alacrity. I thank you for your last, which was not the less welcome for coming, like an extraordinary gazette, at a time when it was not expected.

{90} As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard side, where in general we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water mark, by the usual dashing of the waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise a mob appeared before the window; a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr Grenville. Puss was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach.

Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour, were filled. Mr Grenville advancing toward me shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr Ashburner, the {91} drapier, addressing himself to me at this moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he has a third also, which he wore suspended by a ribband from his buttonhole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered, the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly that I had not that influence for which he sued; and which, had I been possessed of it, with my present views of the dispute between the Crown and the Commons, I must have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disobliging somebody. The town however seems to be much at his service, and if he be equally successful throughout the county, he will undoubtedly gain his election. Mr Ashburner perhaps {92} was a little mortified, because it was evident that I owed the honour of this visit to his misrepresentation of my importance. But had he thought proper to assure Mr Grenville that I had three heads, I should not I suppose have been bound to produce them.

Mr Scott, who you say was so much admired in your pulpit, would be equally admired in his own, at least by all capable judges, were he not so apt to be angry with his congregation. This hurts him, and had he the understanding and eloquence of Paul himself, would still hurt him. He seldom, hardly ever indeed, preaches a gentle, well-tempered sermon, but I hear it highly commended: but warmth of temper, indulged to a degree that may be called scolding, defeats

the end of preaching. It is a misapplication of his powers, which it also cripples, and teases away his hearers. But he is a good man, and may perhaps outgrow it.

Many thanks for the worsted, which is excellent. We are as well as a spring hardly less severe than the severest winter will give us leave to be. With our united love, we conclude ourselves yours and Mrs Newton's affectionate and faithful

W. C. M. U.

(*Letters.*)

{93}

EDWARD GIBBON 1737-1794

YOUTH

At the conclusion of this first period of my life, I am tempted to enter a protest against the trite and lavish praise of the happiness of our boyish years, which is echoed with so much affectation in the world. That happiness I have never known, that time I have never regretted; and were my poor aunt still alive, she would bear testimony to the early and constant uniformity of my sentiments. It will, indeed, be replied that *I* am not a competent judge; that pleasure is incompatible with pain, that joy is excluded from sickness; and that the felicity of a school-boy consists in the perpetual motion of thoughtless and playful agility, in which I was never qualified to excel. My name, it is most true, could never be enrolled among the sprightly race, the idle progeny of Eton or Westminster, who delight to cleave the water with pliant arm, to urge the flying ball, and to chase the speed of the rolling circle. But I would ask the warmest and most active hero of the play-field whether he can seriously compare his childish with his manly enjoyments. . . . A state of happiness arising only from the want of foresight and reflection shall never provoke my envy; such degenerate taste would tend to sink us in the scale of beings from a man to a child, a dog and an oyster, till we had reached the confines of brute matter, which cannot suffer because it cannot feel. The poet may gaily describe the short hours of {94} recreation; but he forgets the daily, tedious labours of the school, which is approached each morning with anxious and reluctant steps. Degrees of misery are proportioned to the mind rather than to the object; *parva leves capiunt animos*; and few men, in the trials of life, have experienced a more painful sensation than the poor school-boy with an imperfect task, who trembles on the eve of the black Monday. A school is the cavern of fear and sorrow; the mobility of the captive youths is chained to a book and a desk; an inflexible master commands their attention, which every moment is impatient to escape; they labour like the soldiers of Persia under the scourge, and their education is nearly finished before they can apprehend the sense or utility of the harsh lessons which they are forced to repeat. Such blind and absolute dependence may be necessary, but can never be delightful: Freedom is the first wish of our heart; freedom is the first blessing of our nature; and, unless we bind ourselves with the voluntary chains of interest or passion, we advance in freedom as we advance in years.

(Autobiography.)

JAMES BOSWELL 1740-1795

FIRST SIGHT OF DR JOHNSON

1763. This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing; an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of {95} the most fortunate circumstances in my life. Though then but two-and-twenty, I had for several years read his works with delight and instruction, and had the highest reverence for their author, which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn abstraction, in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London. Mr Gentleman, a native of Ireland, who passed some years in Scotland as a player, and as an instructor in the English language, a man whose talents and worth were depressed by misfortunes, had given me a representation of the figure and manner of DICTIONARY JOHNSON! as he was then generally called; and during my first visit to London, which was for three months in 1760, Mr Derrick the poet, who was Gentleman's friend and countryman, flattered me with hopes that he would introduce me to Johnson, an honour of which I was very ambitious. But he never found an opportunity; which made me doubt that he had promised to do what was not in his power; till Johnson some years afterwards told me, "Derrick, Sir, might very well have introduced you. I had a kindness for Derrick, and am sorry he is dead."

In the summer of 1761 Mr Thomas Sheridan was at Edinburgh, and delivered lectures upon the English language and Public Speaking to large and respectable audiences. I was often in his company, and heard him frequently expatiate upon Johnson's extraordinary knowledge, talents, and virtues, repeat his pointed sayings, describe his particularities, and boast of his being his guest sometimes till two or three in the morning. At {96} his house I hoped to have many opportunities of seeing the sage, as Mr Sheridan obligingly assured me I should not be disappointed.

When I returned to London in the end of 1762, to my surprise and regret I found an irreconcilable difference had taken place between Johnson and Sheridan. A pension of two hundred pounds a year had been given to Sheridan. Johnson, who, as has been already mentioned, thought slightly of Sheridan's art, upon hearing that he was also pensioned, exclaimed, "What! have they given *him* a pension? Then it is time for me to give up mine." Whether this proceeded from a momentary indignation, as if it were an affront to his exalted merit that a player should be rewarded in the same manner with him, or was the sudden effect of a fit of peevishness, it was unluckily said, and, indeed, cannot be justified. Mr Sheridan's pension was granted to him not as a player, but as a sufferer in the cause of government, when he was manager of the Theatre Royal in Ireland, when parties ran high in 1753. And it must also be allowed that he was a man of literature, and had considerably improved the arts of reading and speaking with distinctness and propriety. . . .

This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnson of one of his most agreeable resources for amusement in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate; and Mrs Sheridan was a most agreeable companion to an intellectual man. She was sensible, ingenious, unassuming, yet communicative. I recollect, with satisfaction, many pleasing hours which I passed with her {97} under the hospitable roof of her husband, who was to me a very kind friend. Her novel, entitled *Memoirs of Miss Sydney Biddulph*, contains an excellent moral while it inculcates a future state of retribution; and what it teaches is impressed upon the mind by a series of as deep distress as can affect humanity, in the amiable and pious heroine who goes to her grave unrelieved, but resigned, and full of hope of heaven's mercy. Johnson paid her this high compliment upon it: "I know not, Madam, that you have a right, upon moral principles, to make your readers suffer so much."

Mr Thomas Davies, the actor, who then kept a bookseller's shop in Russell Street, Covent Garden, told me that Johnson was very much his friend, and came frequently to his house, where he more than once invited me to meet him; but by some unlucky accident or other he was prevented from coming to us.

Mr Thomas Davies was a man of good understanding and talents, with the advantage of a liberal education. Though somewhat pompous, he was an entertaining companion; and his literary performances have no inconsiderable share of merit. He was a friendly and very hospitable man. Both he and his wife (who has been celebrated for her beauty), though upon the stage for many years, maintained an uniform decency of character; and Johnson esteemed them, and lived in an as easy an intimacy with them, as with any family which he used to visit. Mr Davies recollected several of Johnson's remarkable sayings, and was one of the best of the many imitators of his voice and manner, while relating them. He increased my impatience more and more to see the {98} extraordinary man whose works I highly valued, and whose conversation was reported to be so peculiarly excellent.

At last, on Monday the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr Davies's back-parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop; and Mr Davies having perceived him through the glass door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us,—he announced his awful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, "Look, my lord, it comes." I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his *Dictionary*, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation, which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me, and from which an engraving has been made for this work. Mr Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, "Don't tell where I come from."—"From Scotland," cried Davies, roguishly. "Mr Johnson (said I) I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he {99} seized the expression "come from Scotland," which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, "That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." This

stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O, Sir, I cannot think Mr Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir, (said he, with a stern look) I have known David Garrick longer than you have done; and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." Perhaps I deserved this check; for it was rather presumptuous in me, an entire stranger, to express any doubt of the justice of his animadversion upon his old acquaintance and pupil. I now felt myself much mortified, and began to think that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted. And, in truth, had not my ardour been uncommonly strong, and my resolution uncommonly persevering, so rough a reception might have deterred me for ever from making any further attempts. Fortunately, however, I remained upon the field not wholly discomfited. . . .

I was highly pleased with the extraordinary vigour of his conversation, and regretted that I was drawn {100} away from it by an engagement at another place. I had, for a part of the evening, been left alone with him, and had ventured to make an observation now and then, which he received very civilly; so that I was satisfied that though there was a roughness in his manner, there was no ill-nature in his disposition. Davies followed me to the door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy. I can see he likes you very well."

(Life of Samuel Johnson.)

SIR WALTER SCOTT 1771-1832

ARRIVAL AT OSBALDISTONE HALL

"There are hopes of you yet," she said. "I was afraid you had been a very degenerate Osbaldistone. But what on earth brings you to Cub-Castle?—for so the neighbours have christened this hunting-hall of ours. You might have staid away, I suppose, if you would?"

I felt I was by this time on a very intimate footing with my beautiful apparition, and therefore replied in a confidential undertone,— "Indeed, my dear Miss Vernon, I might have considered it as a sacrifice to be a temporary resident in Osbaldistone Hall, the inmates being such as you describe them; but I am convinced there is one exception that will make amends for all deficiencies."

"O, you mean Rashleigh?" said Miss Vernon.

{101} "Indeed I do not; I was thinking—forgive me—of some person much nearer me."

"I suppose it would be proper not to understand your civility?—But that is not my way—I don't make a curtsy for it, because I am sitting on horseback. But, seriously, I deserve your exception, for I am the only conversable being about the Hall, except the old priest and Rashleigh."

"And who is Rashleigh, for Heaven's sake?"

"Rashleigh is one who would fain have every one like him for his own sake.—He is Sir Hildebrand's youngest son—about your own age, but not so—not well looking, in short. But nature has given him a mouthful of common sense, and the priest has added a bushelful of learning—he is what we call a very clever man in this country, where clever men are scarce. Bred to the church, but in no hurry to take orders."

"To the Catholic Church?"

"The Catholic Church! what Church else?" said the young lady. "But I forgot, they told me you are a heretic. Is that true, Mr Osbaldistone?"

"I must not deny the charge."

"And yet you have been abroad, and in Catholic countries?"

"For nearly four years."

"You have seen convents?"

"Often; but I have not seen much in them which recommended the Catholic religion."

"Are not the inhabitants happy?"

"Some are unquestionably so, whom either a profound sense of devotion, or an experience of the {102} persecution and misfortunes of the world, or a natural apathy of temper, has led into retirement. Those who have adopted a life of seclusion from sudden and overstrained enthusiasm, or in hasty resentment of some disappointment or mortification, are very miserable. The quickness of sensation soon returns, and, like the wilder animals in a menagerie, they are restless under confinement, while others muse or fatten in cells of no larger dimensions than theirs."

"And what," continued Miss Vernon, "becomes of those victims who are condemned to a convent by the will of others? what do they resemble? especially, what do they resemble, if they are born to enjoy life, and feel its blessings?"

"They are like imprisoned singing-birds," replied I, "condemned to wear out their lives in confinement, which they try to beguile by the exercise of accomplishments, which would have adorned society, had they been left at large."

"I shall be," returned Miss Vernon—"that is," said she, correcting herself,— "I should be rather like the wild hawk, who, barred the free exercise of his soar through heaven, will dash himself to pieces against the bars of his cage. But to return to Rashleigh," said she, in a more lively tone, "you will think him the pleasantest man you ever saw in your life, Mr

Osbaldistone, that is, for a week at least. If he could find out a blind mistress, never man would be so secure of conquest; but the eye breaks the spell that enchants the ear. But here we are in the court of the old hall, which looks as wild and old-fashioned as any of its inmates. There is {103} no great toilette kept at Osbaldistone Hall, you must know; but I must take off these things, they are so unpleasantly warm, and the hat hurts my forehead too," continued the lively girl, taking it off, and shaking down a profusion of sable ringlets, which, half laughing, half blushing, she separated with her white slender fingers, in order to clear them away from her beautiful face and piercing hazel eyes. If there was any coquetry in the action, it was well disguised by the careless indifference of her manner. I could not help saying, "that, judging of the family from what I saw, I should suppose the toilette a very unnecessary care."

"That's very politely said; though, perhaps, I ought not to understand in what sense it was meant," replied Miss Vernon; "but you will see a better apology for a little negligence, when you meet the Orsons you are to live amongst, whose forms no toilette could improve. But, as I said before, the old dinner-bell will clang, or rather clank, in a few minutes—it cracked of its own accord on the day of the landing of King Willie, and my uncle, respecting its prophetic talent, would never permit it to be mended. So do you hold my palfrey, like a duteous knight, until I send some more humble squire to relieve you of the charge."

She threw me the rein as if we had been acquainted from our childhood, jumped from her saddle, tripped across the court-yard, and entered at a side-door, leaving me in admiration of her beauty, and astonished with the overfrankness of her manners, which seemed the more extraordinary, at a time when the dictates of politeness, flowing from the court of the Grand Monarque Louis {104} XIV., prescribed to the fair sex an unusual severity of decorum. I was left awkwardly enough stationed in the centre of the court of the old hall, mounted on one horse, and holding another in my hand.

