THE SECOND BOOK OF

50 MODEL ESSAYS

50 MORE ESSAYS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS SELECTED FROM MATRICULATION, SCHOOL LEAVING AND SENIOR CAMBRIDGE EXAMINATIONS

THE SECOND BOOK OF 50 MODEL ESSAYS

By MARGARET J. MILLER

Assistant English Mistress at the Wimbledon County School for Girls, England, and Formerly Senior Mistress at Queen Mary School for Girls, Bombay.

Author of 50 *MODEL ESSAYS*

The great success of the author's previous book, "50 Model Essays" has led to the publication of this companion volume. Every year, in all papers of the School Leaving, Senior Cambridge or Matriculation examinations, certain subjects are set for essay writing. As a matter of fact, essay writing forms a part of all higher school and college courses.

In this "The Second Book of 50 Model Essays", the author has taken all the titles from past papers of the Cambridge Examinations. These titles, and others that can easily be adapted from them, occur again and again in English papers of School Leaving examinations. Round these subjects, the author has written delightful little essays. She was a teacher of English in a well-known school in Bombay and is at present Assistant English Mistress at Wimbledon County School for Girls in England. She thus knows the requirements of both the students and the examiners.

All the essays in this book are delightfully written. Four kinds of essays have been given: Narrative Essays, Descriptive Essays, Argumentative Essays, and Reflective Essays. They are gems of their kind and perfect examples of economy of words, simplicity of style, clarity of thought, and bear the touch of a person writing in her own language. Any student who takes this book, and the previous volume, as his guide will be sure to score heavily in the English papers in his examinations. This is thus a book for all students appearing for the School Leaving, Senior Cambridge, or Matriculation examinations of any University in India or the East. Even college students will find the book of great help

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FOREWORD

In this second collection of model essays, I have taken all the titles from past papers of the Cambridge General Certificate of Education at Ordinary level. These titles, and others that can easily be adapted from them, occur again and again in examination papers.

I would like to add a word of advice to Indian students:—write on subjects with which you are familiar. A foreign student whom I was coaching in London, when given this advice, replied: "But I don't want the examiner to know I am not English, or he will be prejudiced against me."

Let me assure you that an examiner who found a well-written account of something quite different from the over-familiar themes of English school essays would be far more likely to be prejudiced in your favour. Examiners are human, and enjoy variety as much as anyone else. So give your essays "local colour" whenever you can.

M. J. M.

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NARRATIVE ESSAYS

A NARROW ESCAPE

It was monsoon time, and Bhanu was the proud possessor of a pair of Wellington boots. To be sure, he was not much drier in them than were his friends who went barefoot, for the rain poured in at the tops and made the insides as wet as the outsides. But, as Bhanu pointed out, they gave him the great advantage of being able to paddle through dithes and pools without danger of cutting his feet or being stung by water creatures. He would not be without them for worlds!

One morning, he and his friend Ganesh were going to school by a road which passed over a level crossing. It was a road that was very little used in monsoon time, since parts of it were frequently flooded. But for that very reason, Bhanu and Ganesh preferred it to any other.

This particular morning, they were having hopping competitions.

"I bet you," said Bhanu at one point, "that I can hop forty from here without putting my foot down."

"Pooh! You couldn't possibly," retorted Ganesh. "It would take you right over the level crossing."

"I don't care," answered Bhanu with bravado, although he had not at first remembered the crossing. "I can do it all the same, and I'm going to begin now." He lifted his left foot from the ground and

began while Ganesh ran beside him counting the hops to make sure there was no cheating.

At the thirty-second hop, Bhanu felt a sharp wrench to his ankle, his heel stuck and he went forward on his hands. Ganesh exulted, for he had won the bet, but he became quickly uneasy when Bhanu did not get up.

"I say," he enquired. "You're not hurt, are you?"

"I can't move my foot," said Bhanu, "and there's an awful pain in it. I must have sprained it."

"Well, I shall have to carry you. You can't stay here. The express comes along in a minute or two, you know. Hop on the other foot, and I'll help you."

But when Bhanu tried to rise, he found that the heel of his Wellington boot had become lodged in the gap between the railway lines, and no amount of pulling would get it out.

"You'll have to pull your foot out and leave the boot behind," said Ganesh, going white in spite of his exertions, when he thought of the approaching train. But the sprained foot had begun to swell and would not come out of the boot. Bhanu felt a cold fear creeping over him.

"Could you run to the signal box and tell them to stop the train?" he said to Ganesh.

Ganesh looked down the line. "I'd never do it," he said. "It's about half a mile away and round a bend. I couldn't possibly get there in time.

Bhanu could see that this was perfectly true.

"We shall have to get the boot out somehow," said Ganesh. "I'll get a stick and lever it up from underneath." He darted to the side of the track and returned with a strong stick. It was too thick to go in the aperture!

Just then they heard the far-off shriek of the train whistle.

Bhanu was suddenly inspired. "A ruler will do it," he shouted. They fumbled in his satchel and produced a ruler. Ganesh slipped it under the heel and gave a great heave. The ruler snapped, but the heel was dislodged. They tumbled in a heap down the side of the embankment. A second later, the express thundered by.

A COUNTRY BUS RIDE

The country bus was as full as it could possibly be packed. Baskets and bundles filled the spaces between the seats. Several passengers had filled the seating spaces with parcels and were themselves sitting on the top, dangling their legs out of the window. The back of the bus was filled with women sitting, some on the seats, some on the floor. Children wriggled and squirmed among the passengers, and were shrilly admonished by their mothers to keep still. Three or four boys were clinging on to the back of the bus, balancing themselves on the bumpers and mudguards.

The driver, who was also the owner of the bus,

had collected the fares as the passengers entered. His system was to wait until he had as many passengers as possible and then to proceed. There was no fixed time for starting.

He looked round at the mob behind him and decided that there was nothing to be gained by waiting any longer. He started the engine, the passengers lurched forward or sideways, and they were off, the noise of the engine vying with the rattle of the body work and the conversation of the passengers as to which could be most deafening.

As soon as the village was left behind, the road degenerated into a couple of deep ruts thickly overlaid with dust. Since the wheels of the bus fitted into the ruts, progress was comparatively smooth, but it was impossible to deviate to the right or left.

Presently, a dense cloud of dust in front showed that the bus was overtaking another vehicle. It was a bullock cart. Piled high with timber. The bus driver hooted vigourously on his horn, but nothing happened. The bullock cart continued at its own leisurely pace in the middle of the road. There was no sign of any human being in charge of it.

Time does not, as a rule, matter very much to an Indian countryman, but money matters a great deal. Most of the bundles and baskets in the bus contained produce to be sold in the market town to which they were going, and to arrive several hours late meant losing customers. So a council of war was held between the driver and the men

nearest him, which resulted in two passengers descending from the bus and going forward to investigate the cause of the stoppage.

The driver of the bullock cart was discovered asleep in the front of his cart. It took several minutes of shouting to convey to him that he must get his cart out of the middle of the road. Then followed a great campaign of beating and slapping of the bullocks and pushing of the cart by volunteers from the bus, and eventually, with horrible jolts and thuds, the bus got itself out of its ruts sufficiently to pass the cart and proceed.

Looking back, the passengers could see the unfortunate bullock cart driver struggling single-handed to get his animals back on to the road with their heavy wagon. But that was his business, and nobody spared him any sympathy.

The morning was now quite well advanced, and it was growing very hot. Conversation died down, and those whose positions were not too acutely uncomfortable went to sleep. Soon the bus came out on to a metalled road, and progress was smoother. The driver put on speed and the vehicle rushed at a frightening pace in and out of the growing traffic.

Now the road was bordered on each side by houses and shops, and in a very short time, the bus drew up in the market place where the commerce of the day was in full swing. The passengers disentangled their limbs and their luggage and emerged to do the business for which they had come. The bus journey was over.

A JOURNEY THROUGH FOG

It was a winter Saturday afternoon. I had travelled on my bicycle from the village where I live to the neighbouring town to see a film. It had been a dull day when I entered the cinema, but not different from the majority of cloudy days in England. I was therefore considerably disturbed on coming out of the cinema at dusk to find that the buildings on the other side of the streets were merely blurs of misty light from the illuminated shop windows, and that it was impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction.

The journey home was not going to be pleasant. However, I knew no-one in the town well enough to invite myself as a guest for the night, so I retrieved my bicycle from where I had parked it, and set off.

While I was in the streets of the town my way was fairly simple. Traffic was certainly not as heavy as usual, but there was enough to give me a feeling of companionship. But when I had left the last house behind me, I might have been alone

in the universe. There was not a sound except for the whirring of the hubs of my bicycle. My lamp shone on to a thick white wall of impenetrable fog. It was quite useless as far as lighting my way was concerned, and I had to keep my eyes on the road beneath my feet to be sure that I was still on the tarmac.

I knew the road very well, and felt confident that I could follow it home, even under these conditions. But after a little while, I began to bump over uneven ground, and I hastily dismounted to reconnoitre my position.

I could see nothing, but my feet told me that the road surface was not that of a smooth main road. There were ruts and pot-holes in abundance. Somehow I must have strayed into a lane. I tried hard to remember whether there were any lanes branching off from the road which would correspond to my position on it at this stage of the journey, but nothing seemed to fit in. I decided to go back.

I turned the bicycle and walked with one hand on the handlebars and the other extended to my left. In a few moments, this left hand encountered branches. I was walking into a hedge. I altered my direction a little, and a second or two later, the front wheel of the bicycle struck something and bounced back so that I almost lost my hold on the handlebar. A feeling of panic seized me. I seemed to have got into some enclosed space. If I could have used both hands, I might have felt my way more successfully, but I was afraid to put the bicycle down lest I could not find it again.

I stood for a moment or two uncertain how to proceed. Then I edged myself round to feel what the front wheel had stuck. It was a fence—a strong, well-made wooden fence such as people put round their gardens. Suddenly I realised where I was—not in a lane, but in the approach to a private house. This was certainly more hopeful, for if I could locate the house, the householder might be able to put me back on the road and give me some idea where I was.

I moved cautiously along the fence, hoping that I was not damaging any precious flower-beds, and presently felt my feet on a gravel path. This was much better. A minute or two more brought me to a stone wall, and here I could faintly discern the light of a curtained window. I did some rapid calculation which helped me to arrive at the front door. How pleased I was when my hand closed on the knocker. I beat a brisk tattoo on it, and then stood quaking outside while dreadful thoughts of possible thieves, murderers, gangs of coiners, dope-runners, and all the other villains of school-boy fiction flooded over me. But when the door opened, a friendly middle-aged woman stood in the opening.

A few minutes later, I was seated in a cheerful room by a warm fire telling my adventures, and when I had been thoroughly warmed and refreshed, the master of the house, a farmer, took me along the road until I had arrived at a place from which I was certain of my home. So my journey ended without mishap.

A MORNING WAIT ON A COUNTRY RAILWAY STATION

I had been lucky enough to spend a week-end with some friends who had a bungalow in the hills not far from Bombay. The little mountain train went down to the plains early in the morning, so on Monday morning, I went to the tiny station where I could join it on its journey down.

The world was remarkably quiet and cool at the early hour. The sun had just risen, and was casting long shadows to the westward, so that a great patch of ground at the foot of the hills, and all their western slopes were still in shade. Further off, one could see the glint of water, as a tank or canal caught the reflection of the mounting sun, and right on the skyline, I could sometimes think I saw the sea.

There was hardly any movement taking place in the countryside around me. A road which wound its way down the hillside, showed its white dusty surface between the bushes and burnt grass, and now again I could see a small group of travellers who were walking down. Two women in red saris made a moving splash of colour, reappearing every so often as the road came into view. Some goats browsed among the rocks behind the station, but everything else seemed asleep.

Then the signal moved, heralding the approach of the train, and away to the north, a plume of smoke from the engine appeared above the trees.

Immediately the morning peace was rudely broken. People and animals appeared as if by magic from the deserted landscape. The station master emerged from his house, buttoning his coat; a couple of coolies who had been sleeping in the goods shed began to run up the platform with a truck full of luggage, shouting warning cries to ensure that nobody would get in their way (though I was the only passenger).

But the greatest commotion was round the train itself. As it approached at its usual leisurely pace, I could see that it was accompanied on both sides of the line by hoardes of children, both boys and girls. Most of the boys wore only loin cloths, or dirty, torn shorts. The girls were in dresses or saris of varying degrees of dirt and dilapidation. Many of them carried smaller children on their backs. All with one accord kept up a continual, high-pitched shriek of "Sahib, baksheesh, baksheesh, sahib." Some had bunches of flowers clasped in their grubby hands, which they tried to thrust upon the unwilling passengers through the train windows.

The hill rose very steeply just above the station, so the line made a great curve in order to take the gradient more gradually. This provided an opportunity for those of the children who had lost their breath, and failed to keep up with the racing, screaming crowd. They waited till they could breath again, and then scrambled down the almost perpendicular hillside to meet the train again as it came round the bend beneath them.

The train pulled into the station. The air was

filled with the hissing of steam, the banging of doors, the clatter of luggage being loaded, and the shrieking of the attendant children. I mounted into a fairly empty compartment, the train moved on, quickly outstripping its attendant beggars, and except for the rhythmic bump of the wheels, all was again quiet.

MY EXPERIENCES AS A COLLECTOR

I began my collection almost by accident. Among the Christmas cards sent to my family that year was a very beautiful reproduction of a Botticelli Madonna. The card had come through the post without receiving any mark or crease, so I decided to frame it and hang it in my room.

It was, of course, only small, but when I took it to a shop to enquire the price of a frame, I found it was far more than I could manage from my pocket money. I was very disappointed, but I was to be glad later that I had not been rich enough at that moment to buy just what I wanted. For when I explained matters to the shopkeeper, he suggested that I might make a frame for my picture with Passe-partout. He sold me a roll of this stuff, a glass cutter and a box of rings for only a fraction of what a frame would have cost me. I remembered seeing a broken sheet of thin glass in an outhouse at home, and felt sure I would be allowed to have it. Then all I needed was some

stiff card for backing, and that was not very difficult to find.

After a couple of attempts, I succeeded in framing my picture. But I had so much material left that it occurred to me to start a private collection of pictures. After that, I always had my eyes open for pictures suitable to frame, at prices suitable for my pocket. My first picture had set a very high standard, and I determined to concentrate on reproductions of the great works of art. Sometimes I found pictures in magazines, but these were generally in black and white, not colour. I debated whether or not to include these in my collection, and in the end decided that I would hang such prints on a different wall of my room, and keep those in full colour in the place of honour.

One day I had a magnificent windfall. I was looking through some prints in an art-shop, hoping to find something both cheap and desirable, when the dealer offered me an old illustrated catalogue that had become too ragged and out-of-date for use. In this were numbers of coloured reproductions of great pictures. Most of them were very small, but they stimulated my search for prints by teaching me what to look for. And one or two of the illustrations were large enough for me to cut out and frame, so my "coloured wall" grew in beauty.

Beneath each picture in this catalogue was a little paragraph about the picture, telling the date, birthplace of the artist and the gallery in which the original was hung. This led me to look out for books about the artists and the galleries. I started a private gallery catalogue of my own,

—an exercise book in which I wrote all I could find about each of the pictures in my collection.

One day, an uncle whom we see very rarely came to visit us. He was very interested in my collection and promised to help me. Since then I have received a picture from him every year on my birthday. I now have ten coloured pictures and twenty-three black and white—and the collection is still growing.

A QUICK DECISION

Everybody has heard of Tower Bridge in London, but there cannot be many people who have had so exciting an experience as I had in connection with it.

The peculiarity of this bridge is that it opens in the middle to allow tall ships to pass up the river. When this operation is about to happen, a bell rings to warn all traffic to vacate the bridge. One morning, I was riding on the front seat of the top deck of a bus whose route crossed Tower Bridge. On approaching the bridge from the south, I noticed that the road across it was quite empty, but this did not strike me as very extraordinary, for the route is not used as much as any of the other bridges across the Thames.

We were just approaching the centre of the bridge when, to my horror, I saw a narrow but distinct fissure right across the road! The bridge was opening.

Horrible visions rushed across my mind. I imagined that I could already feel the bus beginning to tilt towards the rear. As the bridge rose, we should be hurled backwards to destruction. The driver would have no chance of steering his vehicle in reverse while the road rose through an arc of forty-five degrees. We should undoubtedly be hurled into the river, where we would be trapped in the wreckage of the bus.

