

*** A Distributed Proofreaders Canada Ebook ***

This ebook is made available at no cost and with very few restrictions. These restrictions apply only if (1) you make a change in the ebook (other than alteration for different display devices), or (2) you are making commercial use of the ebook. If either of these conditions applies, please check with an FP administrator before proceeding.

This work is in the Canadian public domain, but may be under copyright in some countries. If you live outside Canada, check your country's copyright laws. **If the book is under copyright in your country, do not download or redistribute this file.**

Title: Model Memoirs and Other Sketches from Simple to Serious

Author: Leacock, Stephen Butler (1869-1944)

Date of first publication: 1938

Edition used as base for this ebook: London: John Lane The Bodley Head, 1939

Date first posted: 7 November 2009

Date last updated: October 17, 2014

Faded Page ebook#201410A0

This ebook was produced by: Al Haines

MODEL MEMOIRS

***AND OTHER SKETCHES FROM
SIMPLE TO SERIOUS***

By

Stephen Leacock

LONDON
JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1939

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
UNWIN BROTHERS LIMITED, LONDON AND WOKING

PREFACE

Many of the memoirs and sketches in the present volume have already appeared in print. My thanks are due to the editors who so kindly received them and, with equal kindness, set them free again.

The Model Monologues in the book are constructed as radio sketches, two of them, as marked in the text, being made over from stories in my other books and the others written expressly as radio monologues.

I am aware that parts of this volume may be found offensively serious, and can only plead the influence of advancing years.

STEPHEN LEACOCK

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
November 1938

CONTENTS

MODEL MEMOIRS

- I. (1) [My Victorian Girlhood](#)
- (2) [Through Arabia on a Mule](#)
- (3) [Up and Down Downing Street](#)
- (4) [So This Is the United States](#)
- (5) [The Criminal Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte](#)

MODEL MONOLOGUES

- II. (1) [Mrs. Uplift Better's Society](#)
- (2) [Mrs. Newrich Buys Antiques](#)
- (3) [Mrs. Eiderdown Roughs It in the Bush](#)
- (4) [Mrs. Easy Has Her Fortune Told](#)

III. [THE DISSOLUTION OF OUR DINNER CLUB](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. How Teachers Swim](#)

IV. [HOW TO LOSE MONEY \(FOR AMATEURS\)](#)

V. [THE FAMILIAR MAGIC OF FISHING](#)

VI. [OVERWORKING THE ALPHABET](#)

VII. [ON THE NEED FOR A QUIET COLLEGE](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. Removal Problem Solved](#)

VIII. [TURN BACK THE CLOCK](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. Quality Does It](#)

IX. [COME OUT INTO THE GARDEN](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. All Nice People](#)

X. [THE ANATOMY OF GLOOM](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. A Dip into Psychology](#)

XI. [THEN AND NOW](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. Thrown Out](#)

XII. [WHAT I READ THEN; WHAT YOU READ NOW](#)

[INTERLEAF STORY. Feeding Time](#)

- XIII. [HAND ME DOWN THAT BOOK](#)
- XIV. [WHO KNOWS IT?](#)
- XV. [HOW MUCH DOES LANGUAGE CHANGE?](#)
- XVI. [HOW FAR CAN WE PLAN?](#)
- XVII. [COLLEGE AS COMIC STUFF](#)
- [ALL IS NOT LOST! A Recollection](#)
- XVIII.

I

MODEL MEMOIRS: No. I

MY VICTORIAN GIRLHOOD

by

LADY NEARLEIGH SLOPOVER

The life we led at Gloops—Gloops was my father's seat—had all the charm and quiet and order which went with life in my young days. My dear Papa (he was the eleventh Baron Gloops) was most strict in his household. As a nobleman of the old school, he believed fully in the maxim *noblesse oblige*. He always insisted on the servants assembling for prayers at eight every morning. Indeed his first question to his own man when he brought up his brandy and soda at ten was whether the servants had been at prayers at eight.

My dear Mama, too, always seemed to fulfil my idea of what a *grande dame* should be. She fully understood the routine of a great house like Gloops, and had a wonderful knowledge, not only of the kitchen, but of all sorts of draughts, simples and samples and the use of herbs. If any of the maids were ill, Mama never called a doctor but herself mixed up a draught from roots that would have the girl on her feet in half an hour.

Nor did she disdain to do things herself, especially in an emergency. Once when Papa was taken faint in the drawing-room, Mama herself rang the bell for an egg, told the butler to hand her a glass and a decanter and herself broke the egg into the glass with her own hands. Papa revived at the sight of her presence of mind and himself reached for the brandy.

To myself and my younger sister Lucy, Papa and Mama were ideal parents. Never a day passed but Papa would either come up to our nursery himself, and chat with our governess Mademoiselle Fromage—she was one of the De Bries—or would at least send up his own man to ask how we were. Even as quite little girls Papa could tell us apart without difficulty.

Mama too was devoted to us, and would let us come down to her boudoir and see her all dressed to go out to dinner, or let us come and speak to her, when she was ready to drive in the phaeton; and once when Lucy was ill Mama sent her own maid to sleep in Lucy's room, in spite of the infection.

Gloops was on the border of Lincolnshire. All of Papa's tenants and cottagers spoke with the beautiful old broad accent of the fen country and said 'yowp' for 'yes,' and 'nowp' for 'no,' and 'thowp' for 'thou,' and 'sowp' for 'soup.' It seems so musical. It is a pity it is dying out.

Papa was a model landlord. The tenantry were never evicted unless they failed to pay their rent, and when the cottages fell down Papa had them propped up again. Once a year Papa gave a great ball for the tenantry on his estate, and our friends used to drive long distances to be there, and the great hall was cleared for dancing, for the gentry, and the tenantry danced in the great barn. Papa gave each of them a bun and an orange and a prayer book for each child. The working class was happier, I think, in those days.