The building afforded little to interest a stranger, had I been disposed to consider it attentively; the sides of the quadrangle were of various architecture, and with their stone-shafted latticed windows, projecting turrets, and massive architraves, resembled the inside of a convent, or of one of the older and less splendid colleges of Oxford. I called for a domestic, but was for some time totally unattended to; which was the more provoking, as I could perceive I was the object of curiosity to several servants, both male and female, from different parts of the building, who popped out their heads and withdrew them, like rabbits in a warren, before I could make a direct appeal to the attention of any individual. The return of the huntsmen and hounds relieved me from my embarrassment, and with some difficulty I got one clown to relieve me of the charge of the horses, and another stupid boor to guide me to the presence of Sir Hildebrand. This service he performed with much such grace and good-will, as a peasant who is compelled to act as guide to a hostile patrol; and in the same manner I was obliged to guard against his deserting me in the labyrinth of low vaulted passages which conducted to "Stun Hall," as he called it, where I was to be introduced to the gracious presence of my uncle.

We did, however, at length reach a long vaulted room, floored with stone, where a range of oaken tables, of a weight and size too massive ever to be moved {105} aside, were already covered for dinner. This venerable apartment, which had witnessed the feasts of several generations of the Osbaldistone family, bore also evidence of their success in field-sports. Huge antlers of deer, which might have been trophies of the hunting of Chevy Chace, were

ranged around the walls, interspersed with the stuffed skins of badgers, otters, martens, and other animals of the chase. Amidst some remnants of old armour, which had, perhaps, served against the Scotch, hung the more valued weapons of silvan war, cross-bows, guns of various device and construction, nets, fishing-rods, otter-spears, hunting-poles, with many other singular devices and engines for taking or killing game. A few old pictures, dimmed with smoke, and stained with March beer, hung on the walls, representing knights and ladies, honoured, doubtless, and renowned in their day; those frowning fearfully from huge bushes of wig and of beard; and these looking delightfully with all their might at the roses which they brandished in their hands.

I had just time to give a glance at these matters, when about twelve blue-coated servants burst into the hall with much tumult and talk, each rather employed in directing his comrades than in discharging his own duty. Some brought blocks and billets to the fire, which roared, blazed, and ascended, half in smoke, half in flame, up a huge tunnel, with an opening wide enough to accommodate a stone-seat within its ample vault, and which was fronted, by way of chimney-piece, with a huge piece of heavy architecture, where the monsters of heraldry, embodied by the art of some Northumbrian {106} chisel, grinned and ramped in red free-stone, now japanned by the smoke of centuries. Others of these old-fashioned serving-men bore huge smoking dishes, loaded with substantial fare; others brought in cups, flagons, bottles, yea barrels of liquor. All tramped, kicked, plunged, shouldered, and jostled, doing as little service with as much tumult as could well be imagined. At length, while the dinner was, after various efforts, in the act of being arranged upon the board, "the clamour much of men and dogs," the cracking of whips, calculated for the intimidation of the latter, voices loud and high, steps which, impressed by the heavy-heeled boots of the period, clattered like those of the statue in the *Festin de pierre*, announced the arrival of those for whose benefit the preparations were made. The hubbub among the servants rather increased than diminished as this crisis approached,—some called to make haste,—others to take time,—some exhorted to stand out of the way, and make room for Sir Hildebrand and the young squires,—some to close round the table, and be *in* the way,—some bawled to open, some to shut a pair of folding-doors, which divided the hall from a sort of gallery, as I afterwards learned, or withdrawing-room, fitted up with black wainscot. Opened the doors were at length, and in rushed curs and men,—eight dogs, the domestic chaplain, the village doctor, my six cousins, and my uncle.

(*Rob Roy.*)

{107}

CHARLES LAMB 1775-1834

A VISIT TO COLERIDGE

LONDON, *September* 24, 1802.

MY DEAR MANNING—Since the date of my last letter I have been a Traveller. A strong desire seized me of visiting remote regions. My first impulse was to go and see Paris. It was a trivial objection to my aspiring mind, that I did not understand a word of the language, since I

certainly intend some time of my life to see Paris, and equally certainly intend never to learn the language; therefore that could be no objection. However, I am very glad I did not go, because you had left Paris (I see) before I could have set out. . . . My final resolve was, a tour to the Lakes. I set out with Mary to Keswick, without giving Coleridge any notice, for my time, being precious, did not admit of it. He received us with all the hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to show us all the wonders of the country. He dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains: great floundering bears and monsters they seemed, all couchant and asleep. We got in in the evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunshine, which transmuted all the mountains into colours, purple, etc., etc. We thought we had got into fairyland. But that went off (as it never came {108} again; while we stayed we had no more fine sunsets), and we entered Coleridge's comfortable study just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their heads. . . . Coleridge had got a blazing fire in his study; which is a large antique, ill-shaped room, with an old-fashioned organ, never played upon, big enough for a church, shelves of scattered folios, an Aeolian harp, and an old sofa, half bed, etc. And all looking out upon the last fading view of Skiddaw, and his broad-breasted brethren: what a night! . . . We have clambered up to the top of Skiddaw, and I have waded up the bed of Lodore. In fine, I have satisfied myself that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before: they make such a spluttering about it, and toss their splendid epithets around them, till they give as dim a light as at four o'clock next morning the lamps do after an illumination. Mary was excessively tired when she got about half-way up Skiddaw, but we came to a cold rill (than which nothing can be imagined more cold, running over cold stones), and with the reinforcement of a draught of cold water she surmounted it most manfully. Oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountains all about and about, making you giddy; and then Scotland afar off, and the border countries so famous in song and ballad! It was a day that will stand out, like a mountain, I am sure, in my life. But I am returned (I have now been come home near three weeks; I was a month out), and you cannot conceive the degradation I felt at first, from being accustomed to wander free as air among mountains, and bathe in rivers {109} without being controlled by any one, to come home and *work*. I felt very *little*, I had been dreaming I was a very great man. But that is going off, and I find I shall conform in time to that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me. Besides, after all, Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than amidst Skiddaw. Still, I turn back to those great places where I wandered about, participating in their greatness. After all, I could not *live* in Skiddaw. I could spend a year, two, three years among them, but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street at the end of that time, or I should mope and pine away, I know. Still, Skiddaw is a fine creature. . . I fear my head is turned with wandering. I shall never be the same acquiescent being. Farewell. Write again quickly, for I shall not like to hazard a letter, not knowing where the fates have carried you. Farewell, my dear fellow.

C. LAMB.

(*Letters.*)

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR 1775-1864

DIOGENES AND PLATO

Diogenes. The bird of wisdom flies low, and seeks her food under hedges: the eagle himself would be starved if he always soared aloft and against the sun. The sweetest fruit grows near the ground, and the plants that bear it require ventilation and lopping. Were this not to be done in thy garden, every walk and alley, every {110} plot and border, would be covered with runners and roots, with boughs and suckers. We want no poets or logicians or metaphysicians to govern us: we want practical men, honest men, continent men, unambitious men, fearful to solicit a trust, slow to accept, and resolute never to betray one. Experimentalists may be the best philosophers; they are always the worst politicians. Teach people their duties, and they will know their interests. Change as little as possible, and correct as much.

Philosophers are absurd from many causes, but principally from laying out unthriftilly their distinctions. They set up four virtues: fortitude, prudence, temperance, and justice. Now a man may be a very bad one, and yet possess three out of the four. Every cutthroat must, if he has been a cutthroat on many occasions, have more fortitude and more prudence than the greater part of those whom we consider as the best men. And what cruel wretches, both executioners and judges, have been strictly just! how little have they cared what gentleness, what generosity, what genius, their sentence have removed from the earth! Temperance and beneficence contain all other virtues. Take them home, Plato; split them, expound them; do what thou wilt with them, if thou but use them.

Before I gave thee this lesson, which is a better than thou ever gavest any one, and easier to remember, thou wert accusing me of invidiousness and malice against those whom thou callest the great, meaning to say the powerful. Thy imagination, I am well aware, had taken its flight toward Sicily, where thou seekest thy great {111} man, as earnestly and undoubtingly as Ceres sought her Persephone. Faith! honest Plato, I have no reason to envy thy worthy friend Dionysius. Look at my nose! A lad seven or eight years old threw an apple at me yesterday, while I was gazing at the clouds, and gave me nose enough for two moderate men. Instead of such a godsend, what should I have thought of my fortune if, after living all my lifetime among golden vases, rougher than my hand with their emeralds and rubies, their engravings and embossments; among Parian caryatides and porphyry sphinxes; among philosophers with rings upon their fingers and linen next their skin; and among singing-boys and dancing-girls, to whom alone thou speakest intelligibly,—I ask thee again, what should I in reason have thought of my fortune, if, after these facilities and superfluities, I had at last been pelted out of my house, not by one young rogue, but by thousands of all ages, and not with an apple (I wish I could say a rotten one), but with pebbles and broken pots; and, to crown my deserts, had been compelled to become the teacher of so promising a generation? Great men, forsooth! thou knowest at last who they are.

Plato. There are great men of various kinds.

Diogenes. No, by my beard, are there not!

Plato. What! are there not great captains, great geometricians, great dialecticians?

Diogenes. Who denied it? A great man was the postulate. Try thy hand now at the powerful one.

Plato. On seeing the exercise of power, a child cannot doubt who is powerful, more or less; for power is relative. All men are weak, not only if compared to {112} the Demiurgos, but if compared to the sea or the earth, or certain things upon each of them, such as elephants and whales. So placid and tranquil is the scene around us, we can hardly bring to mind the images of strength and force, the precipices, the abysses—

Diogenes. Prythee hold thy loose tongue, twinkling and glittering like a serpent's in the midst of luxuriance and rankness! Did never this reflection of thine warn thee that, in human life, the precipices and abysses would be much farther from our admiration, if we were less inconsiderate, selfish, and vile? I will not however stop thee long, for thou wert going on quite consistently. As thy great men are fighters and wranglers, so thy mighty things upon the earth and sea are troublesome and intractable incumbrances. Thou perceivedst not what was greater in the former case, neither art thou aware what is greater in this. Didst thou feel the gentle air that passed us?

Plato. I did not, just then.

Diogenes. That air, so gentle, so imperceptible to thee, is more powerful not only than all the creatures that breathe and live by it; not only than all the oaks of the forest, which it rears in an age and shatters in a moment; not only than all the monsters of the sea, but than the sea itself, which it tosses up into foam, and breaks against every rock in its vast circumference; for it carries in its bosom, with perfect calm and composure, the incontrollable ocean and the peopled earth, like an atom of a feather.

To the world's turmoils and pageantries is attracted, not only the admiration of the populace, but the zeal of {113} the orator, the enthusiasm of the poet, the investigation of the historian, and the contemplation of the philosopher: yet how silent and invisible are they in the depths of air! Do I say in those depths and deserts? No; I say at the distance of a swallow's flight,—at the distance she rises above us, ere a sentence brief as this could be uttered.

What are its mines and mountains? Fragments welded up and dislocated by the expansion of water from below; the most part reduced to mud, the rest to splinters. Afterwards sprang up fire in many places, and again tore and mangled the mutilated carcass, and still grows over it.

What are its cities and ramparts, and moles and monuments? Segments of a fragment, which one man puts together and another throws down. Here we stumble upon thy great ones at their work. Show me now, if thou canst, in history, three great warriors, or three great statesmen, who have acted otherwise than spiteful children.

(Imaginary Conversations.)

AN INVITATION

It was now the middle of June and the weather fine, and Mrs Elton was growing impatient to name the day, and settle with Mr Weston as to pigeon-pies and cold lamb, when a lame carriage-horse threw everything into {114} sad uncertainty. It might be weeks, it might be only a few days, before the horse were useable, but no preparations could be ventured on, and it was all melancholy stagnation. Mrs Elton's resources were inadequate to such an attack.

"Is not this most vexatious, Knightley?" she cried; "and such weather for exploring! these delays and disappointments are quite odious. What are we to do? The year will wear away at this rate, and nothing done. Before this time last year, I assure you, we had had a delightful exploring party from Maple Grove to Kings Weston."

"You had better explore to Donwell," replied Mr Knightley. "That may be done without horses. Come and eat my strawberries; they are ripening fast."

If Mr Knightley did not begin seriously, he was obliged to proceed so; for his proposal was caught at with delight; and the "Oh! I should like it of all things," was not plainer in words than manner. Donwell was famous for its strawberry-beds, which seemed a plea for the invitation; but no plea was necessary; cabbage-beds would have been enough to tempt the lady, who only wanted to be going somewhere. She promised him again and again to come—much oftener than he doubted—and was extremely gratified by such a proof of intimacy, such a distinguishing compliment as she chose to consider it.

"You may depend upon me," said she; "I certainly will come.—Name your day, and I will come.—You will allow me to bring Jane Fairfax?"

"I cannot name a day," said he, "till I have {115} spoken to some others, whom I would wish to meet you."

"Oh, leave all that to me; only give me a carte-blanche.—I am Lady Patroness, you know. It is my party. I will bring friends with me."

"I hope you will bring Elton," said he; "but I will not trouble you to give any other invitations."

"Oh, now you are looking very sly; but consider,—you need not be afraid of delegating power to *me*. I am no young lady on her preferment. Married women, you know, may be safely authorized. It is my party. Leave it all to me. I will invite your guests."

