

INTRODUCTION TO PROSE

Prose is the written equivalent of the spoken language. It is written in words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and chapters. It utilizes punctuation, grammar and vocabulary to develop its message. Prose is made up of fiction and nonfiction. Prose is the way you speak normally in every day conversations or writing.

Prose is a **form** of language that has no formal metrical structure. It applies a natural flow of speech, and ordinary grammatical structure, rather than rhythmic structure, such as in the case of traditional poetry. It can be said to be the most reflective of conversational speech. Prose is the so-called “ordinary writing” — made up of sentences and paragraphs, without any metre or rhyme in the structure.

Example to show the difference between prose and poetry:

Prose: “I walked about all alone over the hillsides and saw many daffodils all around,”

Poetry: “I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high o’er vales and **hills**,
When all at once, I saw a crowd, a host of golden **daffodils**”

Prose is divided into **fiction** and **non-fiction**

Fiction:

- Novels
- Short stories

Non-fiction writing includes:

- Essays
- Autobiographies and biographies
- Speeches
- Journals and diaries
- Articles

The basic **elements of prose** are: character, setting, plot, point of view, and mood. ... Setting includes: physical environment, social situation, time period, and location. Plot is what happens: characters' actions and important events. It applies a natural flow of speech, and ordinary grammatical structure, rather than rhythmic structure, such as in the case of traditional poetry. A piece of prose writing can be the most reflective of conversational speech. Some works of **prose** do have versification, and a blend of the two formats that is called “**prose poetry**.”

Prose connotes spoken or written discourse that is not patterned into metric or free verse. Prose is material that you speak or write that is not poetry. Prose exists in a variety of genres. At one end of the spectrum is the ordinary speech, which could be very learned language or colloquial

speech. On the end of the spectrum you will find very distinguished written prose, such as those written by John Dryden or Edmund Burke. Dryden called such writing, “that other harmony of prose”.

There are two kinds of prose writing:

1. **Non-fictional prose:** This is writing based on facts. Examples of this kind of writing would include, autobiography, biography, non-fiction essay
2. **Fictional prose:** This would be imaginative writing. Examples of this kind of writing would be novel, short story, drama.

Prose can be broken into four categories or varieties, divided by purpose:

1. **Narrative:** writing which tells a story (can be fiction or non-fiction); usually told in chronological order; has characters; follows the basic **plot-line** - exposition, rising action, climax, falling action.
2. **Expository:** gives basic information; used often in speeches and essays; does not tell a story or argue.
3. **Descriptive:** describes something in detail, again without telling a story or arguing a point; used most often in combination with another mode of writing, but alone is often found in scientific or medical reports.
4. **Persuasive:** argues a point (or two sides of a question); gives evidence in favor or against.

Descriptive prose: This kind of writing describes or gives a picture of a scene. Some novelists indulge in long descriptions of the setting in which their story is situated before any action dialogue takes place. Descriptive prose describes things as they are or as they appear to be. It can be the description of a person or a landscape or an event. In descriptive prose, we are able to see things as they are or were seen or heard or imagined by the describer. A good description translates the writer's observation into vivid details and creates an atmosphere of its own. Through his/her description, the author tries to recreate what she has seen or imagined. A fine description is a painting in words. Here is description of Mr. Squeers in Charles Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-39).

Mr. Squeers' appearance was not prepossessing. He had but one eye, and the popular prejudice runs in favour of two. The eye he had was unquestionably useful but decidedly not ornamental: being of a greenish grey, and in shape resembling the fan-light of a street door. The blank side of his face was wrinkled and puckered up, which gave him a very sinister appearance, especially when he smiled, at which times his expression bordered closely on the villainous. His hair was very flat and shiny, save at the ends, where it was brushed stiffly up from a low protruding forehead, which assorted well with his harsh voice and coarse manner. He was about two or three and fifty, and a trifle below the middle size; he wore a white neckerchief with long ends, and a suit of scholastic black; but his coat sleeves being a great deal too long, and his trousers a

great deal too short, he appeared ill at ease in his clothes, and as if he were in a perpetual state of astonishment at finding himself so respectable.

Glossary

Prepossessing – inspiring

Puckered up – full of folds and wrinkles

Sinister – wicked, evil

Protruding – jutting out, projecting

Scholastic – formal/academic

This is a graphic description of the appearance of Mr. Squeers. The details are so sharp that we can easily visualize the person. We are told his height, his eyes, his face, hair, forehead and dress. A successful description, it enables us to picture the person vividly. It is also a very enjoyable passage. Did you notice the **irony**? ‘He had but one eye, and the popular prejudice runs in favour of two’. The irony and subtle humour continue throughout the passage so that the reader cannot help smiling at her/himself. The eye further likened to ‘the fan-light of a street door’ - a very interesting and unusual analogy. You must also have noticed how carefully Dickens chooses his words so that we can ‘see’ the hair that was ‘very flat and shiny’, ‘hear’ his ‘harsh voice’ and other details. These are some of the devices that you will find used effectively in literary **prose**.

Varieties of Prose

- Descriptive Prose
- Narrative Prose
- Expository Prose

Forms of Prose

- Short Story
- Novel
- Essay
- Biography and Autobiography

Narrative Prose: **Narrative prose** means ordinary written language which tells a story and has characters. It is often told chronologically. **Narrative** means like a story, or that which tells a story. “**Narrative**” means story, but more deeply it means a story’s technical structure. Songs have narrative, screenplays have narrative, even commercials have narrative; and better, they could have the exact same narrative and manifest differently. Though there is plenty of debate, I lean towards narrative requiring at a minimum the following two qualities: A formal, connected structure (beginning, middle, and end) and conflict driven plot/character dimensionality; a protagonist trying to accomplish a goal while overcoming obstacles.

A narrative is a description of events. It may deal with external or internal events. By internal events, we mean the thoughts, feelings and emotions of individuals. Narrative writing tries to

recreate an actual experience or an imaginary one in a way that we are able to experience it mentally. We lose ourselves in the characters and events of the narrative temporarily. Narratives can deal with the facts or fiction. Autobiographies, biographies, histories are narratives of fact. The short story and novel come under the category of narrative fiction. In a narrative, we are carried along the stream of action. When we narrate a story, we concentrate on the sequence of events. It is the action that grips the attention of the reader. Narration is concerned with action and actors, it may make use of description but description is secondary. Action, characters and setting are the elements that are woven into a pattern to make the narrative interesting.

Examples of narrative can be found everywhere in human expression and creativity, from everyday speech to performance of all types, including television, movies, radio, and even in more static arts such as sculpture, painting, and photography. Even scientific reports may contain elements of narrative, as they describe the initial hypotheses and how those theses were challenged and changed over the course of the study. Thus, narrative is truly a vital aspect of the experience of being human, and has been since the beginning of communication. Here is a piece of narrative writing which is humorous taken from Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist*.

What makes a narrative interesting is not just what is said but the way it is said. Look at this passage from Charles Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist* (1837). Here about the trial of the Artful Dodger when he is produced in court on charges of pick-pocketing. It has Mr Dawkins, who, shuffling into the office with the big coat sleeves tucked up as usual, his left hand in his pocket, and his hat in his right hand, preceded the jailer, with a rolling gait altogether indescribable, and, taking his place in the dock, requested in an audible voice to know what he was placed in that

Dodger: 'ere disgraceful situation for'.

'Hold your tongue, will you?' said the jailer.

'I'm an Englishman, ain't I?' rejoined the Dodger; 'Where are my privileges?'

'You'll get your privileges soon enough,' retorted the jailer, 'and pepper.'

'We'll see wot the Secretary of State for the Home Affairs has got to say to the beaks, if I don't', replied Mr Dawkins.

'Now then! Wot is this here business? I shall thank the mag'strates to dispose of this here little affair, and not to keep me while they read the paper for I've got an appointment with a genelman in the city, and as I'm a man of my word and very punctual in business matters, he'll go away if I ain't there to my time, and then pr'aps there won't be an action for damage against them as kept me away. Oh, no, certainly not!'

At this point the Dodger, with a show of being very particular with a view to proceedings to be had thereafter, desired the jailer to communicate 'the names of them two files as was on the bench', which so tickled the spectators, that they laughed almost as heartily as Master Bates could have done if he had heard the request.

This wish was immediately gratified, for a policeman stepped forward who had seen the prisoner attempt the pocket of an unknown gentleman in a crowd, and indeed take a handkerchief

therefrom, which, being a very old one, he deliberately put back again, after trying it on his own countenance.

For this reason, he took the Dodger into custody as soon as he could get near him, and the said Dodger being searched, had upon his person a silver snuff-box, with the owner's name engraved upon the lid (pence). This gentleman had been discovered on reference to the Court Guide, and being then and there present, swore that the snuff-box was his, and that he had missed it on the previous day, the moment he had disengaged himself from the crowd before referred to. He had also remarked a young gentleman in the crowd particularly active in making his way about, and that young gentleman was the prisoner before him.

We respond at one level to the hilarious situation but at another we also wonder: what should the poor do against such oppressive judicial systems? ('This ain't the shop of justice'). We also get a clear picture of the Artful Dodger: his 'coat-sleeves tucked up', his 'hand in his pocket' and his 'rolling gait' are described vividly at the outset. What then follows is a dialogue full of ironical, witty and quick rejoinders by this habitual offender. This is alternated with third person narration: "At this point the Dodger, with a show of being very particular with a view to proceedings to be had thereafter, desired the jailer to communicate "the names of them two files as was on the bench", which so tickled the spectators, that they laughed almost as heartily as Master Bates could have done if he had heard the request".

In short, what we wish to point out is that narrative writing makes use of narration as well as description using the kind of words, dialect and style as used by a particular group of people. In order to dramatize the situation, dialogues and conversations are introduced so that the writer is able to recreate the situation and communicate the experience.

Expository Writing: Expository writing style refers to a form of writing that informs or explains the topic in a chronological order. This style of writing encompasses a main idea along with the supporting facts and figures and a conclusion. The main objective of expository writing is to inform the readers about something informative or to expose about the truth with the help of evidences. In this form of writing, the texts are written in a specific order so as to give a better clarity to the readers. Instruction manuals, textbooks, research papers, news articles, posters, recipe book, language books and city guide are some of examples of expository writing.

Expository Writing is one of the popular writing styles. Expository Prose Expository writing deals in definition, explanation or interpretation. It includes writing on science, law, philosophy, technology, political science, history and criticism,. Exposition is a form of logical presentation. Its primary object is to explain and clarify. It presents details concretely and exactly. This form of writing is used to inform, explain and describe a concept to the readers. In expository writing, paragraphs are organized in a lucid manner so as to give readers a thorough understanding of the topic. Generally, paragraphs are limited in this form of writing and it usually begins with an introductory sentence. Expository writing form is used in essay writing in which the writer presents the main idea in an introductory paragraph, which is followed by two, three paragraphs

that contain accurate facts and figures to justify the topic. Besides, it also contains a concluding paragraph that summarizes the topic precisely to the readers.

Exposition is an intentional commitment by the writer to an idea. Each exposition stresses significant close reading and analysis of a variety of essays by professional authors for the purpose of better understanding the strategies and writerly choices that can be inferred from the construction of the essay and from an awareness of context. However personal or local the original impulse of the students' own essays, emphasis is on clear expression of ideas and viewpoints meant to engage, challenge, and persuade readers. Imitation, drafting, peer review, revision, and self-reflexive commentary are among the process steps explored on the way to developing finished essays.

Words have a denotative and also a connotative meaning. Denotation is the literal meaning of a word. For example, when you say 'This is a stone', you are referring to an object which is a stone. It is a clear statement. There is no other meaning of this sentence. On the other hand, if we say 'she has a heart of stone' the meaning changes. What does it mean? It simply means that she is cruel or hard-hearted. In fact, it refers to all the qualities you associate with the stone. This is what we mean when we say that a word has several connotations. The word 'home' means a place where one lives with one's family. This is its primary meaning. But it suggests warmth, intimacy, family security, comfort, affection. A house is also a place where one lives. Does it have the same connotations of the word 'home'? No. Poetry is full of connotations and our appreciation of poetry stems a great deal from the connotations of words used in it. Now that we have discussed the difference between denotation and connotation let us discuss the different varieties of prose. But before doing so, it would be a good idea to work out a few exercises. Prose can be best defined formally and can be defined in contrast to poetry and to other forms of writing (like certain lists or certain kinds of directions/instructions).

"Prose - the ordinary form of spoken and written language whose unit is the sentence, rather than the line as it is in poetry. The term applies to all expressions in language that do not have a regular rhythmic pattern". Prose is perhaps the most common mode of writing and uses the conventional forms of grammatically complete sentences. In prose, sentences are almost always presented on the page within a paragraph structure.

Here is an example of a prose passage:

"Reading is the foundation of language arts. To be a competent writer, one must first be a good reader. Reading begins with learning that a language's alphabet is formed of individual letters that compose words, sentences, and paragraphs. Reading, however, is also being able to understand the larger meanings that exist within the printed word and often beyond it".

Notice that the writing in the passage above uses complete sentences structured into a paragraph format. If we take the same language and utilize a different form/format, we will see how prose differs from poetry. Reading is the foundation of language arts.

Additionally, prose can be narrative, expository, descriptive or persuasive. Narrative writing has a storyline and characters. It is often told chronologically. Expository writing denotes writing to explain. This form of writing explores particular topics and themes. Expository writing differs from narrative writing because it does not necessarily tell a story. Descriptive writing uses detail, such as the five senses, to discuss a topic in depth. This form of writing is often used in conjunction with narrative, expository, or persuasive writing. Persuasive writing attempts to convince the audience of the merits or disadvantages of the topic.

The term “prose” originates from the Latin *prosa*, meaning “in phrase” which was derived from *prosa oratio*, meaning “straight, direct, unadorned speech.” This phrase was derived from *prorsus*, meaning “straightforward or direct” and can be further traced to “*proversus*”, meaning “turned forward.” It is also known that artfully written prose seems to have developed later than written verse (poetry). Inherent in prose is a sense of style, or how speakers and writers communicate their meanings. Prose style is specific to a particular work, author, or genre.

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Unit-I

Francis Bacon's Essays

Of Travel and Of Studies.

OF TRAVEL

Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country, before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor, or grave servant, I allow well; so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen, in the country where they go; what acquaintances they are to seek; what exercises, or discipline, the place yieldeth. For else, young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing, that in sea voyages, where there is nothing to be seen, but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land-travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered, than observation. Let diaries, therefore, be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are: the courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities, and towns, and so the heavens and harbors; antiquities and ruins; libraries; colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories; arsenals; magazines; exchanges; burses; warehouses; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasures of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable, in the places where they go. After all which, the tutors, or servants, ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them; yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do. First, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant, or tutor, as knoweth the country, as was

likewise said. Let him carry with him also, some card or book, describing the country where he travelleth; which will be a good key to his inquiry. Let him keep also a diary. Let him not stay long, in one city or town; more or less as the place deserveth, but not long; nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town, to another; which is a great [adamant](#) of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself, from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places, where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth. Let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality, residing in the place whither he removeth; that he may use his favor, in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel, with much profit. As for the acquaintance, which is to be sought in travel; that which is most of all profitable, is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors: for so in travelling in one country, he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see, and visit, eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad; that he may be able to tell, how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided. They are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words. And let a man beware, how he keepeth company with cholerick and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries, where he hath travelled, altogether behind him; but maintain a correspondence by letters, with those of his acquaintance, which are of most worth? And let his travel appear rather in his discourse, than his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse, let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners, for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers, of that he hath learned abroad, into the customs of his own country.

OF STUDIES

In his classic essay, “Of Studies,” Francis Bacon explains how and why study—knowledge—is important. Along with Michel de Montaigne, who published his first essays less than twenty years before Francis Bacon published his first collection in 1597. Bacon is considered the father of the English essay (with Montaigne the father of the French essay). Bacon’s essays differ from Montaigne’s in being more compact and more formal. Where Montaigne conceived of the essays as an opportunity to explore a subject through mental association and a casual ramble of the mind, Bacon envisioned the essay as an opportunity to offer advice. The title of his essay collection: “Essays or Counsels: Civil and Moral,” suggests that didactic intent.

In “Of Studies,” Bacon lays out the value of knowledge in practical terms. Bacon considers to what use studies might be put. He is less interested in their theoretical promise than in their practical utility—a proclivity more English, perhaps, than French. Bacon’s writing in “Of Studies” is direct and pointed. It avoids the meandering find-your-way free form of Montaigne’s essays. From his opening sentence Bacon gets directly to the point: “Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability.” He then elaborates on how studies are useful in these three ways. And he wastes no words in detailing the use of “studies” for a Renaissance gentleman.

One of the attractions of Bacon’s essay is his skillful use of parallel sentence structure, as exemplified in the opening sentence and throughout “Of Studies.” This stylistic technique lends clarity and order to the writing, as in “crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them,” which in its straightforward assertiveness exhibits confidence and elegance in addition to clarity and emphasis.

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment, and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best, from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need

pruning, by study; and studies themselves, do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books, else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit: and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know, that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. Abound studia in mores. Nay, there is no stone or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body, may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the Schoolmen; for they are cymene sectores. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

UNIT- II

Beau Tibbs at Vauxhall

By Oliver Goldsmith (1730–1774)

THE PEOPLE of London are as fond of walking as our friends at Peking of riding; one 1
of the principal entertainments of the citizens here in summer is to repair about
nightfall to a garden not far from town, where they walk about, shew their best clothes
and best faces, and listen to a concert provided for the occasion.