Papa was not only democratic in that way with his tenantry but also with the people of the neighbourhood and of the village, though none of them were gentlemen. Quite often he would bring Dr. McGregor the doctor of the village to dine at Gloops, I mean if no one else was there. Dr. McGregor had taken a very high degree at Edinburgh, but was not a gentleman. He had travelled a great deal and had been decorated by the King of France for some wonderful medical work for the French armies in Algeria, so it was a pity that he wasn't a gentleman: especially as you couldn't tell that he wasn't if no one said so.

Isolated as Gloops was, many great people drove down from London to see us, on account of Papa's position in the Lords. Indeed the most wonderful thing about our life as children at Gloops was the visit every now and then of one of these great and distinguished people whose names are now history. How well one remembers them—such old-world manners and courtesy! I recall how Lucy and I were brought into the drawing-room to shake hands with dear old Lord Melrush, the Prime Minister—always so pleasant and jolly. I remember Mama said, 'These are my two little girls'—and Lord Melrush laughed and said, 'Well, thank God, they don't look like their father, eh?' Which was really quite clever of him, because we didn't. And I remember old Field-Marshal Lord Stickett, perhaps England's greatest strategist—they called him Wellington's right-hand man—he'd lost his left arm. I can still see him standing on the hearth-rug saying, 'Your two little girls, ma'am: well, I don't think much of them!' He was always like that, concise and abrupt.

I liked much better Admiral Rainbow, who had been one of Nelson's captains and had a black patch over his eye where some one hit him in the face at Trafalgar. I was quite a growing girl when he came, fourteen at least, and he said, 'By Gad! Madam, shiver my spankers, but here's a gal for you! Look at the stern run under her counter!'

Another great thing in the life at Gloops was when I got old enough to dine with Mama and Papa and their guests. Such dinners were a wonderful education. I was taken into dinner once by Lord Glower the great archaeologist. He hardly spoke. I asked him if he thought the Pyramids were built by the Hittites. He said he didn't know.

We used to dine in the old wainscotted dining-hall—it was a marvellous room, dating from Richard III, with the panels all worm-eaten almost to pieces. Papa was offered huge sums for them. It had some grand old paintings—one a Vandyke, so blackened you couldn't possibly tell what it was, especially as most of the paint had fallen off. Papa later on presented it to the Nation—the year the Prime Minister voted him the Garter—refusing any pay for it, though the Prime Minister made him accept a thousand guineas as a *solatium*. Papa fetched down another Vandyke from the storeroom.

By the time I was eighteen I think I may claim to have grown to be a very handsome girl and certainly, as everybody said, very aristocratic looking. I was several times compared with the Princess Eulalie of Schlitz and once with the Grand Duchess Marianna Maria of Swig-Pilsener. Dear old Dr. Glowworm, our Vicar, who was so old that he remembered the French Revolution, said that if I had lived then, I would certainly have been guillotined, or at least shut up.

But presently there came into my life, a little earlier than that—I was eighteen—the greatest event of all, when I first met Alfred, my dear husband that was to be. It was at a great dinner party that Papa gave at Gloops, given for Sir John Overdraft, the head of the new bank that had just made Papa a director. Sir John was the head of the bank and had been knighted, but the strange thing was that he was really nobody. I mean he had made a great fortune in the City and had huge

influence in finance, but he wasn't anybody. And, what was more, everybody knew that he was nobody. Papa made no secret of it. I remember hearing old Lord Tweedlepip, our neighbour, in the drawing-room before dinner ask Papa who Sir John was and Papa said, 'As far as I know, he isn't anybody.' But in meeting with him Papa was courtesy itself: indeed he often explained to us children that even though prominent people—writers, painters, sculptors, for instance—were often nobody, we should treat them in society as if they were like ourselves.

It was such a large party that I can hardly remember all the people, especially as it was my first real dinner party: I was out, but hadn't yet been presented. But there was one man there I especially noticed, although he was not only nobody but was an American. He was the first I think I ever saw, though now of course you meet them anywhere, and many of them such cultivated people that you can hardly tell them. But this man, the first American I saw, seemed different from the men around him, more hard and dangerous, and yet pleasant enough, but no manners. I couldn't even be sure of his name because Papa and Sir John, who both seemed to know him well, kept calling him different things like 'Old Forty-four Calibre,' and 'old Ten-Spot.' His family seat was called Colorado and I gathered that he owned gold mines. I gathered all this because I happened to be near the library door, a little before dinner when Papa and Sir John and Mr. Derringer—that perhaps was his real name—were all talking together. Mr. Derringer wanted to give Papa an enormous part of a gold mine and then Papa was to pass it on to Sir John and the new bank was to pass it over to the public. It all seemed very generous. I heard Mr. Derringer say to Papa, laughing, 'Gloops, if we had you in the States you would be sent to Sing-Sing in six months.' Sing-Sing it seems was a new place they had just started in America. It corresponds, Mama said, to our House of Commons. Mr. Derringer laughed when he said that Papa could get in, but I am sure he meant it.

But I am leaving out, in a feminine way, I fear, the great thing of the evening which was that it was dear Alfred, my later husband, who took me in to dinner. So wonderful he looked, over six feet high and as straight as a piece of wood, with beautiful brown hair and those handsome high side whiskers, the French call them *cotelette de mouton*, which were worn then. I had never seen him before and all that I knew of him was that his name was the Hon. Alfred Cyril Nancie Slopover, eldest son of the tenth Marquis of Slopover and Bath and that his people were West Country people, but very old and very good. His mother was a Dudd, which made her a first cousin of Lord Havengotteny.

Alfred, I say, took me in. We hardly spoke at dinner, because I think I was shy, and at any rate at our end of the table Mr. Derringer was telling Mama wonderful stories about hunting the wild papooses in Colorado, which must be fascinating, and how the Cactus Indians pursue the buffalo with affidavits, and we were all listening. But Alfred, though he never talked much, had that firm incisive way of saying things, just in a word, that sounds so final. For instance, after dinner when the men came into the drawing-room for tea, I said to Alfred, 'Shall we go into the conservatory?' And he said, 'Let's.' And I said, 'Shall we sit among the begonias?' and he said, 'Rather!' and after a time I said, 'Shall we go back to the drawing-room?' and he said, 'Ah!' When we got back to the drawing-room, Mr. Derringer was still telling Mama of his wonderful adventures—indeed they were all listening.