I shut my eyes and clung with hands to my seat, waiting for the inevitable crash. Suddenly I become aware that we were travelling rapidly, not backwards but forwards. I opened my eyes and began to look about me. Through the front window of the bus I could see a broad road running downhill, clear of traffic and perfectly negotiable. I began to think I was dreaming, and turned to look back. The road rose behind the bus and stopped abruptly in mid-air. The tower of the south bank could be seen behind it in the distance.

Then I realised what had happened. The driver must have made a quick decision that had saved our lives. He had taken his bus over the opening in the bridge while it was still narrow enough to be jumped: then the vehicle was at least facing downhill and could be driven quickly forward and off the bridge.

This, in fact, was what had happened, We arrived at the next stopping place with no damage beyond tensed nerves, but I shall never again think of Tower Bridge without realising that I owe my life to the quick decision of the driver who put his foot on the accelerator and not on the brake when he saw a chasm yawning before him.

THE STORY OF AN EXPERIENCE THAT WAS NOT AS BAD AS I EXPECTED

My first music examination gave me sleepless nights for weeks beforehand. I had not begun to learn music very young, which was, in some respects, a pity, for I noticed that the little children had no nerves at all, but walked happily into "the lion's den", played their little pieces, and came out again, smiling. But I was fourteen, and had never taken a music examination before. I felt a terrible sense of responsibility. How dreadful it would be if I failed where these younger children were succeeding! My parents and my teacher would lose all their faith in me.

I felt all my fingers becoming stiff, and everything I knew was escaping from me. I had practised very carefully, and could play my pieces on the piano at home without wrong notes, and with real enjoyment. I had taken pleasure also in finding out information about the composers, but how was I going to pass on this knowledge to a terrifyingly unknown man?

I sat in the waiting room clasping my music case and feeling my fingers and toes grow colder and colder, although it was a hot day. Two very sophisticated girls of about seventeen were chatting unconcernedly at the other side of the room. I tried to listen to what they were saying, but I could not concentrate on anything but the dull ache in the pit of my stomach. Was I going to be sick? That would be the ultimate indignity.

At last my turn came. There was a mirror opposite the door in which I saw a reflection of myself as I entered. I could hardly recognise the white-faced girl who confronted me in the glass.

A tall man in his shirt-sleeves was sitting at a table writing. He stood up when I came in, called me by name and shook hands with a smile.

"I hope you will forgive my taking my coat off," he said. "I am not used to your climate and feel the heat very much. I suppose you find it quite ordinary?"

I found myself telling him that I was quite cold with fright. He laughed almost boisterously, and mopped his forehead with a large handkerchief.

"Try what a chocolate will do," he suggested. "I believe they are quite warming."

He offered me a lovely box which had rows of of all sorts of delicious chocolates. He told me which had hard centres, and which had cream, and asked me which I preferred. I chose a nougat and put it into my mouth.

"Well, you won't be able to talk for at least three minutes while you are eating that," he said, "so you had better play over a piece while I finish adding these figures." He sat down at the table and appeared to forget all about me.

I played the piece that I knew by heart. I was thinking mainly of the chocolate, and my fingers found the familiar notes without much conscious guidence from me. At the end, I was surprised to find my fright had disappeared. I played the other pieces, and even answered the examiner's questions

without any panic or discomfort. The chocolate must have had magic qualities, for even my feeling of sickness had disappeared.

Almost before I realised it, I was shaking hands again and then going out of the room.

"How did you get on?" asked my mother, when I arrived home.

"It wasn't nearly as bad as I expected," I replied cheerfully, "I think I shall enter for another one next year."

DESCRIBE A FAMILY FUNCTION AT WHICH A HUMOUROUS OR PATHETIC INCIDENT OCCURRED IN WHICH YOU PLAYED A PART

It was the Golden Wedding of Grandfather and Grandmother. All the family was to be gathered together to celebrate. Luckily, Grandfather's house was large, for besides our family of four children, and my uncle's family of three, there were several aunts and remote cousins that we did not really know. Some had spent most of their lives abroad, but on this auspicious occasion, they were all going to be gathered in. Grandfather said it was his Harvest Home.

We four know our three cousins—Uncle Jim's children—very well, for we live near enough to visit each other frequently. Several weeks before the day of the Golden Wedding, we met together and decided that we ought to do something special

to mark the occasion, and after much thought, we decided to act a play. We wrote the play ourselves, and I was to take the part of Grandmother.

We took great pains over that play. Our costumes were really quite impressive, and we knew our lines beautifully. The only worrying thing was my obstinately youthful appearance. I have very dark hair, and do what I would, I could not make it look grandmotherly.

"You ought to wear a wig," said my brother Tom. "You'll never get that mane of hair to look like an old lady's."

"But wigs are so expensive," I sighed. "None of us has enough money even to hire, let alone to buy one." So we reluctantly left it at that.

The day before the celebration, we all travelled to Grandfather's house. It was late afternoon when we arrived, and the evening was full of meeting strange uncles and aunts, and finding our way about the house. There were so many people there that we were all rather vague about who everybody was. There was one rather austere maiden lady, —Aunt Mary—whom none of us had met before. She was my father's eldest sister. The eldest daughter has always been called Mary in our family, and so I, as the eldest in our branch of the family, was called after her. She held some important post abroad and had not been home for many years. We were all a little frightened of her.

On the morning of the celebration, we children were all up early. The play was going to be given after the family luncheon where the presents and speeches and health-drinking took place. I was

in the hall when the postman came, and to my surprise, there was a parcel for me. It had a type-written label:

Miss Mary Scott,
C/o Amberly Scott, Esq.

(That was Grandfather's name.) I ran off to my room to open it, and revealed a cardboard box in which was a most beautifully curled grey wig. Delightedly, I showed it to my sister.

"Look," I said, "Someone must have heard us saying we needed a wig, and they've sent the very thing. Now I shall really look the part when we do the play."

"We won't tell the others," she suggested. "Let it be a surprise when you appear."

We children were all sent out for a walk after breakfast so as not to hamper the grownups in their preparations for the luncheon. We came back just in time to wash our hands and then gather in the dining room for the function.

It was a magnificent luncheon, and when it was over, we all gave presents to our grandparents, and several of the elders made speeches. But for us children, the highlight of the day was our play. We left the older people to their coffee and cigarettes, and went to prepare.

In theatre programmes, there is usually a list of the actors, labelled: "Characters in order of their appearance."

If we had a programme, my name would have come last, as I did not appear till the action was

well under way . . I came in slowly, leaning on my stick, and feeling really old and grandmotherly in my long grey dress and beautiful wig.

Suddenly, an irate voice spoke from the audience:

"Good gracious! The child's got my new wig. Where on earth—?"

Then someone said "Sh-sh!" and there was a whispered conversation, and then silence. The play went on.

You can guess what had happened! I had entirely forgotten that I was not the only Miss Mary Scott in the household. Aunt Mary, who had lost her hair in a serious illness and had to wear a wig, had ordered a new one for this occasion, and had been very cross that it was not delivered in time. I had to make my very humble apologies, but it was some time before Aunt Mary was mollified.

It was Grandmother who put my mind at rest after this very awkward situation.

"You made a very good grandmother, Mary," she said, "and I, for one, am glad that your part wasn't spoilt for lack of the proper costume, even if you did acquire it by mistake."

IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE TRAVELLING IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY, AND THAT ON THE WAY THERE IS A BREAKDOWN OR ACCIDENT WHICH MAKES FURTHER TRAVEL IN THE WAY YOU INTENDED IMPOSSIBLE. DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED ON YOUR JOURNEY, AND HOW YOU REACHED YOUR DESTINATION

My uncle, who is a Government engineer, frequently has to stay for several days in very remote places, camping out in the Inspection Bungalows that have been built in the country districts of India for this purpose. One May, when I was about fourteen, he had his headquarters at Dapoli, a small village on the mainland of India almost due east of Bombay, and my father decided to take my brother and me to pay him a visit.

We set out by car very early on Saturday morning, and very glad we were to leave the heat and clamour of the great city. It is a peculiarity of travel in Bombay that in whatever direction your ultimate direction lies, you must begin by travelling due north, for there is only one place where Bombay island is joined to the mainland. We set off therefore through the northern suburbs and over Sion causeway, and thence to Thana, nearly twenty miles before we could turn right across the bridge over the creek that brings the great pipe line into Bombay. Once over it, we turned right again and went south along the main road to Poona.

This is an exciting road with massive hills on the right separating the road from the creek. We followed it until our speedometer showed that we had covered fifty miles since we left home. Here, at Panvel, we left the Poona road and turned right, having only another two miles to go to Dapoli.

Here the surface of the road was poor, with deep ruts and clouds of dust. If any vehicle passed, it was several minutes before we could see anything through the dust-cloud that it threw up. We were in the middle of one of these dust clouds, when a bus, travelling much too fast, and heavily overloaded as country buses in India always are, came hurtling out of the murk towards us. Father tried to swerve, but as the car was in a rut it would not respond to the turn of the wheel. There was a horrible rending and crashing sound and a sickening jolt. Then we stopped.

Our first reaction was thankfulness that none of us was hurt. But when we saw the car, we were not so cheerful. The off-side front wing was ripped right off and the wheel buckled. It was impossible to drive it any further. Luckily we had only a mile to walk to our uncle's headquarters—a hot and dusty mile, but we managed it without much difficulty, and were glad of a rest and cool drinks on the verandah of the Dak bungalow.

Then came the question, how were we to get home. Uncle could arrange to have the car collected for repair, but it would take some time, and we had not come prepared to stay overnight. Besides, my mother would be very worried if we did not return. Then Uncle made a delightful suggestion.

"You'd better go back by sea," he said. "There's sure to be a dhow going across at low tide from Ulwa Bandar. It's only thirteen miles from there to Bombay, although you've covered over fifty to do the journey by land."

We went the two miles to Ulwa Bandar in one of the local buses, a ramshackle affair crowded with country people and their bundles. It is a delightful little port, full of the boats we call "country craft", boats that differ hardly at all in pattern from those that have navigated this creek for a thousand years or more. As we stood on the quayside, we could see clearly the skyline of Bombay away to the west.

My uncle bargained with a boatman who consented to take us as passengers. We stepped aboard the romantic looking vessel with its great sail made of hundreds of little patches, and its skinny, bare-legged crew in their tight-fitting jackets and round woollen caps. We had to hold our noses at first because of the overpowering smell of stale fish, but when we got out into the breeze, it was less noticeable.

The boatman had given no guarantee of a quick crossing. "If the wind holds," he said, "we can do it in three hours, but if it drops, we may not arrive till tomorrow afternoon." We were lucky, for it did hold, and we had a delightful evening. The sun went down behind Bombay, throwing into sharp silhouette the domes and towers of the city. The sky turned a deep ultramarine, and became dotted with stars. At about eight o'clock we drew into Apollo Bunder, and were delighted

to find some friends of ours taking the air there, and to see how surprised they were to see us landing from so strange a vessel.

Accidents are usually undesirable occurrences, but one which provided the opportunity for such a trip could only be called fortunate.

A DAY WHEN EVERYTHING WENT WRONG

Of course it was a Tuesday! All the bad things that have ever happened to me have come on Tuesdays. When I was at school, I could never spell that word. Somehow it always wrote itself TEUSDAY, in spite of all the occasions when I had written it out three times as a correction at the end of an exercise. So I think the presiding genius of that day had a grudge against me.

This particular Tuesday was the end of a long week-end when my wife had been away to visit her mother. I was on holiday too, so it appeared quite a simple arrangement. She was to come by train to the junction fifteen miles away, and I was to fetch her in the car. The train arrived at the junction at 3 p.m. There was ample time to get the house straight in the morning, provide something for supper and make the pleasant journey through the countryside in the early afternoon.

Doing housework is, of course, merely a matter of routine. There is nothing to it, once you know

the ropes. But somehow, when your wife is away, the house seems to get into an unusual mess. I looked round on Monday evening, when the fellows who had dropped in for a smoke and a chat had gone, and decided I had better do a bit of cleaning up. I didn't like the look of all that dirty crockery in the sink, and there was a quantity of cigarette ash all over the sitting room, and someone had spilt some beer over a satin cushion. That could all be dealt with on Tuesday morning. I would get up early.

I was awakened, as it turned out, by a tremendous peal on the doorbell. My watch said ten o'clock. I must have forgotten to wind it the night before. But no, it appeared to be going. The doorbell pealed again, and I rushed downstairs. It was a telegram from my wife saying: "Train time changed arrive junction 1 p.m. bringing mother for a week love Mary."

My long Tuesday morning had been telescoped in one blow into something quite inadequate. I began to panic. No time for breakfast. A cigarette while I did the washing-up would have to do instead. I lit one, and turned on the hot tap. The water came steadily cold. The boiler must have gone out. I remembered now that I should have stoked it last night. I opened the boiler door and found it choked with dead cinders. I put the cigarette down on the draining board while I raked out the mess. Clouds of dust came out and settled over everything.

"It's high time some of these scientists stopped bothering with atom bombs and began to invent

something that would do the washing-up without all this palaver," I thought as I struggled on. There were no sticks chopped. I seized a piece of wood and the chopper, aimed a heavy blow at the wood, missed, and grazed the side of my right foot. I was wearing soft slippers that were no protection at all. In two seconds, streams of blood began to flow over the wood-shed floor.

With admirable self-control, I put down the chopper and limped indoors. My first steps left a trail of blood, so I wrapped my foot up in a tea-towel—the only thing available. It was by no means clean, and I thought bitterly that I should probably get gangrene.

It took no end of a time to stop that bleeding and get myself bandaged up. As I came down-stairs from the bathroom, I sniffed suspiciously. There was distinct smell of burning coming from the kitchen. Had the boiler lighted itself? No such luck! It was the cigarette that had burnt itself out on the draining board, leaving a deep groove of charred wood. Whatever would Mary say?

It was at this point that I remembered that I had taken advantage of my wife's absence to turn the spare room into a workshop. I had rolled up the carpet and rigged up quite a useful sort of bench by putting a large board over the bed. Then I had taken to pieces a radio that I had picked up cheap and intended to re-condition. If Mary's mother was going to sleep in that bed tonight, something would have to be done about it.

I turned my back on the kitchen and all its chaos and went upstairs. It was then that I had the one stroke of luck of that otherwise unutterable Tuesday. I saw through the window the "lady who obliges" just going away from the house opposite. I threw open the window and called her. Could she possibly give me two or three hours of her valuable time? She could, and did. Secure in the sounds of dishes being washed and boilers being lighted by an expert hand, I made short work of the workshop in the spare bedroom. You could hardly tell that it had ever existed.

I need scarcely say that I had a puncture on the way to the station; but apart from that the malevolence of the spirit of Tuesday seemed to have worn itself out. I concealed my inability to provide a meal by taking my wife and her mother to the cinema with supper in a restaurant afterwards. That, and the fee of the lady help cost me a pretty penny. But it was worth it.

DESCRIPTIVE ESSAYS

VISITING RELATIVES

I have lived all my life in a big city, but my father, as a young man, lived in a village in the foothills of the Himalayas, and his relatives are still there, still living in the old house that belonged to their ancestors. Sometimes, during the long school holidays, I go to see my hill cousins, and for a time I live a life quite different from the urban existence to which I am accustomed.

The house where my relatives live is a large, rambling one. There is a central court with a fountain in the middle of it, but the fountain no longer plays. All round the courtyard is a deep verandah from which a flight of stone steps goes up at each corner to the first floor.

My grandmother is the head of the household, but three of her sons and their families live in the house as well. My youngest uncle's wife is only a very little older than I am. Her name is Phulmati. She was spinning on her verandah when I first met her. She was a pretty, shy girl, with two long plaits falling from under her bluey-green head-veil. She wore the hill-woman's costume of a tight bodice and very full skirt with a broad black band round the border.

Phulmati took me to her room off the first-floor verandah. It was very sparsely furnished with two string charpoys, several tin boxes, and a line across

one corner on which to hang clothes. On the verandah outside it was a white covered mattress on which Phulmati sat to spin. This was the outer verandah of the house, and from it there was a magnificent view of the hills beyond. I could not help comparing Phulmati's room with mine. Mine, at home, was on the second floor of a block of flats. It was furnished in modern fashion with a wooden bed, dressing table and wardrobe, and had dainty curtains at the windows. But there was no verandah, and the view was of another block of flats about a dozen yards away.