I accepted an invitation a few evenings ago from my old friend, the man in black, to 2
be one of a party that was to sup there; and at the appointed hour waited upon him at
his lodgings. There I found the company assembled, and expecting my arrival. Our
party consisted of my friend in superlative finery, his stockings rolled, a black velvet
waistcoat, which was formerly new, and his grey wig combed down in imitation of
hair; a pawnbroker's widow, of whom by the bye my friend was a professed admirer,
dressed out in green damask, with three gold rings on every finger; Mr. Tibbs the
second-rate beau I have formerly described, together with his lady, in flimsy silk, dirty
gauze instead of linen, and a hat as big as an umbrella.

Our first difficulty was in settling how we should set out. Mrs. Tibbs had a natural 3
aversion to the water, and the widow, being a little in flesh, as warmly protested against
walking; a coach was therefore agreed upon; which, being too small to carry five, Mr.
Tibbs consented to sit in his wife's lap.

In this manner, therefore, we set forward, being entertained by the way with the 4
bodings of Mr. Tibbs, who assured us he did not expect to see a single creature for the
evening above the degree of a cheese monger; that this was the last night of the
gardens, and that consequently we should be pestered with the nobility and gentry
from Thames Street and Crooked Lane; with several other prophetic ejaculations,
probably inspired by the uneasiness of his situation.

The illuminations began before we arrived, and I must confess, that upon entering the 5
gardens I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure: the lights
everywhere glimmering through the scarcely-moving trees—the full-bodied concert

bursting on the stillness of the night—the natural concert of the birds, in the more retired part of the grove viewing with that which was formed by art; the company gaily dressed, looking satisfaction, and the table spread with various delicacies, all conspired to fill my imagination with the visionary happiness of the Arabian lawgiver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. “Head of Confucius,” cried I to my friend, “this is fine! this unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence! If we except the virgins of immortality, that hang on every tree, and may be plucked at every desire, I do not see how this falls short of Mahomet’s Paradise!”—“As for virgins,” cries my friend, “it is true they are a fruit that do not much abound in our gardens here; but if ladies, as plenty as apples in autumn, and as complying as any Houri of them all, can content you, I fancy we have no need to go to heaven for Paradise.”

I was going to second his remarks, when we were called to a consultation by Mr. Tibbs and the rest of the company, to know in what manner we were to lay out the evening to the greatest advantage. Mrs. Tibbs was for keeping the genteel walk of the garden, where, she observed, there was always the very best company; the widow, on the contrary, who came but once a season, was for securing a good standing-place to see the waterworks, which she assured us would begin in less than an hour at the farthest; a dispute therefore began, and as it was managed between two of very opposite characters, it threatened to grow more bitter at every reply. Mrs. Tibbs wondered how people could pretend to know the polite world who had received all their rudiments of breeding behind a counter; to which the other replied, that though some people sat behind counters, yet they could sit at the head of their own tables too, and carve three good dishes of hot meat whenever they thought proper, which was more than some people could say for themselves, that hardly knew a rabbit and onions from a green goose and gooseberries. 6

It is hard to say where this might have ended, had not the husband, who probably knew the impetuosity of his wife’s disposition, proposed to end the dispute by adjourning to a box, and try if there was anything to be had for supper that was supportable. To this we all consented: but here a new distress arose: Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs would sit in none but a genteel box—a box where they might see and be seen—one, as they expressed it, in the very focus of public view; but such a box was not easy 7

to be obtained, for though we were perfectly convinced of our own gentility, and the gentility of our appearance, yet we found it a difficult matter to persuade the keepers of the boxes to be of our opinion; they chose to reserve genteel boxes for what they judged more genteel company.

At last, however, we were fixed, though somewhat obscurely, and supplied with the usual entertainment of the place. The widow found the supper excellent, but Mrs. Tibbs thought everything detestable. “Come, come, my dear,” cries the husband, by way of consolation, “to be sure we can’t find such dressing here as we have at Lord Crump’s or Lady Crimp’s; but, for Vauxhall dressing, it is pretty good: it is not their victuals, indeed, I find fault with, but their wine; their wine,” cries he, drinking off a glass, “indeed is most abominable.” 8

By this last contradiction, the widow was fairly conquered in point of politeness. She perceived now that she had no pretensions in the world to taste; her very senses were vulgar, since she had praised detestable custard, and smacked at wretched wine; she was therefore content to yield the victory, and for the rest of the night to listen and improve. It is true, she would now and then forget herself, and confess she was pleased, but they soon brought her back again to miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which we were sitting, but was soon convinced that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction; she ventured again to commend one of the singers, but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the style of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had neither ear, voice, nor judgment. 9

Mr. Tibbs, now, willing to prove that his wife’s pretensions to music were just, entreated her to favour the company with a song; but to this she gave a positive denial—“for you know very well, my dear,” says she, “that I am not in voice to-day, and when one’s voice is not equal to one’s judgment, what signifies singing? besides, as there is no accompaniment, it would be but spoiling music.” All these excuses, however, were over-ruled by the rest of the company, who, though one would think they already had music enough, joined in the entreaty. But particularly the widow, now willing to convince the company of her breeding, pressed so warmly, that she seemed determined to take no refusal. At last, then, the lady complied, and after humming for some minutes, began with such a voice, and such affectation, as I could perceive, gave 10

but little satisfaction to any except her husband. He sat with rapture in his eye, and beat time with his hand on the table.

You must observe, my friend, that it is the custom of this country, when a lady or gentleman happens to sing, for the company to sit as mute and motionless as statues. Every feature, every limb, must seem to correspond in fixed attention; and while the song continues, they are to remain in a state of universal petrification. In this mortifying situation we had continued for some time, listening to the song, and looking with tranquillity, when the master of the box came to inform us, that the waterworks were going to begin. At this information I could instantly perceive the widow bounce from her seat, but correcting herself, she sat down again, repressed by motives of good-breeding. Mrs. Tibbs, who had seen the waterworks a hundred times, resolving not to be interrupted, continued her song without any share of mercy, nor had the smallest pity on our impatience. The widow's face, I own, gave me high entertainment; in it I could plainly read the struggle she felt between good-breeding and curiosity: she talked of the waterworks the whole evening before, and seemed to have come merely in order to see them; but then she could not bounce out in the very middle of a song, for that would be forfeiting all pretensions to high life, or high-lived company, ever after. Mrs. Tibbs therefore, kept on singing, and we continued to listen, till at last, when the song was just concluded, the waiter came to inform us that the waterworks were over!

"The waterworks over!" cried the widow; "the waterworks over already! that's impossible! they can't be over so soon!"—"It is not my business," replied the fellow, "to contradict your ladyship; I'll run again and see." He went, and soon returned with a confirmation of the dismal tidings. No ceremony could now bind my friend's disappointed mistress; she testified her displeasure in the openest manner: in short, she now began to find fault in turn, and at last insisted upon going home, just at the time that Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs assured the company, that the polite hours were going to begin, and that the ladies would instantaneously be entertained with the horns.

The Spectator Club

Sir Richard Steele

1. Sir Roger de Coverley: He is a good natured, jolly country baronet who was once very particular about elegant dress and sophisticated manners. However, after his unsuccessful love-affair with a widow, he has given up attending to his dress and polite pursuits.
2. A member of the Inner Temple: His name is not mentioned. Though his profession is law, he does not much attend to legal studies. Rather, he gives full attention to theatre and literature.
3. Sir Andrew Freeport: He is a prosperous merchant and is a champion of free trade and commerce.
4. Captain Sentry: He is an ex-serviceman. He is modest and self-critical.
5. Will Honeycomb: He is an old man-about-town and a lady-killer. He is also a recognized authority on fashions and fads of the town.
6. An unnamed clergyman: He enjoys but poor health. He is a great authority on divinity.

Prose:

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THE FIRST of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of an ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behavior, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world, only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humor creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being

unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho Square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humors, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. It is said Sir Roger grew humble in his desires after he had forgot his cruel beauty, insomuch that it is reported he has frequently offended with beggars and gypsies; but this is looked upon, by his friends, rather as matter of raillery than truth. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behavior, that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house, he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause, by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

The gentleman next in esteem and authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple, a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humor some father than 2 in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of the land, and is the most learned of any of the house in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus are much better understood by him than Littleton or Coke. The father sends up every post questions relating to marriage-articles, leases, and tenures, in the neighborhood; all which questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves, when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise

from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool; but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable. As few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste for books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients, makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New-inn, crosses through Russell-court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at the play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London; a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure, were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue that, if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valor, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, amongst which the greatest favorite is, "A penny saved is a penny got." A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortune himself; and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the clubroom sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but

are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take 4 notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir to Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit, who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament that, in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he has talked to this purpose, I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty and an even regular behavior are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds, who endeavor at the same end with himself, the favor of a commander. He will, however, in his way of talk excuse generals for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it; for, says he, that great man who has a mind to help me has as many to break through to come to me as I have to come at him: therefore he will conclude that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders, by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candor does the gentleman speak of himself and others? The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from an habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humorists, unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have amongst us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who, according to his years, should be in the decline of his life; but having ever been very 5 careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but a very little impression either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces on his brain. His person is well turned, and of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the

history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; whose frailty was covered by such a sort of a petticoat, and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge have been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court, such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance, or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord Such-a-one. If you speak of a young commoner that said a lively thing in the House, he starts up, "He has good blood in his veins; Tom Mirable begot him; the rogue cheated me in that affair; that young fellow's mother used me more like a dog than any woman I ever made advances to." This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn, and I find there is not one of the company, but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of a man who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him, whom I am next to speak of, as one of our company; for he visits us but seldom, but when he does, it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently cannot accept of such cares and business as preferment in his function would oblige him to; he is therefore among divines what a chamber-counselor is among lawyers. The probity of his mind, and the integrity of his life, creates him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon; but we are so far gone in years that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interest in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions.

UNIT- III

Dream Children: a Reverie

Charles Lamb

Introduction

The full name of essay is Dream Childern-A Reverie. The essay is about a dream. In the essay all characters are real except the children Alice and John. From the title we can guess that it's a dream and reverie also means a day dream. Alice and John are children of James Elia(charles lamb). They ask their father, James Elia, to tell them about their grandmother. Grandmother's name is Field who has been acquainted to us by Lamb as perfect women with great qualities. Incidents are real from life of Lamb. There is a story related to the house where grandmother Field was a keeper. It was about the murder of children by their cruel uncle. Alice and John came to know this story through a carved writing on a tree which was later brought down by a rich man. After the death of grandmother, house owner took away his belongings and placed them in his new house where they look awkward. When grandmother was alive she used to sleep alone but Elia was afraid of the souls of infants murdered by uncle as it was thought that house is haunted by the spirits of those children. Elia has a brother John full of enthusiasm and zeal, who was loved by everyone especially by her grandmother. On the other hand Elia's childhood was full of isolation and he remained stagnant throughout his life. His mind was working fast but bodily or physically he was totally off and lazy. He was lame and helped by John in every possible way who used to carry him in his back. Unfortunately, John also became lame but Elia never helped him and after his death he realized or missed him. At the end of the essay, Alice and John are crying after hearing all this. Elia is looking his wife, whose name also Alia, in Alice's face. The children started to become faint and say to Elia or Lamb that we are not your real children and Alice is not your wife and our mother. Lamb wakes up finds himself in an armchair and James Elia was vanished. The whole story is based on life of Lamb, he was never able to marry and childless died. He is also regretting and remembering moments like, about his brother, about grandmother, his childhood etc. so, whole of essay is full of melancholy and sad tone of Lamb's life. (One should better study about Lamb's short biography in order to understand his essays).

Dream Children: a Reverie

Charles Lamb

Charles Lamb, English essayist and critic, was born in London in 1775. He is best known for his *Essays of Elia*. He studied at Christ's Hospital where he formed a lifelong friendship with Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In 1792 Lamb joined as a clerk at East India House (the headquarters of the East India Company) and worked there until retirement in 1825. In 1796 Lamb's sister Mary killed their mother in a fit of madness. Lamb reacted with courage and loyalty and took up the responsibility of looking after Mary. We can say that Lamb's greatest achievements were his commendable letters and the essays that he wrote under the pseudonym Elia for *London Magazine*, which was founded in 1820. His style is notable as it is informal and personal. The main function of this essay was to "create" and delineate the persona of Elia. The essays bring out, with humour and sometimes with pathos, old acquaintances of Lamb. They also recall scenes from childhood and from later life, and they indulge the author's sense of playfulness and fancy. Lamb's first Elia essays were published separately in 1823; a second series appeared, as *The Last Essays of Elia*, in 1833.

Children are always very curious to know about the past of their elders. They want to know how their elders were when they were children. Lamb's children, Alice and John had the curiosity to know about their great grandmother Field who had lived in Norfolk.

They gather around Charles Lamb with this desire and he begins to tell them that their great-grandmother lived in a very spacious house. On a chimney piece in the house the story of the children in the wood was carved in marble. According to this story the children were killed by their uncle as he was greedy and wanted possession of the wealth these children had inherited from their parents. It was believed that the original incident was also connected with the same house. He told the children that their great grandmother did not own the mansion. She was only entrusted the duty of taking care of the mansion. She was very pious and religious minded lady. She was loved and respected by everyone. After her death the house started falling apart and all its ornaments and statues were taken away by the owner to his new house where it looked out of

place. When she died, lots of people had come in for her funeral as she was a very popular lady. In her youth she had a tall, graceful and upright figure and used to be good dancer. At this Alice instinctively made a movement with her foot as if to dance. Mrs. Field, their great grandmother could not continue dancing as she was taken ill with cancer. Although it made her body weak it never weakened her spirit.

Charles then goes on to say that as a child he always looked at the twelve statues of Caesar with great interest which were kept as decorations in the room. The house had a good garden where Lamb used to go for walks. There were fruit trees in the garden but he did not pluck any fruit as it was forbidden and Lamb used to be very obedient child. At this John who had quietly taken a bunch of grapes in his hands quickly replaces it.

Mrs Field liked all her grandchildren but she had special affection for John, Lamb's brother because he was handsome and spirited. He was a good rider and hunter. John was very kind to Charles and once when he had hurt his foot, John carried him around on his shoulders. Later on John too became lame footed but Lamb expresses his regret at not having shown sufficient sympathy or consideration. He remembers with great regret that John's death had not moved Lamb in the beginning but it was later on that Lamb began to miss his brother terribly and realized how much he had loved him from within. Here the children feel sad and tell Lamb not to tell them anything more about their uncle but to tell them about their pretty mother who was nowdead. Lamb had wooed his lady love for nearly seven years. He told them about her modesty and coyness. Alice was looking exactly like her mother. Slowly as he stood gazing both the children grew fainter and they disappeared. They were speechless and seemed to say that there were not his children from Alice but children of Alice and Bartrum. The children were creation of his imagination and they need to wait for years to be born after having crossed the river Lethe. Lamb awoke and found that it was all a dream. He had fallen asleep in his bachelor's arm chair.

Styles of writing in Dream Children of Charles Lamb

All of Lamb's major trademarks as an essayist are to be found in this work: overall, a relaxed and colloquial voice and a genteel sensibility incorporating elements of humour, whimsy, strong personal recollection and touches of pathos. All these mark him out as one of the great exponents of the familiar essay in English in the nineteenth century, along with Thomas de Quincey and William Hazlitt. This was a type of writing characterized by a strong personal element and an informal tone, on almost any subject of interest to the writer. Although he also tried his hand at many other literary forms, it is fair to say that Lamb really found his distinctive and most enduring voice in his essays, which he first contributed to the *London Magazine* under the pseudonym of 'Elia'.

As already stated, 'Dream Children: A Reverie' exhibits all Lamb's strengths as an essayist. It is short but effective in encompassing a range of moods. It starts out on a convivial and realistic note with the picture of a cosy domestic setting in which the writer regales his two children with stories of the family past; yet by the end this picture has dissolved into nothingness, is revealed to be a mere dream, or 'reverie' on part of the writer. It is, in fact, the picture of the family that Lamb longed for but never actually had, as he never married, instead devoting a lifetime to caring for his sister Mary (who appears as Bridget in his essays) who was afflicted with periodical insanity.

The real achievement of this piece lies in the compact evocation both of the solid realism of family life and nostalgia for a family past, incorporating the memory of a lost love, Alice, and also of Lamb's older brother, before merging into the air of dream. Lamb manages the transition from one mood to another seamlessly, conveying an ultimate sense of loss without descending to sentimentality. More, he also skilfully conjures a genuine sense of eeriness when the two children reveal themselves to be mere dream, the products of wishful thinking, *before* the dreamer wakes up:

...while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which,

without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been

The realistic and intimate picture thus dissolves, recedes, giving way to ghosts. The style is entirely suited to the subject-matter at this point, slow-paced, languorous, and markedly different from the earlier parts of the essay. This dissolution of realism into dream is a stylistic trick more effective than any self-indulgent musings on the past and its lost possibilities could have been.

This essay exhibits two major concerns of the Romantic age: a fascination with the past and also with the supernatural. Lamb was certainly keenly interested in the past, but although not generally given to dreams or visions – unlike, for instance, his fellow-essayist de Quincey – he mingles realism, memory and dream in a memorable and concise manner in this essay.

The Theme of Lamb's Essay

Regret and Loss

The theme of Lamb's essay is regret and loss: regret for unfulfilled joy, unfulfilled love, and lost hope, lost opportunity and lost joys of life. There are three topics at work in this essay. These are the loss of past happiness as represented by the house, with its carved mantle that an "a foolish rich person pulled it down," and great-grandmother Field and his brother John. Both great-grandmother Field and John died painful deaths while Charles Lamb watched on, being then left alone without their presence, love and care: what he missed most was their presence: "I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him."