"No," he calmly replied, "there is but one married woman in the world whom I can ever allow to invite what guests she pleases to Donwell, and that one is — —"

"Mrs Weston, I suppose," interrupted Mrs Elton, rather mortified.

"No,—Mrs Knightley; and till she is in being, I will manage such matters myself."

"Ah, you are an odd creature!" she cried, satisfied to have no one preferred to herself. "You are a humourist, and may say what you like. Quite a humourist. Well, I shall bring Jane with

me—Jane and her aunt. The rest I leave to you. I have no objections at all to meeting the Hartfield family. Don't scruple, I know you are attached to them."

"You certainly will meet them, if I can prevail; and I shall call on Miss Bates in my way home."

"That's quite unnecessary; I see Jane every day;—but {116} as you like. It is to be a morning scheme, you know, Knightley; quite a simple thing. I shall wear a large bonnet, and bring one of my little baskets hanging on my arm. Here,—probably this basket with pink ribbon. Nothing can be more simple, you see. And Jane will have such another. There is to be no form or parade—a sort of gipsy party. We are to walk about your gardens, and gather the strawberries ourselves, and sit under trees; and whatever else you may like to provide, it is to be all out of doors; a table spread in the shade, you know. Everything as natural and simple as possible. Is not that your idea?"

"Not quite. My idea of the simple and the natural will be to have the table spread in the dining-room. The nature and the simplicity of gentlemen and ladies, with their servants and furniture, I think is best observed by meals within doors. When you are tired of eating strawberries in the garden, there shall be cold meat in the house."

"Well, as you please; only don't have a great set-out. And, by the bye, can I or my housekeeper be of any use to you with our opinion? Pray be sincere, Knightley. If you wish me to talk to Mrs Hodges, or to inspect anything— —"

"I have not the least wish for it, I thank you."

"Well,—but if any difficulties should arise, my housekeeper is extremely clever."

"I will answer for it that mine thinks herself full as clever, and would spurn anybody's assistance."

"I wish we had a donkey. The thing would be for us all to come on donkeys, Jane, Miss Bates, and me, {117} and my *caro sposo* walking by. I really must talk to him about purchasing a donkey. In a country life I conceive it to be a sort of necessary; for, let a woman have ever so many resources, it is not possible for her to be always shut up at home; and very long walks, you know—in summer there is dust, and in winter there is dirt."

"You will not find either between Donwell and Highbury. Donwell Lane is never dusty, and now it is perfectly dry. Come on a donkey, however, if you prefer it. You can borrow Mrs Cole's. I would wish everything to be as much to your taste as possible."

"That I am sure you would. Indeed I do you justice, my good friend. Under that peculiar sort of dry, blunt manner, I know you have the warmest heart. As I tell Mr E., you are a thorough humourist. Yes, believe me, Knightley, I am fully sensible of your attention to me in the whole of this scheme. You have hit upon the very thing to please me."

Mr Knightley had another reason for avoiding a table in the shade. He wished to persuade Mr Woodhouse, as well as Emma, to join the party; and he knew that to have any of them sitting down out of doors to eat would inevitably make him ill. Mr Woodhouse must not, under

the specious pretence of a morning drive, and an hour or two spent at Donwell, be tempted away to his misery.

He was invited on good faith. No lurking horrors were to upbraid him for his easy credulity. He did consent. He had not been at Donwell for two years. "Some very fine morning, he, and Emma, and Harriet {118} could go very well; and he could sit still with Mrs Weston while the dear girls walked about the gardens. He did not suppose they could be damp now, in the middle of the day. He should like to see the old house again exceedingly, and should be very happy to meet Mr and Mrs Elton, and any other of his neighbours. He could not see any objection at all to his, and Emma's, and Harriet's going there some very fine morning. He thought it very well done of Mr Knightley to invite them; very kind and sensible; much cleverer than dining out. He was not fond of dining out."

Mr Knightley was fortunate in everybody's most ready concurrence. The invitation was everywhere so well received, that it seemed as if, like Mrs Elton, they were all taking the scheme as a particular compliment to themselves.

(*Emma.*)

WILLIAM HAZLITT 1778-1830

COLERIDGE AS PREACHER

It was in January of 1798 that I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798. When I got there the organ was playing the 100th Psalm, and when it was done Mr Coleridge rose and gave out {119} his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, *himself, alone.*" As he gave out this text his voice "rose like a stream of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St John came into my mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state—not their alliance but their separation—on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made a poetical and pastoral excursion—and to show the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, "as though he should never be old," and the same poor country lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and

pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood:

"Such were the notes our once-loved poet sung."

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and {120} Philosophy had met together. Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes. I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still labouring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the good cause; and the cold, dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature that turned everything into good.

(Winterslow.)

THOMAS DE QUINCEY 1785-1859

A DREAM

Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance, wailing over the dead that die before the dawn, awakened me as I slept in a boat moored to some familiar shore. The morning twilight even then was breaking; and, by the dusky revelations which it spread, I saw a girl, adorned with a garland of white roses about her head for some great festival, running along the solitary strand in extremity of haste. Her running was the running of panic; and often she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear. But when I leaped ashore, and followed on her steps to warn her of a peril in front, alas! from me she fled as from another peril, and vainly I shouted to her of quicksands that lay ahead. Faster and faster she ran; round a promontory of rocks she {121} wheeled out of sight; in an instant I also wheeled round it, but only to see the treacherous sands gathering above her head. Already her person was buried; only the fair young head and the diadem of white roses around it were still visible to the pitying heavens; and, last of all, was visible one white marble arm. I saw by early twilight this fair young head, as it was sinking down to darkness—saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and her treacherous grave, tossing, faltering, rising, clutching, as at some false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds—saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then uttering her dying despair. The head, the diadem, the arm—these all had sunk; at last over these also the cruel quicksand had closed; and no memorial of the fair young girl remained on earth, except my own solitary tears, and the funeral bells from the desert seas, that, rising again more softly, sang a requiem over the grave of the buried child, and over her blighted dawn.

I sat, and wept in secret the tears that men have ever given to the memory of those that died before the dawn, and by the treachery of earth, our mother. But suddenly the tears and funeral bells were hushed by a shout as of many nations, and by a roar as from some great king's artillery, advancing rapidly along the valleys, and heard afar by echoes from the mountains.

"Hush!" I said, as I bent my ear earthwards to listen—"hush!—this either is the very anarchy of strife, or else"—and then I listened more profoundly, and whispered as I raised my head—"or else, oh heavens! it is *victory* that is final, victory that swallows up all strife."

(*The English Mail-coach.*)

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JOHN KEATS 1795-1821

THE USE OF POETRY

I had an idea that a Man might pass a very pleasant life in this manner—Let him on a certain day read a certain page of full Poesy or distilled Prose, and let him wander with it, and muse upon it, and reflect from it, and bring home to it, and prophesy upon it, and dream upon it: until it becomes stale—But when will it do so? Never—When Man has arrived at a certain ripeness in intellect any one grand and spiritual passage serves him as a starting-post towards all "the two-and-thirty Palaces." How happy is such a voyage of conception, what delicious diligent indolence! A doze upon a sofa does not hinder it, and a nap upon Clover engenders ethereal finger-pointings—the prattle of a child gives it wings, and the converse of middle-age a strength to beat them—a strain of music conducts to "an odd angle of the Isle," and when the leaves whisper it puts a girdle round the earth.—Nor will this sparing touch of noble Books be any irreverence to their Writers—for perhaps the honours paid by Man to Man are trifles in comparison to the benefit done by great works to the "spirit and pulse of good" by their mere passive existence. Memory should not be called Knowledge—Many have original minds who do not think it—they are led away by Custom. Now it appears to me that almost any Man may, like the spider, spin from his own inwards his own airy Citadel—the points of leaves and twigs on which {123} the spider begins her work are few, and she fills the air with a beautiful circuiting. Man should be content with as few points to tip with the fine Web of his Soul, and weave a tapestry empyrean—full of symbols for his spiritual eye, of softness for his spiritual touch, of space for his wandering, of distinctness for his luxury. But the minds of mortals are so different and bent on such diverse journeys that it may at first appear impossible for any common taste and fellowship to exist between two or three under these suppositions. It is however quite the contrary. Minds would leave each other in contrary directions, traverse each other in numberless points, and at last greet each other at the journey's end. An old man and a child would talk together and the old man be led on his path and the child left thinking. Man should not dispute or assert, but whisper results to his Neighbour, and thus, by every germ of spirit sucking the sap from mould ethereal, every human might become great, and humanity instead of being a wide heath of furze and briars, with here and there a remote Oak or Pine, would become a grand democracy of forest trees. It has been an old comparison for urging on—the bee-hive—however it seems to me that we should rather be the flower than the Bee—for it is a false notion that more is gained by receiving than giving—no, the receiver and the giver are equal in their benefits. The flower, I doubt not, receives a fair guerdon from the Bee—its leaves blush deeper in the next spring—and who shall say between Man and Woman which is the most delighted? Now it is more noble to sit like Jove than to fly like Mercury:—let us not

therefore go hurrying about and collecting honey, {124} bee-like, buzzing here and there impatiently from a knowledge of what is to be arrived at. But let us open our leaves like a flower, and be passive and receptive; budding patiently under the eye of Apollo and taking hints from every noble insect that favours us with a visit—Sap will be given us for meat, and dew for drink.

(*Letters.*)

THOMAS CARLYLE 1795-1881

THE FLIGHT TO VARENNES

One finds that in the second week in June Colonel de Choiseul is privately in Paris; having come "to see his children." Also that Fersen has got a stupendous new Coach built, of the kind named *Berline*; done by the first artists; according to a model: they bring it home to him, in Choiseul's presence; the two friends take a proof-drive in it, along the streets; in meditative mood; then send it up to "Madame Sullivan's, in the Rue de Clichy," far north, to wait there till wanted. Apparently a certain Russian Baroness de Korff, with Waiting-woman, Valet, and two Children, will travel homewards with some state: in whom these young military gentlemen take interest? A Passport has been procured for her, and much assistance shewn, with Coachbuilders and such-like;—so helpful-polite are young military men. . . These are the Phenomena, or visual Appearances, of this wide-working terrestrial world: which truly is all phenomenal, what they call spectral; and never rests at any moment; one never at any moment can know why.

On Monday night, the Twentieth of June 1791, about eleven o'clock, there is many a hackney-coach and {125} glass-coach still rumbling or at rest on the streets of Paris. But of all glass-coaches we recommend this to thee, O Reader, which stands drawn up in the Rue de l'Echelle, hard by the Carrousel and outgate of the Tuileries; in the Rue de l'Echelle that then was, "opposite Ronsin the saddler's door," as if waiting for a fare there. Not long does it wait: a hooded Dame, with two hooded Children has issued from Villequier's door, where no sentry walks, into the Tuileries' Court-of-Princes; into the Carrousel; into the Rue de l'Echelle; where the Glass-coachman readily admits them; and again waits. Not long; another Dame, likewise hooded or shrouded, leaning on a servant, issues in the same manner; bids the servant good-night; and is, in the same manner, by the Glass-coachman, cheerfully admitted. Whither go so many Dames? 'Tis his Majesty's *Couchée*, Majesty just gone to bed, and all the Palace-world is retiring home. But the Glass-coachman still waits; his fare seemingly incomplete.

By-and-by, we note a thickset Individual, in round hat and peruke, arm in arm with some servant, seemingly of the Runner or Courier sort; he also issues through Villequier's door; starts a shoebuckle as he passes one of the sentries, stoops down to clasp it again; is however, by the Glass-coachman, still more cheerfully admitted. And *now*, is his fare complete? Not yet; the Glass-coachman still waits.—Alas! and the false Chambermaid has warned Gouvion that

she thinks the Royal Family will fly this very night; and Gouvion, distrusting his own glazed eyes, has sent express for Lafayette; and Lafayette's Carriage, flaring with lights, rolls this moment through the inner arch of the Carrousel,—where a Lady shaded in {126} broad gypsy-hat, and leaning on the arm of a servant, also of the Runner or Courier sort, stands aside to let it pass, and has even the whim to touch a spoke of it with her *badine*,—light little magic rod which she calls *badine*, such as the Beautiful then wore. The flare of Lafayette's carriage rolls past: all is found quiet in the Court-of-Princes; sentries at their post; Majesties' Apartments closed in smooth rest. Your false Chambermaid must have been mistaken? Watch thou, Gouvion, with Argus' vigilance; for of a truth treachery is within these walls.

But where is the Lady that stood aside in gypsy-hat, and touched the wheel-spoke with her *badine*? O Reader, that Lady that touched the wheel-spoke was the Queen of France! She has issued safe through that inner arch, into the Carrousel itself; but not into the Rue de l'Echelle. Flurried by the rattle and rencounter, she took the right hand, not the left; neither she nor her Courier knows Paris; he is indeed no Courier, but a loyal stupid *ci-devant* Body-guard disguised as one. They are off, quite wrong, over the Pont Royal and River; roaming disconsolate in the Rue du Bac; far from the Glass-coachman, who still waits. Waits, with flutter of heart; with thoughts—which he must button close up, under his jarvie-surtout!