It made me realize what a vast country America is. In fact I have always felt, and still feel, that some day it will have a great future. But that evening I could hardly listen to Mr. Derringer because my heart was beating so with happiness, as I felt certain that Alfred had fallen in love with me. He looked so noble, sitting there listening to Mr. Derringer, with his mouth half open, seeming to drink it all in. Now and again he would make such intelligent comments as when Mr. Derringer told about the easy social life in the West, and the lynching parties, and of how they invite even the negroes to them. And Alfred said, 'Do they really!' He seemed that evening, in fact he always has seemed, so typically British, so willing to be informed.

Everybody was so loud in praise of Alfred next day. Tiptoeing round the house, because I did not think it dishonourable, I was able to hear such a lot of complimentary things about him. Mr. Derringer, who used a lot of those fascinating American expressions, taken from their machinery, called him a 'complete nut,' and Lord John, who is so brusque and quick himself that he admires Alfred's dreamy, poetical nature, said he seemed 'only half there.' But think of my delight when a day or two later Alfred sent Mama a beautiful bouquet of roses from Slops, his father's seat, and then a basket of hothouse grapes, and then, for Papa, a large fish, a salmon. Two weeks after that he wrote and definitely proposed to Papa, and Papa went up to London and saw the solicitors and accepted Alfred. It all seemed so romantic and wonderful, and then Alfred came over for a blissful week at Gloops as my betrothed, which meant that we could walk in the grounds together by ourselves, and that even in the drawing-room Mama would sit at the other end of the room and pretend not to see us.

Of course Love always has its ups and downs and never runs smooth: I remember that there was a dreadful quarrel with my sister Lucy who said that Alfred was ignorant and didn't know anything: and I said why should he? What did a man like Alfred need to know? It seemed so silly. I remember I often thought of it later on when Lucy made her own unhappy marriage.

Then for a little while there was a little trouble about my dowry, or jointure. Papa at first offered five thousand pounds and Alfred refused it flat. He said he ought to have at least ten thousand. It seemed so romantic to be quarrelled over like that, as a sort of gage of battle. Alfred was so firm: even when Papa raised from pounds to guineas he held out. So at last Papa gave way completely, and not only gave way, but went generously further and gave Alfred twelve thousand pounds, all to be paid in shares in Mr. Derringer's gold mine. Papa explained that they were called 'preferred' shares, which made them very desirable. He said that if Alfred and I kept them long enough there was no telling what they would be worth. So Alfred was delighted at his victory over Papa, especially as Sir John always said that Papa could have been a financier and Mr. Derringer had said he could have got into Sing-Sing.

I remember that Papa, in the same generous fit, gave away a lot of the same gold shares, practically all he had, to various people, to Alfred's father, Lord Slopover, to old Lord Tweedlepip, our neighbour, and others, for next to nothing, or at least nothing like their real value.

Then came the happy day when Alfred and I were married in the little church at Gloops, by old Dr. Glowworm. Everybody was there, and all the tenantry and cottagers in a long line outside the church, for Alfred and me to walk through; and Papa gave a grand fête for the tenantry on the lawn with beer to drink our health in and an orange and bun for each of the children, and a work-box for each grown-up girl, a work-basket each for the old women, and for each young boy a book called *Work*. I think the working people were far happier then than now. They often strike me now as restless. I think they need more work.

After our marriage we went to live in London because the Prime Minister wanted Alfred to go into the House, as he said that England needed men like Alfred. Alfred accepted the seat, but on the firm condition that he needn't speak, or work, or attend, or have anything to do with the voters. The Prime Minister said yes at once: he didn't want Alfred to see the voters at all.

Naturally, of course, our earlier married life had its ups and downs as it does with all people. When we first went to London we were quite poor, I mean not at all well off, and it was difficult for us to afford enough servants to manage our house properly: on the other hand, without a house that size it would have been hard to use all our servants. Even as it was Alfred would himself often fetch up his own shaving water, and more than once I have seen him light his own fire, touch the match to it himself, sooner than ring up a servant. But we both agreed that these little discomforts only make life all the more worthy.

But after a little while Papa's influence got for Alfred a Court appointment as Gentleman Equerry of the Bloodhounds, which made our position much easier. Alfred, of course, didn't have to take the bloodhounds out himself, as that was done by the Yeoman Equerry: but he had to countersign all the warrants for what they ate, which often kept him busy.

Then on top of little hardships at home came the terrible trouble of my poor sister Lucy's marriage. Lucy had always, I think, been a little wanting in making proper social distinctions. I remember that even as a girl she would often speak with cottagers in what seemed quite a wrong way, as if she were their equal. So in a way it was not surprising when she married absolutely beneath her. Papa and Mama were utterly consternated when they heard of it, and Mama decided to do the only brave thing about it and not speak to Lucy any more. She had married a man who not only had no family—I mean in the literal sense absolutely none—but who worked as a journalist on a newspaper. I know that, of course, nowadays things are different and a journalist can be received anywhere, I mean if he is properly born. But it was not so then, and Lucy's husband, whose name was Mr. Smith, was even worse than that, as he had tried to write books as well: indeed he had one published, a book about flowers and botany. The whole thing was, of course, a great pity to us—I mean, Lucy's living like that, until at last Papa, who naturally had great influence, got the Colonial Office to pay Mr. Smith's expenses, with Lucy and the children—there were three already—to go out to British Borneo to study flowers: as he couldn't afford to get back, they all stayed there and it was all right. Papa had a letter later from one of the boys from Sarawak, and Papa said he seemed promising and might grow up to be a Dacoit.