The second topic of regret and loss is his beloved Alice. Lamb courted her "for seven long years" and in the end, his suit for her love was a failure. This explains why the dream child is named Alice and this explains why he becomes confused about which Alice, younger or elder, he is really looking at:

Turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representment that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or who's that bright hair was...

This leads to the third thematic topic: the children who never were. In a surprise ending, in a dramatic (and at first bewildering) twist, we learn that the children he has been telling stories to--stories of loves and life joys he regrets losing--are air, are a figment of a dream in a bachelor's sleep. These are the children that would have been, that could have been, that might have been if Alice had granted Lamb her love and they had wed. As it is, they are but phantoms of a dream. All he really has is "the faithful Bridget [most likely his dog] unchanged by my side."

Thomas De Quincey - Literature

LITERATURE OF KNOWLEDGE AND LITERATURE OF POWER

What is it that we mean by *literature*? Popularly, and amongst the thoughtless, it is held to include everything that is printed in a book. Little logic is required to disturb *that* definition. The most thoughtless person is easily made aware that in the idea of *literature* one essential element is,—some relation to a general and common interest of man, so that what applies only to a local or professional or merely personal interest even though presenting itself in the shape of a book, will not belong to literature. So far the definition is easily narrowed; and it is as easily expanded. For not only is much that takes a station in books not literature, but, inversely, much that really *is* literature never reaches a station in books. The weekly sermons of Christendom, that vast pulpit literature which acts so extensively upon the popular mind—to warn, to uphold, to renew, to comfort, to alarm--does not attain the sanctuary of libraries in the ten-thousandth part of its extent. The drama, again, as for instance the finest of Shakspeare's plays in England and all leading Athenian plays in the noontide of the Attic stage, operated as a literature on the public mind, and were (according to the strictest letter of that term) *published* through the audiences that witnessed their representation, some time before they were published as things to be read; and they were published in this scenical mode of publication with much more effect than they could have had as books during ages of costly copying or of costly printing.

Books, therefore, do not suggest an idea co-extensive and interchangeable with the idea of literature, since much literature, scenic, forensic, or didactic (as from lectures and public orators), may never come into books, and much that *does* come into books may connect itself with no literary interest. But a far more important correction, applicable to the common vague idea of literature, is to be sought, not so much in a better definition of literature, as in a sharper distinction of the two functions which it fulfils. In that great social organ which, collectively, we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices, that may blend and often *do* so, but capable, severally, of a severe insulation, and naturally fitted for reciprocal repulsion. There is, first, the literature of *knowledge*, and, secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is to *teach*; the function of the second is to *move*: the first is a rudder; the second an oar or a

sail. The first speaks to the *mere* discursive understanding; the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding, or reason, but always *through* affections of pleasure and sympathy. Remotely it may travel towards an object seated in what Lord Bacon calls *dry* light; but proximately it does and must operate--else it ceases to be literature of *power*--on and through that *humid* light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering *iris* of human passions, desires, and genial emotions. Men have so little reflected on the higher functions of literature as to find it a paradox if one should describe it as a mean or subordinate purpose of books to give information. But this is a paradox only in the sense which makes it honorable to be paradoxical. Whenever we talk in ordinary language of seeking knowledge, we understand the words as connected with something of absolute novelty. But it is the grandeur of all truth which *can* occupy a very high place in human interests that it is never absolutely novel to the meanest of minds: it exists eternally, by way of germ or latent principle, in the lowest as in the highest, needing to be developed but never to be planted. To be capable of transplantation is the immediate criterion of a truth ranges on a lower scale. Besides which, there is a rare thing than truth, namely, *power*, or deep sympathy with truth. What is the effect, for instance, upon society, of children? By the pity, by the tenderness, and by the peculiar modes of admiration, which connect themselves with the helplessness, with the innocence, and with the simplicity of children, not only are the primal affections strengthened and continually renewed, but the qualities which are dearest in the sight of heaven--the frailty, for instance, which appeals to forbearance, the innocence which symbolizes the heavenly, and the simplicity which is most alien from the worldly--are kept up in perpetual remembrance, and their ideals are continually refreshed. A purpose of the same nature is answered by the higher literature, viz., the literature of power. What do you learn from *Paradise Lost*? Nothing at all. What do you learn from a cookery book? Something new, something that you did not know before, in every paragraph. But would you therefore put the wretched cookery-book on a higher level of estimation than the divine poem? What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge, of which a million separate items are still but a million of advancing steps on the same earthly level; what you owe is *power*, that is, exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upwards, a step ascending as upon a Jacob's ladder from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth. *All* the steps of knowledge, from first to last, carry

you further on the same plane, but could never raise you one foot above your ancient level of earth; whereas the very *first* step in power is a flight, is an ascending movement into another element where earth is forgotten.

Were it not that human sensibilities are ventilated and continually called out into exercise by the great phenomena of infancy, or of real life as it moves through chance and change, or of literature as it recombines these elements in the mimicries of poetry, romance, etc., it is certain that, like any animal power or muscular energy falling into disuse, all such sensibilities would gradually droop and dwindle. It is in relation to these great *moral* capacities of man that the literature of power, as contra-distinguished from that of knowledge, lives and has its field of action. It is concerned with what is highest in man; for the Scriptures themselves never condescended to deal by suggestion or co-operation with the mere discursive understanding: when speaking of man in his intellectual capacity, the Scriptures speak, not of the understanding, but of "*the understanding heart*," making the heart,—that is, the great intuitive (or non-discursive) organ, to be the interchangeable formula for man in his highest state of capacity for the infinite. Tragedy, romance, fairy tale, or epopee, all alike restore to man's mind the ideals of justice, of hope, of truth, of mercy, of retribution, which else (left to the support of daily life in its realities) would languish for want of sufficient illustration. What is meant, for instance, by *poetic justice*? It does not mean a justice that differs by its object from the ordinary justice of human jurisprudence, for then it must be confessedly a very bad kind of justice; but it means a justice that differs from common forensic justice by the degree in which it *attains* its object, a justice that is more omnipotent over its own ends, as dealing, not with the refractory elements of earthly life, but with the elements of its own creation and with materials flexible to its own purest preconceptions. It is certain that, were it not for the literature of power, these ideals would often remain amongst us as mere arid notional forms; whereas, by the creative forces of man put forth in literature, they gain a vernal life of restoration and germinate into vital activities. The commonest novel, by moving in alliance with human fears and hopes, with human instincts of wrong and right, sustains and quickens those affections. Calling them into action, it rescues them from torpor. And hence the pre-eminency, over all authors that merely *teach*, of the meanest that proves, or that teaches, if at all, indirectly by moving. The very highest work that has ever existed in the literature of knowledge is but a provisional work, a book upon trial and sufferance,

and *quamdiu bene se gesserit* [while it behaved well]. Let its teaching be even partially revised, let it be but expanded, nay, even let its teaching be but placed in a better order, and instantly it is superseded. Whereas the feeblest works in the literature of power, surviving at all, survive as finished and unalterable among men. For instance, the *Principia* of Sir Isaac Newton was a book *militant* on earth from the first. In all stages of its progress it would have to fight for its existence: first, as regards absolute truth; secondly, when that combat was over, as regards its form, or mode of presenting the truth. And as soon as a La Place, or anybody else, builds higher upon the foundations laid by this book, effectually he throws it out of the sunshine into decay and darkness; by weapons won from this book he superannuates and destroys this book, so that soon the name of Newton remains as a mere *nominis umbra*, but his book, as a living power, has transmigrated into other forms. Now, on the contrary, the *Iliad*, the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus, the *Othello* or *King Lear*, the *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, and the *Paradise Lost* are not militant but triumphant forever, as long as the languages exist in which they speak or can be taught to speak. They never can transmigrate into new incarnations. To reproduce these in new forms or variations, even if in some things they should be improved, would be to plagiarize. A good steam-engine is properly superseded by a better. But one lovely pastoral valley is not superseded by another, nor a statue of Praxiteles by a statue of Michael Angelo. These things are separated, not by imparity, but by disparity. They are not thought of as unequal under the same standard, but as different in *kind*, and, if otherwise equal, as equal under a different standard. Human works of immortal beauty and works of nature in one respect stand on the same footing: they never absolutely repeat each other, never approach so near as not to differ; and they differ not as better and worse, or simply by more and less; they differ by undecipherable and incommunicable differences, that cannot be caught by mimicries, that cannot be reflected in the mirror of copies, that cannot become ponderable in the scales of vulgar comparison.

Thomas De Quincey - The Literature of Knowledge and the Literature of Power

Thomas De Quincey, "The Literature of Knowledge and the Literature of Power" (First Published in the *North British Review*, August, 1848, as part of a critical essay on Alexander Pope)

Every great classic in our native language should from time to time be reviewed anew; and especially if he belongs in any considerable extent to that section of the literature which connects itself with manners, and if his reputation originally, or his style of composition, is likely to have been much influenced by the transient fashions of his own age. The withdrawal, for instance, from a dramatic poet, or a satirist, of any false luster which he has owed to his momentary connection with what we may call the personalities of a fleeting generation, or of any undue shelter to his errors which may have gathered round them from political bias, or from intellectual infirmities amongst his partisans, will sometimes seriously modify, after a century or so, the fairest *original* appreciation of a fine writer. A window composed of Claude Lorraine glasses spreads over the landscape outside a disturbing effect, which not the most practiced eye can evade. The *eidola theatri* ["idols of the theater," one of Francis Bacon's *Idols of the Mind* — ed.] affect us all. No man escapes the contagion from his contemporary bystanders.

As books multiply to an unmanageable excess, selection becomes more and more a necessity for readers, and the power of selection more and more a desperate problem for the busy part of readers. The possibility of selecting wisely is becoming continually more hopeless as the necessity for selection is becoming continually more pressing. Exactly as the growing weight of books overlays and stifles the power of comparison, *pari passu* is the call for comparison the more clamorous; and thus arises a duty correspondingly more urgent of searching and revising until everything

spurious has been weeded out from amongst the Flora of our highest literature, and until the waste of time for those who have so little at their command is reduced to a *minimum*. For, where the good cannot be read in its twentieth part, the more requisite it is that no part of the bad should steal an hour of the available time; and it is not to be endured that people without a minute to spare should be obliged first of all to read a book before they can ascertain whether in fact it is worth reading. The public cannot read by proxy as regards the good which it is to appropriate, but it can as regards the poison which it is to escape. And thus, as literature expands, becoming continually more of a household necessity, the duty resting upon critics (who are the vicarious readers for the public) becomes continually more urgent — of reviewing all works that may be supposed to have benefited too much or too indiscriminately by the superstition of a name. The *praegustatores* ["pre-tasters," ie those whose obligation was to taste a Roman emperor's food to determine its fitness for eating — ed.] should have tasted of every cup, and reported its quality, before the public call for it; and, above all, they should have done this in all cases of the higher literature — that is, of literature properly so called.

The Idea of a University. I. What Is a University?

John Henry Newman

IF I were asked to describe as briefly and popularly as I could, what a University was, I should draw my answer from its ancient designation of a *Studium Generale*, or “School of Universal Learning.” This description implies the assemblage of strangers from all parts in one spot;—*from all parts*; else, how will you find professors and students for every department of knowledge? and *in one spot*; else, how can there be any school at all? Accordingly, in its simple and rudimental form, it is a school of knowledge of every kind, consisting of teachers and learners from every quarter. Many things are requisite to complete and satisfy the idea embodied in this description; but such as this a University seems to be in its essence, a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse, through a wide extent of country.

There is nothing far-fetched or unreasonable in the idea thus presented to us; and if this be a University, then a University does but contemplate a necessity of our nature, and is but one specimen in a particular medium, out of many which might be adduced in others, of a provision for that necessity. Mutual education, in a large sense of the word, is one of the great and incessant occupations of human society, carried on partly with set purpose, and partly not. One generation forms another; and the existing generation is ever acting and reacting upon itself in the persons of its individual members. Now, in this process, books, I need scarcely say, that is, the *litera scripta*, are one special instrument. It is true; and emphatically so in this age. Considering the prodigious powers of the press, and how they are developed at this time in the never-intermitting issue of periodicals, tracts, pamphlets, works in series, and light literature, we must allow there never was a time which promised fairer for dispensing with every other means of information and instruction. What can we want more, you will say, for the intellectual education of the whole man, and for every man, than so exuberant and diversified and persistent a promulgation of all kinds of knowledge? Why, you will ask, need we go up to knowledge, when knowledge comes down to us? The Sibyl wrote her prophecies upon the leaves of the forest, and wasted them; but here such careless profusion might be prudently indulged, for it can be afforded without loss, in consequence of the almost fabulous fecundity of the instrument which these latter ages have invented. We have sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks; works larger and more comprehensive than those which have gained for ancients an immortality, issue forth every morning, and are projected onwards to the ends of the earth at the rate of hundreds of miles a day. Our seats are strewn, our pavements are powdered, with swarms of little tracts; and the very bricks of our city walls preach wisdom, by informing us by their placards where we can at once cheaply purchase it.

I allow all this, and much more; such certainly is our popular education, and its effects are remarkable. Nevertheless, after all, even in this age, whenever men are really serious about getting what, in the language of trade, is called “a good article,” when they aim at

something precise, something refined, something really luminous, something really large, something choice, they go to another market; they avail themselves, in some shape or other, of the rival method, the ancient method, of oral instruction, of present communication between man and man, of teachers instead of learning, of the personal influence of a master, and the humble initiation of a disciple, and, in consequence, of great centres of pilgrimage and throng, which such a method of education necessarily involves. This, I think, will be found to hold good in all those departments or aspects of society, which possess an interest sufficient to bind men together, or to constitute what is called “a world.” It holds in the political world, and in the high world, and in the religious world; and it holds also in the literary and scientific world.

If the actions of men may be taken as any test of their convictions, then we have reason for saying this, viz.:—that the province and the inestimable benefit of the *litera scripta* is that of being a record of truth, and an authority of appeal, and an instrument of teaching in the hands of a teacher; but that, if we wish to become exact and fully furnished in any branch of knowledge which is diversified and complicated, we must consult the living man and listen to his living voice. I am not bound to investigate the cause of this, and anything I may say will, I am conscious, be short of its full analysis;—perhaps we may suggest, that no books can get through the number of minute questions which it is possible to ask on any extended subject, or can hit upon the very difficulties which are severally felt by each reader in succession. Or again, that no book can convey the special spirit and delicate peculiarities of its subject with that rapidity and certainty which attend on the sympathy of mind with mind, through the eyes, the look, the accent, and the manner, in casual expressions thrown off at the moment, and the unstudied turns of familiar conversation. But I am already dwelling too long on what is but an incidental portion of my main subject. Whatever be the cause, the fact is undeniable. The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home; but the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already. You must imitate the student in French or German, who is not content with his grammar, but goes to Paris or Dresden: you must take example from the young artist, who aspires to visit the great Masters in Florence and in Rome. Till we have discovered some intellectual daguerreotype, which takes off the course of thought, and the form, lineaments, and features of truth, as completely and minutely as the optical instrument reproduces the sensible object, we must come to the teachers of wisdom to learn wisdom, we must repair to the fountain, and drink there. Portions of it may go from thence to the ends of the earth by means of books; but the fullness is in one place alone. It is in such assemblages and congregations of intellect that books themselves, the masterpieces of human genius, are written, or at least originated.

The principle on which I have been insisting is so obvious, and instances in point are so ready, that I should think it tiresome to proceed with the subject, except that one or two illustrations may serve to explain my own language about it, which may not have done justice to the doctrine which it has been intended to enforce.

For instance, the polished manners and high-bred bearing which are so difficult of attainment, and so strictly personal when attained,—which are so much admired in society, from society are acquired. All that goes to constitute a gentleman,—the carriage, gait, address, gestures, voice; the ease, the self—possession, the courtesy, the power of

conversing, the talent of not offending; the lofty principle, the delicacy of thought, the happiness of expression, the taste and propriety, the generosity and forbearance, the candour and consideration, the openness of hand;—these qualities, some of them come by nature, some of them may be found in any rank, some of them are a direct precept of Christianity; but the full assemblage of them, bound up in the unity of an individual character, do we expect they can be learned from books? are they not necessarily acquired, where they are to be found, in high society? The very nature of the case leads us to say so; you cannot fence without an antagonist, nor challenge all comers in disputation before you have supported a thesis; and in like manner, it stands to reason, you cannot learn to converse till you have the world to converse with; you cannot unlearn your natural bashfulness, or awkwardness, or stiffness, or other besetting deformity, till you serve your time in some school of manners. Well, and is it not so in matter of fact? The metropolis, the court, the great houses of the land, are the centres to which at stated times the country comes up, as to shrines of refinement and good taste; and then in due time the country goes back again home, enriched with a portion of the social accomplishments, which those very visits serve to call out and heighten in the gracious dispensers of them. We are unable to conceive how the “gentlemanlike” can otherwise be maintained; and maintained in this way it is.

And now a second instance: and here too I am going to speak without personal experience of the subject I am introducing. I admit I have not been in Parliament, any more than I have figured in the *beau monde*; yet I cannot but think that statesmanship, as well as high breeding, is learned, not by books, but in certain centres of education. If it be not presumption to say so, Parliament puts a clever man *au courant* with politics and affairs of state in a way surprising to himself. A member of the Legislature, if tolerably observant, begins to see things with new eyes, even though his views undergo no change. Words have a meaning now, and ideas a reality, such as they had not before. He hears a vast deal in public speeches and private conversation, which is never put into print. The bearings of measures and events, the action of parties, and the persons of friends and enemies, are brought out to the man who is in the midst of them with a distinctness, which the most diligent perusal of newspapers will fail to impart to them. It is access to the fountain-heads of political wisdom and experience, it is daily intercourse, of one kind or another, with the multitude who go up to them, it is familiarity with business, it is access to the contributions of fact and opinion thrown together by many witnesses from many quarters, which does this for him. However, I need not account for a fact, to which it is sufficient to appeal; that the Houses of Parliament and the atmosphere around them are a sort of University of politics.