Everybody in my relatives' house was expected to pay great respect to my grandmother. When her husband was alive, he was the most important person in the village, and hardly a day went by without several people coming into the courtyard to ask his advice or to bring some little present or to pay some debt. Now he was dead, they continued to come, and my grandmother always had advice to give, or a scolding to those who were not conducting their lives as she thought they should. She knew everyone in the village, and all their private affairs, and woe-betide anyone whose ways of life did not fit in with my grandmother's ideas!

All the girls in the family, and those in the village too, treated me as an object of great curiosity, because I was fifteen, and still going to school. "When are you going to get a husband?" they asked, and I could tell that they thought my father was a very bad parent to have left me so long without arranging a marriage. But grandmother

unexpectedly took my part and told them to leave me alone. "Padmani will have as fine sons as any of you some day. You wait and see what will happen when she has passed all these examinations she is studying for!"

I laughed and said I hoped I should pass them successfully. But when the holiday was over, I often thought of my uncle's wife, Phulmati, and the life she was leading in that remote village, while I struggled with my bookish problems in the heat and noise of the city.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE CIRCUS

From the point of view of the circus proprietor, the arrival of his show in a town is very important, for it acts as an advertisement. The foretaste of its delights will draw everyone to the "Big Top" to see animals, acrobats and clowns in full performance. It is also very important to the children of the town, for it is their only chance of seeing the show for nothing.

Sometimes the procession is led by a handsomely dressed warrior on a beautiful horse. He blows a trumpet to attract our attention, and soon the word goes round that the circus is coming and the road is filled with admiring spectators. This is as it should be, for a procession is nothing without an audience! We squeeze ourselves into a good position and wait breathlessly for the next part of the procession.

It is the elephants! There are five of them, plodding along with rather bored expressions, and waving their long trunks from side to side. Each one has a rider perched very high up on his steed's neck. We gaze in envy and admiration, and wonder whether there is any hope that our parents might consider elephant riding as a suitable career for us to adopt. While we are lost in delightful imaginings the elephants pass and the horses arrive.

They are magnificent creatures, glossy and shining and gay with nodding plumes and jingling harness. The riders are as noble and unusual as the horses. They wear magnificent uniforms with gold and scarlet braid across their chests and with plumes in their helmets to match those on the horses' heads. The horses step very high and the riders have unbelievably straight backs. They hardly seem to belong to our ordinary world, and we gaze at them in awe and admiration.

Then follows a lorry, bearing the lions' cage open to view. There are five lions. Four of them are sitting lazily in the cage taking no notice of their surroundings; but one is prowling round and round, growling now and again at the crowd. The sight of his great open mouth is terrifying. We are not surprised to see a little girl near us bury her face in her mother's skirts, and we almost wish we were small enough to do the same ourselves. With what relief we turn to the next part of the procession—the clowns!

There are three clowns; one has a bicycle, one a donkey, and the third has nothing but his own

feet. The one with the bicycle is dressed in white with black pompoms and a pointed hat. He does not seem to be a very good rider, for he falls off very frequently, and sometimes rides into the crowd or gets on backwards when he is remounting. The one with the donkey is very tall and thin; his legs reach the ground on each side. Sometimes he seems to be walking with the donkey between his legs; sometimes he twists those long legs as though they were India rubber, and does all sorts of queer antics with the donkey—quite unperturbed —as his base. The third clown is dressed in a ragged pair of check trousers, and a bright yellow pull-over. He carries a "sceptre" of balloons tied to a stick and darts in and out of the crowd making jokes and distributing leaflets about the times of the performance.

Last of all comes the band in gorgeous uniforms with brass instruments gleaming in the sun. They play a stirring march, and all the little boys who can escape from their parents fall in behind them and form a tail to the procession. They go off into the distance and we sigh a sigh of satisfaction, slightly edged with apprehension lest our parents should, for any reason, refuse to take us to a full performance of this delightful entertainment.

A RAILWAY JOURNEY

My family lives for most of the year in Bombay, but nearly every year we are lucky enough to go to the hills for the hot weather. It is a time to

which all the family looks forward with delight. Even the journey, though dreaded by the grown-ups, is enjoyed by us children.

It is a long journey. We board the train in the late afternoon, taking food for three days, and a large pot of water to keep us cool during the hot, dusty journey. Each member of the family has a bedding roll, and we hope there will not be many people in the carriage so that we can get room to spread our beds and sleep in comfort.

For the first few hours, the shutters are closed on the carriage windows and we see very little, but when the sun goes down they are opened, and we see that we have left the town far behind and are out in the vast, brown, scorched country, with here and there the vivid glory of the flame-of-the-forest contrasting with the universal brown.

It is dark in a few minutes, but soon we stop at a wayside station. The darkness is gemmed all along the platform with little spiky lights from the trays of the sellers of fruit and sweets. A man comes along the length of the train, calling "Ghu-rum char! ghurum char!" and we all hold out our brass beakers to be filled with hot, sweet tea that is so refreshing. A number of men passengers get out of the train and cool themselves under the pump on the platform. You can hear the clank-clank of its handle being worked up and down. But the women sit still in the carriages and draw their saris well over their heads to shield them from the curiosity of strangers who stare into the compartment.

A man comes to the carriage window with a tray full of little dolls, each about three inches high, modelled and dressed to represent the different trades and occupations of India. My little sister Shanti is charmed with them and begs my parents to buy her a set. Father is feeling generous and agrees to do so, and Shanti is rapturously happy with her new toy.

The clanging of the station bell brings all the passengers back to the train, and we set off once more. It is now time to settle down for the night, but I am too excited to sleep much. I listen to the regular beat of the train wheels, and note by the reflected light on the roof of the carriage whether we are passing through a station or town. Sometimes there is bright light and the roar of a siren, and a mail train passes us in the opposite direction. But for the most part we go on steadily and monotonously covering mile after mile of lonely country.

At last, I fall asleep, and wake to find that daylight has come and that my parents are making preparations for the morning meal. This second day of the journey always seems very long. We are tired after the excitement of yesterday, and beginning to feel very cramped from being confined so long to a small space. There is nothing very new to see, for we go on travelling through hot, dusty plains, with no excitement to relieve the monotony.

The third day begins more propitiously, for we arrive early in the morning in Delhi. It is almost cold in the first dawn. We disembark from the

train with all our luggage, and try to get Father to take us into the city. Sometimes he agrees and hires a gharry in which we ride proudly round, looking at the wonderful buildings. But sometimes we have to sit dolefully on the station until the next train comes in.

The next lap is a short one, and spent almost entirely in sleep. We tumble out of the train while it is still dark and cross the platform to the mountain railway which is to take us climbing up and up, through tunnel after tunnel, round innumerable bends and turns, up and up out of the heat and dust of the plains to an entirely different world. Here, the air is chilly, the foliage is green and fresh; every road runs round the side of a hill and has a precipitous fall on one side, and from the ridges, we can see the Himalayan snows.

Our railway journey is at an end.

A MAN AT WORK

It is always interesting to watch other people working, especially if it is the sort of work one never does oneself. A man I can always watch for hours is the man who works the sugar-cane press.

The press is a kind of mangle, the rollers of which are kept turning by a couple of bullocks harnessed to a beam. They parade round and round on a circular track worn by their own constantly returning hooves. The man keeps them

moving by an occasional flick to their tails while he feeds the cane into the press.

The cane is brought in by bullock carts straight from the fields where it is cut, and piled up in open spaces round the press. The man puts in two or three canes at a time, placing a second lot in when the first lot has passed in about two feet, so that there is a continuous stream of cane going through the machine. The juice, thin and green, runs out into a container underground, and the pith emerges flat and brittle at the other end.

On a busy day, the ground is thick with the crushed pulp drying in the hot sun. The sticky, sweet odour of the juice fills the sweet air, and there are clouds of flies getting what nourishment they can out of what remains.

Some people like to drink the juice as it comes fresh from the cane, but there is a further process to watch if one is interested. This is the cooking of the liquid which is often done on the spot. A furnace of mud walls is constructed and a series of flat iron pans placed on brick ledges of ascending height, so that the complete arrangement is like a staircase. The juice is placed first in the highest pan because it is farthest away from the fire. The squashed and flattened pulp provides the fuel for the fire, so nothing is wasted.

As the juice cooks, a thick scum forms on the top. The man in charge then skims this off and puts it in a lower pan where it continues to cook at a higher temperature. Each pan, therefore, has a thicker mixture than the one above, and the lowest

pan has a thick, brown toffee-substance with a delicious warm smell.

When this boiling process takes place, as it often does, in a village of Northern India in the cold weather of winter, the furnace is one of the pleasantest spots in the village, especially after nightfall when the glow from the fire makes it delightful to look at as well as to feel and to smell. It is small wonder therefore, that the man who works it is watched by many a villager squatting round the glowing fire, pulling at his hookah, or chatting of the day's doings.

A VISIT TO A POPULAR CAFE

One of the chief delights of having a meal at a popular café is the sense of luxury and importance it gives to its patrons. At home, the need for economy is ever with us. The things we eat and the place we eat in are not those of our dreams; they are those which can be afforded out of our meagre income. But when we go to a café, everything is on a grand scale. Electric light bulbs glow by the dozen instead of in single globes; cakes, fruits and sweets rise in mountains from the counters; cups and plates abound; waiters move about gratifying our slightest whim. Each member of the family can choose a different dish without causing undue pressure on the kitchen. We are indeed in a word of riches.

To make a visit to a café really satisfactory, we

should, of course, go in a taxi. Then as it draws up outside the brightly lit portals, the gorgeously uniformed commissionaire with his row of medals (for all commissionaires are war heroes!) throws open the taxi door and courteously assists us to alight. We wait self-consciously on the pavement while Father pays the driver, hoping that some of our acquaintances may be passing humbly on foot on the other side of the street, to observe our glory.

As we pass through the doors held open for us, the rich, romantic strains of the orchestra thrill our senses. An aristocratic looking gentleman in evening dress enquires the number in our party and leads us to a table decorated with flowers and set with sparkling cutlery. If one of the family member is too young to reach the table with comfort, he hastens to bring a special chair into which the small patron is deferentially lifted by an attendant waiter.

Then comes the exciting moment of choosing what we are to eat. The early part of the menu is usually passed over without interest; it contains such utilitarian items as soup, fish, and joints, all of which we are given at home with monotonous regularity. The thrilling part of the bill of fare is that marked "Sundries" where the young can find unusual and indigestible dishes such as their souls love. Of course, the "bonne bouche" is an ice-cream of some sort, preferably one of those highly coloured confections in a tall glass, bubbling and frosty, with two long straws protruding from the top. The youngest member of the family

is usually too low of stature to place his (or her) mouth conveniently at the higher extremity of the straw, and has to stand or kneel on the seat in order to arrive at the required height. But this trifling adjustment of posture merely adds to the excitement of the experience.

We sit a long time over our meal, far longer than at home, when meals are rushed through as quickly as parental authority will allow, in order to get on with more interesting pursuits. The orchestra changes from waltz to tango, and from tango to romantic ballad. Sometimes there is a crooner who makes noises that no music master would allow in a singing class, and we wonder vaguely why it is that things punishable at school receive great applause in the adult world. But such puzzles do not worry us for long. There is another taxi ride to come. The commissionaire will blow a blast on his shrill whistle, and like magic, the taxi will draw up besides the curb and we shall all crowd in.

Tomorrow we shall be ordinary humble people again, walking or taking a bus to school, and eating plain, wholesome food in the family dining room. But today we have sojourned on Olympus; we are gods, not men.

A VISITOR FROM A FOREIGN LAND HAS ARRIVED IN YOUR COUNTRY ON THE 1st OF JANUARY TO STAY FOR A YEAR. DESCRIBE TO HIM THE CHANGES OF CLIMATE HE IS LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE DURING HIS STAY

Have you come from England? You could not have arrived in Bombay at a better time. The weather is perfect just now. It is what we call the cold weather, but you will find it as warm as the warmest of your summer days. Where we have an advantage over you is that we know that the sun will shine all day and every day. We can arrange picnics and excursions with no fear of their being spoilt by rain.

You can have a magnificent time in Bombay in January. In the early morning and in the evening, there is a fresh breeze so that it is quite pleasant to walk in the country to the north of the city. There are lovely views of the sea, for we are a sea-encircled city with the Arabian Sea to the west and the great harbour to the east, running inland for twenty miles. Wherever you go there is water. To the east, across the harbour, the mountains of the Western Ghats rise to the sky, and in between you can see every kind of craft from great liners and the trim vessels of the Indian Navy to the picturesque dhows and the little fishing vessels such as have sailed those waters for centuries.

Our gardens are full of flowers just now and our grass is still green, especially where it has been carefully watered. Roses in January! That will

seem strange to you. It is a good month too, for strawberries. The fruit sellers will come to your door with luscious baskets of them.

Make the most of January and February, for when March comes you will begin to feel the heat. By the time April arrives, you will need an electric fan day and night, and you will be lucky if your house faces west so that you have the advantage of the sea breeze.

In May, you will probably think the heat intolerable. If you have to wait in the street for a bus, it is almost impossible to stand on the hot pavement in the glare of the sun; you will have to find a doorway under which to shelter. Even the shortest walk makes you so hot that your clothes are wet through. You have to change completely every time you come home. I advise you to spend all the time you can on one of the lovely beaches some miles north of the city. There are miles and miles of flat sand fringed by palm groves. If you are fortunate enough to have a bungalow or a shack there, you can live half in the water and half in the palmshade, and life is very pleasant. That is, of course, if you are on holiday. All our schools have holidays in May, but if you are a business man and have to work, it not so good.

As May comes to an end, you will notice a change in the sea. It is becoming dark and stormy; the waves crash on to the beaches and sea-walls at high tide, and the deep blue colour has changed to steel grey. The sky also has changed. Great banks of cloud come up from the west and hang in the sky, and there are gorgeous sunsets when

the heavens are aflame with every colour in an artist's palette. Eastwards over the Ghats, the lightening flickers and flashes, illuminating the dark hours with strange light. The air is so sticky that one seems to be living in a Turkish bath. Everyone longs for rain.

In the middle of June it comes, quite probably with a tremendous clap of thunder and an opening of the heavens which pours the water down as if from a bucket. You can get drenched to the skin just crossing the pavement from a taxi to your door. Most shops and big buildings protect their doors and windows with awnings of cocoanut matting, and the city seems to be populated entirely by umbrellas. Even the policemen on point duty carry them!

At first you will be delighted. You will welcome the grey skies after so many months of unbroken sunshine, and you will breathe the cool air with relief. But the rain goes on for three months. Every open space is sodden; rain seeps through every crack. You cannot dry your wet clothes; your shoes and other leather articles grow fungus; everything smells mouldy. Rats come indoors from the sewers and holes from which they have been driven by floods. You will wonder why you ever came here.

In September the rains will probably become less heavy, and then, just as you think they have gone for good, there may be a final tremendous outburst which will flood the streets to knee-depth, and sweep away to destruction any little boats that have ventured on to the sea. Then the sun will

return, sucking up the moisture from the drenched earth in hot sweeps of vapour. May was bad enough, you will say, but October is worse. Can mortal man endure such heat and humidity together?

Just as you have decided that you cannot bear the climate any longer, the air dries and cools. November brings clear sunshine and fresh breezes. You remember the fog and damp of England at this season and decide to stay; and by December, all is again idyllic.

A CITY BY NIGHT

A Western city looses its normal character at nightfall. Its busy traffic disappears, its shops are closed, its streets are empty save for an occasional late taxi or a patrolling policeman. There is something rather frightening about the long vistas of empty pavement, and if one has to traverse them, one does so hurriedly, and with distaste.

An Eastern city, on the other hand, wears its greatest charm after sunset. All day its white buildings have reflected the glare of the sun, and its streets have resounded with the noise of traffic. Now there are softer outlines, a cooler air; the hustle of business is exchanged for the slow pace of leisure. One might almost imagine that the city had changed sex; its forceful masculinity has gone, and a gentle feminine charm has taken its place

It is, however, by no means dead, or even asleep. White clad figures whose sandals make a flopping sound on the pavement go to and fro, not hurrying with baskets on their heads as in the day time, but in a leisurely way about their own pleasure. Along the sea-wall men recline in easy attitudes, watching the flashing of a distant lighthouse, or the shimmering of the moon on the water. If the tide is propitious, there may be a line of fishing boats setting out for the night's catch, their sails standing out against the sky. In contrast to their silent movement comes the chug-chug of a liberty boat sent from a cruiser anchored off-shore to pick up members of its crew who have had late shore leave.