But much more serious were the financial troubles which once or twice threatened to overwhelm us. The first was when Papa's bank broke and Sir John and the directors went to jail, because in those days the law was very strict and fair and the bank directors went to jail like anybody else—except, of course, Papa. In his case, as the Lord Chief Justice explained, it had to be understood that he acted in utter ignorance, in fact that he knew nothing, being a nobleman. Indeed Lord Argue, after sentencing the directors, complimented Papa very highly: he said it was men like Papa who make embezzlement possible—which we all thought very handsome. But after all it was a great relief when it was over, especially as it turned out that by a lucky chance Papa had sold all his own shares in the bank the very day before it broke.

But to us, Alfred and me, a much more direct blow was the failure of Mr. Derringer's gold mine. We never knew just what happened. It seemed that the mine had not exactly failed but it had never been there. Alfred heard in the City that Mr. Derringer had 'salted' the mine, but Alfred couldn't see how he could do that, as it would take such a lot. At any rate it was all in the American papers, and poor Mr. Derringer's trial, and he was sent to prison for ten years and was there for weeks and weeks before he could get out. Papa's name came into it all, of course, as a first director, but he was out of it since, though there might have been a sort of scandal except that the American judge spoke very handsomely of Papa's ignorance of it all. Indeed he said that what Papa didn't know would fill a book, and that it was men like Papa who gave England the name it had.

So it all blew over, but presently Alfred and I found that after that the dividends from the mine stopped, which we couldn't understand as they were preferred. Alfred would have been very cool with Papa over it, but as Papa was getting old it seemed wrong to get cool with him. If anything happened to Papa while Alfred was cool, it might make a difference, indeed it was just at that time that dear Papa got a stroke, his first stroke. It didn't really incapacitate him at first but we thought best to call in a consultant opinion, and then he got a second stroke, and so, in real alarm, we sent for a great Harley Street specialist and Papa got a third stroke. With the third stroke, he passed out.

I will not carry these Memoirs down any further than the day of Papa's funeral which seems a good place to stop. Such a wonderful day, one of those bright crisp autumn days when it just feels good to be alive! Gloops looked so wonderful in the bright sunlight and everywhere the late autumn flowers. And such wonderful messages of sympathy! One from the House of Lords, official, to say that the House had learned with satisfaction that Lord Gloops was to be buried; and one from the Home Secretary expressing his personal appreciation of Papa's burial; and one from the Secretary in Waiting at Windsor Castle that the whole Court was ordered to go into half mourning for a quarter of an hour. And then the funeral service in our dear little church at Gloops. Old Dr. Glowworm, though he must have been nearly a hundred at the time, preached the funeral sermon. It was just a little hard to hear him, except the text which was 'Where has he gone?'—we all thought it so beautifully apt—but we couldn't quite follow Dr. Glowworm's answer. Then as the crowning thing in the day came the reading of Papa's will, by Papa's own solicitor, Mr. Rust, who came from London to Gloops on purpose. Of course we knew that everything would be all right, but of course couldn't help feeling a little nervous. Poor Papa had always been a little uncertain and when we remembered about Papa's bank and the mine, we couldn't feel quite sure what would happen to Gloops. The title, of course, would go to my cousin, the present Marquis of Gloops, but the entail had been cut long ago and Papa was free to do as he liked. I remember how dear Alfred sat so bolt upright, trying so hard to understand every word, though of course that was impossible as most of the will was in law terms. But the meaning came out clear enough. Dear Papa had done everything just as it should be, according to the fine old traditions of the time. Mama was given the Dower House for life, with the full right to use her own money in maintaining it. All the old servants were remembered—Papa gave them each a suit of mourning and quite a substantial sum, I forget what, but I think at least ten pounds, which meant a great deal to people in their class. For my sister Lucy, Papa could not, of course, in view of what had happened, do very much: but even in her case he left her something to remember him by, a beautiful set of books from his library—sermons bound in old leather—and a purse for each of her children—there were only five at that time—with half a sovereign in it, and a prayer book each. Alfred and I got Gloops and all the residuum—that was the word Mr. Rust used—residuum of the estate—which was only fair as we should need it to keep the estate up: on the other hand we could hardly have used the residuum if we hadn't had the estate itself. Mr. Rust explained it all very clearly.

After it was all over Alfred said, 'Well, it's all over.'

MODEL MEMOIRS: No. II

THROUGH ARABIA ON A MULE

By

MAJOR ALLHELL

Late Pindilwani Field Force (Third Base)

We based our expedition on Waz-el-Yaz, which is about two hours' steam, or four hours' hot water, from Aden. From Waz-el-Yaz, or Yaz, as the natives call it, our purpose was to strike direct into the desert. At Yaz, therefore, we spent several days in terrific heat (the thermometer standing, even at night, at over 110° Fahrenheit), in what seemed at the time the hopeless attempt at organizing the expedition. Our accommodation meantime was a wretched hotel or caravanserai, conducted by a villainous Frenchman, where for three days we drank the most abominable champagne at a most iniquitous price, our sole diversion being endless games of billiards on a perfectly impossible billiard table, or endless games of écarté with a pack of unrecognizable cards.

At last, however, after the most terrific exertions we were able to start. We had with us four Dhouris, as bearers, two Yawks for the heavier stuff, and as our guard six Hepaticas—very fine-looking fellows—on foot. My advice, by the way, for any one proposing to follow our route would emphatically be *not* to take Yawks. A Yawk is good enough as a bearer, reminding me very much of the Dongolas of Angola, and may do at a pinch as a beater, but only at a pinch, and is quite hopeless as a scout or tracker. If I were going again I should use every effort to get Scafaris. I give this advice merely for what it is worth. I may add that for my own transport, in addition to being carried by the Yawks, I had also a mule. The mule was less comfortable than the natives, but I needed her for these memoirs.

Our Nilghari, or dragoman, completed the procession of our escort, as apart from Major Boozer, young Charteris, myself, and Professor McTosh. The fellow seemed to know his business and professed to talk six of the Arabian desert languages—though I presently doubted if he knew anything of them except a few words of Pindi and perhaps a little Hootch.