As regards the world of science, we find a remarkable instance of the principle which I am illustrating, in the periodical meetings for its advance, which have arisen in the course of the last twenty years, such as the British Association. Such gatherings would to many persons appear at first sight simply preposterous. Above all subjects of study, Science is conveyed, is propagated, by books, or by private teaching; experiments and investigations are conducted in silence; discoveries are made in solitude. What have philosophers to do with festive celebrities, and panegyrical solemnities with mathematical and physical truth? Yet on a closer attention to the subject, it is found that not even scientific thought can dispense with the suggestions, the instruction, the

stimulus, the sympathy, the intercourse with mankind on a large scale, which such meetings secure. A fine time of year is chosen, when days are long, skies are bright, the earth smiles, and all nature rejoices; a city or town is taken by turns, of ancient name or modern opulence, where buildings are spacious and hospitality hearty. The novelty of place and circumstance, the excitement of strange, or the refreshment of well-known faces, the majesty of rank or of genius, the amiable charities of men pleased both with themselves and with each other; the elevated spirits, the circulation of thought, the curiosity; the morning sections, the outdoor exercise, the well-furnished, well-earned board, the not ungraceful hilarity, the evening circle; the brilliant lecture, the discussions or collisions or guesses of great men one with another, the narratives of scientific processes, of hopes, disappointments, conflicts, and successes, the splendid eulogistic orations; these and the like constituents of the annual celebration, are considered to do something real and substantial for the advance of knowledge which can be done in no other way. Of course they can but be occasional; they answer to the annual Act, or Commencement, or Commemoration of a University, not to its ordinary condition; but they are of a University nature; and I can well believe in their utility. They issue in the promotion of a certain living and, as it were, bodily communication of knowledge from one to another, of a general interchange of ideas, and a comparison and adjustment of science with science, of an enlargement of mind, intellectual and social, of an ardent love of the particular study, which may be chosen by each individual, and a noble devotion to its interests.

Such meetings, I repeat, are but periodical, and only partially represent the idea of a University. The bustle and whirl which are their usual concomitants, are in ill keeping with the order and gravity of earnest intellectual education. We desiderate means of instruction which involve no interruption of our ordinary habits; nor need we seek it long, for the natural course of things brings it about, while we debate over it. In every great country, the metropolis itself becomes a sort of necessary University, whether we will or no. As the chief city is the seat of the court, of high society, of politics, and of law, so as a matter of course is it the seat of letters also; and at this time, for a long term of years, London and Paris are in fact and in operation Universities, though in Paris its famous University is no more, and in London a University scarcely exists except as a board of administration. The newspapers, magazines, reviews, journals, and periodicals of all kinds, the publishing trade, the libraries, museums, and academies there found, the learned and scientific societies, necessarily invest it with the functions of a University; and that atmosphere of intellect, which in a former age hung over Oxford or Bologna or Salamanca, has, with the change of times, moved away to the centre of civil government. Thither come up youths from all parts of the country, the students of law, medicine, and the fine arts, and the *employés and attachés* of literature. There they live, as chance determines; and they are satisfied with their temporary home, for they find in it all that was promised to them there. They have not come in vain, as far as their own object in coming is concerned. They have not learned any particular religion, but they have learned their own particular profession well. They have, moreover, become acquainted with the habits, manners, and opinions of their place of sojourn, and done their part in maintaining the tradition of them. We cannot then be without virtual Universities; a metropolis is such: the simple question is, whether the education sought and given should be based on principle, formed upon rule, directed to the highest ends, or left to the

random succession of masters and schools, one after another, with a melancholy waste of thought and an extreme hazard of truth.

Religious teaching itself affords us an illustration of our subject to a certain point. It does not indeed seat itself merely in centres of the world; this is impossible from the nature of the case. It is intended for the many, not the few; its subject matter is truth necessary for us, not truth recondite and rare; but it concurs in the principle of a University so far as this, that its great instrument, or rather organ, has ever been that which nature prescribes in all education, the personal presence of a teacher, or, in theological language, Oral Tradition. It is the living voice, the breathing form, the expressive countenance, which preaches, which catechizes. Truth, a subtle, invisible, manifold spirit, is poured into the mind of the scholar by his eyes and ears, through his affections, imagination, and reason; it is poured into his mind and is sealed up there in perpetuity, by propounding and repeating it, by questioning and requestioning, by correcting and explaining, by progressing and then recurring to first principles, by all those ways which are implied in the word “catechising.” In the first ages, it was a work of long time; months, sometimes years, were devoted to the arduous task of disabusing the mind of the incipient Christian of its pagan errors, and of moulding it upon the Christian faith. The Scriptures indeed were at hand for the study of those who could avail themselves of them; but St. Irenæus does not hesitate to speak of whole races, who had been converted to Christianity, without being able to read them. To be unable to read or write was in those times no evidence of want of learning: the hermits of the deserts were, in this sense of the word, illiterate; yet the great St. Anthony, though he knew not letters, was a match in disputation for the learned philosophers who came to try him. Didymus again, the great Alexandrian theologian, was blind. The ancient discipline, called the *Disciplina Arcani*, involved the same principle. The more sacred doctrines of Revelation were not committed to books but passed on by successive tradition. The teaching on the Blessed Trinity and the Eucharist appears to have been so handed down for some hundred years; and when at length reduced to writing, it has filled many folios, yet has not been exhausted.

But I have said more than enough in illustration; I end as I began;—a University is a place of concourse, whither students come from every quarter for every kind of knowledge. You cannot have the best of every kind everywhere; you must go to some great city or emporium for it. There you have all the choicest productions of nature and art all together, which you find each in its own separate place elsewhere. All the riches of the land, and of the earth, are carried up thither; there are the best markets, and there the best workmen. It is the centre of trade, the supreme court of fashion, the umpire of rival talents, and the standard of things rare and precious. It is the place for seeing galleries of first-rate pictures, and for hearing wonderful voices and performers of transcendent skill. It is the place for great preachers, great orators, great nobles, great statesmen. In the nature of things, greatness and unity go together; excellence implies a centre. And such, for the third or fourth time, is a University; I hope I do not weary out the reader by repeating it. It is the place to which a thousand schools make contributions; in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and

error exposed, by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is the place where the professor becomes eloquent, and is a missionary and a preacher, displaying his science in its most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers. It is the place where the catechist makes good his ground as he goes, treading in the truth day by day into the ready memory, and wedging and tightening it into the expanding reason. It is a place which wins the admiration of the young by its celebrity, kindles the affections of the middle-aged by its beauty, and rivets the fidelity of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of the faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation. It is this and a great deal more, and demands a somewhat better head and hand than mine to describe it well.

Such is a University in its idea and in its purpose; such in good measure has it before now been in fact. Shall it ever be again? We are going forward in the strength of the Cross, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, in the name of St. Patrick, to attempt it.

UNIT- IV

Discourse V: Newman's "Knowledge its Own End"

SUMMARY

In Discourse V: Knowledge its Own End, John Henry Newman details the greatness and opportunity a University education has to offer. "It is a great point then to enlarge the range of studies which a University professes, even for the sake of the students; and, though they cannot pursue every subject which is open to them, they will be the gainers by living among those and under those who represent the whole circle." Newman is basically saying that although it is unfortunate that students cannot dabble in every subject available to them, being absorbed in a learning environment is beneficial to the student and their own success. "An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought, by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, and to aid each other. Thus is created a pure and clear atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes, though in his own case he only pursues a few sciences out of the multitude." Being a part of such environment benefits a person, even after leaving the university, a person leaves the University with feeling of "freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom." which are invaluable tools and characteristics that will benefit an individual throughout their life, both personally, and professionally. Newman argues, as in the title, that knowledge is its own end. It is this way because a student's education is what they choose the make of it, and to choose a University education means to choose a higher education that will present student with knowledge in multiple subjects to make them a well-rounded individual.

UNIT- IV

John Ruskin's

Sesame and Lilies Sesame or

The King's Treasuries

John Ruskin opens his essay by apologizing for the ambiguity in the title. He says that the title is ambiguous and figurative in nature. By king's treasuries, he means the best books written by the most brilliant authors and not other material things. The whole of the lecture is about books and the way to read them.

He says that modern education is materialistic and it aims at advancement. This aim is narrow. The speaker says that love of praise and reputation moves humankind primarily. On the other hand, duty moves them secondarily. He says that clever persons wish to become high in status. To achieve higher status we should have sincere and good friends.

Best books are said to be best friends. He divides books into four types:

- i) Good books of the hour – has enlightened talks of some persons. They could talk about travels or in the form of novels.
- ii) Good books for all life
- iii) Bad books of the hour
- iv) Bad books for all life

Great authors, statesmen, philosophers and thinkers write books for all life. Nobody can enter into these unless they stoop. We must enter into the thoughts of such writers, which is a difficult task. They write long sentences and serious thoughts are hidden in those sentences. So we should read them carefully.

An educated man need not know all things but he must learn a few languages. He must be aware of words and its origins. English language is of a mongrel breed. Their words are deceptive. For example the word condemn originates from the Greek word “damno”. It does not

have the power of the Greek word in it. A good scholar must know the vital meanings of words. Ruskin asks the readers to read Max Muller's "The Science of Languages" to understand English language better.

Later Ruskin analyses Milton's Lycidas. He considers Milton as a great scholar. Common minds are full of filth and prejudice. It should be cleansed. It is necessary to burn the jungle of bad ideas than to sow the fertile ground among thorns.

The real gift of great writers is that they kindle passion in us. Passions are good things but they must be tested and disciplined. In England, passion means low-headed crimes. Ruskin attacks English people. They are under the control of passion. English people spend a lot of money and time in horse and not in books.

English people despise science. There are very few utilitarian inventions in England when compared with other countries. English arts are far behind other countries. English people destroy nature and create racecourse. English economics is also very poor. There is wide gap between the rich and the poor. The churches and the cathedrals are also current in England.

Ruskin concluded his lecture by saying that a nation rich in literature would be the best in the world. A king must be sympathetic to his people and he should encourage people to read more books.

UNIT- IV

Sesame and Lilies

Sesame: Of Kings' Treasuries

John Ruskin

“You shall each have a cake of sesame,—and ten pound.”

1

LUCIAN: *The Fisherman*.

MY first duty this evening is to ask your pardon for the ambiguity of title under which the subject of lecture has been announced: for indeed I am not going to talk of kings, known as regnant, nor of treasuries, understood to contain wealth; but of quite another order of royalty, and another material of riches, than those usually acknowledged. I had even intended to ask your attention for a little while on trust, and (as sometimes one contrives, in taking a friend to see a favorite piece of scenery) to hide what I wanted most to show, with such imperfect cunning as I might, until we unexpectedly reached the best point of view by winding paths. But—and as also I have heard it said, by men practised in public address, that hearers are never so much fatigued as by the endeavor to follow a speaker who gives them no clue to his purposes,—I will take the slight mask off at once, and tell you plainly that I want to speak to you about the treasures hidden in books; and about the way we find them, and the way we lose them. A grave subject, you will say; and a wide one! Yes; so wide that I shall make no effort to touch the compass of it. I will try only to bring before you a few simple thoughts about reading, which press themselves upon me every day more deeply, as I watch the course of the public mind with respect to our daily enlarging means of education; and the answeringly wider spreading on the levels, of the irrigation of literature.

2. It happens that I have practically some connection with schools for different classes of youth; and I receive many letters from parents respecting the education of their children. In the mass of these letters I am always struck by the precedence which the idea of a “position in life” takes above all other thoughts in the parents’—more especially in the mothers’—minds. “The education befitting such and such a *station in life*”—this is the phrase, this the object, always. They never seek, as far as I can make out, an education good in itself; even the conception of abstract rightness in training rarely seems reached by the writers. But an education “which shall keep a good coat on my son’s back;—which shall enable him to ring with confidence the visitors’ bell at double-belled doors; which shall result ultimately in establishment of a double-belled door to his own house;—in a word, which shall lead to ‘advancement in life’;—*this* we pray for on bent knees—and this is *all* we pray for.” It never seems to occur to the

parents that there may be an education which, in itself, is advancement in life;—that any other than that may perhaps be advancement in Death; and that this essential education might be more easily got, or given, than they fancy, if they set about it in the right way; while it is for no price, and by no favor, to be got, if they set about it in the wrong.

3. Indeed, among the ideas most prevalent and effective in the mind of this busiest of countries, I suppose the first—at least that which is confessed with the greatest frankness, and put forward as the fittest stimulus to youthful exertion—is this of “Advancement in Life.” May I ask you to consider with me what this idea practically includes, and what it should include? 3

Practically, then, at present, “advancement in life” means, becoming conspicuous in life;—obtaining a position which shall be acknowledged by others to be respectable or honorable. We do not understand by this advancement in general, the mere making of money, but the being known to have made it; not the accomplishment of any great aim, but the being seen to have accomplished it. In a word, we mean the gratification of our thirst for applause. That thirst, if the last infirmity of noble minds, is also the first infirmity of weak ones; and, on the whole, the strongest impulsive influence of average humanity: the greatest efforts of the race have always been traceable to the love of praise, as its greatest catastrophes to the love of pleasure. 4

4. I am not about to attack or defend this impulse. I want you only to feel how it lies at the root of effort; especially of all modern effort. It is the gratification of vanity which is, with us, the stimulus of toil, and balm of repose; so closely does it touch the very springs of life that the wounding of our vanity is always spoken of (and truly) as in its measure *mortal*; we call it “mortification,” using the same expression which we should apply to a gangrenous and incurable bodily hurt. And although few of us may be physicians enough to recognize the various effect of this passion upon health and energy, I believe most honest men know, and would at once acknowledge, its leading power with them as a motive. The seaman does not commonly desire to be made captain only because he knows he can manage the ship better than any other sailor on board. He wants to be made captain that he may be *called* captain. The clergyman does not usually want to be made a bishop only because he believes no other hand can, as firmly as his, direct the diocese through its difficulties. He wants to be made bishop primarily that he may be called “My Lord.” And a prince does not usually desire to enlarge, or a subject to gain, a kingdom, because he believes that no one else can as well serve the State, upon its throne; but, briefly, because he wishes to be addressed as “Your Majesty,” by as many lips as may be brought to such utterance. 5

5. This, then, being the main idea of “advancement in life,” the force of it applies, for all of us, according to our station, particularly to that secondary result of such advancement which we call “getting into good society.” We want to get into good 6

society, not that we may have it, but that we may be seen in it; and our notion of its goodness depends primarily on its conspicuousness.

Will you pardon me if I pause for a moment to put what I fear you may think an impertinent question? I never can go on with an address unless I feel, or know, that my audience are either with me or against me: I do not much care which, in beginning; but I must know where they are; and I would fain find out, at this instant, whether you think I am putting the motives of popular action too low. I am resolved, to-night, to state them low enough to be admitted as probable; for whenever, in my writings on Political Economy, I assume that a little honesty, or generosity—or what used to be called “virtue”—may be calculated upon as a human motive of action, people always answer me, saying, “You must not calculate on that: that is not in human nature: you must not assume anything to be common to men but acquisitiveness and jealousy; no other feeling ever has influence on them, except accidentally, and in matters out of the way of business.” I begin, accordingly, to-night low in the scale of motives; but I must know if you think me right in doing so. Therefore, let me ask those who admit the love of praise to be usually the strongest motive in men’s minds in seeking advancement, and the honest desire of doing any kind of duty to be an entirely secondary one, to hold up their hands. (*About a dozen hands held up—the audience, partly not being sure the lecturer is serious, and, partly, shy of expressing opinion.*) I am quite serious—I really do want to know what you think; however, I can judge by putting the reverse question. Will those who think that duty is generally the first, and love of praise the second, motive, hold up their hands? (*One hand reported to have been held up, behind the lecturer.*) Very good; I see you are with me, and that you think I have not begun too near the ground. Now, without teasing you by putting farther question, I venture to assume that you will admit duty as at least a secondary or tertiary motive. You think that the desire of doing something useful, or obtaining some real good, is indeed an existent collateral idea, though a secondary one, in most men’s desire of advancement. You will grant that moderately honest men desire place and office, at least in some measure, for the sake of beneficent power; and would wish to associate rather with sensible and well-informed persons than with fools and ignorant persons, whether they are seen in the company of the sensible ones or not. And finally, without being troubled by repetition of any common truisms about the preciousness of friends, and the influence of companions, you will admit, doubtless, that according to the sincerity of our desire that our friends may be true, and our companions wise—and in proportion to the earnestness and discretion with which we choose both, will be the general chances of our happiness and usefulness.

6. But, granting that we had both the will and the sense to choose our friends well, how few of us have the power! or, at least, how limited, for most, is the sphere of choice! Nearly all our associations are determined by chance, or necessity; and

restricted within a narrow circle. We cannot know whom we would; and those whom we know, we cannot have at our side when we most need them. All the higher circles of human intelligence are, to those beneath, only momentarily and partially open. We may, by good fortune, obtain a glimpse of a great poet, and hear the sound of his voice; or put a question to a man of science, and be answered good-humoredly. We may intrude ten minutes' talk on a cabinet minister, answered probably with words worse than silence, being deceptive; or snatch, once or twice in our lives, the privilege of throwing a bouquet in the path of a Princess, or arresting the kind glance of a Queen. And yet these momentary chances we covet; and spend our years, and passions, and powers in pursuit of little more than these; while, meantime, there is a society continually open to us, of people who will talk to us as long as we like, whatever our rank or occupation;—talk to us in the best words they can choose, and of the things nearest their hearts. And this society, because it is so numerous and so gentle, and can be kept waiting round us all day long,—kings and statesmen lingering patiently, not to grant audience, but to gain it!—in those plainly furnished and narrow anterooms, our bookcase shelves,—we make no account of that company,—perhaps never listen to a word they would say, all day long!