In the residential quarter, the houses are all wide open to the cool air, and people can be seen sitting round a late dinner table, or reclining in their easy chairs in garden or verandah. The transitory glow of cigarettes pierces the darkness; now and again a man's face is sharply illuminated by the match with which he is lighting his pipe. In some flats, radio or gramophone is in full play and the peace is shattered by the shrill voice of a singer, or the cacophony of a modern dance band. Somewhere, a child may wake suddenly and cry; then a light goes up, a mother or ayah hurries to comfort him, and presently the light is switched off and all is quiet again.

But this air of tranquillity and repose is not found in the bazaar area. The shops are indeed closed, but dim lights can be seen down remote alleys and behind shuttered windows. There is a good deal of furtive coming and going; voices are

low, and new-comers are challenged before they are allowed to enter. There is a mysterious sense of secret activity going on behind the closed doors. For those who have no part in it, it is safer to keep away.

Meanwhile the moon shines serenely over the city, sometimes showing herself coyly through the fronds of a palm, sometimes riding majestically over the curve of a dome or the point of a turret. She knows well enough that a city of the East never sleeps, but she keeps her secrets to herself.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKER IN YOUR DISTRICT. THE CHOWKIDAR

The chowkidar's day is different from that of most people for his most important work is done at night. He is the village watchman, and his duty is to protect the village from thieves, brigands, wild beasts or any other danger that may attack it by night.

In our village, the office is hereditary. Its present holder, Gopaldas, is very proud of the position which his ancestors have held for centuries. He combines the duties of night-watchman and town-crier. If there is to be a public meeting or entertainment, or if some travelling salesman wishes to give a demonstration of his wares, Gopaldas goes round the village calling out the news and inviting the inhabitants to gather together in the village square. Then, when they

have assembled, he acts as Master of Ceremonies and preserves order among the crowd.

This is, of course, good for his prestige, but it is not so important as his night-time occupation. When it has grown dark, he sets out, armed with his long staff of office (which is also a serviceable weapon) and a hurricane lantern, and patrols the village. As he goes, he gives ear-piercing shrieks to announce his approach. Once, an irreverent and uninstructed visitor who was a city dweller, ventured to make fun of Gopaldas, suggesting that he would catch thieves better if he stole upon them quietly and in the dark. But Gopaldas explained patiently that he had no wish to do the poor fellows any harm. If he actually caught them at their nefarious work, he would be obliged to beat them, or even to arrest them, whereas, by warning them of his coming, he could scare them away and keep the village in safety.

Our village is small, and it does not take Gopaldas long to make his preliminary round. Having assured himself that all is well, he composes himself to sleep in any spot that may take his fancy. If one of the inhabitants is going to be away from home at night, and his wife is nervous about being left alone, the chowkidar can be persuaded by a little "baksheesh" to sleep outside her door for part of the night. But any untoward noise in the village will rouse him, and then he will go on his rounds shouting his traditional cry at the top of his voice. The village is so used to the noise that it hardly wakes, but visitors have sometimes lost the

best part of their night's sleep and been frightened out of their wits.

By dawn, the chowkidar's work is over. Technically, he sleeps during the daytime, but as he has usually slept for most of the night he has plenty of energy left for miscellaneous activities. Wherever something unusual is happening, Gopaldas is to be found lapping up information. If, therefore, you need to learn anything about our village, Gopaldas is the person to ask.

THE CELEBRATION OF A FESTIVAL

Holi, like all the great festivals which have come down to us from remote antiquity, is connected with the course of nature and the fruits of the soil. It takes place when the wheat crops are ready for harvest, and is therefore a festival of great joy. The cultivator is now assured of his harvest and can throw off his anxiety and give himself up to rejoicing. This is probably the reason why the feast has always been one where the restraints of convention are thrown off, and people of all classes mingle freely with one another.

Many legends from Hindu mythology have been associated with this festival; the most popular is that which connects it with the death of the demoness Putana who had tried to destroy the infant Krishna. Krishna is the Divine Lover, so the songs of Holi are mostly love lyrics, but not usually of a refined type.

The entertainment most closely associated with Holi is the throwing of coloured water and red dust. Merry-makers are armed with squirts, and anyone who comes near enough is doused with coloured water. Then a handful of red dust is thrown at him, and it sticks to his damp clothes.

It would be fatal for respectable ladies to venture out when Holi celebrations are in full swing. They would undoubtedly be greeted with coarse jests most unsuited to their ears, and their clothes would soon be ruined. But men thoroughly enjoy being covered from head to foot in splashes of lurid colour. Coolies will go on wearing their stained clothes for days after the feast, in the belief that the coloured splashes will bring them luck.

At nightfall, a great fire is lit, and the merry-makers dance round it, feeding the flames by casting on anything that will burn. It is their traditional privilege that night to help themselves to anything in the way of fuel that happens to be left unguarded. In some places, residents who have had their names painted on wooden boards on the gates of their houses, have all found themselves nameless on the morning after Holi!

In some country districts, Holi is celebrated by a mock battle between the women of one village and the men of another. The women pull their saris well down over their faces so that they can remain unrecognised in this very unfeminine activity. They are armed with long sticks with which they belabour their opponents. The men have no weapons, but they can protect themselves with round leather shields, and they also carry stags'

horns with which they threaten their opponents and urge them on to renewed attacks if their vigour shows any sign of abating.

In Rajputana, not only villagers but the princes themselves have traditionally taken part in Holi ceremonies. Battles on horseback have played an important part. The red dust is encased in little envelopes of mica which burst when thrown at a person, and scatter their contents all over him. In the Prince of Wales Museum in Bombay is a famous picture of princes and their ladies taking part in a Holi battle on the backs of elephants. The picture is so realistic that one can see very little but red dust with a few scattered portions of elephants and men and women appearing on the edge of the cloud!

Holi offers plenty of opportunities for rowdy fun and healthy animal spirits. But if you are dignified and precise, and value your clothes, you had better spend it safely indoors.

CONDUCT A FRIEND ROUND A HOUSE (REAL OR IMAGINARY) AND SHOW HIM OR HER HOW BEAUTY AND UTILITY CAN BE COMBINED TO EQUIP A HOME FOR THE COMFORT AND NEEDS OF A FAMILY

Ah, here you are! Do come in. I am looking forward to showing you round our new home. We are all very proud of it. My parents had a legacy

last year, and they have had this house built for us, so it is just what we want.

Come and hang your hat in here. This little cloakroom is very handy just inside the front door. We can put our outdoor clothes here, and change our shoes, and there is a basin for washing hands, and if anyone is untidy, the untidiness is hidden away from the hall.

Now we will begin the tour of the ground floor. The hall is large and cool, you see. Mother always has a big bowl of flowers standing in the angle of the stairs. It looks very gay and bright.

This big room is the family sitting-room. The French windows lead into the garden, and the cushions and furnishings are green to reflect the green of the trees outside. That was Mother's idea. She says green is a very restful colour. The walls are cream so that the dark wood of the bookcases and writing desk will show up well in front of them. Yes, we have a great many books, and they look so nice, I think, besides being interesting. All the different colours of the bindings make the room so gay. There are plenty of comfortable chairs, and a radio in the corner. The pictures are water-colours of places my parents have visited.

The next room is the dining room. You may think it rather austere and bare, but there is a reason for this. We have these rugs on the polished floor so that they can easily be taken up, and we can use the room for other purposes. We could easily have a small dance here, and it is grand for playing games when we have parties. The

silver on the sideboard can easily be put away inside, and there is nothing to get broken or spoilt.

That door leads to my father's study. That is his private sanctum, and we never go there unless he asks us.

This is the kitchen. Isn't it a lovely room? Anybody would like cooking in a room like this. All this side is window, you see, so that the room is light and airy, and it looks on to the garden so that those who are cooking have a pleasant view. I like the white walls and cupboards and tables, and the blue-tiled floor.

Now you must come upstairs. There are two large bedrooms and three small ones, and, we are lucky enough to have two bathrooms, so there is no queueing for washing! My parents have one of the large bedrooms and the other is a guest room. The three small ones are for us three children. You may be rather surprised to find that they contain nothing but a bed, a table and chair and a built-in cupboard. But that is rather a good idea really. My parents say we can complete the furnishings as we like when we really know what we want. My sister has made her own curtains and bedcover, you see; rather fussy, I think, but it is the sort of thing girls like.

Now for the attics. There are two of them; one is for storing boxes and things we are not using at present, and the other is a work-room for any member of the family who wants to make something. There is a carpenter's bench you see, and a sewing machine, and plenty of space for

anything else we want to do. I like this room best of all because nobody minds how untidy it gets. We don't have to stop and clear away because it's time for a meal or bed. And there is water laid on, and a gas point and an electric point, so all sorts of exciting things can be done.

Now you have seen it all. Don't you think we are lucky to have such a lovely new house?

A GARAGE REPAIR-SHOP

From a girl's point of view, a garage repair shop is a sort of Inferno. I know that my brothers would be only too delighted at the prospect of spending a day in one, but to me it would be worse than a mediaeval dungeon.

To begin with, everything is covered with oil. There is a thick layer of it, mingled with mud, all over the floor and on all the fittings. It is impossible to touch anything without covering one's hands with black, evil-smelling grease. Here and there are pits whose black depths are lost to view. One can imagine unnameable horrors lurking in them, and one pities the poor begrimed fellow of whom one catches an occasional glimpse as he struggles without light or air with his body in one of these modern oubliettes and his head in the entrails of a great car. Jonah in the belly of the whale can hardly have been more uncomfortable!

And how disorderly everything is! Old tyres,

battered mudguards, nuts and bolts, and the rusty remains of old cars are to be seen everywhere. If one manages to avoid smudging one's dress with oil, one can hardly escape tearing it on a protruding piece of rusty iron. It is of course for that reason that the unfortunates who work in such a place have to clothe themselves in coarse, dark, unbecoming overalls—garments which make even the handsomest young man look like a denizen of the underworld.

The "coup-de-grace" is provided by noise. To dirt and disorder is added din. The cars that are not completely out of action are constantly being "revved up", presumably to see whether they will reach breaking point. Those which have ceased to work are being dealt with, in all probability, by an oxy-acetylene welder, whose contribution to the atmosphere of the repair shop is a blinding glare and a steam-like hiss.

When one sits at ease on the soft cushions of a car, and hears the gentle purring of a high-powered engine as it eats up the miles with speed, one wonders how such mechanical perfection can have come from such a place of chaos. I am thankful, indeed, that repair shops exist, so that our cars can be kept in good order and we do not have to resort to the bullock carts of our ancestors. But I am content only to use the results of their labour and to take no active part in it.

AN AUCTION SALE

Notices had appeared in great profusion announcing a great auction sale of furniture and valuables at "The Gables", Hill Road, and as we had just moved into a larger house, we thought we might find some bargains to fill up the empty spaces in our new rooms. So, on the day of the sale, the family set off, full of hope and expectation.

"The Gables" was the property of a gentleman now labelled as "deceased". The contents were, presumably, those he had used when he lived there and so we were a little surprised when we entered, to see some very old furnishings in the entrance hall. There were three grandfather clocks, (one might almost have called them grandfather, great-grandfather, and remote ancestor!) two dog kennels, a large empty bird cage, two umbrella stands, a perambulator and a quantity of fishing tackle. I began to try to form in my mind a picture of the character of the late owner. He must have been very punctilious as to keeping appointments, since it needed three clocks to reassure him that he was not late. He was also, obviously, careful not to get wet, since one umbrella stand was not enough to house his protection against rain and storm. And how did the dogs, the baby and the fishing tackle fit in with one another? I found it very difficult to imagine.

My reflections were cut short by the arrival of the auctioneer and his clerk. We followed them into the dining room where the sale was to begin.

Lot I was the dining table—a beautiful mahog-

any one capable of seating a company of twelve or more. It was bought, after some brisk bidding, by a seedy-looking man in a dirty coat, several mufflers and at least two days' growth of beard. It seemed to me unlikely that he would have a home which could provide a suitable background to such a piece of furniture. But someone near me murmured that he was a dealer. I felt an unreasonable annoyance that he should walk of with things under the noses of people who really needed them.

I was not very interested in the next few lots, and wandered about exploring. There was a waste paper basket which looked useful. There never seem to be enough waste paper baskets in any house, so I determined to bid for it when it came under the hammer as Lot 23.1 got it without much opposition, but when I came to take possession, I found to my dismay that the lot included a mouse-trap, a bamboo plant-stand, and a small door-mat with a hole in it. What was I to do with these unwelcome possessions?

While I was pondering these problems, the auctioneer moved into the drawing-room. This was crammed so full of chairs, settees, couches, radios, occasional tables, coffee-stools and miscellaneous bric-a-brac that I wondered how anyone could possibly have lived in it. No wonder that Mr. X. the late owner was "deceased". Death would be preferable to having to live with all this. I ventured to comment on this to a neighbour who often attended sales, and might be able to explain the phenomenon.

"Goodness me!" exclaimed that gentleman. "This stuff didn't belong to old X. He had very good taste indeed. He wouldn't have housed this rubbish for a moment. Most of his good pieces have been bought privately. This stuff is what the auctioneers have not been able to sell at previous sales and they have imported it in the hope that the good address will be sufficient recommendation."

My imaginary picture of Mr X dissolved like a cloud. Perhaps he had never hurried to the station, an umbrella under each arm, fishing rod over the left shoulder, two dogs (one large and one small) following obediently to heel, while three clocks chimed in the hall and the baby howled in its perambulator.

Disillusioned, I went to collect my purchases. Perhaps I should not now vex the ghost of Mr X if I dropped the mousetrap into a galvanised iron dust-bin with lid (Lot 57) and left the bamboo plant stand and the doormat to be included in some future sale where the property of Mr Y was being disposed of by order of the executors. I picked up my waste paper basket and went home.

THE FAMILY ALBUM

In my grandmother's drawing room there is a small table covered with a lace cloth, in the centre of which lies a fat volume bound in soft, padded leather. This is the Family Album, and from my

earliest infancy, it has been produced at a certain moment in my visit to my grandparents, and delivered into my carefully washed hands as the great treat of the day.

I know every page of it by heart. In pride of place on page one is a large faded photograph of a grim-looking house of three storeys. A flight of six steps goes up to a solid front door, and all the windows are completely covered in lace curtains. This is the house in which my grandfather was born and spent his childhood. I could pass an examination on the lay-out of that house, giving details of the furniture contained in each room, the fuctions that were celebrated there and in which bedrooms all my great-aunts and uncles slept.

The next few pages are devoted to photographs of children. They vary in age and sex, (in some, indeed, it is difficult to tell whether they are boys or girls) but all are preternaturally solemn. The photographers of those days could never have said: "Smile, please!" Then there is a family group taken on my grandfather's twenty-first birthday. All the young men have luxuriant side-whiskers, and the girls have mountains of hair piled high on their heads, if they are grown up, or descending in cascades to their waists if they are still in the schoolroom. Both sexes have very high, tight collars and very broad shoulders. Yet, in spite of the oddity of their clothes, they all look very fresh and handsome. I doubt if the average family would be as good-looking nowadays.

After a few more pages, my grandmother

makes her first appearance in the album. She is standing beside a rickety small table arranging some unlikely looking flowers in a vase, while behind her rolls a vast landscape with windswept skies and bent trees such as you might expect to see in the storm scene in King Lear. But no apprehension of the approaching downpour is reflected in her face. She gazes serenely before her, thinking more, I am sure, of the pleasure the photograph will give to her betrothed, than of the havoc the photographer's storm might wreak on her muslin dress.

As I turn the pages, I can trace the family history by its pictures. There are photographs of weddings, of naked babies on fur rugs, of the same babies as older children in school groups or dressed for a part in a play. There are those same children as proud schoolboys with brawny knees and enormous arms in photographs of teams with the cups that they have won.

Then comes a point in the album where the style of the photographs changes. Instead of "professional" groups and portraits, snapshots taken by members of the family themselves begin to fill the pages. From this time onwards, the pictures are far less formal, and show a much greater variety of background. There are members of the family playing leapfrog on the sands, boating on the river, having tea on the lawn. There are girls posed in front of the Arc the Triomphe, and the west door of Notre Dame de Paris, and young men on skis, on ocean-going liners, and in the uniform of the Army, Navy, or Air Force. Each

one is marked with a date and a place, and each one is connected with some little part of the enormous mosaic that makes up the family history. My grandmother knows the story behind each picture, and has told every one so many times that her memory is as exact as a B.B.C. recording.