Midnight clangs from all the City-steeple; one precious hour has been spent so; most mortals are asleep. The Glass-coachman waits; and in what mood! A brother jarvie drives up, enters into conversation; is answered cheerfully in jarvie-dialect: the brothers of the whip exchange a pinch of snuff; decline drinking together; and part with good-night. Be the Heavens blest! here at length is the Queen-lady, in gypsy-hat; {127} safe after perils; who has had to enquire her way. She too is admitted; her Courier jumps aloft, as the other, who is also a disguised Bodyguard, has done; and now, O Glass-coachman of a thousand,—Count Fersen, for the Reader sees it is thou,—drive!

Dust shall not stick to the heels of Fersen: crack! crack! The Glass-coach rattles, and every soul breathes lighter. But is Fersen on the right road? North-eastward, to the Barrier of Saint-Martin and Metz Highway, thither were we bound: and lo, he drives right Northward! The royal Individual, in round hat and peruke, sits astonished; but right or wrong, there is no remedy. Crack, crack, we go incessant, through the slumbering City. Seldom, since Paris rose out of mud, or the Longhaired Kings went in bullock-carts, was there such a drive. Mortals on each hand of you, close by, stretched out horizontal, dormant; and we alive and quaking! Crack, crack, through the Rue de Grammont; across the Boulevard; up the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin,—these windows, all silent, of Number 42, were Mirabeau's. Towards the Barrier, not of Saint-Martin, but of Clichy on the utmost north! Patience, ye royal Individuals; Fersen understands what he is about. Passing up the Rue de Clichy, he alights for one moment at Madame Sullivan's: "Did Count Fersen's Coachman get the Baroness de Korff's new Berline?"—"Gone with it an hour and a half ago," grumbles responsive the drowsy Porter.—"C'est bien." Yes, it is well;—though had not such hour-and-half been *lost*, it were still better. Forth therefore, O Fersen, fast, by the Barrier de Clichy; then eastward along the Outer Boulevard, what horses and whipcord can do!

{128} Thus Fersen drives, through the ambrosial night. Sleeping Paris is now all on the right-hand of him; silent except for some snoring hum: and now he is eastward as far as the

Barrier of Saint-Martin; looking earnestly for Baroness de Korff's Berline. This Heaven's Berline he at length does descry, drawn up with its six horses, his own German coachman waiting on the box. Right, thou good German: now haste, whither thou knowest!—And as for us of the Glass-coach, haste too, O haste; much time is already lost! The august Glass-coach fare, six Insides, hastily packs itself into the new Berline; two Body-guard Couriers behind. The Glass-coach itself is turned adrift, its head towards the City, to wander where it lists,—and be found next morning tumbled in a ditch. But Fersen is on the new box, with its brave new hammer-cloths; flourishing his whip; he bolts forward towards Bondy. There a third and final Bodyguard Courier of ours ought surely to be, with post-horses ready ordered. There likewise ought that purchased Chaise, with the two Waiting-maids and their handboxes, to be; whom also her Majesty could not travel without. Swift, thou deft Fersen, and may the Heavens turn it well!

Once more, by Heaven's blessing, it is all well. Here is the sleeping hamlet of Bondy; Chaise with Waiting-women; horses all ready, and postilions with their churn-boots, impatient in the dewy dawn. Brief harnessing done, the postilions with their churn-boots vault into the saddles; brandish circularly their little noisy whips. Fersen, under his jarvie-surtout, bends in lowly silent reverence of adieu; royal hands wave speechless inexpressible response; Baroness de Korff's Berline, with {129} the Royalty of France, bounds off; for ever, as it proved. Deft Fersen dashes obliquely northward, through the country, towards Bougret; gains Bougret, finds his German coachman and chariot waiting there; cracks off, and drives undiscovered into unknown space. A deft active man, we say; what he undertook to do is nimbly and successfully done.

And so the Royalty of France is actually fled? This precious night, the shortest of the year, it flies, and drives! *Baroness de Korff* is, at bottom, Dame de Tourzel, Governess of the Royal Children: she who came hooded with the two hooded little ones: little Dauphin; little Madame Royale, known long afterwards as Duchesse d'Angoulême. Baroness de Korff's *Waiting-maid* is the Queen in gypsy-hat. The royal Individual in round hat and peruke, he is *Valet* for the time being. That other hooded Dame, styled *Travelling-companion*, is kind Sister Elizabeth; she had sworn long since, when the Insurrection of Women was, that only death should part her and them. And so they rush there, not too impetuously, through the Wood of Bondy;—over a Rubicon in their own and France's history.

Great; though the future is all vague! If we reach Bouillé? If we do not reach him? O Louis! and this all round thee is the great slumbering Earth (and overhead, the great watchful Heaven); the slumbering Wood of Bondy,—where Longhaired Childeric Do-nothing was struck through with iron; not unreasonably, in a world like ours. These peaked stone-towers are Raincy; towers of wicked d'Orleans. All slumbers save the {130} multiplex rustle of our new Berline. Loose-skirted scarecrow of an Herb-merchant, with his ass and early greens, toilsomely plodding, seems the only creature we meet. But right ahead the great North-east sends up evermore his grey brindled dawn: from dewy branch, birds here and there, with short deep warble, salute the coming sun. Stars fade out, and galaxies; street-lamps of the City of God. The Universe, O my brothers, is flinging wide its portals for the levee of the GREAT HIGH KING. Thou, poor King Louis, farthest nevertheless, as mortals do, towards Orient lands

of Hope; and the Tuileries with *its* levées, and France and the Earth itself, is but a larger kind of dog-hutch—occasionally going rabid.

(The French Revolution.)

LORD MACAULAY 1800-1859

THE TRIAL OF THE SEVEN BISHOPS

It was dark before the jury retired to consider of their verdict. The night was a night of intense anxiety. Some letters are extant which were despatched during that period of suspense, and which have therefore an interest of a peculiar kind. "It is very late," wrote the Papal Nuncio; "and the decision is not yet known. The Judges and the culprits have gone to their own homes. The jury remain together. To-morrow we shall learn the event of this great struggle."

The solicitor for the Bishops sate up all night with a body of servants on the stairs leading to the room {131} where the jury was consulting. It was absolutely necessary to watch the officers who watched the doors; for those officers were supposed to be in the interest of the crown, and might, if not carefully observed, have furnished a courtly juryman with food, which would have enabled him to starve out the other eleven. Strict guard was therefore kept. Not even a candle to light a pipe was permitted to enter. Some basins of water for washing were suffered to pass at about four in the morning. The jurymen, raging with thirst, soon lapped up the whole. Great numbers of people walked the neighbouring streets till dawn. Every hour a messenger came from Whitehall to know what was passing. Voices, high in altercation, were repeatedly heard within the room: but nothing certain was known.

At first nine were for acquitting and three for convicting. Two of the minority soon gave way; but Arnold was obstinate. Thomas Austin, a country gentleman of great estate, who had paid close attention to the evidence and speeches, and had taken full notes, wished to argue the question. Arnold declined. He was not used, he doggedly said, to reasoning and debating. His conscience was not satisfied; and he should not acquit the Bishops. "If you come to that," said Austin, "look at me. I am the largest and strongest of the twelve; and before I find such a petition as this a libel, here I will stay till I am no bigger than a tobacco pipe." It was six in the morning before Arnold yielded. It was soon known that the jury were agreed: but what the verdict would be was still a secret.

{132} At ten the Court again met. The crowd was greater than ever. The jury appeared in their box; and there was a breathless stillness.

Sir Samuel Astry spoke. "Do you find the defendants, or any of them, guilty of the misdemeanour whereof they are impeached, or not guilty?" Sir Roger Langley answered, "Not guilty." As the words passed his lips, Halifax sprang up and waved his hat. At that signal, benches and galleries raised a shout. In a moment ten thousand persons, who crowded the great

hall, replied with a still louder shout, which made the old oaken roof crack; and in another moment the innumerable throng without set up a third huzza, which was heard at Temple Bar. The boats which covered the Thames gave an answering cheer. A peal of gunpowder was heard on the water, and another, and another; and so, in a few moments, the glad tidings went flying past the Savoy and the Friars to London Bridge, and to the forest of masts below. As the news spread, streets and squares, market places and coffee-houses, broke forth into acclamations. Yet were the acclamations less strange than the weeping. For the feelings of men had been wound up to such a point that at length the stern English nature, so little used to outward signs of emotion, gave way, and thousands sobbed aloud for very joy. Meanwhile, from the outskirts of the multitude, horsemen were spurring off to bear along all the great roads intelligence of the victory of our Church and nation. Yet not even that astounding explosion could awe the bitter and intrepid spirit of the Solicitor. Striving to make himself heard above the {133} din, he called on the Judges to commit those who had violated, by clamour, the dignity of a court of justice. One of the rejoicing populace was seized. But the tribunal felt that it would be absurd to punish a single individual for an offence common to hundreds of thousands, and dismissed him with a gentle reprimand.

It was vain to think of passing at that moment to any other business. Indeed the roar of the multitude was such that, for half an hour, scarcely a word could be heard in court. Williams got to his coach amidst a tempest of hisses and curses. Cartwright, whose curiosity was ungovernable, had been guilty of the folly and indecency of coming to Westminster in order to hear the decision. He was recognised by his sacerdotal garb and by his corpulent figure, and was hooted through the hall. "Take care," said one, "of the wolf in sheep's clothing." "Make room," cried another, "for the man with the Pope in his belly."

The acquitted prelates took refuge from the crowd which implored their blessing in the nearest chapel where divine service was performing. Many churches were open on that morning throughout the capital; and many pious persons repaired thither. The bells of all the parishes of the City and liberties were ringing. The jury meanwhile could scarcely make their way out of the hall. They were forced to shake hands with hundreds. "God bless you," cried the people; "God prosper your families; you have done like honest good-natured gentlemen; you have saved us all to-day." As the noblemen who had appeared to support the good cause drove off, they flung from their carriage windows {134} handfuls of money, and bade the crowd drink to the health of the King, the Bishops, and the jury.

The attorney went with the tidings to Sunderland, who happened to be conversing with the Nuncio. "Never," said Powis, "within man's memory, have there been such shouts and such tears of joy as to-day." The King had that morning visited the camp on Hounslow Heath. Sunderland instantly sent a courier thither with the news. James was in Lord Feversham's tent when the express arrived. He was greatly disturbed, and exclaimed in French, "So much the worse for them." He soon set out for London. While he was present respect prevented the soldiers from giving a loose to their feelings; but he had scarcely quitted the camp when he heard a great shouting behind him. He was surprised, and asked what that uproar meant. "Nothing," was the answer. "The soldiers are glad that the bishops are acquitted." "Do you call that nothing?" said James. And then he repeated, "So much the worse for them."

(History of England.)

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN 1801-1890**THE UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS**

If we would know what a University is, considered in its elementary idea, we must betake ourselves to the first and most celebrated home of European literature and source of European civilization, to the bright and beautiful Athens,—Athens, whose schools drew to her bosom, and then sent back again to the business of life, the youth of the Western World for a long thousand years. Seated on the verge of the continent, the city seemed hardly suited for the duties of a central metropolis of knowledge; yet, what it lost in convenience of approach it gained in its neighbourhood to the traditions of the mysterious East, and in the loveliness of the region in which it lay. Hither, then, as to a sort of ideal land, where all archetypes of the great and the fair were found in substantial being, and all departments of truth explored, and all diversities of intellectual power exhibited, where taste and philosophy were majestically enthroned as in a royal court, where there was no sovereignty but that of mind, and no nobility but that of genius, where professors were rulers, and princes did homage, hither flocked continually from the very corners of the *orbis terrarum*, the many-tongued generation, just rising, or just risen into manhood, in order to gain wisdom.

Pisistratus had in an early age discovered and nursed the infant genius of his people, and Cimon, after the {136} Persian war, had given it a home. That war had established the naval supremacy of Athens; she had become an imperial state; and the Ionians, bound to her by the double chain of kindred and of subjection, were importing into her both their merchandize and their civilization. The arts and philosophy of the Asiatic coast were easily carried across the sea, and there was Cimon, as I have said, with his ample fortune, ready to receive them with due honours. Not content with patronizing their professors, he built the first of those noble porticos, of which we hear so much in Athens, and he formed the groves, which in process of time became the celebrated Academy. Planting is one of the most graceful, as in Athens it was one of the most beneficent, of employments. Cimon took in hand the wild wood, pruned and dressed it, and laid it out with handsome walks and welcome fountains. Nor, while hospitable to the authors of the city's civilization, was he ungrateful to the instruments of her prosperity. His trees extended their cool, umbrageous branches over the merchants, who assembled in the Agora, for many generations.

Those merchants certainly had deserved that act of bounty; for all the while their ships had been carrying forth the intellectual fame of Athens to the western world. Then commenced what may be called her University existence. Pericles, who succeeded Cimon both in the government and in the patronage of art, is said by Plutarch to have entertained the idea of making Athens the capital of federated Greece: in this he failed, but his encouragement of such men as Phidias and Anaxagoras led the way to her acquiring a far more lasting {137} sovereignty over a far wider empire. Little understanding the sources of her own greatness, Athens would go to war: peace is the interest of a seat of commerce and the arts; but to war she went; yet to her, whether peace or war, it mattered not. The political power of Athens waned and disappeared; kingdoms rose and fell; centuries rolled away,—they did but bring fresh triumphs to the city of the poet and the sage. There at length the swarthy Moor and Spaniard were seen to meet the blue-eyed Gaul; and the Cappadocian, late subject of Mithridates, gazed

without alarm at the haughty conquering Roman. Revolution after revolution passed over the face of Europe, as well as of Greece, but still she was there,—Athens, the city of mind,—as radiant, as splendid, as delicate, as young, as ever she had been.