7. You may tell me, perhaps, or think within yourselves, that the apathy with which we 9 regard this company of the noble, who are praying us to listen to them; and the passion with which we pursue the company, probably of the ignoble who despise us, or who have nothing to teach us, are grounded in this,—that we can see the faces of the living men, and it is themselves, and not their sayings, with which we desire to become familiar. But it is not so. Suppose you never were to see their faces;—suppose you could be put behind a screen in the statesman's cabinet, or the prince's chamber, would you not be glad to listen to their words, though you were forbidden to advance beyond the screen? And when the screen is only a little less, folded in two instead of four, and you can be hidden behind the cover of the two boards that bind a book, and listen all day long, not to the casual talk, but to the studied, determined, chosen addresses of the wisest of men;—this station of audience, and honorable privy council, you despise!

8. But perhaps you will say that it is because the living people talk of things that are 10 passing, and are of immediate interest to you, that you desire to hear them. Nay; that cannot be so, for the living people will themselves tell you about passing matters much better in their writings than in their careless talk. But I admit that this motive does influence you, so far as you prefer those rapid and ephemeral writings to slow and enduring writings,—books, properly so called. For all books are divisible into two classes, the books of the hour, and the books of all time. Mark this distinction—it is not one of quality only. It is not merely the bad book that does not last, and the good one that does. It is a distinction of species. There are good books for the hour, and good ones for all time; bad books for the hour, and bad ones for all time. I must define the

two kinds before I go farther.

9. The good book of the hour, then,—I do not speak of the bad ones,—is simply the useful or pleasant talk of some person whom you cannot otherwise converse with, printed for you. Very useful often, telling you what you need to know; very pleasant often, as a sensible friend's present talk would be. These bright accounts of travels; good-humored and witty discussions of question; lively or pathetic story-telling in the form of novel; firm fact-telling, by the real agents concerned in the events of passing history; all these books of the hour, multiplying among us as education becomes more general, are a peculiar possession of the present age; we ought to be entirely thankful for them, and entirely ashamed of ourselves if we make no good use of them. But we make the worst possible use if we allow them to usurp the place of true books: for strictly speaking, they are not books at all, but merely letters or newspapers in good print. Our friend's letter may be delightful, or necessary, to-day: whether worth keeping or not, is to be considered. The newspaper may be entirely proper at breakfast time, but assuredly it is not reading for all day. So, though bound up in a volume, the long letter which gives you so pleasant an account of the inns, and roads, and weather last year at such a place, or which tells you that amusing story, or gives you the real circumstances of such and such events, however valuable for occasional reference, may not be, in the real sense of the word, a "book" at all, nor in the real sense, to be "read." A book is essentially not a talked thing, but a written thing; and written, not with the view of mere communication, but of permanence. The book of talk is printed only because its author cannot speak to thousands of people at once; if he could, he would—the volume is mere *multiplication* of his voice. You cannot talk to your friend in India, if you could, you would; you write instead: that is mere *conveyance* of voice. But a book is written, not to multiply the voice merely, not to carry it merely, but to perpetuate it. The author has something to say which he perceives to be true and useful, or helpfully beautiful. So far as he knows, no one has yet said it; so far as he knows, no one else can say it. He is bound to say it, clearly and melodiously if he may; clearly, at all events. In the sum of his life he finds this to be the thing, or group of things, manifest to him;—this, the piece of true knowledge, or sight, which his share of sunshine and earth has permitted him to seize. He would fain set it down forever; engrave it on rock, if he could; saying, "This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another; my life was as the vapor and is not; but this I saw and knew: this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory." That is his "writing"; it is, in his small human way, and with whatever degree of true inspiration is in him, his inscription, or scripture. That is a "Book."

11

10. Perhaps you think no books were ever so written. 12

But, again, I ask you, do you at all believe in honesty, or at all in kindness? or do you think there is never any honesty or benevolence in wise people? None of us, I hope, are 13

so unhappy as to think that. Well, whatever bit of a wise man's work is honestly and benevolently done, that bit is his book, or his piece of art. [2](#) It is mixed always with evil fragments—ill-done, redundant, affected work. But if you read rightly, you will easily discover the true bits, and those *are* the book.

11. Now books of this kind have been written in all ages by their greatest men:—by 14
great readers, great statesmen, and great thinkers. These are all at your choice; and Life is short. You have heard as much before;—yet have you measured and mapped out this short life and its possibilities? Do you know, if you read this, that you cannot read that—that what you lose to-day you cannot gain to-morrow? Will you go and gossip with your housemaid, or your stable-boy, when you may talk with queens and kings; or flatter yourselves that it is with any worthy consciousness of your own claims to respect that you jostle with the hungry and common crowd for *entrée* here, and audience there, when all the while this eternal court is open to you, with its society, wide as the world, multitudinous as its days, the chosen, and the mighty, of every place and time? Into that you may enter always; in that you may take fellowship and rank according to your wish; from that, once entered into it, you can never be outcast but by your own fault; by your aristocracy of companionship there, your own inherent aristocracy will be assuredly tested, and the motives with which you strive to take high place in the society of the living, measured, as to all the truth and sincerity that are in them, by the place you desire to take in this company of the Dead.

12. “The place you desire,” and the place you *fit yourself for*, I must also say; because, 15
observe, this court of the past differs from all living aristocracy in this:—it is open to labor and to merit, but to nothing else. No wealth will bribe, no name overawe, no artifice deceive, the guardian of those Elysian gates, In the deep sense, no vile or vulgar person ever enters there. At the portieres of that silent Faubourg St. Germain, there is but brief question:—“Do you deserve to enter? Pass. Do you ask to be the companion of nobles? Make yourself noble, and you shall be. Do you long for the conversation of the wise? Learn to understand it, and you shall hear it. But on other terms?—no. If you will not rise to us, we cannot stoop to you. The living lord may assume courtesy, the living philosopher explain his thought to you with considerate pain; but here we neither feign nor interpret; you must rise to the level of our thoughts if you would be gladdened by them, and share our feelings, if you would recognize our presence”

13. This, then, is what you have to do, and I admit that it is much. You must, in a 16
word, love these people, if you are to be among them. No ambition is of any use. They scorn your ambition. You must love them, and show your love in these two following ways:

I.—First, by a true desire to be taught by them, and to enter into their thoughts. To 17
enter into theirs, observe; not to find your own expressed by them. If the person who wrote the book is not wiser than you, you need not read it; if he be, he will think

differently from you in many respects.

Very ready we are to say of a book, “How good this is—that’s exactly what I think!” 18
But the right feeling is, “How strange that is! I never thought of that before, and yet I see it is true; or if I do not now, I hope I shall, some day.” But whether thus submissively or not, at least be sure that you go to the author to get at *his* meaning, not to find yours. Judge it afterwards, if you think yourself qualified to do so; but ascertain it first. And be sure also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get at his meaning all at once;—nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise. Not that he does not say what he means, and in strong words too; but he cannot say it all; and what is more strange, will not, but in a hidden way and in parables, in order that he may be sure you want it. I cannot quite see the reason of this, nor analyze that cruel reticence in the breasts of wise men which makes them always hide their deeper thought. They do not give it to you by way of help, but of reward; and will make themselves sure that you deserve it before they allow you to reach it. But it is the same with the physical type of wisdom, gold. There seems, to you and me, no reason why the electric forces of the earth should not carry whatever there is of gold within it at once to the mountain tops, so that kings and people might now that all the gold they could get was there; and without any trouble and digging, or anxiety, or chance, or waste of time, cut it away, and coin as much as they needed. But Nature does not manage it so. She puts it in little fissures in the earth, nobody knows where: you may dig long and find none; you must dig painfully to find any.

14. And it is just the same with men’s best wisdom. When you come to a good book, 19
you must ask yourself, “Am I inclined to work as an Australian miner would? Are my pickaxes and shovels in good order, and am I in good trim myself, my sleeves well up to the elbow, and my breath good, and my temper?” And, keeping the figure a little longer, even at the cost of tiresomeness, for it is a thoroughly useful one, the metal you are in search of being the author’s mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning; your smelting-furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any good author’s meaning without those tools and that fire; often you will need sharpest, finest chiseling, and patientest fusing, before you can gather one grain of the metal.

15. And therefore, first of all, I tell you, earnestly and authoritatively (*I know I am* 20
right in this,) you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter. For though it is only by reason of the opposition of letters in the function of signs, to sounds in the function of signs, that the study of books is called “literature,” and that a man versed in it is called, by the consent of nations, a man of letters instead of a man of books, or of words, you may yet connect with that accidental nomenclature this real fact:—that you

might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain an utterly “illiterate,” uneducated person; but that if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are forevermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it) consists in this accuracy. A well-educated gentleman may not know many languages,—may not be able to speak any but his own,—may have read very few books. But whatever language he knows, he knows precisely; whatever word he pronounces, he pronounces rightly; above all, he is learned in the *peerage* of words; knows the words of true descent and ancient blood at a glance, from words of modern canaille; remembers all their ancestry, their inter-marriages, distant relationships, and the extent to which they were admitted, and offices they held, among the national noblesse of words at any time, and in any country. But an uneducated person may know, by memory, many languages, and talk them all, and yet truly know not a word of any,—not a word even of his own. An ordinarily clever and sensible seaman will be able to make his way ashore at most ports; yet he has only to speak a sentence of any language to be known for an illiterate person: so also the accent, or turn of expression of a single sentence, will at once mark a scholar. And this is so strongly felt, so conclusively admitted by educated persons, that a false accent or a mistaken syllable is enough, in the parliament of any civilized nation, to assign to a man a certain degree of inferior standing forever.

16. And this is right; but it is a pity that the accuracy insisted on is not greater, and required to a serious purpose. It is right that a false Latin quantity should excite a smile in the House of Commons; but it is wrong that a false English *meaning* should *not* excite a frown there. Let the accent of words be watched; and closely: let their meaning be watched more closely still, and fewer will do the work. A few words well chosen and distinguished, will do work that a thousand cannot, when every one is acting, equivocally, in the function of another. Yes; and words, if they are not watched, will do deadly work sometimes. There are masked words droning and skulking about us in Europe just now,—(there never were so many, owing to the spread of a shallow, blotching, blundering, infectious, “information,” or rather deformation, everywhere, and to the teaching of catechisms and phrases at schools instead of human meanings)—there are masked words abroad, I say, which nobody understands, but which everybody uses, and most people will also fight for, live for, or even die for, fancying they mean this or that, or the other, of things dear to them: for such words wear chameleon cloaks—“groundlion” cloaks, of the color of the ground of any man’s fancy: on that ground they lie in wait, and rend him with a spring from it. There never were creatures of prey so mischievous, never diplomatists so cunning, never poisoners so deadly, as these masked words; they are the unjust stewards of all men’s ideas: whatever fancy or favorite instinct a man most cherishes, he gives to his favorite masked word to take care of for him; the word at last comes to have an infinite power

21

over him,—you cannot get at him but by its ministry.

17. And in languages so mongrel in breed as the English, there is a fatal power of equivocation put into men's hands, almost whether they will or no, in being able to use Greek or Latin words for an idea when they want it to be awful; and Saxon or otherwise common words when they want it to be vulgar. What a singular and salutary effect, for instance, would be produced on the minds of people who are in the habit of taking the Form of the "Word" they live by, for the Power of which that Word tells them, if we always either retained, or refused, the Greek form "biblos," or "biblion," as the right expression for "book"—instead of employing it only in the one instance in which we wish to give dignity to the idea, and translating it into English everywhere else. How wholesome it would be for many simple persons, if, in such places (for instance) as Acts xix. 19, we retained the Greek expression, instead of translating it, and they had to read—"Many of them also which used curious arts, brought their bibles together, and burnt them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver"! Or if, on the other hand, we translated where we retain it, and always spoke of "The Holy Book," instead of "Holy Bible," it might come into more heads than it does at present, that the Word of God, by which the heavens were, of old, and by which they are now kept in store, [3](#) cannot be made a present of to anybody in morocco binding; nor sown on any wayside by help either of steam plough or steam press; but is nevertheless being offered to us daily, and by us with contumely refused; and sown in us daily, and by us, as instantly as may be, choked. 22

18. So, again, consider what effect has been produced on the English vulgar mind by the use of the sonorous Latin form "damno," in translating the Greek [Greek], when people charitably wish to make it forcible; and the substitution of the temperate "condemn" for it, when they choose to keep it gentle; and what notable sermons have been preached by illiterate clergymen on—"He that believeth not shall be damned"; though they would shrink with horror from translating Heb. xi. 7, "The saving of his house, by which he damned the world"; or John viii. 10, 11, "Woman, hath no man damned thee? She saith, No man, Lord. Jesus answered her, Neither do I damn thee; go and sin no more." And divisions in the mind of Europe, which have cost seas of blood and in the defense of which the noblest souls of men have been cast away in frantic desolation, countless as forest leaves—though, in the heart of them, founded on deeper causes—have nevertheless been rendered practicably possible, namely, by the European adoption of the Greek word for a public meeting, "ecclesia," to give peculiar respectability to such meetings, when held for religious purposes; and other collateral equivocations, such as the vulgar English one of using the word "priest" as a contraction for "presbyter." 23

19. Now, in order to deal with words rightly, this is the habit you must form. Nearly every word in your language has been first a word of some other language—of Saxon, 24

German, French, Latin, or Greek (not to speak of eastern and primitive dialects). And many words have been all these;—that is to say, have been Greek first, Latin next, French and German next, and English last: undergoing a certain change of sense and use on the lips of each nation; but retaining a deep vital meaning, which all good scholars feel in employing them, even at this day. If you do not know the Greek alphabet, learn it; young or old—girl or boy—whoever you may be, if you think of reading seriously (which, of course, implies that you have some leisure at command), learn your Greek alphabet; then get good dictionaries of all these languages, and whenever you are in doubt about a word, hunt it down patiently. Read Max Müller’s lectures thoroughly, to begin with; and, after that, never let a word escape you that looks suspicious. It is severe work; but you will find it, even at first, interesting, and at last, endlessly amusing. And the general gain to your character, in power and precision, will be quite incalculable.

Mind, this does not imply knowing, or trying to know, Greek or Latin, or French. It takes a whole life to learn any language perfectly. But you can easily ascertain the meanings through which the English word has passed; and those which in a good writer’s work it must still bear. 25

20. And now, merely for example’s sake, I will, with your permission, read a few lines of a true book with you, carefully; and see what will come out of them. I will take a book perfectly known to you all. No English words are more familiar to us, yet few perhaps have been read with less sincerity. I will take these few following lines of “Lycidas”: 26

“Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain),
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake,
‘How well could I have spar’d for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies’ sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers’ feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn’d aught else, the least
That to the faithful herdsman’s art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;

And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
 Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
 But, swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
 Daily devours apace, and nothing said.””

Let us think over this passage, and examine its words. 27

First, is it not singular to find Milton assigning to St. Peter, not only his full episcopal 28
 function, but the very types of it which Protestants usually refuse most passionately?
 His “mitred” locks! Milton was no Bishop—lover; how comes St. Peter to be “mitred”?
 “Two massy keys he bore.” Is this, then, the power of the keys claimed by the Bishops
 of Rome, and is it acknowledged here by Milton only in a poetical license, for the sake
 of its picturesqueness, that he may get the gleam of the golden keys to help his effect?
 Do not think it. Great men do not play stage tricks with doctrines of life and death: only
 little men do that. Milton means what he says; and means it with his might too—is
 going to put the whole strength of his spirit presently into the saying of it. For though
 not a lover of false bishops, he was a lover of true ones; and the Lake-pilot is here, in
 his thoughts, the type and head of true episcopal power. For Milton reads that text, “I
 will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven” quite honestly. Puritan though
 he be, he would not blot it out of the book because there have been bad bishops; nay, in
 order to understand *him*, we must understand that verse first; it will not do to eye it
 askance, or whisper it under our breath, as if it were a weapon of an adverse sect. It is a
 solemn, universal assertion, deeply to be kept in mind by all sects. But perhaps we shall
 be better able to reason on it if we go on a little farther, and come back to it. For clearly
 this marked insistence on the power of the true episcopate is to make us feel more
 weightily what is to be charged against the false claimants of episcopate; or generally,
 against false claimants of power and rank in the body of the clergy; they who, “for their
 bellies’ sake, creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold.”

21. Never think Milton uses those three words to fill up his verse, as a loose writer 29
 would. He needs all the three; especially those three, and no more than those—“creep,”
 and “intrude.” and “climb”; no other words would or could serve the turn, and no more
 could be added. For they exhaustively comprehend the three classes, correspondent to
 the three characters, of men who dishonestly seek ecclesiastical power. First, those
 who “*creep*” into the fold; who do not care for office, nor name, but for secret
 influence, and do all things occultly and cunningly, consenting to any servility of office
 or conduct, so only that they may intimately discern, and unawares direct, the minds of
 men. Then those who “intrude” (thrust, that is) themselves into the fold, who by natural

insolence of heart, and stout eloquence of tongue, and fearlessly perseverant self-assertion, obtain hearing and authority with the common crowd. Lastly, those who “climb,” who by labor and learning, both stout and sound, but selfishly exerted in the cause of their own ambition, gain high dignities and authorities, and become “lords over the heritage,” though not “ensamples to the flock.”