To my grandmother, "the family" is by far the most important unit in existence. She is, as it were, its creator, and its story is the record of her life's work. So it is not surprising that the Family Album holds pride of place among the treasures of her house.

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

ARGUE FOR OR AGAINST THE VIEW THAT THE THEATRE CAN PROVIDE BETTER ENTERTAINMENT THAN THE CINEMA

Today, every small town has its cinema and the entertainment it provides is universal. The same film can be seen in cities and villages, and frequently in foreign countries as well, so it must, of course, avoid any special feature which will narrow its appeal to a certain type of audience.

Most films make no demands at all upon their audience. All the art which has gone into the making of them is completed before the film is shown, and the actual performance is a mere mechanical reproduction. No enthusiasm, or lack of it, on the part of the audience can make any difference to it. But in the theatre, the audience plays a vital part. It creates the atmosphere which makes the success or failure of the production, and to do this, it needs a strongly developed critical sense.

A play-goer who takes his pleasure seriously makes a study of dramatic art. He likes to see the same play performed by different actors and to compare their treatment of the roles. He has his views on stage settings, lighting, incidental music and all the etceteras of the production. After the performance he has further pleasure in discussing the play with other people who have

seen it. The text is usually published and can be read and studied.

Most important of all to the keen play-goer is the personal presence of the actors. A film, however well made, is only a series of photographs which can so easily be faked. The voice he hears may not really belong to the person who appears to be speaking or singing; the acrobatic feats are almost certainly performed by a "double"; imperfections in the acting can be glossed over in a hundred ways. A play is a unit, performed in a single evening and calling for a great artistic effort on the part of the actors. A film was probably spread over several weeks; any weak spots could be cut out and retaken. The sense of a great achievement by a company of artists is quite lost.

Finally, there is the satisfaction that the play-goer has in expressing his appreciation to the actors by his applause. Everyone enjoys the end of a play when the actors take their curtain calls. At that moment, the audience is the more active portion of the house, and its members feel that they have had a share in the creation of a work of art.

LIBERTY AND EQUALITY, ARE THEY COMPATIBLE?

Liberty and equality, as everyone knows, were two of the three watchwords of the French Re-

volution, a movement that ended in dictatorship because those who objected to others wielding power seized for themselves an even greater power when they had the opportunity.

The French Revolution was the first of many throughout the world which showed that the assumption of equality in the state by men with no training for responsibility usually ends in disaster. Today, the slogan has changed to "equality of opportunity". The great democracies are trying to give to all their citizens the kind of education which will fit them for the responsibilities of government. Where there is universal adult suffrage, as there is in England, every grown man and woman plays a part in the government of the country, and every part is equal, for no one has more than one vote. In former days, the Universities and the City of London had their own representatives, but now, even this concession to the privilege of learning and commerce has been abolished. Equality of suffrage is absolute.

To prepare her children for this equality in adult life, England has, during the past decade, introduced some important changes into her educational system. Today there is secondary education for all. This does not, of course, mean that every child now attains to the standard of knowledge gained by a pupil who had passed through a secondary school in pre-war days. It means that the secondary schools have not only those pupils whose parents desire, and prepared to pay for, advanced education, but every child in the country, whether he wishes to learn or not. Naturally, as the school-

ing is free and compulsory, a large number of children do not want it. They therefore make no effort to learn and the general standard of attainment is considerably lowered.

The equalising policy is shown even more strongly in the examinations for the General Certificate of Education. Formerly, a candidate had to pass in five subjects in order to gain a certificate. This entailed a certain amount of intelligence and a large amount of hard work. But it created a kind of intellectual proletariat; those who had no certificate being less acceptable to employers than those who had succeeded in obtaining one, while the "plum" jobs went to the "aristocracy" who had passed with distinction. Nowadays, one can gain a Certificate of Education in only one subject; no marks are allowed to be published, and no distinctions are awarded. Therefore, the candidate who just manages to scrape through in one subject has the same certificate as the one who gains eighty per cent in half a dozen subjects or more. Surely equality can go no further!

It seems then that a policy of equality deprives those who work hard of the satisfaction of climbing the ladder of success beyond their lazier or less competent fellows. But there is no sign that it deprives them of liberty. It is undoubtedly more difficult to attain a high standard of scholarship in a large class of indifferent pupils than in a small class of keen ones, but no one will prevent the ambitious pupil from going beyond the standard of his fellows if he so wishes. The clever, hard-working youth may not begin his career with any

advantage over his casual or careless neighbour, but there is nothing to prevent him from putting all his energies into his work, and proving himself a capable and trustworthy man. His liberty is uncurtailed.

Our question then, is answered; liberty and equality *are* compatible. Equality does, to a certain extent, put barriers in the way of the ambitious spirit, but only in order to encourage him to surmount them, and to use the experience he gains in so doing for his greater advancement in life.

EVERY MAN HAS A RIGHT TO HIS OWN OPINION. DISCUSS

We hear a good deal today about fundamental human rights. Charters have been drawn up, tabulating those aspects of man's nature which are individual and sacred, and which other men must respect if we are to retain our humanity. A man's opinion, like his conscience, is, of course, essentially individual. It cannot be imposed upon him from without, or changed by act of parliament or by any external authority. It is part of himself.

There is, however, one great difference between conscience and opinion. A conscience is innate; every human being is born with one. It distinguishes between right and wrong, and guides a man's moral judgments. Only when it is deliberately stifled can it fade away and disappear.

But an opinion is the product of education. A man cannot have an opinion on a subject of which he knows nothing. If then every man has a right to an opinion, he also has a duty to inform himself on the subject before expressing that opinion. Opinions are very often stated dogmatically by people who have only partially considered the question on which they lay down the law, and they can do great harm, both to the speaker and to those who allow themselves to be influenced.

In "The Merchant of Venice", Shakespeare makes fun of a certain type of man in the words: "I am Sit Oracle, and when I open my lips, let no dog bark." This pompous creature is to be found in all walks of life. He will make authoritative statements on any subject under the sun, and when faults are found with his information or his logic, he merely repeats his opinion in a louder voice, as though the force of his lungs gave it greater value. Very frequently, also, he repeats aggressively the words which form the title of this essay: "Every man has a right to his own opinion," and secure in the truth of this platitude, he refuses to reconsider his position, or to learn from others who know more about the subject under discussion.

The forming of opinions is one of the most important aspects of education. Young children generally realise that they have not yet reached a stage when they can have an opinion of their own, and when they take part in an argument, their remarks are usually prefaced by such phrases as: "My father says" or "My teacher says—". If, when they grow older, they can trace the steps by which

that opinion was arrived at, they have made it their own and are able to express it as their personal conviction. But young people have to be taught to beware of forming opinions on wrong foundations. If, for example, you admire a man for his prowess in athletics, you may place a certain amount of faith in his opinion on the training of athletics, but not necessarily in his opinion on politics or music!

We conclude, then, that the right to an opinion has to be earned by careful study; it is not a right that comes automatically by virtue of our humanity. If we wish to be wise, we shall be very wary of expressing opinions before we have acquired sufficient knowledge and experience to support them by sound and reasoned argument.

"IT IS THE LITTLE THINGS OF LIFE, NOT THE GREAT THINGS, THAT MAKE LIFE WHAT IT IS." HOW FAR DO YOU FIND THIS STATEMENT TRUE?

Most people would include among the great things of life those incidents which are remembered as red-letter days—the day they won a scholarship, their twenty-first birthday, their wedding day, the birth of their children. Or perhaps they would include tragic as well as happy days, and interpret the word "great" as meaning "unusual".

These outstanding occasions are certainly remembered as mile-stones along the road of life,

but they do not make life what it is. Every adult has had a twenty-first birthday; a great many have had a wedding day. Hundreds of people have had to suffer the loss of parents and friends. Yet the same happenings do not produce similarity in the lives of those who experience them.

Again, great and epoch making events can have very different effects on different people. A physical infirmity may be used by one man as an excuse for doing nothing useful with his life, and expecting someone else to provide and care for him. Yet Beethoven wrote his greatest symphony after becoming stone deaf, Milton his greatest poem after going blind. It seems, therefore, to be not so much the great happenings in life that make the differences, as the ways in which people react to those happenings.

It has frequently come about that a great national disaster has brought out excellent qualities in the people who have suffered it. During the two world wars of this century, many people have risen to great heights of selflessness and devotion during times of crisis, and served in countless little ways, none of which would be worth mentioning by itself, but which, together with many other details, helped to make life tolerable for those around them. Thousands gave up their sleep two or three nights a week to watch for incendiary bombs; thousands gave up the privacy of their homes to accept evacuees and refugees; thousands gave hospitality to strangers. None of these actions would be called great, but their cumulative effect was to draw people together and diffuse a

very valuable feeling of comradeship and goodwill.

If we asked an old man who claimed to have had a very happy life what had contributed most to that happiness, he would probably recall to mind many tiny details which had woven themselves into the texture of his life, making it colourful and enjoyable: the recollection of the view from his bedroom window, the delightful feeling of swimming in deep water, the clothes he wore on the occasion when he first met his future wife, the day when he held his grandchild in his arms.

The significance of these little things is recognised by poets, many of whom have caught the deep inner meaning of such details and enshrined it in their works. W. H. Davies reminds us that:

"A rainbow and a cuckoo's song,
May never come together again,
May never come this side the tomb,"

and Rupert Brooke has made one of the most famous of modern poems out of what might, from one point of view, be described as a catalogue of little things.

"White plates and cups, clean-gleaming
Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, faery dust;
Wet roofs beneath the lamp-light; the strong crust
Of friendly bread, and many tasting food;
Rainbows, and the blue bitter smoke of wood."

If then the little things of one's life are happy, shot through with recollections that endear them,

and filled with a significance that supplies purpose and pattern, life will be good and rich. If on the other hand, the little things of life are full of irritation, resentment, jealousy, frustration, the person who experiences them will have but a jaundiced view of existence. The statement is certainly to be endorsed that "It is the little things of life, and not the great things, that make life what it is."

MAKE SOMETHING, IF IT'S ONLY A MISTAKE!

In the earliest days of man's history, every article he used had to be made by himself. One can trace the advance of civilisation by the articles which he learned to construct, from arrow-heads and bone needles to boats, and houses on stilts. Every new thing man learned to make represented a conquest of the hostile forces of nature, and so increased his mental stature.

Today, the contact between man and nature is much less direct. When a twentieth century man feels the need for some new possession, he very rarely thinks about making it. He goes to a shop and buys it readymade. Even when he takes part in the construction of some object, he very rarely makes the whole of it, for modern manufacture is such a complicated process that dozens of men, sometimes even hundreds, are needed to supply the various parts of a single article.

This mass-production is not without its effect on the mind of man. If the struggle to manufacture

something useful out of the raw materials of nature gave an impetus to the development of man, making him a creature far in advance of the animals, it follows that when he ceases to make things, he ceases to develop. There is a good deal of evidence that this unfortunate state of affairs has come to pass in the world of today.

Of course the discovery of new things has not ceased. Every year produces some new and marvellous invention, but these are the work of highly trained specialists, and not of the ordinary man.

The passing away of craftmanship from the lives of the common people has had a bad effect on mental health. Man is no longer satisfying his creative instinct, and the result is that he suffers from boredom—a disease unknown to earlier ages. Many people have realised their need to make things, and have taken up various crafts as hobbies. This is the most satisfactory method of counteracting the effect of mass-production on modern society. Some social reformers have tried to urge people to stand out against industrialism by refusing to purchase mass-produced articles. They have hoped that, by so doing, they could preserve the old cottage industries and give men back the satisfaction of creating finished pieces of work. But the economic difficulties of such a campaign would be insuperable. Factory produced goods are far cheaper than those made at home, and to ban mass production would be to deprive many a poor man of the necessities of life. The clock of industrial progress cannot be put back.

There is, however, nothing to prevent people

from making things for fun. Many a man has added zest to his life, as well as profit, by having some hobby in which he uses his hands. Of course he makes mistakes and spoils good materials from time to time, but that is the price he pays to gain experience, and each time he learns to overcome a difficulty, he has raised his own stature as a human being.

"FOR MOST PEOPLE, BOOKS ARE AN ESCAPE FROM REAL LIFE"

"Escapist literature" is a term of contempt which is used today to designate books which serve to take their readers for a brief period out of a life which is tedious and unprofitable. The man who spent his life in an office reads stories of adventure in wide open spaces; the mother whose life is spent in trying to make a small amount of money feed and clothe a large family reads of beautiful ladies who live in palatial houses and spend a fortune on clothes. The books are probably inaccurate in detail and their literary quality is negligible. All they do is to provide a kind of drug to deaden the pain of life for a short space of time, and they do nothing to transform life from a burden to a joy.

But to put all books in this class would be a grave injustice. There are countless books which have provided many a man with mental and spiritual nourishment and have enabled him to grow in knowledge of the world and of himself.

Even story books in which boys and girls lose themselves for a few blissful hours can make a positive contribution to their development if well written. The adventures of a hero from a particular epoch in history do more than any text book to acquaint the reader with the social conditions of that period. In the same way, young people can learn through stories that pluck and perseverance are qualities which make for success in life, and that gentleness and consideration for others win more friends than smartness and ambition.

To a highly developed mind, books can be of incalculable value, for they can provide expert knowledge by the greatest authorities on any subject. None can learn everything from personal experience, but everyone can learn from the personal experiences of those who have written good books. Every kind of knowledge can be passed from one mind to another by means of books; in the practical sphere, readers can advance in knowledge of cookery or embroidery, gardening or electricity, cricket or mountaineering! In biographies of great men, one catches a glimpse of the spirit which inspires all greatness and raises men out of the common way.

From the great literature of all time, men gain an insight into a world beyond the knowledge of those who never have learned to use books well. All poets have been aware of the existence of this "other world" and their best work has opened windows on to it, through which its light can shine even on the ordinary man. Then his heart is lifted

up in a strange exaltation and he is given vigour and power which enable him to live his life to the full, savouring it and enjoying it, instead of wishing to escape from it.

Books, then, should be an aid to life, not an escape from it, and even if some are written and read without any real connection with life, it would be foolish to condemn all reading because some is superficial.

WHAT, IN YOUR OPINION, BEST CONTRIBUTES TO THE MAKING OF A HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL?

The essential factor of success and happiness in a school is that the pupils should want to belong to it. In many countries today, education is free and compulsory, and it is one of the less pleasant aspects of human nature that we do not value benefits that are shared with many others as much as those which are exclusively our own. Therefore, in the state schools, there are always some who are being educated against their will. These bear a grudge against authority and look upon the schools as a sort of prison.

These people refuse to co-operate with those who are working for the good of the school. They care very little whether or not they win the commendation of the staff, and they will not put themselves out to ensure the success of any project the school has in hand. They leave their books at

home, do not provide themselves with equipment, fail to be present at rehearsals or meetings, and generally form a pocket of resistance that would spoil the happy atmosphere of any school.

How is a school to get rid of such undesirables? The easy way is, of course, to insist on their withdrawal from the school. After disciplinary action of this kind on one or two, the other anti-social members would probably be deterred from their bad ways. But many authorities object to cutting the Gordian knot in this way, and prefer to stake all on "turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just". This has to be done by the force of public opinion. If the majority of pupils show that they disapprove of non-co-operation and do not consider rebels as brave and daring heroes, those same rebels, who are only out for popularity, will stop their knavish tricks.

The next problem is how to ensure that public opinion is on the side of authority. For this, it is essential that the headmaster or mistress should be a person who can command the respect and admiration of all the pupils. A little healthy fear of him (or her) is not a disadvantage, for, if being called to the Head's study has no terrors, there will be little to stop the wicked in their ways. "A beast, but a just beast," was how Stalky described his headmaster, and this is no bad testimonial.

A wise head and a loyal staff are far more important than beautiful buildings and up-to-date equipment, however desirable these latter may be. For education is caught, not taught, and one cannot "catch" reliability, courage, and a love of learn-

ing from painted walls and mahogany benches. There are small schools in cramped buildings where no great changes have taken place for over a hundred years, and which still send forth a steady stream of valuable citizens year by year to take their place in the service of their country.