For the use of prospective travellers who may follow in our steps, I will first set down a few words in regard to our special equipment for the desert. It consisted of 18 boxes of chocolates supplied by the kindness of Messrs. Sweets, Bonbons and Company, Ludgate Hill, Piccadilly Circus, Covent Garden, London: 10 pounds of the best condensed preserved ginger, very kindly contributed to the expedition by Messrs. Ginger and Ginger, of Preserve Street, Soho; one fur sleeping-bag and a tin of arctic cough drops, supplied by the kindness of the Hudson's Bay Company; together with a bottle of Bromo Seltzer, given to us as a send-off by the Royal Geographical Society. All these things, of course, had been given to us gratis, and I desire here to express my sense of obligation to the donors. We had also an aneroid barometer, a clinical thermometer, and part of a sextant. All these were given to us, so we took them.

As for arms we had with us one elephant gun, two cow guns, a buffalo gun—an excellent piece sighted up to fifty feet—and two fowling pieces, carrying fowl shot. Our natives were all armed with double-headed Knerries and with the usual smooth Kiboshes, very deadly at close quarters.

I prefer to say as little as possible in this place about ourselves. But the acrimonious discussion in regard to our expedition that has followed my return to London makes it perhaps necessary to say at least a few words as to my companions.

Of Major Boozer, late of the 89th Hurraws, and young Charteris, I may say, apart from any question of ill-faith or

treachery, for which my narrative will speak for itself, that they were at least both gentlemen. Major Boozer was one of the well-known Boozers of Hampshire, indeed one of the best known. In the case of young Charteris, certain temporary difficulties in connection with his leaving Sandhurst, after being sent down from Oxford and sent back from Canada, had made his father, Lord Mudloft, anxious to have him out of England, and led to his being placed in our expedition. I must add in all fairness that our subsequently leaving him in the desert was due rather to a misunderstanding, on our part, of Lord Mudloft's wishes, than any ill-will on our part; the more so as the lad was a likeable boy and had proved a good companion on the coastal steamer that took us from Suez to Aden, though, I admit, a poor hand at cards, losing so habitually that presently Boozer and I ceased to play with him.

But at least both Boozer and Charteris were gentlemen. It was this that induced me to take them, my experience being that if you are embarking on an expedition into the dark places of the earth, among crime and vice, what you need are gentlemen. A gentleman will go where other men refuse to; indeed will go anywhere, provided, of course, that his expenses are paid. In a tight place he will get out of it more quickly than any other man. In especial I have found that Oxford men—but I must not over-exalt my old Alma Mater (where I was up for two years and had my Blue before I was down) except to say that if I *have* to go anywhere among savages, give me an Oxford man every time. But as to poor Charteris, I need only add that I doubted from the first whether his physique could stand the strain of Arabian travel. Even while still waiting at Waz-el-Yaz, the boy showed signs of what looked alarmingly like Beriberi, though it turned out to be only a touch of Billi-billi. But we were hardly two days out from our base when I was compelled to discuss with Major Boozer the question of leaving him to die in the desert. In many ways it seemed the right thing to do. On all such expeditions as ours, one has to face the fact that some of the members have got to be left to die somewhere, and it is perhaps better to get it over and done with as early as may be.

Boozer, however, argued that if Charteris were left to die so near the base, natives might pick him up, so that it would be better in any case to take him as far as he could go.

Of Professor McTosh, our other companion of the march, I say nothing. He was not at the time attached to the expedition except in a temporary capacity. Professor McTosh, who holds the chair of Archaeology at the University of Inverness, is, I suppose, one of the world's greatest archaeologists. He has himself told me that he regards his interpretation of Mesopotamian cuneiform inscriptions as superior to anything else that he knows of. The flat stones which he brought home from the Euphrates (he has never divulged the exact spot) containing inscriptions absolutely unreadable by anyone else, were bought by the British Museum for a thousand guineas; Professor McTosh donating a Gaelic translation as a personal gift. At that stage of our expedition all that we knew of Professor McTosh's plans was that he was entering Arabia with a view to excavating the buried city of Blob. This city, he told us, was mentioned by Herodotus, mentioned again, though somewhat dubiously, by Pythagoras and afterwards, though with great hesitation, by Pliny. Strabo never speaks of it. Then silence falls over it for more than a thousand years, and Professor McTosh argues that it is buried under the sand and claims that he knows where it is. He expects, moreover, to find inscriptions of the greatest interest, probably, he says, Coptic, but perhaps Cryptic. Major Boozer and I, as plain soldiers, could have but little interest in this. Nor had we, as in the case of young Charteris, any apprehension as to the Professor's stamina for the desert journey. Though advanced in years McTosh's appearance speaks of rugged strength and endurance. His wearing of a plaid and a tam o'shanter at a time when Boozer and I were glad to just wear merely a pugaree and a suttee, was merely personal eccentricity.

McTosh, by arrangement, was to come with us into the desert to a point where his route should leave ours, paying for his transport for himself and for his baggage, carried by one of our Yawks. He himself arranged the fees, a matter which Major Boozer and I, as gentlemen, could hardly discuss. He set down the price of carrying himself and his baggage, including his whiskey, in Arabian money, at one Arabian jolt (four squid) per pound for each mile. We found later this equals one Singapore cent for ten miles; a sum on which McTosh claimed a further deduction per mile when he walked, while from the weight of the whiskey he subtracted one jolt each time he took a drink, and two when he treated us.

Yet, whatever its difficulties and dangers, we soon fell under the spell of Arabian travel in the desert. I shall never forget our first night in camp. Only those who have seen the sand deserts of the tropics know how rapidly day changes into night. The glare and heat and dust passed into stillness under the great stars of a purple sky. We sat upon mats round a light fire of dried roots of desert grass, for a chill strikes when the sun is gone, the camp equipment piled in a ring around us, the natives at a respectful distance, sitting on the ground occupied with cleaning and furbishing their weapons.

Even McTosh admitted that nowhere, except in the Hebrides, had he known a more peaceful scene. Little did we think that that peaceful camp—but I must not anticipate except to indicate that plenty more is coming. Boozer and I, as old campaigners, sat and discussed our route over a parchment map, dimly illuminated by the firelight.