Many a more fruitful coast or isle is washed by the blue Aegean, many a spot is there more beautiful or sublime to see, many a territory more ample; but there was one charm in Attica, which in the same perfection was nowhere else. The deep pastures of Arcadia, the plain of Argos, the Thessalian vale, these had not the gift; Boeotia, which lay to its immediate north, was notorious for its very want of it. The heavy atmosphere of that Boeotia might be good for vegetation, but it was associated in popular belief with the dulness of the Boeotian intellect: on the contrary, the special purity, elasticity, clearness, and salubrity of the air of Attica, fit concomitant and emblem of its genius, did that for it which earth did not;—it brought out every bright hue and tender shade of the landscape over which it was {138} spread, and would have illuminated the face even of a more bare and rugged country.

A confined triangle, perhaps fifty miles its greatest length, and thirty its greatest breadth; two elevated rocky barriers, meeting at an angle; three prominent mountains, commanding the plain,—Parnes, Pentelicus, and Hymettus; an unsatisfactory soil; some streams, not always full;—such is about the report which the agent of a London company would have made of Attica. He would report that the climate was mild; the hills were limestone; there was plenty of good marble; more pasture land than at first survey might have been expected, sufficient certainly for sheep and goats; fisheries productive; silver mines once, but long since worked out; figs fair; oil first-rate; olives in profusion. But what he would not think of noting down, was, that that olive tree was so choice in nature and so noble in shape, that it excited a religious veneration; and that it took so kindly to the light soil, as to expand into woods upon the open plain, and to climb up and fringe the hills. He would not think of writing word to his employers, how that clear air, of which I have spoken, brought out, yet blended and subdued, the colours on the marble, till they had a softness and harmony, for all their richness, which in a picture looks exaggerated, yet is after all within the truth. He would not tell, how that same delicate and brilliant atmosphere freshened up the pale olive, till the olive forgot its monotony, and its cheek glowed like the arbutus or beech of the Umbrian hills. He would say nothing of the thyme and thousand fragrant herbs which carpeted Hymettus; he would hear nothing of the hum {139} of its bees; nor take much account of the rare flavour of its honey, since Gozo and Minorca were sufficient for the English demand. He would look over the Aegean from the height he had ascended; he would follow with his eye the chain of islands, which, starting from the Sunian headland, seemed to offer the fabled divinities of Attica, when they would visit their Ionian cousins, a sort of viaduct thereto across the sea: but that fancy would not occur to him, nor any admiration of the dark violet billows with their white edges down below; nor of those graceful, fan-like jets of silver upon the rocks, which slowly rise aloft like water spirits from the deep, then shiver, and break, and spread, and shroud themselves, and disappear, in a soft mist of foam; nor of the gentle, incessant heaving and panting of the whole liquid plain; nor of the long waves, keeping steady time, like a line of soldiery, as they resound upon the hollow shore,—he would not deign to notice that restless living element at all, except to bless his stars that he was not upon it. Nor the distinct detail, nor the refined colouring, nor the graceful outline and roseate golden hue of the jutting crags, nor the bold shadows cast from Otus or Laurium by the declining sun;—our agent of a mercantile firm would not value these matters even at a low figure. Rather we must turn for the sympathy we seek to yon pilgrim student,

come from a semi-barbarous land to that small corner of the earth, as to a shrine, where he might take his fill of gazing on those emblems and coruscations of invisible unoriginate perfection. It was the stranger from a remote province, from Britain or from Mauritania, who in a scene so different from that of his chilly, woody swamps, or of {140} his fiery choking sands, learned at once what a real University must be, by coming to understand the sort of country which was its suitable home.

(Historical Sketches.)

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE 1804-1864

THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

A descriptive paragraph or two, treating of the seven-gabled mansion in its more recent aspect, will bring this preliminary chapter to a close. The street in which it upreared its venerable peaks has long ceased to be a fashionable quarter of the town; so that, though the old edifice was surrounded by habitations of modern date, they were mostly small, built entirely of wood, and typical of the most plodding uniformity of common life. Doubtless, however, the whole story of human existence may be latent in each of them, but with no picturesqueness, externally, that can attract the imagination or sympathy to seek it there. But as for the old structure of our story, its white-oak frame, and its boards, shingles, and crumbling plaster, and even the huge clustered chimney in the midst, seemed to constitute only the least and meanest part of its reality. So much of mankind's varied experience had passed there,—so much had been suffered, and something, too, enjoyed,—that the very timbers were oozy, as with the moisture of a heart. It was itself like a great human heart, with a life of its own, and full of rich and sombre reminiscences.

{141} The deep projection of the second story gave the house such a meditative look, that you could not pass it without the idea that it had secrets to keep, and an eventful history to moralize upon. In front, just on the edge of the unpaved sidewalk, grew the Pyncheon-elm, which, in reference to such trees as one usually meets with, might well be termed gigantic. It had been planted by a great-grandson of the first Pyncheon, and, though now fourscore years of age, or perhaps nearer a hundred, was still in its strong and broad maturity, throwing its shadow from side to side of the street, overtopping the seven gables, and sweeping the whole black roof with its pendent foliage. It gave beauty to the old edifice, and seemed to make it a part of nature. The street having been widened about forty years ago, the front gable was now precisely on a line with it. On either side extended a ruinous wooden fence, of open lattice-work, through which could be seen a grassy yard, and, especially in the angles of the building, an enormous fertility of burdocks, with leaves, it is hardly an exaggeration to say, two or three feet long. Behind the house there appeared to be a garden, which undoubtedly had once been extensive, but was now infringed upon by other enclosures, or shut in by habitations and out-buildings that stood on another street. It would be an omission, trifling indeed, but unpardonable, were we to forget the green moss that had long since gathered over the

projections of the windows, and on the slopes of the roof; nor must we fail to direct the reader's eye to a crop, not of weeds, but flower-shrubs, which were growing aloft in the air, not a great way from the chimney, in the nook between two of the gables. {142} They were called Alice's Posies. The tradition was, that a certain Alice Pyncheon had flung up the seeds in sport, and that the dust of the street and the decay of the roof gradually formed a kind of soil for them, out of which they grew, when Alice had long been in her grave. However the flowers might have come there, it was both sad and sweet to observe how nature adopted to herself this desolate, decaying, gusty, rusty old house of the Pyncheon family; and how the ever-returning summer did her best to gladden it with tender beauty, and grew melancholy in the effort.

There is one other feature, very essential to be noticed, but which, we greatly fear, may damage any picturesque and romantic impression which we have been willing to throw over our sketch of this respectable edifice. In the front gable, under the impending brow of the second story, and contiguous to the street, was a shop-door, divided horizontally in the midst, and with a window for its upper segment, such as is often seen in dwellings of a somewhat ancient date. This same shop-door had been a subject of no slight mortification to the present occupant of the august Pyncheon-house, as well as to some of her predecessors. The matter is disagreeably delicate to handle; but, since the reader must needs be let into the secret, he will please to understand, that about a century ago, the head of the Pyncheons found himself involved in serious financial difficulties. The fellow (gentleman, as he styled himself) can hardly have been other than a spurious interloper; for, instead of seeking office from the king or the royal governor, or urging his hereditary claim to eastern lands, he bethought {143} himself of no better avenue to wealth than by cutting a shop-door through the side of his ancestral residence. It was the custom of the time, indeed, for merchants to store their goods and transact business in their own dwellings. But there was something pitifully small in this old Pyncheon's mode of setting about his commercial operations; it was whispered, that, with his own hands, all be-ruffled as they were, he used to give change for a shilling, and would turn a half-penny twice over, to make sure that it was a good one. Beyond all question, he had the blood of a petty huckster in his veins, through whatever channel it may have found its way there.

Immediately on his death, the shop-door had been locked, bolted, and barred, and, down to the period of our story, had probably never once been opened. The old counter, shelves, and other fixtures of the little shop remained just as he had left them. It used to be affirmed, that the dead shopkeeper, in a white wig, a faded velvet coat, an apron at his waist, and his ruffles carefully turned back from his wrists, might be seen through the chinks of the shutters, any night of the year, ransacking his till, or poring over the dingy pages of his day-book. From the look of unutterable woe upon his face, it appeared to be his doom to spend eternity in a vain effort to make his accounts balance.

And now—in a very humble way, as will be seen—we proceed to open our narrative.

(House of the Seven Gables.)

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WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY 1811-1863**DENIS DUVAL'S FIRST JOURNEY TO LONDON**

At Michaelmas, in the year 1776 (I promise you I remember the year), my dear and kind friend, Doctor Barnard, having to go to London with his rents, proposed to take me to London to see my other patron, Sir Peter Denis, between whom and the Doctor there was a great friendship; and it is to those dear friends that I owe the great good fortune which has since befallen me in life. Indeed, when I think of what I might have been, of what I have escaped, my heart is full of thankfulness for the great mercies which have fallen to my share. Well, at this happy and eventful Michaelmas of 1776, Doctor Barnard says to me, "Denis, my child, if thy mother will grant leave, I have a mind to take thee to see thy god-father, Sir Peter Denis, in London. I am going up with my rents, my neighbour Weston will share the horses with me, and thou shalt see the Tower and Mr Salmon's wax-work before thou art a week older."

You may suppose that this proposition made Master Denis Duval jump for joy. Of course I had heard of London all my life, and talked with people who had been there, but that I should go myself to Admiral Sir Peter Denis's house, and see the play, St Paul's and Mr Salmon's, here was a height of bliss I had never hoped to attain. I could not sleep for thinking of my pleasure; I had {145} some money, and I promised to buy as many toys for Agnes as the Chevalier used to bring her. My mother said I should go like a gentleman, and turned me out in a red waistcoat with plate buttons, a cock to my hat, and ruffles to my shirts. How I counted the hours of the night before our departure! I was up before the dawn, packing my little valise. I got my little brass-barrelled pocket-pistol, and I loaded it with shot. I put it away into my breast-pocket; and if we met with a highwayman I promised myself he should have my charge of lead in his face. The Doctor's postchaise was at his stables not very far from us. The stable lanterns were alight, and Brown, the Doctor's man, cleaning the carriage, when Mr Denis Duval comes up to the stable-door, lugging his portmanteau after him through the twilight. Was ever daylight so long a-coming? Ah! there comes the horses at last; the horses from the "King's Head," and old Pascoe, the one-eyed postillion. How well I remember the sound of their hoofs in that silent street! I can tell everything that happened on that day; what we had for dinner—viz., veal cutlets and French beans, at Maidstone; where we changed horses, and the colour of the horses. "Here, Brown! here's my portmanteau! I say, where shall I stow it?" My portmanteau was about as large as a good-sized apple-pie. I jump into the carriage and we drive up to the rectory: and I think the Doctor will never come out. There he is at last: with his mouth full of buttered toast, and I bob my head to him a hundred times out of the chaise window. Then I must jump out, forsooth. "Brown, shall I give you a hand with the luggage?" says I, and I dare say they all laugh. Well, {146} I am so happy that anybody may laugh who likes. The Doctor comes out, his precious box under his arm. I see dear Mrs Barnard's great cap nodding at us out of the parlour window as we drive away from the Rectory door to stop a hundred yards further on at the Priory.

There at the parlour window stands my dear little Agnes, in a white frock, in a great cap with a blue riband and bow, and curls clustering over her face. I wish Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted thee in those days, my dear: but thou wert the very image of one of his little ladies, that one who became Duchess of Buccleuch afterwards. There is my Agnes, and now presently comes out Mr Weston's man and luggage, and it is fixed on the roof. Him, his master, Mr George Weston, follows. This was the most good-natured of the two, and I shall never forget

my sensation of delight, when I saw him bring out two holster-pistols, which he placed each in a pocket of the chaise. Is Tommy Chapman, the apothecary's son of Westgate, alive yet, and does he remember my wagging my head to him as our chaise whirled by? He was shaking a mat at the door of his father's shop as my lordship accompanied by my noble friends passed by.

First stage, Ham Street, "The Bear." A grey horse and a bay to change, *I* remember them. Second stage, Ashford. Third stage—I think I am asleep about the third stage; and no wonder, a poor little wretch who had been awake half the night before, and no doubt many nights previous, thinking of this wonderful journey. Fourth stage, Maidstone, "The Bell." "And here we will stop to dinner, master Shrimp-catcher," says the Doctor, and I jump down out of the carriage, nothing {147} loth. The Doctor followed with his box, of which he never lost sight.

The Doctor liked his ease in his inn, and took his sip of punch so comfortably, that I, for my part, thought he never would be gone. I was out in the stables and looking at the horses, and talking to the ostler who was rubbing his nags down. I dare say I had a peep into the kitchen, and at the pigeons in the inn-yard, and at all things which were to be seen at "The Bell," while my two companions were still at their interminable punch. It was an old-fashioned inn, with a gallery round the court-yard. Heaven bless us! Falstaff and Bardolph may have stopped there on the road to Gadshill. I was in the stable looking at the nags, when Mr Weston comes out of the inn, looks round the court, opens the door of the postchaise, takes out his pistols, looks at the priming, and puts them back again. Then we are off again, and time enough too. It seemed to me many hours since we had arrived at that creaking old "Bell." And away we go through Addington, Eynesford, by miles and miles of hop-gardens. I dare say I did not look at the prospect much, beautiful though it might be, my young eyes being for ever on the look-out for St Paul's and London.