Of the material amenities a school needs, I think the most important is a library, for a good pupil should be inspired by good teaching to go in search of further knowledge for himself. The habit of reading, when once established, will enable a student to educate himself in any subject that may take his fancy, and will also broaden the mind of the general reader and make him acquainted with the greatest minds of all time through the medium of books.

To sum up, the essentials of a good school are the willingness of the pupils, the wisdom of the staff, and books, and the greatest of these is willingness.

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BEING A MEMBER OF A LARGE FAMILY

How lucky to be an only child! That would be the materialist's point of view. He would think of the advantages of having all his parents' resources lavished on him alone. With only one child, they would be able to afford so many more luxuries than if there were several young people to equip and educate. They would probably be

able to have a car, and holidays every year, perhaps even long trips to distant places.

Faced with this formidable array of benefits which an only child can expect, one might be tempted to envy his happy lot. But a more serious consideration of his fate will show that there are a great many disadvantages which are not at first apparent. Children do not miss luxuries which they have never had, but every child has an instinctive desire for the companionship of other children. The only child of rich parents, bored with his own society, will look with envy on the beggar children playing in happy little gangs in the gutter. The home-made boat, constructed from a bit of wood and a scrap of paper for a sail, making a really adventurous voyage down a muddy stream is so much more fun than a beautifully finished yacht bought at the Army and Navy stores, and only allowed to be used in properly constructed sailing pools and under adult supervision.

Then again, how impoverished would be a childhood which passed without any opportunities for those delightful imaginative games which evolve in any family where there are several children!

Some families have a regular ritual for occupying those periods of time between the hour when adults think they ought to go to bed, and the time when they themselves feel disposed to go to sleep. It is of necessity a secret ritual, and must be carried out with very little sound, or the hand of parental authority will descend and stop it. This spice of danger makes it all the more delightful; in later years, the memory of these exploits has a halo of

charm by virtue of which life is definitely the richer. An only child can do nothing more desperate than reading in bed!

Most important of all are the lessons which children learn in the give and take of life by living among brothers and sisters. The older members of the family have to learn to be responsible for the younger ones and to make allowances for their lack of knowledge and experience; the younger children have to learn to accept without jealousy the privileges granted to their elders which they themselves do not enjoy. At first sight, these may seem to be disadvantages rather than advantages, for such lessons are not always pleasant, and there are, of course, many temporary quarrels and heartburnings among brothers and sisters. But in a large family with wise parents, children are well prepared for the adult world where they have constantly to be making allowances for other people. They are used to adapting themselves to the company of people with differing views, and with different conceptions of what is enjoyable or humorous. They can be unselfish without being subservient; they can be persistent in their aims without disregarding the claims of others upon them.

In the light of all these benefits which the child gains from being a member of a large family, the mere enjoyment of luxuries fades into insignificance. The only child is quite definitely the poorer.

SPEED: ITS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

In the twentieth century, a new religion has spread like wildfire through the world—the worship of speed. We are always hearing of vehicles that can travel by land, air or water faster than any vehicle has done in the same element before. Even Man, unaided by machines, can now run a mile in fewer seconds than any of his ancestors could accomplish (although, of course, we have no records of how fast our cave-dwelling forebears ran when escaping from wild beasts).

It is usually in some professional capacity that we moderns are searching for greater and greater speeds, but the pursuit also invades our holiday periods. Travel agencies advertise with complacency the remarkably small number of minutes it takes us to get from X to Y if we avail ourselves of their expert services. Tours are offered that will take us all round the world and back again to our school, shop, or office within the fortnight's holiday that the ordinary man or woman can expect to enjoy. Surely, speed is here of great advantage, for it gives opportunities for a widening of horizons which was quite impossible a hundred years ago. In those days, people took their holidays within a couple of hundred miles from their homes, and thousands never ventured beyond this radius throughout their lifetime. Today, the butcher is familiar with Baghdad and the clerk has visited Copenhagen while the lady visiting her hairdresser

will be told all about her latest holiday in Honolulu or Hanoi.

Yet there are still some who agree with that pre-twentieth century writer Robert Louis Stevenson when he said: "To travel hopefully is better than to arrive." These old fashioned people desire not only to go to places, but to know them, and to know the roads which lead to them. The great airlines will transport travellers from one European capital to another within the space of an hour, but all they will see is the cosmopolitan air-ports and the great cities with their international business houses and world-famous thoroughfares. While they are actually en route they will see nothing but the chequer-board of roads and rivers far below them, and not even that if they are flying above cloud. But if they disdain speed and travel at leisure, they will have much more chance to imbibe something of the spirit of the country which they are visiting.

To people who live the highly organised life of today, bound by time-tables and forced to be at certain places at certain times all through the working year, one of the great delights of a holiday is the chance to loiter. To such people it is a joy to travel slowly along by-roads, stopping where there is a fine view, or where a pleasing shade offers an attractive place for a meal. In this kind of travel, the holiday maker often has the chance to meet the people of the countryside as they go about their work, or to chat with them at a wayside inn. He finds charming little corners which are not in any guide book, and has the great satisfaction of feel-

ing that he has made a discovery unknown to the common run of travellers.

Finally, after these leisurely wanderings, he comes home rested and refreshed, while his speed-worshipping neighbour who has encircled the world has nothing but nervous exhaustion and a confused medley of impressions as a result of his holiday; and he will smile to himself and decide that, in holiday travel, speed is definitely *not* an advantage.

THE PLACE OF THE ARTIST IN INDUSTRY

A hundred years ago, men would have considered art and industry as representing two opposite poles; art was the expression of the spiritual side of man's life, industry was purely material. A rich industrialist might buy a work of art to adorn his home, or to perpetuate his name as a donor to some public building, but he would not think of using it in his factories.

The artist in those days, and indeed throughout history, depended for his livelihood on the patronage of the rich. The "pure" artist must perhaps always do this, whether his patron be a private individual or a public body; but the decorative artist has, in modern days, changed his relationship to the community. If he makes a beautiful piece of furniture, for instance, he does not sell it to a rich man who will, in future, have it for his sole use, but to a manufacturer who will

have thousands of copies of it made by machinery for sale to ordinary men and women.

It is true that each piece of furniture is not the work of the artist in the sense that the pieces of Sheraton or Chippendale were the works of their hands. But the design of the artist reaches a much wider field today than it did when only one piece was made for each pattern. The beautiful idea conceived in the artist's mind can give pleasure to a very large number, and the standard of beauty in the homes of the people can be raised considerably by the combination of the artist's work with that of the industrialist.

Both the pure and the decorative artist can assist the industrialist in the ancillary service of advertising. The days of blunt exhortations to buy a certain product are gone; advertising must be individual and distinctive in order to catch the eye of the public and retain an impression of pleasure. Many first-rate artists have contributed to make certain products familiar to the public, and pages of illustrated journals are adorned, not disfigured, by the advertisements they contain.

Finally, the artist, in the branch of architecture, can save an industrial country from being aesthetically ruined by designing factories, power plants, and other necessary industrial buildings so that they have strength and dignity of structure as well as mere usefulness. In the past, very little thought has been devoted to the external form of factories. They have been made like huge boxes of brick and concrete, with dirty chimneys rising

from untidy piles of buildings. Modern industrial building is done with care and design, and although suitability must of course be the first consideration, outward appearance is also an important factor. When our architects can design factories which are, in themselves, a work of art, the artist will indeed have won a place of honour in industry.

GAMES ARE FOR THOSE WHO DON'T READ AND CAN'T THINK

Support or Attack This View

Those whose aim is to disseminate false doctrines know that by mingling them with a very small amount of truth, they have a better chance of getting them believed than if they are undiluted falsehood. The statement under discussion has that mixture of a little truth and much untruth.

Games represent physical activity; reading and thinking represent mental activity. The writer of this statement obviously considers that the two are incompatible. This is his first error. Physical and mental activity are complementary, not antagonistic. The Greeks, who were excellent educators, understood this very well and encouraged their children to excel in sport as the first part of their training. A well-trained and disciplined body was considered by them to be the vehicle for a well-trained and disciplined mind, and their theories were certainly justified by the result, for the classical age of Greek culture produced the

greatest philosophers the world has ever known. The same theory has been taken as the basis of the English system of education which is summed up in the Latin tag: "Mens sana in corpore sano."

The writer makes a second error in suggesting that one does not need to think in order to play games. Games are nearly always in the form of a contest, and in every contest, one has to judge the thoughts of one's opponents. One has also to note the strength and weakness of the opposing side and be ready to take advantage of it. A tennis match is not won by the hardest hitter, but by the player who knows best where to place his balls. Even a boxing match can be won by a combination of strength and thinking rather than by mere strength without thought.

It is true that there are some people who exalt games to a position of such importance that they become a fetish. The importance of physical activity is that it perfects one side of man's being and therefore helps the other (the mental) side to grow to its full stature. If the mental side is entirely neglected the value of the physical training is partly, if not wholly lost. A wise man realises that the body is the hand-maid of the mind; his hand-maid is well kept and well trained so that she may be efficient, but she is only a hand-maid, and not a mistress.

Games, therefore, should certainly not take the place of reading or thinking in any man's life. They should be used to keep him in physical health, to train his muscles to respond instantly to his brain,

to teach him to take a beating with equanimity, and to be victorious without arrogance. Having learned those lessons, he should use his reading and thinking to develop the other side of his nature, and so grow in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

REFLECTIVE ESSAYS

A GARDEN

Francis Bacon, in his famous essay on Gardens, used these words: "A garden is the purest of human pleasures."

So many human pleasures entail hardship to other people or to animals; many have disastrous effects on the character or health of the people who indulge in them. A drunkard doubtless considers drink his greatest pleasure, but it ends in destroying his faculties; a gambler enjoys the excitement he gets from the hope of winning a fortune, but he may just as easily fall into financial disaster. Some people love to watch contests in which the competitors risk death or disablement, or to take part in the hunting of animals and display with pride the skins of the creatures they have killed. Even fishing, that most peaceful of pleasures, entails the death of the fish—provided the fisherman is successful, and it is doubtful whether even a fisherman would continue to think fishing a pleasure if he never caught anything!

But the pleasures of a garden are creative, not destructive. It is true that toil is needed, but it is the gardener's own effort, it is not imposed on others against their will—unless of course, he forces his children to dig when they want to do something else! Moreover, the physical effort of gardening, though arduous, is beneficial rather than harmful

to a man's health. It takes place out of doors in pure air, it gives him exercise, aids his digestion, and strengthens his muscles.

Gardeners are usually the most generous of men. They love to offer gifts of their produce to their friends, and to give cuttings and seeds to other gardeners so that their land may be enriched and made beautiful. They are not exclusive like connoisseurs in other lines. A collector of pictures or china or stamps would not dream of sharing his treasures with another collector. But a gardener's pride is in the increase of growth, and he is happy to be the instrument by which the desert can be made to blossom as the rose.

There is, indeed, a wonderful opportunity in gardening; one is allowed to share in the working of a miracle. One drops a series of dead-looking seeds or shrivelled roots into the ground, tends and waters them for a time, and then is rewarded with rows of fresh, green vegetables, or masses of colourful flowers. Surely there is no labour that has so great a reward! Even the humble grass, when cut, rolled, and watered, gives ample return by providing a smooth green lawn, restful to the eyes, and delightful to sit upon in the cool of the evening. Flowering trees and shrubs adorn the garden with bloom each in its season, and beds of gay flowers provide decoration for inside the house as well as out.

The cynic may suggest that there was a serpent even in the Garden of Eden, and that no garden is free from slugs, snails, ants and the like. Even admitting this, we can point out that nothing

human is perfect, and we still feel justified in agreeing with Bacon that "a garden is the purest of human pleasures."

LOOKING IN SHOP WINDOWS

Shopping is always an exciting occupation. Surely there is none so remote from the world that he does not feel a thrill at the prospect of acquiring some new possession. Even if the acquisition is only food, "the memory of which is as a guest that tarrieth but a night", yet there is a certain delight in the choosing and buying of it.

Unfortunately, to indulge in shopping one must have money, and there are so many of us who have to cut shopping down to a minimum because of the insufficiency of our wealth. But window-shopping is open to every one, however poor. All we need is time, the energy to walk from one shop window to another, and imagination to suggest to us that we are in a position to purchase, —in fancy—anything we like.

Some people like to make a definite game of this occupation, complete with its code of rules. My favourite variant of the game is to imagine that an eccentric millionaire has told me that I may buy anything I like between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. of a certain day, and that he will pay the bill. I have heard of some extremists who stipulate that one should have nothing material left at the end of the day, but that is not my idea of the game!

The only limitation to my spending is that I am not allowed subsequently to sell anything that I have bought on that day.

Behold me, then, as I pass an expensive looking motor-car showroom studying the shining models displayed to view. It matters not a jot how expensive the car is, but I must be careful not to choose one too big and powerful, or its petrol consumption will give me trouble. My millionaire only pays the bill once.

An estate-agent's window does not normally hold great fascination, but today I am inspired by the idea of buying a bungalow in the hills where I can go for holidays. This is quite a practical idea, I tell myself, for though I may not sell anything, there is no rule against letting and my bungalow might bring me in some useful pocket money when I did not want to use it myself.

And now, of course, I must furnish it. There are fascinating things of all kinds that can find a home in it, from gleaming bathroom and kitchen fittings with chromium taps and delicately tinted porcelain to exquisite china and glass for the dining room, and the very latest form of easy chair for the lounge. Then there must be beautiful Persian carpets and lovely curtains and linen of all kinds for bedroom and table.

I had nearly forgotten pictures! Here is a chance of buying something really good. Perhaps an art gallery, where contemporary pictures are being shown, would be better than a shop, for there I could buy originals which would be much better and more exciting than prints, however good.

I must hurry, for time is passing, and so far I have bought no clothes. It would be terrible not to be suitably equipped in costume for taking my place in the delightful home I have chosen for myself. Once in a clothes shop there are untold possibilities—clothes for every season, every time of day and night; etceteras to match every costume.

Time passes so quickly that I am very afraid that it will be four o'clock before I have completed my purchases. I glance at my watch. It is only about half an hour since I began my game, and my hands are empty, for I have, in reality, bought nothing. But I have enjoyed my imaginary excursion into affluence and if ever that millionaire does come along, I shall know exactly what to do!

DETECTIVE STORIES

There are people who condemn the detective story, and look with pious horror on those who read it. Its "addicts" are considered frivolous, morbid, even immoral. Yet, in truth, detective-story readers are usually intelligent above the avarage, (schoolmasters, bishops, and cabinet-ministers are among their number); they are also heathy-minded and law-abiding citizens.

The detective story proper, though it usually begins with a murder, is not concerned with horrors. Its aim is to set a problem, and then to follow systematically the steps by which the hero-detective solves it. Different writers are experts in different

types of problem; many show a deep knowledge of some branch of learning such as archeology, history, or law, and every good detective writer must be a student of human nature, for psychology provides the motives for all human actions. It is of the greatest interest to those who enjoy using their brains to try to forestall the detective and arrive at the correct solution by using the clues which the story provides.

Murder is, of course, an extreme form of human behaviour, and no murderer can be considered altogether normal. But it must be remembered that, of all the characters in the story, only one is the murderer; the others are normal people reacting to the stress of unusual circumstances. Such is the setting of all great works of literature from Sophocles to Shakespeare, and the character drawing in the best detective stories of the present century is good enough to give them a place among books that last.

Several writers of detective stories have made their books into a modern form of the "novel of manners" of earlier centuries. They have set their mystery in particular surroundings—a school, a village, a new university—and have given a vivid picture of life in that milieu, with just that touch of caricature which gives humour and life to an imaginary scene. Some have gone back into history and written of famous problems which have never been solved. Some have set their scenes in Ancient Greece or Egypt, and have taken infinite pains to fit all their details with the place and period. There can be no more delight-

ful way of beginning a study of history than to read one of these imaginative reconstructions.

The charge that an interest in crime breeds criminals would, if it were true, be a very serious one. G. K. Chesterton in his essay "In Defence of Detective Stories" has answered it very convincingly. He points out that the detective is the representative not only of the law in action against the law-breaker, but of cosmic order in action against chaos. He personifies Right, Justice, and social Unity working against the rebel who puts his own desires before any other consideration. He is, in fact, essentially moral, much more so than the hero of many other types of novel.