22. Now go on:—

30

“Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers’ feast.
Blind mouths—”

I pause again, for this is a strange expression; a broken metaphor, one might think, careless and unscholarly. 31

Not so: its very audacity and pithiness are intended to make us look close at the phrase and remember it. Those two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character, in the two great offices of the Church—those of bishop and pastor. 32

A “Bishop” means a “person who sees.” 33

A “Pastor” means a “person who feeds.” 34

The most unbishoply character a man can have is therefore to be Blind. 35

The most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed,—to be a Mouth. 36

Take the two reverses together, and you have “blind mouths.” We may advisably follow out this idea a little. Nearly all the evils in the Church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*. They want authority, not outlook. Whereas their real office is not to rule; though it may be vigorously to exhort and rebuke; it is the king’s office to rule; the bishop’s office is to *oversee* the flock; to number it, sheep by sheep; to be ready always to give full account of it. Now it is clear he cannot give account of the souls, if he has not so much as numbered the bodies of his flock. The first thing, therefore, that a bishop has to do is at least to put himself in a position in which, at any moment, he can obtain the history, from childhood, of every living soul in his diocese, and of its present state. Down in that back street, Bill and Nancy, knocking each other’s teeth out!—Does the bishop know all about it? Has he his eye upon them? Has he *had* his eye upon them? Can he circumstantially explain to us how Bill got into the habit of beating Nancy about the head? If he cannot, he is no bishop, though he had a mitre as high as Salisbury steeple; he is no bishop,—he has sought to be at the helm instead of the masthead; he has no sight of things. “Nay,” you say, “it is not his duty to look after Bill in the back street.” What! the fat sheep that have full fleeces—you think it is only those he should look after, while (go back to your Milton) “the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed, besides what the grim wolf with privy paw” (bishops knowing nothing about it) “daily devours apace, and nothing said”? 37

“But that’s not our idea of a bishop.” ⁴ Perhaps not; but it was St. Paul’s; and it was Milton’s. They may be right, or we may be; but we must not think we are reading either one or the other by putting our meaning into their words. 38

23. I go on. 39

“But, swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw.”

This is to meet the vulgar answer that “if the poor are not looked after in their bodies, they are in their souls; they have spiritual food.” 40

And Milton says, “They have no such thing as spiritual food; they are only swollen with wind.” At first you may think that is a coarse type, and an obscure one. But again, it is a quite literally accurate one. Take up your Latin and Greek dictionaries, and find out the meaning of “Spirit.” It is only a contraction of the Latin word “breath,” and an indistinct translation of the Greek word for “wind.” The same word is used in writing, “The wind bloweth where is listeth”; and in writing, “So is every one that is born of the Spirit”; born of the *breath*, that is; for it means the breath of God, in soul and body. We have the true sense of it in our words “inspiration” and “expire.” Now, there are two kinds of breath with which the flock may be filled; God’s breath, and man’s. The breath of God is health, and life, and peace to them, as the air of heaven is to the flocks on the hills; but man’s breath—the word which *he* calls spiritual,—is disease and contagion to them, as the fog of the fen. They rot inwardly with it; they are puffed up by it, as a dead body by the vapors of its own decomposition. This is literally true of all false religious teaching; the first and last, and fatalest sign of it is that “puffing up.” Your converted children, who teach their parents; your converted convicts, who teach honest men; your converted dunces, who, having lived in cretinous stupefaction half their lives, suddenly awakening to the fact of there being a God, fancy themselves therefore His peculiar people and messengers; your sectarians of every species, small and great, Catholic or Protestant, of high church or low, in so far as they think themselves exclusively in the right and others wrong; and preeminently, in every sect, those who hold that men can be saved by thinking rightly instead of doing rightly, by word instead of act, and wish instead of work:—these are the true fog children—clouds, these, without water; bodies, these, of putrescent vapor and skin, without blood or flesh: blown bag-pipes for the fiends to pipe with—corrupt, and corrupting,—“Swollen with wind, and the rank mist they draw.” 41

24. Lastly, let us return to the lines respecting the power of the keys, for now we can understand them. Note the difference between Milton and Dante in their interpretation of this power: for once, the latter is weaker in thought; he supposes *both* the keys to be of the gate of heaven; one is of gold, the other of silver: they are given by St. Peter to the sentinel angel; and it is not easy to determine the meaning either of the substances of the three steps of the gate, or of the two keys. But Milton makes one, of gold, the key of heaven; the other, of iron, the key of the prison in which the wicked teachers are to 42

be bound who “have taken away the key of knowledge, yet entered not in themselves.” We have seen that the duties of bishop and pastor are to see and feed; and of all who do so it is said, “He that watereth, shall be watered also himself.” But the reverse is truth also. He that watereth not, shall be *withered* himself, and he that seeth not, shall himself be shut out of sight—shut into the perpetual prison-house. And that prison opens here, as well as hereafter: he who is to be bound in heaven must first be bound on earth. That command to the strong angels, of which the rock-apostle is the image, “Take him and bind him hand and foot, and cast him out,” issues, in its measure, against the teacher, for every help withheld, and for every truth refused, and for every falsehood enforced; so that he is more strictly fettered the more he fetters, and farther outcast, as he more and more misleads, till at last the bars of the iron cage close upon him, and as “the golden opes, the iron shuts amain.”

25. We have got something out of the lines, I think, and much more is yet to be found 43 in them; but we have done enough by way of example of the kind of word-by-word examination of your author which is rightly called “reading”; watching every accent and expression, and putting ourselves always in the author’s place, annihilating our own personality, and seeking to enter into his, so as to be able assuredly to say, “Thus Milton thought,” not “Thus *I* thought, in mis-reading Milton.” And by this process you will gradually come to attach less weight to your own “Thus I thought” at other times. You will begin to perceive that what *you* thought was a matter of no serious importance;—that your thoughts on any subject are not perhaps the clearest and wisest that could be arrived at thereupon:—in fact, that unless you are a very singular person, you cannot be said to have any “thoughts” at all; that you have no materials for them, in any serious matters; 5—no right to “think,” but only to try to learn more of the facts. Nay, most probably all your life (unless, as I said, you are a singular person) you will have no legitimate right to an “opinion” on any business, except that instantly under your hand. What must of necessity be done, you can always find out, beyond question, how to do. Have you a house to keep in order, a commodity to sell, a field to plough, a ditch to cleanse? There need be no two opinions about these proceedings; it is at your peril if you have not much more than an “opinion” on the way to manage such matters. And also, outside of your own business, there are one or two subjects on which you are bound to have but one opinion. That roguery and lying are objectionable, and are instantly to be flogged out of the way whenever discovered;—that covetousness and love of quarreling are dangerous dispositions even in children, and deadly dispositions in men and nations;—that in the end, the God of heaven and earth loves active, modest, and kind people, and hates idle, proud, greedy, and cruel ones;—on these general facts you are bound to have but one, and that a very strong, opinion. For the rest, respecting religions, governments, sciences, arts, you will find That, on the whole, you can know NOTHING,—judge nothing; that the best you can do, even though you may be a well-educated person, is to be silent, and strive to be wiser every day, and to understand

a little more of the thoughts of others, which so soon as you try to do honestly, you will discover that the thoughts even of the wisest are very little more than pertinent questions. To put the difficulty into a clear shape, and exhibit to you the grounds for *indecision*, that is all they can generally do for you!—and well for them and for us, if indeed they are able “to mix the music with our thoughts, and sadden us with heavenly doubts.” This writer, from whom I have been reading to you, is not among the first or wisest: he sees shrewdly as far as he sees, and therefore it is easy to find out his full meaning; but with the greater men, you cannot fathom their meaning; they do not even wholly measure it themselves,—it is so wide. Suppose I had asked you, for instance, to seek for Shakespeare’s opinion, instead of Milton’s, on this matter of Church authority?—or for Dante’s? Have any of you, at this instant, the least idea what either thought about it? Have you ever balanced the scene with the bishops in “Richard III.” against the character of Cranmer? the description of St. Francis and St. Dominic against that of him who made Virgil wonder to gaze upon him,—“disteso, tanto vilmente, nell’ eterno esilio”; or of him whom Dante stood beside, “come ’l frate che confessa lo perfido assassin?” [6](#) Shakespeare and Alighieri knew men better than most of us, I presume! They were both in the midst of the main struggle between the temporal and spiritual powers. They had an opinion, we may guess. But where is it? Bring it into court! Put Shakespeare’s or Dante’s creed into articles, and send it up for trial by the Ecclesiastical Courts.

26. You will not be able, I tell you again, for many and many a day, to come at the real 44 purposes and teaching of these great men; but a very little honest study of them will enable you to perceive that what you took for your own “judgment” was mere chance prejudice, and drifted, helpless, entangled weed of castaway thought: nay, you will see that most men’s minds are indeed little better than rough heath wilderness, neglected and stubborn, partly barren, partly overgrown with pestilent brakes, and venomous, wind-sown herbage of evil surmise; that the first thing you have to do for them, and yourself, is eagerly and scornfully to set fire to *this*; burn all the jungle into wholesome ash heaps, and then plough and sow. All the true literary work before you, for life, must begin with obedience to that order, “Break up your fallow ground, and sow *not among thorns*.”

27. II. [7](#)—Having then faithfully listened to the great teachers, that you may enter into 45 their Thoughts, you have yet this higher advance to make;—you have to enter into their Hearts. As you go to them first for clear sight, so you must stay with them, that you may share at last their just and mighty Passion. Passion, or “sensation.” I am not afraid of the word; still less of the thing. You have heard many outcries against sensation lately; but, I can tell you, it is not less sensation we want, but more. The ennobling difference between one man and another,—between one animal and another,—is precisely in this, that one feels more than another. If we were sponges, perhaps

sensation might not be easily got for us; if we were earthworms, liable at every instant to be cut in two by the spade, perhaps too much sensation might not be good for us. But, being human creatures, *it is* good for us; nay, we are only human in so far as we are sensitive, and our honor is precisely in proportion to our passion.

28. You know I said of that great and pure society of the dead, that it would allow “no 46
vain or vulgar person to enter there.” What do you think I meant by a “vulgar” person? What do you yourselves mean by “vulgarity”? You will find it a fruitful subject of thought; but, briefly, the essence of all vulgarity lies in want of sensation. Simple and innocent vulgarity is merely an untrained and undeveloped bluntness of body and mind; but in true inbred vulgarity, there is a deathful callousness, which, in extremity, becomes capable of every sort of bestial habit and crime, without fear, without pleasure, without horror, and without pity. It is in the blunt hand and the dead heart, in the diseased habit, in the hardened conscience, that men become vulgar; they are forever vulgar, precisely in proportion as they are incapable of sympathy,—of quick understanding,—of all that, in deep insistence on the common, but most accurate term, may be called the “tact” or “touch—faculty” of body and soul; that tact which the Mimosa has in trees, which the pure woman has above all creatures;—fineness and fullness of sensation beyond reason;—the guide and sanctifier of reason itself. Reason can but determine what is true: it is the God-given passion of humanity which alone can recognize what God has made good.

29. We come then to the great concourse of the Dead, not merely to know from them 47
what is True, but chiefly to feel with them what is just. Now, to feel with them, we must be like them; and none of us can become that without pains. As the true knowledge is disciplined and tested knowledge,—not the first thought that comes,—so the true passion is disciplined and tested passion,—not the first passion that comes. The first that come are the vain, the false, the treacherous; if you yield to them they will lead you wildly and far in vain pursuit, in hollow enthusiasm, till you have no true purpose and no true passion left. Not that any feeling possible to humanity is in itself wrong, but only wrong when undisciplined. Its nobility is in its force and justice; it is wrong when it is weak, and felt for paltry cause. There is a mean wonder, as of a child who sees a juggler tossing golden balls, and this is base, if you will. But do you think that the wonder is ignoble, or the sensation less, with which every human soul is called to watch the golden balls of heaven tossed through the night by the Hand that made them? There is a mean curiosity, as of a child opening a forbidden door, or a servant prying into her master’s business;—and a noble curiosity, questioning, in the front of danger, the source of the great river beyond the sand,—the place of the great continents beyond the sea;—a nobler curiosity still, which questions of the source of the River of Life, and of the space of the Continent of Heaven,—things which “the angels desire to look into.” So the anxiety is ignoble, with which you linger over the course and catastrophe of an

idle tale; but do you think the anxiety is less, or greater, with which you watch, or *ought* to watch, the dealings of fate and destiny with the life of an agonized nation? Alas! it is the narrowness, selfishness, minuteness, of your sensation that you have to deplore in England at this day;—sensation which spends itself in bouquets and speeches; in revelings and junketings; in sham fights and gay puppet shows, while you can look on and see noble nations murdered, man by man, without an effort or a tear.

30. I said “minuteness” and “selfishness” of sensation, but in a word, I ought to have said “injustice” or “unrighteousness” of sensation. For as in nothing is a gentleman better to be discerned from a vulgar person, so in nothing is a gentle nation (such nations have been) better to be discerned from a mob, than in this,—that their feelings are constant and just, results of due contemplation, and of equal thought. You can talk a mob into anything; its feelings may be—usually are—on the whole, generous and right; but it has no foundation for them, no hold of them; you may tease or tickle it into any, at your pleasure; it thinks by infection, for the most part, catching an opinion like a cold, and there is nothing so little that it will not roar itself wild about, when the fit is on;—nothing so great but it will forget in an hour, when the fit is past. But a gentleman’s, or a gentle nation’s, passions are just, measured, and continuous. A great nation, for instance, does not spend its entire national wits for a couple of months in weighing evidence of a single ruffian’s having done a single murder; and for a couple of years see its own children murder each other by their thousands or tens of thousands a day, considering only what the effect is likely to be on the price of cotton, and caring nowise to determine which side of battle is in the wrong. Neither does a great nation send its poor little boys to jail for stealing six walnuts; and allow its bankrupts to steal their hundreds or thousands with a bow, and its bankers, rich with poor men’s savings, to close their doors “under circumstances over which they have no control,” with a “by your leave”; and large landed estates to be bought by men who have made their money by going with armed steamers up and down the China Seas, selling opium at the cannon’s mouth, and altering, for the benefit of the foreign nation, the common highwayman’s demand of “your money or your life,” into that of “your money *and* your life.” Neither does a great nation allow the lives of its innocent poor to be parched out of them by fog fever, and rotted out of them by dunghill plague, for the sake of sixpence a life extra per week to its landlords; [8](#)and then debate, with driveling tears, and diabolical sympathies, whether it ought not piously to save, and nursingly cherish, the lives of its murderers. Also, a great nation, having made up its mind that hanging is quite the wholesomest process for its homicides in general, can yet with mercy distinguish between the degrees of guilt in homicides; and does not yelp like a pack of frost-pinched wolf-cubs on the blood-track of an unhappy crazed boy, or gray-haired clodpate Othello, “perplexed i’ the extreme,” at the very moment that it is sending a Minister of the Crown to make polite speeches to a man who is bayoneting young girls in their father’s sight, and killing noble youths in cool blood, faster than a country

butcher kills lambs in spring. And, lastly, a great nation does not mock Heaven and its Powers, by pretending belief in a revelation which asserts the love of money to be the root of *all* evil, and declaring, at the same time, that it is actuated, and intends to be actuated, in all chief national deeds and measures, by no other love.

31. My friends, I do not know why any of us should talk about reading. We want some sharper discipline than that of reading; but, at all events, be assured, we cannot read. No reading is possible for a people with its mind in this state. No sentence of any great writer is intelligible to them. It is simply and sternly impossible for the English public, at this moment, to understand any thoughtful writing,—so incapable of thought has it become in its insanity of avarice. Happily, our disease is, as yet, little worse than this incapacity of thought; it is not corruption of the inner nature; we ring true still, when anything strikes home to us; and though the idea that everything should “pay” has infected our every purpose so deeply, that even when we would play the good Samaritan, we never take out our two pence and give them to the host without saying, “When I come again, thou shalt give me four pence,” there is a capacity of noble passion left in our hearts’ core. We show it in our work,—in our war,—even in those unjust domestic affections which make us furious at a small private wrong, while we are polite to a boundless public one: we are still industrious to the last hour of the day, though we add the gambler’s fury to the laborer’s patience; we are still brave to the death, though incapable of discerning true cause for battle; and are still true in affection to our own flesh, to the death, as the sea-monsters are, and the rock-eagles. And there is hope for a nation while this can be still said of it. As long as it holds its life in its hand, ready to give it for its honor (though a foolish honor), for its love (though a selfish love), and for its business (though a base business), there is hope for it. But hope only; for this instinctive, reckless virtue cannot last. No nation can last, which has made a mob of itself, however generous at heart. It must discipline its passions, and direct them, or they will discipline *it*, one day, with scorpion whips. Above all a nation cannot last as a money-making mob: it cannot with impunity,—it cannot with existence,—go on despising literature, despising science, despising art, despising nature, despising compassion, and concentrating its soul on Pence. Do you think these are harsh or wild words? Have patience with me but a little longer. I will prove their truth to you, clause by clause. 49

32. I.—I say first we have despised literature. What do we, as a nation, care about books? How much do you think we spend altogether on our libraries, public or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses? If a man spends lavishly on his library you call him mad—a bibliomaniac. But you never call any one a horsemaniac, though men ruin themselves every day by their horses, and you do not hear of people ruining themselves by their books. Or, to go lower still, how much do you think the contents of the bookshelves of the United Kingdom, public and private, would fetch, as compared 50

with the contents of its wine-cellars? What position would its expenditure on literature take, as compared with its expenditure on luxurious eating? We talk of food for the mind, as of food for the body; now a good book contains such food inexhaustibly; it is a provision for life, and for the best part of us; yet how long most people would look at the best book before they would give the price of a large turbot for it! though there have been men who have pinched their stomachs and bared their backs to buy a book, whose libraries were cheaper to them, I think, in the end, than most men's dinners are. We are few of us put to such trial, and more the pity; for, indeed, a precious thing is all the more precious to us if it has been won by work or economy; and if public libraries were half as costly as public dinners, or books cost the tenth part of what bracelets do, even foolish men and women might sometimes suspect there was good in reading, as well as in munching and sparkling; whereas the very cheapness of literature is making even wise people forget that if a book is worth reading, it is worth buying. No book is worth anything which is not worth much; nor is it serviceable, until it has been read, and reread, and loved, and loved again; and marked, so that you can refer to the passages you want in it as a soldier can seize the weapon he needs in an armory, or a housewife bring the spice she needs from her store. Bread of flour is good: but there is bread, sweet as honey, if we would eat it, in a good book; and the family must be poor indeed which, once in their lives, cannot, for such multipliable barley-loaves, pay their baker's bill. We call ourselves a rich nation, and we are filthy and foolish enough to thumb each other's books out of circulating libraries!