For a great part of the way Doctor Barnard and his companion had a fine controversy about their respective religions, for which each was alike zealous. Nay: it may be the Rector invited Mr Weston to take a place in his postchaise in order to have this battle, for he never tired of arguing the question between the two churches. Towards the close of the day Master Denis Duval fell {148} asleep on Doctor Barnard's shoulder, and the good-natured clergyman did not disturb him.

I woke up with the sudden stoppage of the carriage. The evening was falling. We were upon a lonely common, and a man on horseback was at the window of the postchaise.

"Give us out that there box! and your money!" I heard him say in a very gruff voice. O heavens! we were actually stopped by a highwayman! It was delightful.

Mr Weston jumped at his pistols very quick. "Here's our money, you scoundrel!" says he, and fired point-blank at the rogue's head. Confusion! the pistol missed fire. He aimed the second, and again no report followed!

"Some scoundrel has been tampering with these," says Mr Weston, aghast.

"Come," says Captain Macheath, "come, your—"

But the next word the fellow spoke was a frightful oath; for I took out my little pistol, which was full of shot, and fired it into his face. The man reeled, and I thought would have fallen out

of his saddle. The postillion, frightened, no doubt, clapped spurs to his horse, and began to gallop. "Shan't we stop and take that rascal, sir?" said I to the Doctor. On which Mr Weston gave a peevish kind of push at me, and said, "No, no. It is getting quite dark. Let us push on." And, indeed, the highwayman's horse had taken fright, and we could see him galloping away across the common.

I was so elated to think that I, a little boy, had shot a live highwayman, that I dare say I bragged outrageously of my action. We set down Mr Weston at his {149} inn in the Borough, and crossed London Bridge, and there I was in London at last. Yes, and that was the Monument, and then we came to the Exchange, and yonder, yonder was St Paul's. We went up Holborn, and so to Ormonde Street, where my patron lived in a noble mansion; and where his wife, my lady Denis, received me with a great deal of kindness. You may be sure the battle with the highwayman was fought over again, and I got due credit from myself and others for my gallantry.

(Denis Duval.)

CHARLES DICKENS 1812-1870

STORM

"Don't you think that," I asked the coachman, in the first stage out of London, "a very remarkable sky? I don't remember to have seen one like it."

"Nor I,—not equal to it," he replied. "That's wind, sir. There'll be mischief done at sea, I expect, before long."

It was a murky confusion—here and there blotted with a colour like the colour of the smoke from damp fuel—of flying clouds tossed up into most remarkable heaps, suggesting greater heights in the clouds than there were depths below them to the bottom of the deepest hollows in the earth, through which the wild moon seemed to plunge headlong, as if, in a dread disturbance of the laws of nature, she had lost her way and were frightened. {150} There had been a wind all day; and it was rising then, with an extraordinary great sound. In another hour it had much increased, and the sky was more overcast, and it blew hard.

But, as the night advanced, the clouds closing in and densely overspreading the whole sky, then very dark, it came on to blow, harder and harder. It still increased, until our horses could scarcely face the wind. Many times, in the dark part of the night (it was then late in September, when the nights were not short), the leaders turned about, or came to a dead stop; and we were often in serious apprehension that the coach would be blown over. Sweeping gusts of rain came up before this storm, like showers of steel; and, at those times, when there was any shelter of trees or lee walls to be got, we were fain to stop, in a sheer impossibility of continuing the struggle.

When the day broke, it blew harder and harder. I had been in Yarmouth when the seamen said it blew great guns, but I had never known the like of this, or anything approaching to it. We came to Ipswich—very late, having had to fight every inch of ground since we were ten miles out of London; and found a cluster of people in the market-place, who had risen from their beds in the night, fearful of falling chimneys. Some of these, congregating about the inn-yard while we changed horses, told us of great sheets of lead having been ripped off a high church-tower, and flung into a bye-street, which they then blocked up. Others had to tell of country people, coming in from neighbouring villages, who had seen great trees lying torn out of the earth, and whole {151} ricks scattered about the roads and fields. Still, there was no abatement in the storm, but it blew harder.

As we struggled on, nearer and nearer to the sea, from which this mighty wind was blowing dead on shore, its force became more and more terrific. Long before we saw the sea, its spray was on our lips, and showered salt rain upon us. The water was out, over miles and miles of the flat country adjacent to Yarmouth; and every sheet and puddle lashed its banks, and had its stress of little breakers setting heavily towards us. When we came within sight of the sea, the waves on the horizon, caught at intervals above the rolling abyss, were like glimpses of another shore with towers and buildings. When at last we got into the town, the people came out to their doors, all aslant, and with streaming hair, making a wonder of the mail that had come through such a night.

I put up at the old inn, and went down to look at the sea; staggering along the street, which was strewn with sand and seaweed, and with flying blotches of sea-foam; afraid of falling slates and tiles; and holding by people I met, at angry corners. Coming near the beach, I saw, not only the boatmen, but half the people of the town, lurking behind buildings; some, now and then braving the fury of the storm to look away to sea, and blown sheer out of their course in trying to get zigzag back.

Joining these groups, I found bewailing women whose husbands were away in herring or oyster boats, which there was too much reason to think might have foundered before they could run in anywhere for safety. Grizzled old sailors were among the people, shaking their heads, {152} as they looked from water to sky, and muttering to one another; ship-owners, excited and uneasy; children, huddling together, and peering into older faces; even stout mariners, disturbed and anxious, levelling their glasses at the sea from behind places of shelter, as if they were surveying an enemy.

The tremendous sea itself, when I could find sufficient pause to look at it, in the agitation of the blinding wind, the flying stones and sand, and the awful noise, confounded me. As the high watery walls came rolling in, and, at their highest, tumbled into surf, they looked as if the least would engulf the town. As the receding wave swept back with a hoarse roar, it seemed to scoop out deep caves in the beach, as if its purpose were to undermine the earth. When some white-headed billows thundered on, and dashed themselves to pieces before they reached the land, every fragment of the late whole seemed possessed by the full might of its wrath, rushing to be gathered to the composition of another monster. Undulating hills were changed to valleys, undulating valleys (with a solitary storm-bird sometimes skimming through them) were lifted up to hills; masses of water shivered and shook the beach with a booming sound; every shape tumultuously rolled on, as soon as made, to change its shape and place, and beat another shape

and place away; the ideal shore on the horizon, with its towers and buildings, rose and fell; the clouds flew fast and thick; I seemed to see a rending and upheaving of all nature. . . .

I went back to the inn; and when I had washed and dressed, and tried to sleep, but in vain, it was five o'clock in the afternoon. I had not sat five minutes by the {153} coffee-room fire, when the waiter coming to stir it, as an excuse for talking, told me that two colliers had gone down, with all hands, a few miles away; and that some other ships had been seen labouring hard in the Roads, and trying, in great distress, to keep off shore. Mercy on them, and on all poor sailors, said he, if we had another night like the last!

(David Copperfield.)

CHARLOTTE BRONTË 1816-1855

JANE EYRE AND MR ROCHESTER

"And now, what did you learn at Lowood? Can you play?"

"A little."

"Of course, that is the established answer. Go into the library—I mean, if you please.—(Excuse my tone of command; I am used to say, 'Do this,' and it is done. I cannot alter my customary habits for one new inmate.)—Go, then, into the library; take a candle with you; leave the door open; sit down to the piano, and play a tune."

I departed, obeying his directions.

"Enough!" he called out in a few minutes. "You play a *little*, I see, like any other English school-girl; perhaps rather better than some, but not well."

I closed the piano, and returned. Mr Rochester continued—

{154} "Adèle showed me some sketches this morning, which, she said, were yours. I don't know whether they were entirely of your doing: probably a master aided you?"

"No, indeed!" I interjected.

"Ah! that pricks pride. Well, fetch me your portfolio, if you can vouch for its contents being original; but don't pass your word unless you are certain: I can recognise patchwork."

"Then I will say nothing, and you shall judge for yourself, sir."

I brought the portfolio from the library.

"Approach the table," said he; and I wheeled it to his couch. Adèle and Mrs Fairfax drew near to see the pictures.

"No crowding," said Mr Rochester: "take the drawings from my hand as I finish with them; but don't push your faces up to mine."

He deliberately scrutinised each sketch and painting. Three he laid aside; the others, when he had examined them, he swept from him.

"Take them off to the other table, Mrs Fairfax," said he, "and look at them with Adèle;—you" (glancing at me) "resume your seat, and answer my questions. I perceive these pictures were done by one hand. Was that hand yours?"

"Yes."

"And when did you find time to do them? They have taken much time, and some thought."

"I did them in the last two vacations I spent at Lowood, when I had no other occupation."

{155} "Where did you get your copies?"

"Out of my head."

"That head I see now on your shoulders?"

"Yes, sir."

"Has it other furniture of the same kind within?"

"I should think it may have. I should hope—better."

He spread the pictures before him, and again surveyed them alternately.

While he is so occupied, I will tell you, reader, what they are, and first, I must premise that they are nothing wonderful. The subjects had, indeed, risen vividly on my mind. As I saw them with the spiritual eye, before I attempted to embody them, they were striking; but my hand would not second my fancy, and, in each case, it had wrought out but a pale portrait of the thing I had conceived.

These pictures were in water-colours. The first represented clouds low and livid, rolling over a swollen sea: all the distance was in eclipse; so, too, was the foreground; or, rather, the nearest billows, for there was no land. One gleam of light lifted into relief a half-submerged mast, on which sat a cormorant, dark and large, with wings flecked with foam; its beak held a gold bracelet, set with gems, which I had touched with as brilliant tints as my pencil could impart. Sinking below the bird and mast, a drowned corpse glanced through the green water; a fair arm was the only limb clearly visible, whence the bracelet had been washed or torn.

The second picture contained for foreground only the dim peak of a hill, with grass and some leaves slanting {156} as if by a breeze. Beyond and above spread an expanse of sky, dark blue, as at twilight; rising into the sky was a woman's shape to the bust, portrayed in tints as dusk and soft as I could combine. The dim forehead was crowned with a star; the lineaments below were seen as through the suffusion of vapour; the eyes shone dark and wild; the hair streamed shadowy, like a beamless cloud torn by storm or by electric travail. On the neck lay a

pale reflection like moonlight: the same faint lustre touched the train of thin clouds from which rose and bowed this vision of the Evening Star.

The third showed the pinnacle of an iceberg piercing a polar winter sky: a muster of northern lights reared their dim lances, close serried, along the horizon. Throwing these into distance, rose, in the foreground, a head,—a colossal head, inclined towards the iceberg, and resting against it. Two thin hands, joined under the forehead, and supporting it, drew up before the lower features a sable veil; a brow quite bloodless, white as bone, and an eye hollow and fixed, blank of meaning but for the glassiness of despair, alone were visible. Above the temples, amidst wreathed turban folds of black drapery, vague in its character and consistency as cloud, gleamed a ring of white flame, gemmed with sparkles of a more lurid tinge. This pale crescent was "the likeness of a Kingly Crown"; what it diademed was "the shape which shape had none."

(Jane Eyre.)

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HENRY DAVID THOREAU 1817-1862

A HUT IN THE WOODS

I did not read books the first summer; I hoed beans. Nay, I often did better than this. There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hands. I love a broad margin to my life. Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a reverie, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang around, or flitted noiseless through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller's waggon on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those seasons like corn in the night, and they were far better than any work of the hands would have been. They were not time subtracted from my life, but so much over and above my usual allowance. I realised what the Orientals mean by contemplation and the forsaking of works. For the most part, I minded not how the hours went. The day advanced as if to light some work of mine; it was morning, and lo, now it is evening, and nothing memorable is accomplished. Instead of singing like the birds, I silently smiled at my incessant good fortune. As the sparrow had its trill, sitting on the hickory before my door, so I had my chuckle or suppressed warble which he might hear out of my nest. My days were not days {158} of the week, bearing the stamp of any heathen deity, nor were they minced into hours and fretted by the ticking of a clock; for I lived like the Puri Indians, of whom it is said that for yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow they have only one word, and they express the variety of meaning by pointing backward for yesterday, forward for to-morrow, and overhead for the passing day. This was sheer idleness to my fellow-townsmen, no doubt; but if the birds and flowers had tried me by their standard, I should not have been found wanting. A man must find his occasions in himself, it is true. The natural day is very calm, and will hardly reprove his indolence.

I had this advantage, at least, in my mode of life, over those who were obliged to look abroad for amusement, to society and the theatre, that my life itself was become my amusement and never ceased to be novel. It was a drama of many scenes and without an end. If we were always indeed getting our living, and regulating our lives according to the last and best mode we had learned, we should never be troubled with ennui. Follow your genius closely enough, and it will not fail to show you a fresh prospect every hour. House-work was a pleasant pastime. When my floor was dirty, I rose early, and, setting all my furniture out of doors on the grass, bed and bedstead making but one budget, dashed water on the floor, and sprinkled white sand from the pond on it, and then with a broom scrubbed it clean and white; and by the time the villagers had broken their fast the morning sun had dried my house sufficiently to allow me to move in again, and my meditations were almost uninterrupted. It was pleasant to see my whole {159} household effects out on the grass, making a little pile like a gypsy's pack, and my three-legged table, from which I did not remove the books and pen and ink, standing amid the pines and hickories. They seemed glad to get out themselves, and as if unwilling to be brought in. I was sometimes tempted to stretch an awning over them and take my seat there. It was worth the while to see the sun shine on these things, and hear the free wind blow on them; so much more interesting most familiar objects look out of doors than in the house. A bird sits on the next bough; life everlasting grows under the table, and blackberry vines run round its legs; pine cones, chestnut burs, and strawberry leaves are strewn about. It looked as if this was the way these forms came to be transferred to our furniture, to tables, chairs, and bedsteads,—because they once stood in their midst.