We proposed to strike east, direct across the desert, then to turn and strike west, after that to strike north—and by this means, after three strikes, to go out.

This route eastward, if successful, would let us visit the Veiled City of Hush, as yet never penetrated by Europeans. The routes to the west and north would then afford a safe exit. The main difficulty and danger, however, lay in the fact that to reach Hush, we must go through the country of the Fusees, said to be the fiercest tribesmen of the desert, while westward—but again I must not anticipate.

During our deliberation, McTosh, who had mixed himself an evening toddy for fear that the desert might get damp, said nothing, but sat adding up accounts and shaking his head from time to time. Young Charteris lay trying in vain to sleep, but groaning slightly. The lad had complained of fatigue so I had given him a heavy dose from our medicine chest; on his again complaining I gave him another, after which his complaint had ceased.

But whatever the charm of an evening encampment, with the first streak of dawn our day's work, the stern routine of desert travel, began again. I warn all prospective travellers that it cannot be undertaken except by those who have the physique to stand it. With the earliest daylight our Swas—the word is the same as the Indian Kitmutgar—called Major Boozer and myself, bringing us a long cool swizzle-stick, which we drank somewhat slowly to allow our bearers, all Mohammedans, to make their prayer to the rising sun just visible in the east. Our Yawks then lifted us into the two palanquins, or sedan chairs, that they carried (my mule I seldom rode till the cool of evening) and the march over the sand, unremitting and relentless, went on for three hours, till a halt was called for breakfast. At midday a longer halt enabled the bearers to prepare us our tiffin. We ate in such shade as we could find, there being no trees, either under the shady edge of a broken nullah, or under a canvas shelter set up on spears.... Here we slept for the three hours of the afternoon siesta, a necessity of tropical travel, after which the march began again, and we were carried five hours, sleeping as best we could, or waking from time to time to take a drink of Rhine wine and Seltzer, a wise precaution against tropic disease of any kind.

Our first fortnight's journey had brought us far out into the tropical Arabian Desert. I can best describe it as flat, quite deserted and entirely without vegetation or vegetables. The soil is what one would call sandyish, but here and there roughish and even rockyish, and some of it clayish. The reader may form a mental picture of the Arabian desert by imagining a flat country covered with a dense forest and then removing the forest. We had, however, now reached a region where the flat desert began to change to a country of rolling sand hills, called, I believe, 'dunes' in Scotland, or 'djinns' in Iceland, and in Norway, where they don't have any, 'dumps.' From this we knew that we were entering the country of the Fusees, a fact confirmed by the obvious trepidation of our natives and their anxious glances from time to time at the horizon. Even my mule at times humped me up sharply in the air as if scenting danger.

It was just at this stage of our journey that the unfortunate incident occurred which led to our separation from Professor McTosh. Under the circumstances I fear I can call his departure little else than treacherous desertion. The circumstances were these. Major Boozer made the astounding discovery that Professor McTosh was carrying a large sum of gold money in a belt around his person. His laying it aside for a few moments enabled Major Boozer, the soul of honour, I may say, to estimate rapidly with his fingers that it contained at least two hundred sovereigns. He had just opened one end of the belt to ascertain whether the coins really *were* sovereigns and had removed one with a view of biting it, when McTosh reappeared and with some heat demanded his belt. Both Major Boozer and I explained to him the folly of his carrying such a sum of money when unarmed in the dangerous region we were entering, We showed him the obvious advantage of transferring it to us—I think the suggestion was made for a transfer in half and half. McTosh absolutely refused this, although Boozer offered to give him a written receipt and our words as gentlemen.

That night, after the camp was quiet, Major Boozer and I discussed the propriety, in the Professor's own interest, of taking his money into safe keeping. Something may have been said about chloroform or even a tap on the head, nothing very severe, with a stick. No decision was reached.

Judge of our amazement on finding in the morning that McTosh had disappeared. A brief note, left on a piece of

rock, explained that he proposed to leave our company and make his own way to the buried city of Blob. The note contained the sum of ten pounds ten shillings and sixpence for his board as from Yaz and in compensation for two Hepaticas and one Yawk, persuaded, apparently, to go with him.

This treacherous desertion of McTosh was a severe blow. We had relied on him for our line of march as neither Major Boozer nor I could use a sextant. It had been understood also that McTosh would collect and classify the *flora* and *fauna* of the desert which should have formed the appendix to these memoirs, now unfortunately missing. We ourselves saw no flora that we recognized as such, and, as for fauna, the few bugs we were afterwards able to collect made too poor a showing afterwards. In any case, we lost track of which was which.

It would indeed have been possible to follow after McTosh to the buried city of Blob. But this would mean abandoning our search for the Veiled City of Hush. Both Major Boozer and myself were unwilling to do this. A buried city is of merely archaeological interest whereas a Veiled City evidently carries the idea of Veiled Women; and both for Boozer and myself Veiled Women hit us where we live. To women, in the abstract, I confess that I am not particularly susceptible. But shut them up and I want to get at them, especially if they are veiled before being shut up. To me therefore the notion of women in a harem or purdah or a zenana, wearing a Yasmak and under the care of a duenna or a bigorra, has an irresistible attraction. These feelings, I may say, are entirely shared by Major Boozer.

To us, therefore, there could be no hesitation as between a march to the buried city of Blob, to dig up a few archaeological specimens of rock, and a forward advance towards the Veiled City of Hush. Little could we foretell the sequel of our choice—but I only add that so that the reader may know that we couldn't foretell it, and keep excited.