33. II.—I say we have despised science. “What!” you exclaim, “are we not foremost in all discovery, [9](#) and is not the whole world giddy by reason, or unreason, of our inventions?” Yes; but do you suppose that is national work? That work is all done *in spite of* the nation; by private people's zeal and money. We are glad enough, indeed, to make our profit of science; we snap up anything in the way of a scientific bone that has meat on it, eagerly enough; but if the scientific man comes for a bone or a crust to *us*, that is another story. What have we publicly done for science? We are obliged to know what o'clock it is, for the safety of our ships, and therefore we pay for an observatory; and we allow ourselves, in the person of our Parliament, to be annually tormented into doing something, in a slovenly way, for the British Museum; sullenly apprehending that to be a place for keeping stuffed birds in, to amuse our children. If anybody will pay for his own telescope, and resolve another nebula, we cackle over the discernment as if it were our own; if one in ten thousand of our hunting squires suddenly perceives that the earth was indeed made to be something else than a portion for foxes, and burrows in it himself, and tells us where the gold is, and where the coals, we understand that there is some use in that; and very properly knight him; but is the accident of his having found out how to employ himself usefully any credit to *us*? (The negation of such discovery among his brother squires may perhaps be some *discredit* to us, if we would consider of it.) But if you doubt these generalities, here is one fact for

us all to meditate upon, illustrative of our love of science. Two years ago there was a collection of the fossils of Solenhofen to be sold in Bavaria; the best in existence, containing many specimens unique for perfectness, and one unique as an example of a species (a whole kingdom of unknown living creatures being announced by that fossil.) This collection, of which the mere market worth, among private buyers, would probably have been some thousand or twelve hundred pounds, was offered to the English nation for seven hundred; but we would not give seven hundred, and the whole series would have been in the Munich Museum at this moment, if Professor Owen [10](#) had not with loss of his own time, and patient tormenting of the British public in person of its representatives, got leave to give four hundred pounds at once, and himself become answerable for the other three! which the said public will doubtless pay him eventually, but sulkily, and caring nothing about the matter all the while; only always ready to cackle if any credit comes of it. Consider, I beg of you, arithmetically, what this fact means. Your annual expenditure for public purposes (a third of it for military apparatus) is at least fifty millions. Now 700*l.* is to 50,000,000*l.* roughly, as seven pence to two thousand pounds. Suppose, then, a gentleman of unknown income, but whose wealth was to be conjectured from the fact that he spent two thousand a year on his park-walls and footmen only, professes himself fond of science; and that one of his servants comes eagerly to tell him that an unique collection of fossils, giving clue to a new era of creation, is to be had for the sum of seven pence sterling; and that the gentleman, who is fond of science, and spends two thousand a year on his park, answers, after keeping his servant waiting several months, “Well! I’ll give you four pence for them, if you will be answerable for the extra three pence yourself, till next year!”

34. III.—I say you have despised Art! “What!” you again answer, “have we not Art exhibitions, miles long? and do we not pay thousands of pounds for single pictures? and have we not Art schools and institutions, more than ever nation had before?” Yes, truly, but all that is for the sake of the shop. You would fain sell canvas as well as coals, and crockery as well as iron; you would take every other nation’s bread out of its mouth if you could; [11](#) not being able to do that, your ideal of life is to stand in the thoroughfares of the world, like Ludgate apprentices, screaming to every passer-by, “What d’ye lack?” You know nothing of your own faculties or circumstances; you fancy that, among your damp, flat fields of clay, you can have as quick art-fancy as the Frenchman among his bronzed vines, or the Italian under his volcanic cliffs;—that Art may be learned as bookkeeping is, and when learned, will give you more books to keep. You care for pictures, absolutely, no more than you do for the bills pasted on your dead walls. There is always room on the walls for the bills to be read,—never for the pictures to be seen. You do not know what pictures you have (by repute) in the country, nor whether they are false or true, nor whether they are taken care of or not; in foreign countries, you calmly see the noblest existing pictures in the world rotting in abandoned wreck—(in Venice you saw the Austrian guns deliberately pointed at the palaces

containing them), and if you heard that all the fine pictures in Europe were made into sand-bags to-morrow on the Austrian forts, it would not trouble you so much as the chance of a brace or two of game less in your own bags, in a day's shooting. That is your national love of Art.

35. IV.—You have despised Nature; that is to say, all the deep and sacred sensations of natural scenery. The French revolutionists made stables of the cathedrals of France; you have made race-courses of the cathedrals of the earth. Your *one* conception of pleasure is to drive in railroad carriages round their aisles, and eat off their altars. [12](#) You have put a railroad bridge over the fall of Schaffhausen. You have tunneled the cliffs of Lucerne by Tell's chapel; you have destroyed the Clarens shore of the Lake of Geneva; there is not a quiet valley in England that you have not filled with bellowing fire; there is no particle left of English land which you have not trampled coal ashes into [13](#)—nor any foreign city in which the spread of your presence is not marked among its fair old streets and happy gardens by a consuming white leprosy of new hotels and perfumers' shops: the Alps themselves, which your own poets used to love so reverently, you look upon as soaped poles in a bear garden, which you set yourselves to climb, and slide down again with “shrieks of delight.” When you are past shrieking, having no human articulate voice to say you are glad with, you fill the quietude of their valleys with gunpowder blasts, and rush home, red with cutaneous eruption of conceit, and voluble with convulsive hiccough of self-satisfaction. I think nearly the two sorrowfullest spectacles I have ever seen in humanity, taking the deep inner significance of them, are the English mobs in the valley of Chamouni, amusing themselves with firing rusty howitzers; and the Swiss vintagers of Zurich expressing their Christian thanks for the gift of the vine, by assembling in knots in the “towers of the vineyards,” and slowly loading and firing horse-pistols from morning till evening. It is pitiful to have dim conceptions of duty; more pitiful, it seems to me, to have conceptions like these, of mirth.

36. Lastly. You despise compassion. There is no need of words of mine for proof of this. I will merely print one of the newspaper paragraphs which I am in the habit of cutting out and throwing into my store-drawer; here is one from a *Daily Telegraph* of an early date this year (1867) (date which, though by me carelessly left unmarked, is easily discoverable; for on the back of the slip, there is the announcement that “yesterday the seventh of the special services of this year was performed by the Bishop of Ripon in St. Paul's”); it relates only one of such facts as happen now daily; this, by chance, having taken a form in which it came before the corner....

“An inquiry was held on Friday by Mr. Richards, deputy coroner, at the White Horse Tavern, Christ Church, Spitalfields, respecting the death of Michael Collins, aged 58 years. Mary Collins, a miserable-looking woman, said that she lived with the deceased and his son in a room at 2, Cobb's Court, Christ Church. Deceased was a ‘translator’ of

boots. Witness went out and bought old boots; deceased and his son made them into good ones, and then witness sold them for what she could get at the shops, which was very little indeed. Deceased and his son used to work night and day to try and get a little bread and tea, and pay for the room (2s. a week), so as to keep the home together. On Friday night week, deceased got up from his bench and began to shiver. He threw down the boots, saying, "Somebody else must finish them when I am gone, for I can do no more." There was no fire, and he said, 'I would be better if I was warm.' Witness therefore took two pairs of translated boots [14](#) to sell at the shop, but she could only get 14d. for the two pairs, for the people at the shop said, 'We must have our profit.' Witness got 14 lbs. of coal and a little tea and bread. Her son sat up the whole night to make the 'translations,' to get money, but deceased died on Saturday morning. The family never had enough to eat.—Coroner: 'It seems to me deplorable that you did not go into the workhouse.' Witness: 'We wanted the comforts of our little home.' a juror asked what the comforts were, for he only saw a little straw in the corner of the room, the windows of which were broken. The witness began to cry, and said that they had a quilt and other little things. The deceased said he never would go into the workhouse. In summer, when the season was good, they sometimes made as much as 10s. profit in a week. They then always saved towards the next week, which was generally a bad one. In winter they made not half so much. For three years they had been getting from bad to worse.—Cornelius Collins said that he had assisted his father since 1847. They used to work so far into the night that both nearly lost their eyesight. Witness now had a film over his eyes. Five years ago deceased applied to the parish for aid. The relieving officer gave him a 4-lb. loaf, and told him if he came again he should 'get the stones.' [15](#) That disgusted deceased, and he would have nothing to do with them since. They got worse and worse until last Friday week, when they had not even a half penny to buy a candle. Deceased then lay down on the straw, and said he could not live till morning.—A juror: 'You are dying of starvation yourself, and you ought to go into the house until the summer.' Witness: 'If we went in we should die. When we come out in the summer we should be like people dropped from the sky. No one would know us, and we would not have even a room. I could work now if I had food, for my sight would get better.' Dr. G. P. Walker said deceased died from syncope, from exhaustion, from want of food. The deceased had had no bedclothes. For four months he had had nothing but bread to eat. There was not a particle of fat in the body. There was no disease, but if there had been medical attendance, he might have survived the syncope or fainting. The coroner having remarked upon the painful nature of the case, the jury returned the following verdict: 'That deceased died from exhaustion, from want of food and the common necessities of life; also through want of medical aid.'"

37. "Why would witness not go into the workhouse?" you ask. Well, the poor seem to have a prejudice against the workhouse which the rich have not; for, of course, every one who takes a pension from Government goes into the workhouse on a grand

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scale; [16](#) only the workhouses for the rich do not involve the idea of work, and should be called play-houses. But the poor like to die independently, it appears; perhaps if we made the play-houses for them pretty and pleasant enough, or gave them their pensions at home, and allowed them a little introductory speculation with the public money, their minds might be reconciled to the conditions. Meantime, here are the facts: we make our relief either so insulting to them, or so painful, that they rather die than take it at our hands; or, for third alternative, we leave them so untaught and foolish that they starve like brute creatures, wild and dumb, not knowing what to do, or what to ask. I say, you despise compassion; if you did not, such a newspaper paragraph would be as impossible in a Christian country as a deliberate assassination permitted in its public streets. [17](#)“Christian,” did I say? Alas, if we were but wholesomely un-Christian, it would be impossible; it is our imaginary Christianity that helps us to commit these crimes, for we revel and luxuriate in our faith, for the lewd sensation of it; dressing it up, like everything else, in fiction. The dramatic Christianity of the organ and aisle, of dawn-service and twilight-revival—the Christianity which we do not fear to mix the mockery of, pictorially, with our play about the devil, in our Satanellas,—Roberts,—Fausts; chanting hymns through traceried windows for background effect, and artistically modulating the “Dio” through variation on variation of mimicked prayer (while we distribute tracts, next day, for the benefit of uncultivated swearers, upon what we suppose to be the signification of the Third Commandment);—this gas-lighted, and gas-inspired, Christianity, we are triumphant in, and draw back the hem of our robes from the touch of the heretics who dispute it. But to do a piece of common Christian righteousness in a plain English word or deed; to make Christian law any rule of life, and found one National act or hope thereon,—we know too well what our faith comes to for that! You might sooner get lightning out of incense smoke than true action or passion out of your modern English religion. You had better get rid of the smoke, and the organ-pipes, both; leave them, and the Gothic windows, and the painted glass, to the property-man; give up your carburetted hydrogen ghost in one healthy expiration, and look after Lazarus at the door-step. For there is a true Church wherever one hand meets another helpfully, and that is the only holy or Mother Church which ever was, or ever shall be.

38. All these pleasures, then, and all these virtues, I repeat, you nationally despise. You have, indeed, men among you who do not; by whose work, by whose strength, by whose life, by whose death, you live, and never thank them. Your wealth, your amusement, your pride, would all be alike impossible, but for those whom you scorn or forget. The policeman, who is walking up and down the black lane all night to watch the guilt you have created there, and may have his brains beaten out, and be maimed for life, at any moment, and never be thanked; the sailor wrestling with the sea’s rage; the quiet student poring over his book or his vial; the common worker, without praise, and nearly without bread, fulfilling his task as your horses drag your carts, hopeless, and

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spurned of all: these are the men by whom England lives; but they are not the nation; they are only the body and nervous force of it, acting still from old habit in a convulsive perseverance, while the mind is gone. Our National wish and purpose are to be amused; our National religion is the performance of church ceremonies, and preaching of soporific truths (or untruths) to keep the mob quietly at work, while we amuse ourselves; and the necessity for this amusement is fastening on us as a feverous disease of parched throat and wandering eyes—senseless, dissolute, merciless. How literally that word *Dis-Ease*, the Negation and impossibility of Ease, expresses the entire moral state of our English Industry and its Amusements!

39. When men are rightly occupied, their amusement grows out of their work, as the color-petals out of a fruitful flower;—when they are faithfully helpful and compassionate, all their emotions become steady, deep, perpetual, and vivifying to the soul as the natural pulse of the body. But now, having no true business, we pour our whole masculine energy into the false business of money-making; and having no true emotion, we must have false emotions dressed up for us to play with, not innocently, as children with dolls, but guiltily and darkly, as the idolatrous Jews with their pictures on cavern walls, which men had to dig to detect. The justice we do not execute, we mimic in the novel and on the stage; for the beauty we destroy in nature, we substitute the metamorphosis of the pantomime, and (the human nature of us imperatively requiring awe and sorrow of some kind) for the noble grief we should have borne with our fellows, and the pure tears we should have wept with them, we gloat over the pathos of the police court, and gather the night-dew of the grave. 58

40. It is difficult to estimate the true significance of these things; the facts are frightful enough;—the measure of national fault involved in them is, perhaps, not as great as it would at first seem. We permit, or cause, thousands of deaths daily, but we mean no harm; we set fire to houses, and ravage peasants' fields; yet we should be sorry to find we had injured anybody. We are still kind at heart; still capable of virtue, but only as children are. Chalmers, at the end of his long life, having had much power with the public, being plagued in some serious matter by a reference to "public opinion," uttered the impatient exclamation, "The public is just a great baby!" And the reason that I have allowed all these graver subjects of thought to mix themselves up with an inquiry into methods of reading, is that, the more I see of our national faults and miseries, the more they resolve themselves into conditions of childish illiterateness, and want of education in the most ordinary habits of thought. It is, I repeat, not vice, not selfishness, not dullness of brain, which we have to lament; but an unreachable schoolboy's recklessness, only differing from the true schoolboy's in its incapacity of being helped, because it acknowledges no master. 59

41. There is a curious type of us given in one of the lovely, neglected works of the last of our great painters. It is a drawing of Kirkby Lonsdale churchyard, and of its brook, 60

and valley, and hills, and folded morning sky beyond. And unmindful alike of these, and of the dead who have left these for other valleys and for other skies, a group of schoolboys have piled their little books upon a grave, to strike them off with stones. So, also, we play with the words of the dead that would teach us, and strike them far from us with our bitter, reckless will; little thinking that those leaves which the wind scatters had been piled, not only upon a gravestone, but upon the seal of an enchanted vault—nay, the gate of a great city of sleeping kings, who would awake for us, and walk with us, if we knew but how to call them by their names. How often, even if we lift the marble entrance gate, do we but wander among those old kings in their repose, and finger the robes they lie in, and stir the crowns on their foreheads; and still they are silent to us, and seem but a dusty imagery; because we know not the incantation of the heart that would wake them;—which, if they once heard, they would start up to meet us in their power of long ago, narrowly to look upon us, and consider us; and, as the fallen kings of Hades meet the newly fallen, saying, “Art thou also become weak as we—art thou also become one of us?” so would these kings, with their undimmed, unshaken diadems, meet us, saying, “Art thou also become pure and mighty of heart as we—art thou also become one of us?”

42. Mighty of heart, mighty of mind—“magnanimous”—to be this, is, indeed, to be great in life; to become this increasingly, is, indeed, to “advance in life,”—in life itself—not in the trappings of it. My friends, do you remember that old Scythian custom, when the head of a house died? How he was dressed in his finest dress, and set in his chariot, and carried about to his friends’ houses; and each of them placed him at his table’s head, and all feasted in his presence? Suppose it were offered to you, in plain words, as it is offered to you in dire facts, that you should gain this Scythian honor, gradually, while you yet thought yourself alive. Suppose the offer were this: You shall die slowly; your blood shall daily grow cold, your flesh petrify, your heart beat at last only as a rusted group of iron valves. Your life shall fade from you, and sink through the earth into the ice of Caina; but, day by day, your body shall be dressed more gaily, and set in higher chariots, and have more orders on its breast-crowns on its head, if you will. Men shall bow before it, stare and shout round it, crowd after it up and down the streets; build palaces for it, feast with it at their tables’ heads all the night long; your soul shall stay enough within it to know what they do, and feel the weight of the golden dress on its shoulders, and the furrow of the crown-edge on the skull;—no more. Would you take the offer, verbally made by the death-angel? Would the meanest among us take it, think you? Yet practically and verily we grasp at it, every one of us, in a measure; many of us grasp at it in its fullness of horror. Every man accepts it, who desires to advance in life without knowing what life is; who means only that he is to get more horses, and more footmen, and more fortune, and more public honor, and—*not* more personal soul. He only is advancing in life, whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into Living peace.