Therefore, if you take pleasure in detective stories, you need not indulge in them furtively or with a sense of shame; you can be happy in the knowledge that you are encouraging morality, intelligence and art, and you can, at the same time, have a very pleasant few hours of light reading.

MOVING HOUSE

To move house is undoubtedly the most uncomfortable experience a family can suffer. It affects everyone, from the grandmother to the youngest child, and though some hardy people may pretend for a time to enjoy it, they cannot fail, on maturer reflection, to admit that it is experience none would wish to repeat.

Some weeks before the appointed day of the

move, various household and private articles begin to disappear from circulation. On enquiring, for example, for one's paint-box, one is told that it has been packed, and no amount of pleading can cause it to reappear in the light of day. The inspiration that might have given birth to a masterpiece has to pass by unheeded. Worse still, the family menus are curtailed because the kitchen utensils are being packed and those required for certain dishes are no longer available. As the dread day approaches, this diminution of the "lares et penates" becomes so acute that one feels guilty at the very desire to eat, wash, or sleep, because of the absence of the accoutrements required for these operations.

On the day itself, there is a division of the family; someone has to stay behind and see that all the belongings are properly loaded; that the men are warned not to drop that box containing the precious china; that the cat is caught before he goes off for the day to an unknown destination; that the things used for the last meal are cleared away and put into some receptacle. Then someone else must go on ahead to receive the luggage as it arrives and direct it to its proper place in the new house.

The children are usually sent with the advance party. They are eager to see the new house, and the person in charge of operations at the despatching base is only too anxious to be rid of them. So off they go first thing in the morning, leaving behind many last-minute injunctions about their prized possessions among the luggage. Each

child has an enormous box containing the things which could not on any account be left to the care of a removal man. The adult in charge looks at the boxes with a sinking heart. She knows that before very long she will have to carry most of them herself, and possibly one of the proprietors as well!

On arrival, tired and rather cross at the new house, the children feel a temporary lightening of spirits. They rush from one room to another, exploring everything, appropriating sites for this and storing places for the other, climbing the trees in the garden, worming their way through the hole in the fence, making friends with the dog next door. But soon they become hungry and demand food. This demand has been anticipated, and bread and butter have been brought, but no knife can be found to cut the one or spread the other. The milk brought from the old house has turned sour on the journey, and no one knows exactly where one should go to buy more. Moreover, it is not safe to leave the house in case the van should arrive in the meantime. There is gas laid on, but the cooker is in the van, so it is not possible to boil a kettle for a cup of tea. Tempers begin to to grow frayed.

"Never mind," says the grown-up in charge. "The van is sure to be here in a few minutes. Go to the end of the road and see if you can see it coming."

The children run off excitedly, but return in a moment with the youngest in floods of tears. She has fallen down and cut her knees. The wounds

are full of gravel and she has torn her frock.

Of course, the family medicine chest has not arrived. There is not even a way of obtaining boiled water to wash the wounds. The harassed grown-up in charge is tearing her hair when a kind neighbour comes to the rescue and takes off the children for first-aid and drinks.

While they are gone, the van arrives, with apologies for lateness, but it had lost its way. The next few hours are too hectic for thought. It is found impossible to get the big cupboard up the stairs and it has to be put in a downstairs room where it looks very out of place—. One could put the youngest child to bed if only one could find the screws which fasten her cot together. But they are as lost as Paradise. The cat, when let out of his basket, immediately vanishes, and the children are convinced he is on his way back to the old home.

At last the men depart, a few dishes and implements are unpacked, and some kind of meal is served. Tired children go to bed in unfamiliar surrounding; tireder grown-ups look round upon the chaos and wonder if ever it will be reduced to order. All breathe a prayer that it may never be their lot to move house again.

CLIMBING TREES

One of my most vivid recollections of early childhood is of an incident which took place when

I was five. My mother and I were on holiday in the little hill-station of Matheran. My mother was sitting on the hotel verandah, and I and some other children were playing in the garden—a paradise of adventure and excitement to children who spent most of their lives in a city flat. Suddenly, I heard the voice of one of the ladies staying in the hotel addressing my mother in shrill horror: "Oh, Mrs X, your little boy is up a tree!" and then my mother's calm reply: "A very good place for him to be!"

Since then, I have always considered a tree to be a good place to be. In a few vigorous movements, one can mount into a secret world, screened from the common eye by leafy branches. Just below, easily seen and heard by the hidden watcher, unsuspecting people walk and talk. They may be people with evil designs on one's liberty, —suggestions that it is time to come in and wash for a meal, to go to lessons, or, that worst of fates for the very young, to go to bed. But securely lodged in a fork with a spreading branch below to cut off the view, one can share the adventure of King Charles of England when he hid in the oak tree while his baffled pursuers discussed his fate below.

Then again, what a beautiful place a tree-top is! It is a dappled world of light and shadow, constantly changing in pattern as the leaves move in the breeze, a world with no harsh colours or ugly shapes, a world where one shares with the birds their delightful perspective of the human world. Houses and gardens look much prettier

from above than from below. The roofs and chimneys rise from the pile, making areas of shadow to set off the brilliance of the sunshine reflected from white walls; and in the garden, the shapes of the flowers are distinguishable through the branches; they show only in colour, a treasury of bright jewels glowing in the sunlight.

But the greatest exhilaration of tree-climbing is the sense of mastery it gives to the climber. Up and up one mounts, half a yard at a time from fork to fork. It is an image in miniature of man's conquest of nature. It is inspired by the spirit which causes men to climb the great peaks of the Alps and the Himalayas. The exploits of the mountaineer can only be achieved by the few, after long and hazardous training, but the same joy of conquest can be felt by the small boy as he ascends skyward by the rough staircase of the tree trunk. Here he is no longer small, insignificant, dominated by adults. He has risen to magnificent heights by his own efforts, and though he may not express it, he feels confident that he will be able to mount to the top of the ladder of success with the same ease.

I wonder if all these thoughts were in my mother's mind when she said: "A very good place for him to be." Probably not, but she knew instinctively that to forbid a boy to climb trees is to put shackles on his limbs as he climbs the ladder of life.

SMUGGLERS, PAST AND PRESENT

"I like a smuggler; he is the only honest thief," said Charles Lamb, and though we may not all agree

with Lamb as to the smuggler's honesty, we are nearly all with him in liking smugglers, or at least, stories about them.

In Lamb's time and before it, smugglers were picturesque and romantic people. They owned sailing boats which approached remote sections of the coastline secretly after nightfall, and they sent in dinghies rowed by muffled oars to land their contraband materials in convenient caves. Very frequently, there was a secret passage which led from the caves to the inn or the manor-house, and the owners of these dwellings lived a double life, presenting to the public the appearance of respectable, law-abiding citizens, and at nightfall, donning cloak and mask, and riding away to cheat the revenue officers and the Chancellor of the Exchequer as thoroughly as they could.

"Five and twenty ponies trotting through the dark
Brandy for the parson, 'baccy for the clerk.
Them as asks no questions isn't told a lie,
So watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentleman go by."

So wrote Kipling in "The Smugglers' Song", and he would certainly be a dull dog whose pulses did not beat at the thought of those midnight horsemen, evading the vigilance of King George's men.

The smugglers of today are very different. They possess neither cave nor cutter, but travel with diplomats on the Golden Arrow, or with hikers and students from Dieppe to Newhaven. Some may even fly, but the small amount of luggage allowed to air passengers does not give very

much scope for the secretion of contraband. Gone are the ponies, the masks and cloaks, the secret passages and the jolly inn-keepers. Today's smuggler does his best to look as ordinary as possible. He might be an old lady with a stuffed parrot, or a longhaired musician with a 'cello, but within these seemingly innocent possessions lurk cocaine or nylon stockings. Battered cars which, to outward appearances, have done a noble duty in providing impecunious families with a cheap tour of Europe, have been found to have their tyres inflated with Swiss watches. A cripple's crutches have proved to be padded by dozens of pairs of Parisian gloves.

The emphasis has changed. The smuggler of yesterday left his goods undisguised and trusted to his ability to land them where no coastguard or customs officer could interfere. Today, such an undertaking would be almost impossible. Aeroplanes, telephones, radar, and countless other modern inventions would all work against him, so he has to resort to ingenuity of deception instead of hardihood and daring adventure. And with this change, the thrill has gone from smuggling. It is now no more than an evasion of one's just dues, and when the contraband is a dangerous drug which may affect the health of dozens of weaklings who have been persuaded to become addicts, no-one can have any sympathy with the smuggler.

PAPER

Primitive man was unacquainted with paper, and if he had possessed any, he could not have put it

to any use. Yet today, there is scarcely any commodity in so great demand and with so great an influence on mankind. Vast areas of forest in Europe, Asia and America have been felled, pulped, and printed and despatched all over the world as books and newspapers. As the world population grows, and the demand for all sorts of things far exceeds the supply, paper substitutes are speedily invented. Men have been known to wear paper collars, blow their noses into paper handkerchiefs, eat from paper plates, and pay their bills with paper money. Paper is, indeed, the most ubiquitous of substances!

Moralists and fable-writers have always enjoyed telling stories in which animals, objects or influences boasted of their use to mankind, and always in such stories, it is the weakest and humblest that proves most powerful in the end. A modern moralist could well write such a fable in which the fragile and unenduring paper proves itself to be of all substances the most necessary. That charming early twentieth-century essay-writer, E. V. Lucas has, in fact, written a fable about paper (a parody on Hans Andersen) called "The Fir Tree, Revised Version". It tells of a fir tree whose ambition it was to influence the world, and who was exceedingly proud of being made into newsprint. But when all its processes of evolution were completed, it found that it was covered with accounts of divorces, strikes, suicides, breaches of promise, accidents and burglaries. It was quickly read through and discarded and the following day, was used to make a fire. Even the fire was a poor one, and went out almost at once, so there was very

little the fir tree had done to influence the world!

We must admit, however, that this particular fir tree was unlucky. Most paper which propagates the printed word makes an impression more or less lasting on the mind of its readers, even if the reader is the sort of person who only reads the more lurid of the cheap newspapers and throws them away immediately afterwards. His conception of the world will be formed by these constantly repeated details. He will grow to expect crime. treason and disloyalty among men, and will see no reason why he himself should struggle to have standards of a higher level than in those of which he reads.

If, on the other hand, a man has learnt to discriminate as to paper, and only peruses that on which unbiassed news, well-formed opinions, sound common-sense and well-written sentences are printed, he will grow up with a high esteem for his fellow men. Is there such paper, and if so, how can one recognise it at a glance?

In answering this question, we have to admit that the paper itself has no quality, either good or bad. As Jesus said to Pilate: "Thou couldst have no power at all, except it were given thee from above". The power of paper is derived entirely from the minds of the men who use it. It can have no power at all without them. It is not pulp of the fir tree that makes slumps or booms, war or peace, beauty or ugliness, vice or virtue; it is the mind of man which uses this humble agent to spread his influence through the world.

VISITORS, WELCOME AND UNWELCOME

There is a certain type of visitor whose approach to the house is always viewed with apprehension by the children of the family. I well remember an "aunt" whose image will always spring to my mind when the words "unwelcome visitor" are spoken. She is the prototype of bugbears!

Of course, she was not really an aunt. She had some connection with my mother in her youth, and felt it her duty to keep an eye on her and offer advice about the upbringing of her family. She was a spinster herself, having been far too formidable all her life to attract a husband, but that did not deter her from knowing more about how to bring up children than any mother of a large family!

She used to drive up to the house in a hired victoria or "gharry", and always seemed to choose the leanest horse and the most disreputable carriage on the cab rank. We children had long ago decided that she instinctively chose the poorest-looking equipage because it obviously cost less to keep. Her saris were always of some cold, dull material, and the pattern of the borders suggested chains.

As soon as she set foot on the porch, we children were sent to wash and change. I remember how I resented having to have my hair replaited within an hour of bedtime. My ayah was always in a hurry and pulled at the tangles with a merciless comb. Then, clean and shining, but with black looks and thoughts, we went in an unwilling pro-

cession to the verandah where the visitor proceeded to hold an enquiry into our doings. I, as the eldest girl, was always expected to produce an elaborate piece of needlework. It was no use protesting that my school work left no time for sewing. "Aunt" insisted that every girl should embroider some elaborate article every year. Then she would enquire about my prowess at cooking, and expect me to play my latest "piece" on the piano. Usually I loved the piano, but when she was there, it always made noises that were not at all harmonious.

There was a very different feeling in the family when Mr. Candywala came. That was not his real name, but he had been in America, and always called sweets "candy", and whenever he visited us, he brought candy with him. Hence the nickname. He would stroll in upon us at all times of the day, and no special preparations were made to receive him. If my brothers were playing with trains, he would go down on his knees by the track and help to wind the engines or change the points; if I was in the depths of despair over algebra homework, he would cast an experienced eye over the sum and make a few suggestions which solved the tough problem like magic. He never asked awkward questions about what we were learning, or how many marks we had gained in examinations, but if we were excited about a new hobby or had a thrilling experience to relate, he was always ready to listen to our outpourings.

Occasionally he would come with an invitation for one particular member of the family—a long

motor drive was a special treat for my eldest brother, and once he took me to a performance of Indian ballet. That was a wonderful occasion which I shall never forget. Mr Candywala's treats were always exactly right; he seemed to know by instinct if there was something that we were longing to do or see, and as soon as the opportunity arose, he transformed our dreams into reality. Once he took the whole family to the circus. That in itself was sufficient to include him in our private calendar of saints!

You can well understand how it is that Mr. Candywala is always a most welcome visitor when he calls on us.

MY FAVOURITE WOMAN CHARACTER IN FICTION

In a great many novels written by men, women characters are beautiful and virtuous beyond belief, or sometimes beautiful and wicked beyond belief. But these glamorous heroines, or villainesses do not give an impression of reality. For, a real life heroine, I think one must go to a woman writer, and I shall choose Elizabeth Bennet from "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen.

Elizabeth is a pretty girl, but not so breath-takingly beautiful as to be inhuman. In fact, the man whom she eventually marries describes her, after his first sight of her, as "tolerable"—a very luke-warm adjective for a lover!

It is the normal in Elizabeth that charms her admirers rather than the abnormal. She does not

move through an atmosphere of thrilling adventure or great tragedy; she has the kind of family and the kind of life that any girl of her class might expect, and though the circumstances may change with the fashion of the time, the problems remain the same.

She is a member of a large family, some of whom behave in a way which causes great embarrassment to the more sensible members. Elizabeth deals with these difficulties with poise and dignity. She deplores her mother's vulgarity and the frivolity of her younger sisters, but she never descends to the practice of emphasising her own good qualities by contrasting them with the weaknesses of her relations. She is loyal and affectionate to her family, yet shrewd enough to recognise their faults and to understand how outsiders regard them.

As a conversationalist she is lively and witty, and when she is in company which does not appreciate her intellectual interests, she is content to sit silent and observe the other members of the circle. She has plenty of physical energy. On one occasion, she shocked her conventional acquaintance, Miss Bingley, by walking several miles in the rain, and arriving at the house wet and mud-stained. But this "extraordinary" activity was not undertaken merely to show her scorn for conventions. It was because her sister was ill, and there was no other way of going to join her. In ordinary circumstances, Elizabeth was willing enough to be conventional.

Elizabeth moves through the uneventful life of country society, making plans and carrying them

out, choosing the course of conduct which is right and fitting and rejecting what seems to her unworthy. She might have secured for herself the inheritance of her father's lands by marrying the foolish Mr. Collins on whom they were entailed, but her conscience would not let her accept a husband for his possessions rather than for himself, and she refused. It is very satisfactory to the reader to find that this good judgment is handsomely rewarded, for the man Elizabeth eventually marries is very rich as well as possessing a character worthy of her respect.

To sum up, Elizabeth appeals to me because her attractiveness can find scope in the everyday affairs of family life. Very few of us can emulate the heroines of sensational fiction, but Elizabeth's "adventures", given the appropriate circumstances, might happen to any one of us.

SAFETY FIRST

As a traffic slogan, "Safety First" may be eminently suitable, but as a motto for life, either of a nation or an individual, it would be as deadening as a permanently acting brake. All the great deeds of history have been achieved by people who were not thinking of safety, but had been inspired to take risks by some great endeavour towards which they were working.