Three weeks more of arduous travel on this soil had brought us into the very heart of the Arabian desert, a country not flat like the Sahara or the Gobi or the Kalahari, or in short, any of the half-dozen deserts I have traversed, but made up of rolling sandhills alternating with open spaces of flat rock. It was here that we got our first alarm of the Fusees. It was, fortunately for us, just at sundown, after we had gone into camp in the bottom of a hollow much resembling a donga, or a South African drift. Here, just at dusk, outlined against the last of the sunset, appeared on the sky-line a string of Fusees, mounted and riding in single file. They appeared tall fine-looking men wearing the usual shapka over their shoulders and armed with long pointed spears. They resembled very closely the more familiar Bedouins or the Baggaras of Bahr-el-Gazal (I know all these places). We could form no estimate of their numbers as we saw them only over a shoulder of a sandhill, but they were evidently numerous and formidable. Their distance from us being less than a hundred yards, it seemed little short of miraculous that they didn't see us. This was due, I presume, to their position on the sky-line.

At the sight of the Fusees our Hepaticas fell to the ground, shuddering with terror, while our Yawks seemed about to bolt away in sheer panic. I realized at once that, as so often happens, we had taken the wrong natives. I gather not only from my own experience, corroborated by that of Major Boozer, but also from many books of adventure, that one nearly always gets hold of the wrong natives, the terrified ones, whereas the really desirable ones are always those on the sky-line, who belong to the enemy party. There is also, I admit, something very terrifying about riders on the sky-line. Even in my own case, such riders if accurately on the sky-line, get me every time. I have noticed it often, at the cinema, as applied to a Sheriff's posse in Wyoming, or to the Mounted Police descending the edge of the Rockies.

Fortunately, the Fusees passed us by, but from this time on we advanced with extreme caution, concealing our march in the hollows. From time to time we could observe parties of Fusees on the horizon—though we managed to keep them off the sky-line—or at times a single Fuse, riding rapidly over the desert.

Whether we should be able to make our way through country thus occupied to the Veiled City of Hush now became a serious matter. Our Hepaticas, let alone the Yawks, were in a constant state of terror, our Nilghari in an absolute funk. To say that Major Boozer and I were afraid would of course be ridiculous. We could at any time have bagged half a dozen of the fellows on the sky-line with our buffalo gun. But then the remaining fellows might have come off the sky-line and bagged us.

This first alarm of the Fusees made us realize that the time had come to abandon poor Charteris. It was quite unlikely that his strength would carry him forward. His one chance was to be left behind—a procedure always adopted in any expedition I have known. If the Fusees found him it would divert their attention at a possibly critical moment. We

therefore left the lad beside a shady rock, giving him a supply of water, the sextant, a can of corned beef and the copy of last year's Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society, presented to us in London. Little did we think at the time—but naturally we had little time to.

Our march from now on became extremely hazardous. Almost every evening, usually just about dusk, Fusees appeared upon the sky-line, in long cavalcades in single file, or in smaller parties, or at times merely a single Fuse. It became necessary for us to avoid the sky-line altogether and to keep hidden at dusk, marching only in the day time, when they couldn't see us. A week of such travel saw but little progress, especially as we had no idea where we were going.

Both Major Boozer and myself agreed, that is, I agreed with myself as completely as he did, that our only hope would be to secure the services of a friendly native as a guide. Experienced travellers find that among a given group of natives there is always one that is 'friendly.' This 'friendly native' usually speaks broken English, such as can just be re-set by a printer into type, has probably been in the United States and has very likely worked in a saloon in Chicago. Get such a man as that and his devotion is extraordinary.

By good luck we got him the third night we tried. On Boozer's suggestion we adopted the strategy of setting up a bottle of rye whiskey on a stick, a few yards from the sky-line—with a piece of cardboard carrying the words *Family Entrance*. 'If he comes from Chicago,' said Boozer, 'he can't miss it.' True enough, on the third night, we perceived a friendly native carefully crawling on his stomach—their only method of approach—the nature of his wriggling leaving no doubt of his sentiments. Boozer and I walked forward to meet him. He rose up at once and introduced himself, carefully breaking his English, as Hassangarlick Ibn Allah. He said that he had worked in Chicago on South Clark Street for three years, knew all the best people there, mixed with any of them, anything. He seemed an excellent fellow, friendly and biddable from the first, and told us to call him simply Hassangarlick; the rest of his name, 'Ibn Allah,' merely meaning 'faithful child of God,' a point he was willing to lay aside while working for Christians. We preferred, however, to call him 'Ibn' as having more character for us.

To our great delight Ibn not only knew the city of Hush—he pronounced it Hootch—but said that we were only three days' journey from it. We asked at once about veiled women and where they kept them, and were reassured when Ibn, understanding at once, laughed, showed all his teeth as friendly natives always do, and said, 'Oh yes, yes, Bulbul Zenana!' My knowledge of Arabic was sufficient to tell me that this meant the 'Birdcage of the Nightingales,' and fitted our idea exactly.

This was just the place for us. Boozer and I agreed to push our march with full speed. We stepped boldly up on the sky-line—in spite of the tremors of our Hepaticas—and walked straight along it. My mule, which proved too slow for this part of the advance, I left tied to a stick in a nullah.

In three days of this bold advance we never saw a trace of a single Fuse. Confidence always wins. Imagine our delight on the fourth morning when Ibn, leading us to the top of a ridge of rock, showed us almost at our very feet a silver inlet of the sea, and beside it the goal of our desires—The Veiled City of Hootch, the capital of the Sultan, or Sheik, of Fuz.

I have to admit that after the first ecstasy of discovery had passed, the prospect was not altogether as we had expected it. The city of Hootch did not appear to be sufficiently veiled. We saw what were undoubtedly large gas tanks. We could even read the words 'Standard Fuz Oil Company.' Several at least of the buildings looked like skyscrapers on a small scale. Most disappointing of all was a huge sign over a gate with the words HOOTCH—WELCOME. Indeed in the nearer foreground, outside the gates, we could detect what we were almost certain were little buildings like cabins, with signs apparently reading TOURISTS and perhaps FRESH EGGS.

In short, the first aspect of the city seemed to add one more disillusionment to our rapidly vanishing myth of Oriental mystery. As I said to Major Boozer, who agreed with me—in fact we both did—as far as any mystery or romance or oddness about the place went, we might as well be back among the Pygmies of Central Africa, or in a café in Samarkand or at any ordinary Boy Scouts' reception in Constantinople. 'The thing,' I said, 'Boozer, is over. I'm going back for my mule.'