And the men who have this life in them are the true lords or kings of the earth—they, and they only. All other kingships, so far as they are true, are only the practical issue and expression of theirs; if less than this, they are either dramatic royalties,—costly shows, set off, indeed, with real jewels instead of tinsel,—but still only the toys of nations; or else they are no royalties at all, but tyrannies, or the mere active and practical issue of national folly; for which reason I have said of them elsewhere, “Visible governments are the toys of some nations, the diseases of others, the harness of some, the burdens of more.”

43. But I have no words for the wonder with which I hear Kinghood still spoken of, 62 even among thoughtful men, as if governed nations were a personal property, and might be bought and sold, or otherwise acquired, as sheep, of whose flesh their king was to feed, and whose fleece he was to gather; as if Achilles’ indignant epithet of base kings, “people-eating,” were the constant and proper title of all monarchs; and enlargement of a king’s dominion meant the same thing as the increase of a private man’s estate! Kings who think so, however powerful, can no more be the true kings of the nation than gadflies are the kings of a horse; they suck it, and may drive it wild, but do not guide it. They, and their courts, and their armies are, if one could see clearly, only a large species of marsh mosquito, with bayonet proboscis and melodious, band-mastered trumpeting in the summer air; the twilight being, perhaps, sometimes fairer, but hardly more wholesome, for its glittering mists of midge companies. The true kings, meanwhile, rule quietly, if at all, and hate ruling; too many of them make “il gran rifiuto”; [18](#) and if they do not, the mob, as soon as they are likely to become useful to it, is pretty sure to make *its* “gran rifiuto” of *them*.

44. Yet the visible king may also be a true one, some day, if ever day comes when he 63 will estimate his dominion by the *force* of it,—not the geographical boundaries. It matters very little whether Trent cuts you a cantel out here, or Rhine rounds you a castle less there. But it does matter to you, king of men, whether you can verily say to this man, “Go,” and he goeth; and to another, “Come,” and he cometh. Whether you can turn your people, as you can Trent—and where it is that you bid them come, and where go. It matters to you, king of men, whether your people hate you, and die by you, or love you, and live by you. You may measure your dominion by multitudes better than by miles; and count degrees of love latitude, not from, but to, a wonderfully warm and indefinite equator.

45. Measure! nay, you cannot measure. Who shall measure the difference between the 64 power of those who “do and teach,” and who are greatest in the kingdoms of earth, as of heaven—and the power of those who undo, and consume—whose power, at the fullest, is only the power of the moth and the rust? Strange! to think how the Moth-kings lay up treasures for the moth; and the Rusk-kings, who are to their peoples’ strength as rust to armor, lay up treasures for the rust; and the Robber-kings, treasures for the robber; but

how few kings have ever laid up treasures that needed no guarding—treasures of which, the more thieves there were, the better! Broidered robe, only to be rent; helm and sword, only to be dimmed; jewel and gold, only to be scattered;—there have been three kinds of kings who have gathered these. Suppose there ever should arise a Fourth order of kings, who had read, in some obscure writing of long ago, that there was a Fourth kind of treasure, which the jewel and gold could not equal, neither should it be valued with pure gold. A web made fair in the weaving, by Athena’s shuttle; an armor, forged in divine fire by Vulcanian force—a gold to be mined in the sun’s red heart, where he sets over the Delphian cliffs;—deep-pictured tissue, impenetrable armor, potable gold!—the three great Angels of Conduct, Toil, and Thought, still calling to us, and waiting at the posts of our doors, to lead us, with their winged power, and guide us, with their unerring eyes, by the path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture’s eye has not seen! Suppose kings should ever arise, who heard and believed this word, and at last gathered and brought forth treasures of—Wisdom—for their people?

46. Think what an amazing business that would be! How inconceivable, in the state of our present national wisdom! That we should bring up our peasants to a book exercise instead of a bayonet exercise!—organize, drill, maintain with pay, and good generalship, armies of thinkers, instead of armies of stabbers!—find national amusement in reading-rooms as well as rifle—grounds; give prizes for a fair shot at a fact, as well as for a leaden splash on a target. What an absurd idea it seems, put fairly in words, that the wealth of the capitalists of civilized nations should ever come to support literature instead of war!

47. Have yet patience with me, while I read you a single sentence out of the only book, properly to be called a book, that I have yet written myself, the one that will stand (if anything stand) surest and longest of all work of mine.

“It is one very awful form of the operation of wealth in Europe that it is entirely capitalists’ wealth that supports unjust wars. Just wars do not need so much money to support them; for most of the men who wage such, wage them gratis; but for an unjust war, men’s bodies and souls have both to be bought; and the best tools of war for them besides, which make such war costly to the maximum; not to speak of the cost of base fear, and angry suspicion, between nations which have not grace nor honesty enough in all their multitudes to buy an hour’s peace of mind with; as, at present, France and England, purchasing of each other ten millions’ sterling worth of consternation, annually (a remarkably light crop, half thorns and half aspen leaves, sown, reaped, and granaried by the ‘science’ of the modern political economist, teaching covetousness instead of truth). And, all unjust war being supportable, if not by pillage of the enemy, only by loans from capitalists, these loans are repaid by subsequent taxation of the people, who appear to have no will in the matter, the capitalists’ will being the primary root of the war; but its real root is the covetousness of the whole nation, rendering it

incapable of faith, frankness, or justice, and bringing about, therefore, in due time, his own separate loss and punishment to each person.”

48. France and England literally, observe, buy panic of each other; they pay, each of them, for ten thousand thousand pounds’ worth of terror, a year. Now suppose, instead of buying these ten millions’ worth of panic annually, they made up their minds to be at peace with each other, and buy ten millions’ worth of knowledge annually; and that each nation spent its ten thousand thousand pounds a year in founding royal libraries, royal art galleries, royal museums, royal gardens, and places of rest. Might it not be better somewhat for both French and English? 68

49. It will be long, yet, before that comes to pass. Nevertheless, I hope it will not be long before royal or national libraries will be founded in every considerable city, with a royal series of books in them; the same series in every one of them, chosen books, the best in every kind, prepared for that national series in the most perfect way possible; their text printed all on leaves of equal size, broad of margin, and divided into pleasant volumes, light in the hand, beautiful, and strong, and thorough as examples of binders’ work; and that these great libraries will be accessible to all clean and orderly persons at all times of the day and evening; strict law being enforced for this cleanliness and quietness. 69

50. I could shape for you other plans for art galleries, and for natural history galleries, and for many precious—many, it seems to me, needful—things; but this book plan is the easiest and needfullest, and would prove a considerable tonic to what we call our British constitution, which has fallen dropsical of late, and has an evil thirst, and evil hunger, and wants healthier feeding. You have got its corn laws repealed for it; try if you cannot get corn laws established for it dealing in a better bread;—bread made of that old enchanted Arabian grain, the Sesame, which opens doors;—doors not of robbers’, but of Kings’ Treasuries. 70

Note to §30.—Respecting the increase of rent by the deaths of the poor, for evidence of which see the preface to the Medical officers’ report to the Privy Council, just published, there are suggestions in its preface which will make some stir among us, I fancy, respecting which let me note these points following:— 71

There are two theories on the subject of land now abroad, and in contention; both false. 72

The first is that, by Heavenly law, there have always existed, and must continue to exist, a certain number of hereditarily sacred persons to whom the earth, air, and water of the world belong, as personal property; of which earth, air, and water, these persons may, at their pleasure, permit, or forbid, the rest of the human race to eat, breathe, or to drink. This theory is not for many years longer tenable. The adverse theory is that a division of the land of the world among the mob of the world would immediately 73

elevate the said mob into sacred personages; that houses would then build themselves, and corn grow of itself; and that everybody would be able to live, without doing any work for his living. This theory would also be found highly untenable in practice.

It will, however, require some rough experiments and rougher catastrophes, before the 74
generality of persons will be convinced that no law concerning anything, least of all concerning land, for either holding or dividing it, or renting it high, or renting it low—would be of the smallest ultimate use to the people—so long as the general contest for life, and for the means of life, remains one of mere brutal competition. That contest, in an unprincipled nation, will take one deadly form or another, whatever laws you make against it. For instance, it would be an entirely wholesome law for England, if it could be carried, that maximum limits should be assigned to incomes according to classes; and that every nobleman's income should be paid to him as a fixed salary or pension by the nation; and not squeezed by him in variable sums, at discretion, out of the tenants of his land. But if you could get such a law passed to-morrow, and if, which would be farther necessary, you could fix the value of the assigned incomes by making a given weight of pure bread for a given sum, a twelvemonth would not pass before another currency would have been tacitly established, and the power of accumulative wealth would have reasserted itself in some other article, or some other imaginary sign. There is only one cure for public distress—and that is public education, directed to make men thoughtful, merciful, and just. There are, indeed, many laws conceivable which would gradually better and strengthen the national temper; but, for the most part, they are such as the national temper must be much bettered before it would bear. A nation in its youth may be helped by laws, as a weak child by backboards, but when it is old it cannot that way straighten its crooked spine.

And besides, the problem of land, at its worst, is a bye one; distribute the earth as you 75
will, the principal question remains inexorable,—Who is to dig it? Which of us, in brief words, is to do the hard and dirty work for the rest—and for what pay? Who is to do the pleasant and clean work, and for what pay? Who is to do no work, and for what pay? And there are curious moral and religious questions connected with these. How far is it lawful to suck a portion of the soul out of a great many persons, in order to put the abstracted psychical quantities together and make one very beautiful or ideal soul? If we had to deal with mere blood, instead of spirit (and the thing might literally be done—as it has been done with infants before now)—so that it were possible by taking a certain quantity of blood from the arms of a given number of the mob, and putting it all into one person, to make a more azure blooded gentleman of him, the thing would of course be managed; but secretly, I should conceive. But now, because it is brain and soul that we abstract, not visible blood, it can be done quite openly, and we live, we gentlemen, on delicatest prey, after the manner of weasels; that is to say, we keep a certain number of clowns digging and ditching, and generally stupefied, in order that

we, being fed gratis, may have all the thinking and feeling to ourselves. Yet there is a great deal to be said for this. A highly-bred and trained English, French, Austrian, or Italian gentleman (much more a lady) is a great production,—a better production than most statues; being beautifully colored as well as shaped, and plus all the brains; a glorious thing to look at, a wonderful thing to talk to; and you cannot have it, any more than a pyramid or a church, but by sacrifice of much contributed life. And it is, perhaps, better to build a beautiful human creature than a beautiful dome or steeple—and more delightful to look up reverently to a creature far above us, than to a wall; only the beautiful human creature will have some duties to do in return—duties of living belfry and rampart—of which presently.

UNIT- V

With the Photographer

-Stephen Leacock

"I WANT my photograph taken," I said. The photographer looked at me without enthusiasm. He was a drooping man in a gray suit, with the dim eye of a natural scientist. But there is no need to describe him. Everybody knows what a photographer is like.

"Sit there," he said, "and wait."

I waited an hour. I read the *Ladies Companion* for 1912, the *Girls Magazine* for 1902 and the *Infants Journal* for 1888. I began to see that I had done an unwarrantable thing in breaking in on the privacy of this man's scientific pursuits with a face like mine.

After an hour the photographer opened the inner door.

"Come in," he said severely.

I went into the studio.

"Sit down," said the photographer.

I sat down in a beam of sunlight filtered through a sheet of factory cotton hung against a frosted skylight.

The photographer rolled a machine into the middle of the room and crawled into it from behind. He was only in it a second,—just time enough for one look at me,—and then he was out again, tearing at the cotton sheet and the window panes with a hooked stick, apparently frantic for light and air.

Then he crawled back into the machine again and drew a little black cloth over himself. This time he was very quiet in there. I knew that he was praying and I kept still.

When the photographer came out at last, he looked very grave and shook his head.

"The face is quite wrong," he said.

"I know," I answered quietly; "I have always known it."

He sighed.

"I think," he said, "the face would be better three-quarters full."

"I'm sure it would," I said enthusiastically, for I was glad to find that the man had such a human side to him. "So would yours. In fact," I continued, "how many faces one sees that are apparently

hard, narrow, limited, but the minute you get them three-quarters full they get wide, large, almost boundless in——"

But the photographer had ceased to listen. He came over and took my head in his hands and twisted it sideways. I thought he meant to kiss me, and I closed my eyes.

But I was wrong.

He twisted my face as far as it would go and then stood looking at it.

He sighed again.

"I don't like the head," he said.

Then he went back to the machine and took another look.

"Open the mouth a little," he said.

I started to do so.

"Close it," he added quickly.

Then he looked again.

"The ears are *bad*," he said; "droop them a little more. Thank you. Now the eyes. Roll them in under the lids. Put the hands on the knees, please, and turn the face just a little upward. Yes, that's better. Now just expand the lungs! So! And hump the neck—that's it—and just contract the waist—ha!—and twist the hip up toward the elbow—now! I still don't quite like the face, it's just a trifle *too* full, but——"

I swung myself round on the stool.

"Stop," I said with emotion but, I think, with dignity. "This face is *my* face. It is not yours, it is mine. I've lived with it for forty years and I know its faults. I know it's out of drawing. I know it wasn't made for me, but it's *my* face, the only one I have—" I was conscious of a break in my voice but I went on—"such as it is, I've learned to love it. And this is my mouth, not yours.

These ears are *mine*, and if your machine is too narrow—" Here I started to rise from the seat.

Snick!

The photographer had pulled a string. The photograph taken. I could see the machine still staggering from the shock.

"I think," said the photographer, pursing his lips in a pleased smile, "that I caught the features just in a moment of animation."

"So!" I said bitingly,— "features, eh? You didn't think I could animate them, I suppose? But let me see the picture."

"Oh, there's nothing to see yet," he said, "I have to develop the negative first. Come back on Saturday and I'll let you see a proof of it."

On Saturday I went back.

The photographer beckoned me in. I thought he seemed quieter and graver than before. I think, too, there was a certain pride in his manner.

He unfolded the proof of a large photograph, and we both looked at it in silence.

"Is it me?" I asked.

"Yes," he said quietly, "it is you," and we went on looking at it.

"The eyes," I said hesitatingly, "don't look very much like mine."

"Oh, no," he answered, "I've retouched them. They come out splendidly, don't they?"

"Fine," I said, "but surely my eyebrows are not like that?"

"No," said the photographer, with a momentary glance at my face, "the eyebrows are removed.

We have a process now—the Delphide—for putting in new ones. You'll notice here where we've applied it to carry the hair away from the brow. I don't like the hair low on the skull."

"Oh, you don't, don't you?" I said.

"No," he went on, "I don't care for it. I like to get the hair clear back to the superficies and make out a new brow line."

"What about the mouth?" I said with a bitterness that was lost on the photographer; "is that mine?"

"It's adjusted a little," he said, "yours is too low. I found I couldn't use it."

"The ears, though," I said, "strike me as a good likeness; they're just like mine."

"Is it me?"

"Yes," said the photographer thoughtfully, "that's so; but I can fix that all right in the print. We have a process now—the Sulphide—for removing the ears entirely. I'll see if——"

"Listen!" I interrupted, drawing myself up and animating my features to their full extent and speaking with a withering scorn that should have blasted the man on the spot. "Listen! I came here for a photograph—a picture—something which (mad though it seems) would have looked like me. I wanted something that would depict my face as Heaven gave it to me, humble though the gift may have been. I wanted something that my friends might keep after my death, to reconcile them to my loss. It seems that I was mistaken. What I wanted is no longer done. Go on, then, with your brutal work. Take your negative, or whatever it is you call it,—dip it in sulphide,

bromide, oxide, cowhide,—anything you like,—remove the eyes, correct the mouth, adjust the face, restore the lips, reanimate the necktie and reconstruct the waistcoat. Coat it with an inch of gloss, shade it, emboss it, gild it, till even you acknowledge that it is finished. Then when you have done all that—keep it for yourself and your friends. They may value it. To me it is but a worthless bauble."

I broke into tears and left.

Spoken English and Broken English
By G. B. Shaw

...If you are learning English because you intend to travel in England and wish to be understood there, do not try to speak English perfectly because if you do, no one will understand you.

...Though there is no such thing as perfectly correct English, there is presentable English which we call 'Good English', but in London nine hundred and ninety nine out of every thousand people not only speak bad English but speak even that very badly. You may say that even if they do not speak English well themselves they at least understand it when the speaker is a foreigner, the better he speaks the harder it is to understand him. Therefore the first thing you have to do is to speak with a strong foreign accent, and speak broken English: that is English without any grammar. Then every English person will at once know that you are a foreigner, and try to understand and be ready to help you.

He will not expect you to be polite and to use elaborate grammatical phrases. He will be interested in you because you are a foreigner. If you say: "Will you have the goodness, sir, to direct me to the railway terminus at "Charing Cross," pronouncing all the vowels and consonants beautifully, he will suspect you of being a beggar. But if you shout "Please! Charing Cross! Which way?" you will have no difficulty. Half a dozen people will give you directions at once.

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