(*Walden.*)

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN EVANS) 1819-1880

A MISER

Gradually the guineas, the crowns, and the half-crowns grew to a heap, and Marner drew less and less for his own wants, trying to solve the problem of keeping himself strong enough to work sixteen hours a day on as small an outlay as possible. . . . He handled them, he counted them, till their form and colour were like the {160} satisfaction of a thirst to him; but it was only in the night, when his work was done, that he drew them out to enjoy their companionship. He had taken up some bricks in his floor underneath his loom, and here he made a hole in which he set the iron pot that contained his guineas and silver coins, covering the bricks with sand whenever he replaced them. Not that the idea of being robbed presented itself often or strongly to his mind: hoarding was common in country districts in those days; there were old labourers in the parish of Raveloe who were known to have their savings by them, probably inside their flock-beds; but their rustic neighbours, though not all of them as honest as their ancestors in the days of King Alfred, had not imaginations bold enough to lay a plan of burglary. How could they have spent the money in their own village without betraying

themselves? They would be obliged to "run away"—a course as dark and dubious as a balloon journey.

So, year after year, Silas Marner had lived in this solitude, his guineas rising in the iron pot, and his life narrowing and hardening itself more and more into a mere pulsation of desire and satisfaction that had no relation to any other being. His life had reduced itself to the functions of weaving and hoarding, without any contemplation of an end towards which the functions tended. The same sort of process has perhaps been undergone by wiser men, when they have been cut off from faith and love—only, instead of a loom and a heap of guineas, they have had some erudite research, some ingenious project, or some well-knit theory. Strangely Marner's face and figure shrank and bent themselves {161} into a constant mechanical relation to the objects of his life, so that he produced the same sort of impression as a handle or a crooked tube, which has no meaning standing apart. The prominent eyes that used to look trusting and dreamy, now looked as if they had been made to see only one kind of thing that was very small, like tiny grain, for which they hunted everywhere; and he was so withered and yellow, that, though he was not yet forty, the children always called him "Old Master Marner."

Yet even in this stage of withering a little incident happened, which showed that the sap of affection was not all gone. It was one of his daily tasks to fetch his water from a well a couple of fields off, and for this purpose, ever since he came to Raveloe, he had a brown earthenware pot, which he held as his most precious utensil among the very few conveniences he had granted himself. It had been his companion for twelve years, always standing on the same spot, always lending its handle to him in the early morning, so that its form had an expression for him of willing helpfulness, and the impress of its handle on his palm gave a satisfaction mingled with that of having the fresh clear water. One day as he was returning from the well, he stumbled against the step of the stile, and his brown pot, falling with force against the stones that over-arched the ditch below him, was broken in three pieces. Silas picked up the pieces and carried them home with grief in his heart. The brown pot could never be of use to him any more, but he stuck the bits together and propped the ruin in its old place for a memorial.

{162} This is the history of Silas Marner, until the fifteenth year after he came to Raveloe. The livelong day he sat in his loom, his ear filled with its monotony, his eyes bent close down on the slow growth of sameness in the brownish web, his muscles moving with such even repetition that their pause seemed almost as much a constraint as the holding of his breath. But at night came his revelry: at night he closed his shutters, and made fast his doors, and drew forth his gold. Long ago the heap of coins had become too large for the iron pot to hold them, and he had made for them two thick leather bags, which wasted no room in their resting-place, but lent themselves flexibly to every corner. How the guineas shone as they came pouring out of the dark leather mouths! The silver bore no large proportion in amount to the gold, because the long pieces of linen which formed his chief work were always partly paid for in gold, and out of the silver he supplied his own bodily wants, choosing always the shillings and sixpences to spend in this way. He loved the guineas best, but he would not change the silver—the crowns and half-crowns that were his own earnings, begotten by his labour; he loved them all. He spread them out in heaps and bathed his hands in them; then he counted them and set them up in regular piles, and felt their rounded outline between his thumb and fingers, and thought fondly of the guineas that were only half earned by the work in his loom, as if they had been unborn children—thought of the guineas that were coming slowly through the coming years,

through all his life, which spread far away before him, the end quite hidden by countless days of weaving.

(*Silas Marner.*)

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JOHN RUSKIN 1819-1900

SHIPS

Down to Elizabeth's time chivalry lasted; and grace of dress and mien, and all else that was connected with chivalry. Then came the ages which, when they have taken their due place in the depths of the past, will be, by a wise and clear-sighted futurity, perhaps well comprehended under a common name, as the ages of Starch; periods of general stiffening and bluish-whitening, with a prevailing washerwoman's taste in everything; involving a change of steel armour into cambric; of natural hair into peruke; of natural walking into that which will disarrange no wristbands; of plain language into quips and embroideries; and of human life in general, from a green race-course, where to be defeated was at worst only to fall behind and recover breath, into a slippery pole, to be climbed with toil and contortion, and in clinging to which, each man's foot is on his neighbour's head.

But, meanwhile, the marine deities were incorruptible. It was not possible to starch the sea; and precisely as the stiffness fastened upon men, it vanished from ships. What had once been a mere raft, with rows of formal benches, pushed along by laborious flap of oars, and with infinite fluttering of flags and swelling of poops above, gradually began to lean more heavily into the deep water, to sustain a gloomy weight of guns, to draw back its spider-like feebleness of limb, and open its bosom to the wind, and finally darkened down from all its painted {164} vanities into the long low hull, familiar with the over-flying foam; that has no other pride but in its daily duty and victory; while, through all these changes, it gained continually in grace, strength, audacity, and beauty, until at last it has reached such a pitch of all these, that there is not, except the very loveliest creatures of the living world, anything in nature so absolutely notable, bewitching, and, according to its means and measure, heart-occupying, as a well-handled ship under sail in a stormy day. Any ship, from lowest to proudest, has due place in that architecture of the sea; beautiful, not so much in this or that piece of it, as in the unity of all, from cottage to cathedral, into their great buoyant dynasty. Yet, among them, the fisher-boat, corresponding to the cottage on the land (only far more sublime than a cottage ever can be), is on the whole the thing most venerable. I doubt if ever academic grove were half so fit for profitable meditation as the little strip of shingle between two black, steep, overhanging sides of stranded fishing-boats. The clear, heavy water-edge of ocean rising and falling close to their bows, in that unaccountable way which the sea has always in calm weather, turning the pebbles over and over as if with a rake, to look for something, and then stopping a moment down at the bottom of the bank, and coming up again with a little run and clash, throwing a foot's depth of salt crystal in an instant between you and the round stone you were going to take in your hand; sighing, all the while, as if it would infinitely rather be doing something else. And the dark flanks of the fishing-boats all aslope above, in their shining quietness, hot in

the morning sun, rusty and seamed with square patches of {165} plank nailed over their rents; just rough enough to let the little flat-footed fisher-children haul or twist themselves up to the gunwales, and drop back again along some stray rope; just round enough to remind us, in their broad and gradual curves, of the sweep of the green surges they know so well, and of the hours when those old sides of seared timber, all ashine with the sea, plunge and dip into the deep green purity of the mounded waves more joyfully than a deer lies down among the grass of spring, the soft white cloud of foam opening momentarily at the bows, and fading or flying high into the breeze where the sea-gulls toss and shriek,—the joy and beauty of it, all the while, so mingled with the sense of unfathomable danger, and the human effort and sorrow going on perpetually from age to age, waves rolling for ever, and winds moaning for ever, and faithful hearts trusting and sickening for ever, and brave lives dashed away about the rattling beach like weeds for ever; and still at the helm of every lonely boat, through starless night and hopeless dawn, His hand, who spread the fisher's net over the dust of the Sidonian palaces, and gave into the fisher's hand the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Next after the fishing-boat—which, as I said, in the architecture of the sea represents the cottage, more especially the pastoral or agricultural cottage, watchful over some pathless domain of moorland or arable, as the fishing-boat swims humbly in the midst of the broad green fields and hills of ocean, out of which it has to win such fruit as they can give, and to compass with net or drag such flocks as it may find,—next to this ocean-cottage ranks in interest, it seems to me, the small, over-wrought, {166} under-crewed, ill-caulked merchant brig or schooner; the kind of ship which first shows its couple of thin masts over the low fields or marshes as we near any third-rate seaport; and which is sure somewhere to stud the great space of glittering water, seen from any sea-cliff, with its four or five square-set sails. Of the larger and more polite tribes of merchant vessels, three-masted, and passenger-carrying, I have nothing to say, feeling in general little sympathy with people who want to go anywhere; nor caring much about anything, which in the essence of it expresses a desire to get to other sides of the world; but only for homely and stay-at-home ships, that live their life and die their death about English rocks. Neither have I any interest in the higher branches of commerce, such as traffic with spice islands, and portorage of painted tea-chests or carved ivory; for all this seems to me to fall under the head of commerce of the drawing-room; costly, but not venerable. I respect in the merchant service only those ships that carry coals, herrings, salt, timber, iron, and such other commodities, and that have disagreeable odour, and unwashed decks. But there are few things more impressive to me than one of these ships lying up against some lonely quay in a black sea-fog, with the furrow traced under its tawny keel far in the harbour slime. The noble misery that there is in it, the might of its rent and strained unseemliness, its wave-worn melancholy, resting there for a little while in the comfortless ebb, unpitied, and claiming no pity; still less honoured, least of all conscious of any claim to honour; casting and craning by due balance whatever is in its hold up to the pier, in quiet truth of time; spinning of wheel, and {167} slackening of rope, and swinging of spade, in as accurate cadence as a waltz music; one or two of its crew, perhaps, away forward, and a hungry boy and yelping dog eagerly interested in something from which a blue dull smoke rises out of pot or pan; but dark-browed and silent, their limbs slack, like the ropes above them, entangled as they are in those inextricable meshes about the patched knots and heaps of ill-reefed sable sail. What a majestic sense of service in all that languor! the rest of human limbs and hearts, at utter need, not in sweet meadows or soft air, but in harbour slime and biting fog; so drawing their breath once more, to go out again, without lament, from between the two skeletons of pier-heads, vocal

with wash of under wave, into the grey troughs of tumbling brine; there, as they can, with slacked rope, and patched sail, and leaky hull, again to roll and stagger far away amidst the wind and salt sleet, from dawn to dusk and dusk to dawn, winning day by day their daily bread; and for last reward, when their old hands, on some winter night, lose feeling along the frozen ropes, and their old eyes miss mark of the lighthouse quenched in foam, the so-long impossible Rest, that shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more,—their eyes and mouths filled with the brown sea-sand.

(Harbours of England.)

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WALTER PATER 1839-1894

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE

As Florian Deleal walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighbourhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall and floor, and some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he {169} then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit—in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favourable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualised house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there—of which indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture—half, tint and trace and accident of homely colour and form, from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their

lives) really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates—descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the rooms—might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there—the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree {170} most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fire-place of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight—an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures, glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of coloured silks, among its lumber—a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighbouring steeples; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is false to suppose that a child's sense of beauty is dependent on any choiceness or special fineness, in the objects which present themselves to it, though this indeed comes to be the rule with most of us in later life; earlier, in {171} some degree, we see inwardly, and the child finds for itself, and with unstinted delight, a difference for the sense, in those whites and reds through the smoke on very homely buildings, and in the gold of the dandelions at the road-side, just beyond the houses, where not a handful of earth is virgin and untouched, in the lack of better ministries to its desire of beauty.

(Miscellaneous Studies.)

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON 1850-1894

DIVING

Into the bay of Wick stretched the dark length of the unfinished breakwater, in its cage of open staging; the travellers (like frames of churches) over-plumbing all; and away at the extreme end, the divers toiling unseen on the foundation. On a platform of loose planks, the assistants turned their air-mills; a stone might be swinging between wind and water; underneath the swell ran gaily; and from time to time, a mailed dragon with a window-glass snout came dripping up the ladder. . . . To go down in the diving-dress, that was my absorbing

fancy; and with the countenance of a certain handsome scamp of a diver, Bob Bain by name, I gratified the whim.

It was grey harsh, easterly weather, the swell ran pretty high, and out in the open there were "skipper's daughters," when I found myself at last on the diver's platform, twenty pounds of lead upon each foot and my {172} whole person swollen with ply and ply of woollen underclothing. One moment, the salt wind was whistling round my night-capped head; the next, I was crushed almost double under the weight of the helmet. As that intolerable burthen was laid upon me, I could have found it in my heart (only for shame's sake) to cry off from the whole enterprise. But it was too late. The attendants began to turn the hurdy-gurdy, and the air to whistle through the tube; some one screwed in the barred window of the vizor; and I was cut off in a moment from my fellow-men; standing there in their midst, but quite divorced from intercourse: a creature deaf and dumb, pathetically looking forth upon them from a climate of his own. Except that I could move and feel, I was like a man fallen in a catalepsy. But time was scarce given me to realise my isolation; the weights were hung upon my back and breast, the signal rope was thrust into my unresisting hand; and setting a twenty-pound foot upon the ladder, I began ponderously to descend.