The history of the progress of civilisation is the story of the achievements of those who put adventure before safety. The primitive men who

dared to leave the safety of their native valley and cross high mountains in search of a new land were the pioneers of discovery. Those who ventured in home-made boats across the sea were even bolder. When we seek to discover what urged them to take such important steps, we find that there was always some discontent with their conditions which made them feel that the risk of danger, or even death, was better than passive acceptance of a life that was far from satisfying.

There are countless examples in history of how men have been urged by dissatisfaction to make some great discovery which has been of the utmost value to the human race. It was a small group of men and women in sixteenth and seventeenth century England who found the interference of authority with their religious beliefs so intolerable that they were willing to set out for the New World —the recently discovered America, to found a new home. Safety was the last thing these brave people could expect in their venture.

In our present century, great discoveries in Science have been made by people who had no thought for their own safety, but were eager to find a way to help their fellow creatures. The work of Madame Curie is an outstanding example. Her life story shows how little she valued her personal safety; her work brought her a constant succession of risks to health, wealth, and life itself, but as a result of her discoveries, hundreds of sufferers from the dreadful disease of cancer have received relief or cure.

The idea of Safety First, or Security, has been

taken by some political leaders in modern times as an ideal of national life. It is considered that the people of a nation need to feel safe, to know that there will always be food, shelter, clothes, education, holidays and entertainments whatever happens. Those who have not the brains, energy, or initiative to work for these things for themselves must have them provided by other people. A general acceptance of this principle would have a most stultifying effect on progress. If all our people preferred the safe and familiar life of some regular, humdrum occupation and began to calculate their retirement pensions before they were twenty, there would be no one to lead the world to new discoveries. We should glorify the income-tax collector rather than the discoverer of the South Pole or the climbers of Everest!

Let us then keep "Safety First" in its proper place in the Highway Code.

STYLES IN DRESS

"The apparel of it proclaims the man."

How far can one read the characters of men and women in their dress? There is without doubt a certain indication. Here we have A, whose trousers bag at the knees, whose coat does not match his waistcoat, whose tie, shoes and handkerchief are all different colours; and B, who is neat and well-dressed, and has everything from his socks to his shirt of a calculated colour scheme designed to enhance the blue of his eyes. You may

be sure from these outward signs that A will be happy-go-lucky where B is meticulous: but have you learnt anything of their respective reliability, kindness, unselfishness, or any of the other deeper virtues?

With women, dress is perhaps more revealing of character than with men, for women have always considered dress an art, and the way they use it denotes their aim in self-adornment. Some women's aim is to catch the eye at all costs. They clothe themselves in the most flamboyant garment that the fashion of the day produces, and the shape and cut is always in the extreme of the fashion. When they enter a public place, they expect all eyes to be turned towards them. Other women would no more appear in public in anything startling than they would go and sing their life-history in the streets. To such women, the aim is to be unnoticed. In one of her novels, Ann Bridge, a well-known modern writer, says that a well-dressed woman in street clothes is almost invisible!

You may then claim that you can recognise a woman's breeding by her dress, but you are still uninformed about her loyalty, generosity and reliability. Only on further acquaintance will these become known.

Styles of dress in past history are again more revealing of the aim and habits of the wearer than of his individual character. Our remote forebears wore skins, merely to keep them warm. In the middle ages, dress was regulated by the trade or profession of the wearer and was practically a uniform, so that one could tell at sight the social status

of the wearer. In Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the elaborate and luxurious styles of dress of the upper classes emphasised the fact that they were people who did no manual work, for their garments would have been unsuitable for any kind of toil. In mid-seventeenth century England, the Puritans reflected their stern and uncompromising religious beliefs in the severity of their dress. No bright colours, no decoration, no jewelry was allowed. Dress had to be strictly utilitarian. All pleasure was sin, and pleasure in dress was among the worst of vanities. Given a picture of a man or woman in any fashion of the past, one could place the wearer fairly accurately in the period and class to which he belonged, but again, one would have very little clue to his individuality.

Finally, dress reflects geography. It is possible to tell at once by the style of garment, whether a person comes from Iceland or the Fiji Islands. It is true that these are extremes, but even in the vast area of the world where European dress is habitually worn, there are shades of difference that may show to the observant whether the dress was designed in New York or Paris, in Edinburgh or Rome. Yet, in spite of all these nuances, it is impossible to agree completely with Polonius's maxim quoted at the beginning of this essay. To know a man thoroughly, it is necesary to be acquainted with much more than his style of dress.

CROWDS

A crowd is always exciting, and nearly always excited. It is made up of a number of people who have gathered for the same purpose, and who share the same desires and the same emotions. Very often the desire is for entertainment, and the pleasurable emotion is heightened by being multiplied for each person in the crowd. Sometimes, each member is competing against the others, as when fifty people are trying to get on to a bus which has seats for only twenty. Sometimes, the emotion is antagonism to some authority, and then feelings of anger and hatred are multiplied, and "danger rears its ugly head."

Crowds are subject to what psychologists call "mass hysteria"; that is to say the individual members lose their own will power and are submerged in the will of the whole mass. A mature, well-balanced person would dislike this sinking of his own judgment in the whim of a crowd, and so we generally find that mature, well-balanced people do not like crowds, and do their best to avoid being involved in them. On the other hand, unformed or weak minds find strength in the companionship of many others. They enjoy the unusual sensation of power which they gain from being part of a juggernaut, and they willingly exert their modicum of force in whatever direction the crowd ordains. This accounts for the very cruel actions that take place in riots; no single member of the crowd would be guilty of them, but altogether, the mob is ruthless in its violence.

Shakespeare knew a good deal about the instability of crowds. In several of his plays, he comments with scorn on the fickle behaviour of the "many-headed multitude", and in Julius Caesar, gives a vivid picture of how the emotions of a crowd can be swayed by the clever orator and made to serve his will. Antony succeeds in playing upon the mob which has acquiesced in the murder of Caesar, and in turning it into an instrument of revenge for that murder. When he has finished with them, they are rushing away to set fire to the houses of those whom, a short while before, they were hailing as benefactors.

Inter-communal riots are nearly always the result of mass-hysteria. In countries where members of different religions live in close proximity to one another, it is possible for individuals to be tolerant and friendly towards people of a different creed. Quite often they go to the same schools and share an interest in many activities, such as music, literature and sport. Yet, if a crowd composed of members of one creed happens to clash with a crowd of another religion, all friendly feelings are forgotten, and murder and bloodshed are considered justifiable or even admirable. It is for this reason that the authorities always forbid public meetings and processions when there is any danger of disturbances.

The poet Gray, in his famous Elegy, has summed up all the undesirability of crowds in one short line:

"The madding crowd's ignoble strife."

Those, therefore, who wish to preserve sanity, nobility and peace will avoid crowds, and

"Along the cool sequestered vale of life
Pursue the even tenor of their way."

JOURNALISM AS A CAREER.

There are in every generation, people whose chief pleasure, from as soon as they are able to write, is to express their ideas in words. Boys and girls lug dog-eared exercise books from their pockets and inscribe stories, plays or poems in the style which, at that stage of their development, most appeals to them. Later, their chief ambition is to see the works of their pen in print, either in the school magazine or in the local paper. It is these people who look forward with delight to journalism as a career.

Those who aspire to power could hardly find any profession which would give their ambition more scope. Even the most influential of statesmen is dependent on the support of the electorate, and if he is not returned to power by his constituents, he can do nothing. But a journalist can continue to sway men's opinions by the power of the printed word for as long as he can get a publisher or a newspaper editor to print what he writes.

Then again, journalism has an infinite number of facets; you can write on anything from philosophy to prize-fighting, from nuclear physics to nudism. There is always somebody who will be interested if you have something original to say and can say it in persuasive terms.

The greatest difficulty in the career of journal-

ism lies in what is known as "getting a foot in." There are so many people who think they have a flair for writing, and so few editors who agree that their flair is worth cultivating. Some young people concentrate on the news side of journalism. They keep their eyes and ears open for anything that is likely to find a place in the news of the day, and take care to be the first to inform the local newspaper. They learn to develop a sixth sense which leads them to the scene of motor-accidents or fires, or the return of long-lost heirs or the probable marriage of film stars. They cultivate a highly coloured vocabulary, and learn to know the set phrases by which the sensation seeking public expects to be informed. Soon, they can turn out accounts of flower shows, prize-givings, weddings and court cases as swiftly as if they were turning the handle of a mincing machine. But such glibness, though possibly gratifying at first, does not lead very far, and its possessor finds himself doomed to permanent anonymity as "Our reporter". No true journalist would be content with this.

The second method of entry is far more difficult, and very few aspirants finally reach success. It consists in careful and exhaustive study of the subject in which the would-be journalist is most interested, and very stern training in writing. This study involves years of hard work, often at a university, and then the student attempts to join the staff of a newspaper of good standing where his expert knowledge will be appreciated.

This path into the world of writers is naturally comparatively untrodden, for only the best succeed

in finding any place at all. But for those who do there are great possibilities. Many of the most influential men in the world today have begun their careers in this way, and they can claim with the poets and music makers:

"We are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems."

MONDAY

Monday has a bad character among the days. Those who like to give a colour to each day of the week label Monday "black". It is looked upon as an ogre of a day, a task-master who drags poor slaves back to their toil when they have, for a brief week-end escaped into freedom.

I do not agree with this denigration of Monday. To me it is a day of beginnings, an exciting day when anything may happen. All the things that went wrong last week are past and done with. They have been buried with Friday (that truly gloomy day!) and there has been a blissful period of rest and relaxation. And now, with Monday, a new week's work is beginning, one that may be the most successful and exciting that has ever happened.

Perhaps I have a special proprietory interest in Monday, as it was the day of my birth. According to the old rhyme: "Monday's child is fair of face." Here, I am afraid, my tutelary goddess did not keep the rules of the game, for I was not endowed with beauty of form or feature. But I do celebrate a kind of birthday every Monday. For me, more

than for a Tuesday or Thursday child, it is a new week. I turn over a page in my book of life, and find it clean and unsullied. Perhaps what I write in it will be my masterpiece.

Often on a Friday, I plod home weary and disillusioned. My prowess during the week has given me no satisfaction at all. I am all too conscious that I have done those things which I ought not to have done, and left undone those things which I ought to have done, and I would not back myself, even for a place, in any of the races of this life. On those occasions, I look forward with relief and pleasure to Saturday and Sunday, those two green pastures where one may browse at ease, and run no races at all. I play with the idea of a life of perpetual Saturdays and Sundays. How glorious it would be if there were no problems to work out, no hills to climb, no obstacles in the path, nothing but repose beside still waters.

But when Monday dawns, such languid aspirations, if they can be called aspirations at all, are shown up in their true coward's colours. On Monday, what delights have slothful ease and uneventful peace? Time enough for such placid pleasures when I am old and grey. Youth and Monday together demand something more active. Today, I seek mountains to climb, seas to cross, new worlds to discover.

"By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon."

Surely these words were spoken on a Monday, for is not Monday dedicated to the moon?

THE FASCINATION OF AN ATLAS

To open an atlas is to plunge straightway into a world of romance. Nowhere between the pages of a book, (no, not even a Bradshaw!) are there such destinations towards which the imaginative traveller can journey hopefuly.

"When I was but thirteen or so,
I went into a golden land;
Chimborozo, Cotopaxy
Took me by the hand."

These names, and that of Popocatapetl, inspired W. J. Turner to write his charming little poem, "Romance". Another page in the atlas was the inspiration of Flecker's "Golden Journey to Samarkand." Kipling longed to sail to Rio, "just once before I'm old"; and there are hundreds of verses, popular or classic, that take their colour and charm from some place name which has filled the writer with enthusiasm and desire.

To me personally, an atlas has two quite different charms—that of the very familiar, and that of the very remote. I like to be able to find places that I know well, to remember when I last visited them. If I have pleasant memories of a picnic by a river, it is fascinating to discover as far as possible the exact spot in the atlas; to trace the river upstream and imagine what we should have found on that past occasion if we had done this in actual fact; to follow it downstream, and see what towns it passes, and where it eventually reaches the sea. Perhaps I catch sight of the name of a town where

I have stayed, and I realise, with the help of my atlas, how near I was to many other places I have often longed to see.

"Next time I go there," I promise myself, "I will make the trip to this other place. It isn't more than ten miles away."

The second charm is one of imagination more than of memory. I like to turn to the map of a country where I have never been, and see how much I can discover about that country from the atlas. Here, a map which marks its contours in colours is most helpful, for one can see at a glance where there are hills and valleys, whether the slopes are steep or gradual, which towns are on high ground and which on low.

There is, of course, a great deal that the atlas will leave untold, and here it is that imagination can have full play. The appearance and dress of the inhabitants of my chosen country are not to be discovered from an atlas, but I probably have some idea from pictures in geography books, what to expect. I can imagine myself being received hospitably in strange homes, feeding on strange, romantic foods, and taking part in unusual and impressive ceremonies. Certain plants, flowers and fruits are connected in my mind with certain places: I could not visit Lebanon without admiring its cedars; in Kashmir, I should expect the lotus, and in Ceylon, the passion fruit. Australia must, of course, provide me with the eucalyptus tree, and Scotland with heather.

So I range through the world from Kamchatka to Karachi, from Buenos Aires to Bangkok. I

pay no railway fares or freight charges—my only expenditure is a small bill from the book-seller who provided my atlas. Finally, I turn to the map of my home country, and find the comfortable and familiar syllables of my own town. In this kind of globe-trotting I do not suffer from home-sickness, for when my wandering is done, I have only to close the book, and I am back at my own fireside, a happy and satisfied traveller at his journey's end.

THOUGHTS ON THE PROSPECT OF LEAVING HOME TO ENTER EMPLOYMENT OR A COLLEGE IN A STRANGE AND DISTANT LAND

Tomorrow, I shall be leaving India for three years at the University of London. I have never been out of India before, nor have I left my family for more than a few days. So this will be a great adventure.

When I contemplate the immediate future, my thoughts are very mixed. First, there is a great sense of satisfaction and triumph. It has been my ambition for as long as I can remember, to go to England to study. There were many difficulties to overcome, and I needed a great deal of determination. But at last they were all surmounted: I won a scholarship which would cover my expenses, and my parents were persuaded to give their consent. So already I have achieved something. I feel that I am about to taste the fruits of victory.

But, of course, this victory is only a preliminary one. Up to now, I have been at home, surrounded by loving parents, and given help and encouragement by my teachers. From tomorrow I shall be entirely alone, first on a long journey, then in a strange land. I cannot help a little sinking of the heart when I contemplate that loneliness. Shall I be able to conquer it?

Then there is the strangeness of climate, food and customs. My mother has seen to it that I am well equipped with warm clothes, but even so, the prospect of long weeks of cold rain and wind, with fog, ice and snow to relieve the monotony is not very inviting. And food has always been one of my minor pleasures. It will be hard not to have any of the traditional Indian dishes automatically provided for days of celebration like birthdays. In that respect, perhaps I am lucky to be going to London, for I understand there are Indian restaurants there where nearly all our best delicacies can be obtained. I hope I shall not "put my foot in it" when I go into English homes, but after all, I am of average intelligence, and ought to be able to trust my wits to show me how to behave.

Now that I have confessed to some slight apprehension, let me turn to the more rosy prospect. What opportunities I am going to have during this next three years. First, I am travelling seven thousand miles, through Italy and France to the largest city in the world. I shall see towns that have been famous for centuries, shall be able to stand in the very spot where great men of past ages have walked and made history. I shall see

landscapes of very different character from those to which I have been accustomed and shall be able to appreciate from my own experience the emotions which have inspired the great poets and painters to write or paint their masterpieces.

Then there is London itself. Young men have travelled there to seek their fortunes for many hundreds of years. Some who went expecting to find the streets paved with gold have been disappointed, but only because they were looking for the wrong kind of gold. It is not the precious metal that London provides to treasure seekers, (though some have even chanced on that) but the gold of opportunity. There, one can see the greatest actors in the works of the greatest dramatists of the world; one can hear the most famous orchestras and soloists performing the masterpieces of the world's most admired composers; one can, (if one has a mind to it) visit the Mother of Parliaments and hear the "hot air" that is generated daily in the palace of Westminster. One can see flower shows and dog shows, prize fights and book exhibitions—in fact there is nothing under the sun that sooner or later does not come to London.

All these are attractions for my leisure hours. The main object of my journey is my university education. That is a wonderful opportunity of which I intend to take the fullest advantage, and when, after three years, I return to my native land, I hope I shall "bring my sheaves with me."

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