Some twenty rounds below the platform, twilight fell. Looking up, I saw a low green heaven mottled with vanishing bells of white; looking around, except for the weedy spokes and shafts of the ladder, nothing but a green gloaming, somewhat opaque but very restful and delicious. Thirty rounds lower, I stepped off on the *pierres perdues* of the foundation; a dumb helmeted figure took me by the hand, and made a gesture (as I read it) of encouragement; and looking in at the creature's window, I beheld the face of Bain. There we were, hand to hand and (when it pleased us) eye to eye; and either might have burst himself with shouting, and not a {173} whisper come to his companion's hearing. Each, in his own little world of air, stood incommunicably separate.

Bob had told me ere this a little tale, a five minutes' drama at the bottom of the sea, which at that moment possibly shot across my mind. He was down with another, settling a stone of the sea-wall. They had it well adjusted, Bob gave the signal, the scissors were slipped, the stone set home; and it was time to turn to something else. But still his companion remained bowed over the block like a mourner on a tomb, or only raised himself to make absurd contortions and mysterious signs unknown to the vocabulary of the diver. There, then, these two stood for a while, like the dead and the living; till there flashed a fortunate thought into Bob's mind, and he stooped, peered through the window of that other world, and beheld the face of its inhabitant wet with streaming tears. Ah! the man was in pain! And Bob, glancing downward, saw what was the trouble: the block had been lowered on the foot of that unfortunate—he was caught alive at the bottom of the sea under fifteen tons of rock.

That two men should handle a stone so heavy, even swinging in the scissors, may appear strange to the inexpert. These must bear in mind the great density of the water of the sea, and the surprising results of transplantation to that medium. To understand a little what these are, and how a man's weight, so far from being an encumbrance, is the very ground of his agility, was the chief lesson of my submarine experience. The knowledge came upon me by degrees. As I began to go forward with the hand of my estranged companion, a world of tumbled stones {174} was visible, pillared with the weedy uprights of the staging: overhead, a flat roof of

green: a little in front, the sea-wall, like an unfinished rampart. And presently in our upward progress, Bob motioned me to leap upon a stone; I looked to see if he were possibly in earnest, and he only signed to me the more imperiously. Now the block stood six feet high; it would have been quite a leap to me unencumbered; with the breast and back weights, and the twenty pounds upon each foot, and the staggering load of the helmet, the thing was out of reason. I laughed aloud in my tomb; and to prove to Bob how far he was astray, I gave a little impulse from my toes. Up I soared like a bird, my companion soaring at my side. As high as the stone, and then higher, I pursued my impotent and empty flight. Even when the strong arm of Bob had checked my shoulders, my heels continued their ascent; so that I blew out sideways like an autumn leaf, and must be hauled in, hand over hand, as sailors haul in the slack of a sail, and propped upon my feet again like an intoxicated sparrow. Yet a little higher on the foundation, and we began to be affected by the bottom of the swell, running there like a strong breeze of wind. Or so I must suppose; for, safe in my cushion of air, I was conscious of no impact; only swayed idly like a weed, and was now borne helplessly abroad, and now swiftly—and yet with dreamlike gentleness—impelled against my guide. So does a child's balloon divagate upon the currents of the air, and touch and slide off again from every obstacle. So must have ineffectually swung, so resented their inefficiency, those light crowds that followed the {175} Star of Hades, and uttered exiguous voices in the land beyond Cocytus.

There was something strangely exasperating, as well as strangely wearying, in these uncommanded evolutions. It is bitter to return to infancy, to be supported, and directed, and perpetually set upon your feet, by the hand of some one else. The air besides, as it is supplied to you by the busy millers on the platform, closes the eustachian tubes and keeps the neophyte perpetually swallowing, till his throat is grown so dry that he can swallow no longer. And for all these reasons—although I had a fine, dizzy, muddle-headed joy in my surroundings, and longed, and tried, and always failed, to lay hands on the fish that darted here and there about me, swift as humming-birds—yet I fancy I was rather relieved than otherwise when Bain brought me back to the ladder and signed to me to mount. And there was one more experience before me even then. Of a sudden, my ascending head passed into the trough of a swell. Out of the green, I shot at once into a glory of rosy, almost of sanguine light—the multitudinous seas incarnadined, the heaven above a vault of crimson. And then the glory faded into the hard, ugly daylight of a Caithness autumn, with a low sky, a grey sea, and a whistling wind.

(Across the Plains.)

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NOTES

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1 Sir Mordred, left in charge of the kingdom during King Arthur's absence oversea, treacherously raised a rebellion and made war on the king when he returned. It was in this war that Arthur presently met his end.

5 The grants to which the Queen refers are the trade-monopolies granted by her, which she now proceeded to abolish.

8 This account of Cleopatra's death (from North's translation of Plutarch's *Life of Antony*) is closely followed by Shakespeare in *Antony and Cleopatra*.

11 The basket of figs contained the asp, from the bite of which Cleopatra died (*Antony and Cleopatra*, act V. scene ii.).

12 *The three first monarchies of the world*: these, according to Raleigh's account of the world's history, are those of Assyria, Egypt, and Persia.

13 *The good advice of Cineas*: when Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, was contemplating the invasion of Italy (B.C. 280) his friend and adviser Cineas asked him what he would do when he was master of the world. 'Pyrrhus, finding his drift, answered pleasantly, that they would live merrily: a thing (as Cineas then told him) that they presently might do without any trouble, if he could be contented with his own' (Raleigh).

discourse here means 'fame.'

16 The two kinds of law which Hooker (as he indicates at the beginning of this extract) has already dealt with are: the law which binds a man's private conscience, and the law which regulates his dealings with the state (or 'politic society') of which he is a member.

conceits=conceptions.

18 *But that is a wisdom*: i.e. the wisdom of wise men, who know how to make a proper use of their studies.

distilled books: i.e. books of selections and extracts.

Abeunt studia, etc.: 'studies pass into the character.'

stond= impediment.

19 *bowling*, i.e. playing bowls.

schoolmen: the theological and metaphysical writers of the middle ages.

Cymini sectores: 'splitters of cumin-seed,' i.e. what we should call 'hair-splitters,' the seed of the cumin (a plant something like fennel) being very minute.

20 *In the universality of the kind, etc.*: i.e. the race endures, the individual perishes.

24 *Lycosthenes*, a German scholar of the sixteenth century, wrote a commentary on a book of *Lives of eminent men*, a work attributed to Pliny the younger (first century A.D.).

26 *The eighth climate*: i.e. England, which lies in the eighth of the zones (or 'climates') into which the old geographers divided the globe.

constellated: i.e. born under a particular 'constellation' or conjunction of planets (an astrological expression).

Hydra: the many-headed monster slain by Hercules.

in casting account=in doing sums.

27 *Dorados*=rich men; a Spanish word, as in the phrase 'El dorado' ('the rich country').

First, when a city, etc.: the skeleton of this highly involved sentence is as follows: 'First, when a city shall be as it were besieged. . . , that then the people . . . should be disputing. . . , argues first a singular good will. . . , and from thence derives itself [i.e. flows on, proceeds] to a gallant bravery. . . .'

28 *as his was who when Rome, etc.*: this story is told by Livy, as an instance of the undaunted spirit of the Romans during the Punic war.

mewing properly means 'moulting.' Milton apparently uses it in the sense of 'renewing by the process of moulting.'

29 *engrossers*: wholesale buyers; here used metaphorically of those who, by curtailing the liberty of book-printing, would 'buy up' the stock of knowledge and dole it out as they thought fit.

30 *he who takes up arms for coat and conduct*: this refers to Charles I's exaction of a tax for the clothing and conducting (i.e. conveying) of troops.

his four nobles of Danegelt: a noble was a coin worth 6s. 8d. Danegelt was originally the land-tax raised by Ethelred the Unready to buy off the Danes; the word was afterwards used of any unpopular tax, here of Charles I's imposition of ship-money, resisted by Hampden.

In this unhappy battle: the battle of Newbury, Sept. 20, 1643, in which the advantage was on the whole with the King against the Roundheads.

33 *vacant*: i.e. open, unclouded.

addresses to his place: i.e. to his office. Falkland was Secretary of State to Charles I.

40 *Phalaris*: a Sicilian tyrant of the sixth century B.C., famous for his cruelties. The Greek poet Stesichorus was a contemporary of his.

42 Samuel Pepys, from whose diary this extract (slightly abridged) is taken, wrote solely for his own private amusement, troubling himself very little about style or grammar. He held a post in the Navy Office, and his work did not often allow him to take a day in the country, such as he here describes.

46 Defoe's *Captain Singleton* is an imaginary account of the adventures of certain pirates in different parts of the world. In the extract here given they are lying in Chinese waters. 'William,' one of their crew, has gone ashore to trade with some Chinese merchants.

47 *thieves' pennyworths*: 'things sold at a robber's price,' i.e. below their real value.

55 *composures*=compositions.

56 *the Great Mogul*: the Emperor of Hindostan.

Muscovy=Russia, of which Moscow was formerly the capital.

57 *the old philosopher*: Socrates; see Hooker's reference to the anecdote on page 17 of this book.

degree: i.e. of latitude and longitude.

62 *whereas the ladies now walk, etc.*; this was written in 1711, when ladies wore very large 'hoops,' or crinolines.

65 Tom Jones, the hero of Fielding's novel of that name, takes some friends to see Hamlet, acted by Garrick. Partridge, is a timorous ex-schoolmaster, without experience of the theatre.

77 *redans*: projecting fortifications.

the talus of the glacis: the pitch of the outer slope of an earthwork.

banquettes: the raised way running along the inside of a rampart.

78 *chamade*: a signal given by drum, announcing surrender.

79 *a new reign*: George II died on October 25, 1760.

80 *a rag of quality*: Horace Walpole was a younger son of Sir Robert Walpole (Earl of Orford).

81 *the Duke of Cumberland*: second son of George II.

a dark brown adonis: a kind of wig.

the Duke of Newcastle: the Prime Minister.

83 Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* consists of a series of letters on European manners and customs, purporting to be written by a Chinaman who has never before visited England.

86 *whatever accidentally becomes indisposed, etc.*; i.e. whoever falls out with the authorities.

87 *There never was a period, etc.*: this was written in 1777, during the American War of Independence.

90 'Puss' was Cowper's tame hare.

92 The initials at the foot of the letter are those of William Cowper and Mary Unwin, a friend of the poet's.

99 *David Garrick*: the celebrated actor (1717-1779).

100 Frank Osbaldistone, the hero of Scott's novel *Rob Roy*, goes to Yorkshire on a visit to his uncle, Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone, whom he has never seen. As he approaches his destination he falls in with a young lady on horseback, who turns out to be Diana Vernon, a niece of Sir Hildebrand's. The period of the story is early in the eighteenth century.

106 *The 'Festin de pierre'*: Moliere's play, in which the hero, Don Juan, rashly invites the statue of a man he has murdered to dine with him. The invitation is unexpectedly accepted.

107 Coleridge, the poet, was an old friend and school-fellow of Charles Lamb's.

109 An imaginary dialogue between the two philosophers. Plato, born 427 B.C., was some years the older of the two.

111 Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, with whom Plato had lived for a time, was overthrown and expelled by his subjects, and driven to support himself as a schoolmaster at Corinth.

The Demiurgos: the Creator.

113 Mrs Elton, in Jane Austen's novel *Emma*, is the somewhat meddlesome wife of the village parson. Mr Knightley is a gentleman living at Donwell, in the neighbourhood. The rest of the people named are other neighbours and friends, one of them, Mr Woodhouse, being an old gentleman of valetudinarian habits.

118 Coleridge, as a young man (he was born in 1772), was for a time in the habit of preaching in Unitarian chapels.

122 This is an extract from a letter of Keats to a friend, written in 1818.

124 *The Flight to Varennes*: by the middle of 1791 the French Revolution had gone so far that the king and queen were practically prisoners in the palace of the Tuileries at Paris. They at last determined to try to escape, and the arrangements for their flight were carried out, in all possible secrecy, by Choiseul, an officer of the French army, and Fersen, a young Swedish count. Carlyle's vivid account tells how the start was made; but the royal party were stopped at Varennes, not far from the frontier, and brought back to Paris.

the Carrousel, or 'tilting-ground,' was an open space in front of the Tuileries.

130 *Trial of the Seven Bishops*: James II, in 1687, issued a 'declaration of indulgence,' promising to suspend certain laws against Roman Catholics. His command that this declaration should be read in all parish churches was resisted by seven bishops, who were accordingly brought to trial for sedition. The declaration was very unpopular in the country, so that the result of the trial was anxiously awaited.

135 *Cimon* was one of the Athenian commanders in the Persian war. He died in 449 B.C.

140 The scene of Hawthorne's novel, *The House of the Seven Gables*, is laid in a small town in New England.

148 Mr Weston was in the plot with the highwayman to rob Dr Barnard. He had himself tampered with his own pistols (in the stable at Maidstone) so that they should miss fire. Hence his peevishness with Denis Duval, for so unexpectedly routing the thief.

153 Jane Eyre is governess to Mr Rochester's daughter, Adèle. She describes how he cross-questioned her with regard to her accomplishments.

157 Thoreau lived for two years in a small hut which he built for himself in a wood near Concord, in New England. This extract is from the account he wrote of his life there.

171 Stevenson came of a family of engineers, and he himself was supposed to be preparing for the same profession. But he already wished to be a writer, and his interest in the harbour-works at Wick, in Caithness, which he had been sent to study, was romantic rather than practical.

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