But in one moment all our excitement was restored when Ibn touched me on the elbow and pointed to a large group

of buildings standing in a heavy grove of cypress, on the east side of the city, now illuminated with the light of the rising sun. The place was just right; square buildings, with small barred windows, wide screened verandahs, the whole set in a compound surrounded by unbroken walls at least twelve feet high. 'That's it,' said Ibn, 'Bulbul Zenana.'

I need not say in what eagerness Major Boozer and I waited for the day to wear slowly towards night. We hurriedly prepared the scaling ladders, together with other apparatus, such as ropes, masks—both gas and ordinary evening wear—and chloroform, et cetera, et cetera. What we had not got Ibn fetched secretly from the city, from a chain gas-and-mask store.

Our calculations were that we could carry two women each and Ibn one, and make three, perhaps four, trips a night.

Our excitement did not abate as the swift tropical sunset passed into purple night. We had sneaked, under such cover as we could find, to a favourable spot beneath the compound wall. Here we waited till we could hear the priests or muezzins call out their night prayers from the roof. We knew that after this all pious Fusees would seek the peace of their own harems. The night and the dark were for marauders like ourselves.

With no difficulty we ascended the wall by our ladders and came down on the other side among the shrubbery. It was almost pitch dark and very still, so much so, that men of a different type might have felt apprehensive. But for old soldiers, such as Major Boozer and myself, the darker it is the better we can see. For Ibn, who had known the West side of Chicago, our enterprise, at the rate of ten women a night, was nothing.

We moved gently through the shrubbery, making use of our flash-lights only when strictly necessary. I cannot say at what point our first misgivings arose, but I think it was when we came across a little bench labelled with the device *Reserved for the Bible Class*. This shook us. Something seemed wrong, still more so when we carefully made our way to a side entrance of a building, flashed the light a moment and read, *Bible Class Entrance*. Reckless with apprehension we now walked boldly along the building to what was evidently its main entrance. We turned the light full on to the large brass plate beside the doorway. Its inscription read: FEMALE TEACHERS' EDUCATIONAL MISSION PERSIAN GULF BRANCH LEAVE ALL PARCELS AT THE TRADESMEN'S ENTRANCE. Lower down was another plate, marked with hands to indicate directions, and with the legends Y.W.C.A. BUILDING TO THE LEFT, W.C.T.U. OFFICES TO THE RIGHT. 'W.C.T.U.! Good Lord,' exclaimed Boozer, 'school teachers! Let's get out of this.'

I understood, of course, his meaning. Boozer's code of honour was entirely my own. A gentleman has no hesitation in carrying off veiled women but when it comes to carrying off female teachers, and members of a women's Temperance Union, his code of honour forbids it. Our only course now was to get out of the place, before being tempted to break a rule and take a teacher.

Our disappointment no doubt made us forget our position. We must unconsciously have spoken too loudly and made a noise in our movements. At any rate, within a few moments, windows opened in the upper floor, lights appeared everywhere, and from heads put out of the windows came everywhere the cry of 'Men! Men!'

'Great Heavens,' said Boozer, 'run for the ladders! They'll get us.' We lost no time, running as best we could through the dark shrubbery. We just reached our ladders in time. Ibn, I imagine, was caught by the women. We had no time to think of him.

But for us it was out of the frying pan into the fire. The noise and lights in the compounds had attracted the Fusee Police outside; it was not like our orderly home cities, where one can escape comfortably, in a fusillade of shots, by motor car. A fusillade hurts no one.

Boozer and I, no doubt, could have knocked over half a dozen Fusees each. But as that only made twelve and there were about twenty-four, we submitted. We were taken into custody, amid an increasing hullabaloo, and dragged to what appeared to be a sort of jail. Here we were thrown into separate cells, ignorant of one another's fate. For myself, I spent a sleepless night, with nothing in the way of supper except a little coffee, a few dates, and some French rolls, and nothing to smoke except native cigars. My jailers, however, for some reason I failed to grasp, were singularly civil.

I was still more surprised when in the morning a person, evidently an official, for he wore a frock coat and a

tarboosh and had a Rotary Club 'Good Luck' button, was shown into my cell. He told me that I was not to go before the *cadi*, or magistrate, but was to be taken to the Sultan of Hootch himself—the Sheik ul Fuselem.

The Sheik—always called in Arabic and Turkish The Shake, as they don't know it is pronounced Sheik—was seated on his divan, in a heavily curtained room, windowless and fragrantly scented with bil and sice. He looked exactly the right thing for a Shake—heavy, and gone to fat; his features the colour of light gingerbread, heavy and motionless, his lips large, his eyes protruding. He too wore a frayed frock coat, the kind used with us by peddlers, and a tarboosh with a tassel. He had on the lapel of his coat the French Legion of Honour (Class A1) and the British Victoria Cross. Most Shakes are eager for these and pay well for them. The Shake was smoking a narghile in rose water.

My conductor salaamed twice—once for the Shake and once for me—and left us. From this I knew that I was received not as a prisoner but as a gentleman.

Oriental courtesy demands delay. The Shake motioned me to a cushion and invited me to smoke. After half an hour he clapped his hands and ordered coffee. Half an hour later he ordered a drink of Scotch whiskey, and five minutes after, two more. After that, he began to talk. Rolling his eyes slightly sideways, and speaking with evident meaning, 'You were in the compound?' he said. 'I was.' 'What's it like inside?' he asked, his mouth expanding into a smile. 'Women?' 'Full of them,' I said. 'A female teachers' educational mission!' 'Heavens!' said the Shake, smacking his lips with gusto! 'Female teachers, eh? Ha! Ha!' 'And a branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.' ... 'No!' exclaimed the Shake, his eyes popping with excitement. 'You don't say so! Tell me all about it!'

I began to realize that the Shake had never seen the inside of the Women's Educational Mission Compound—the Bulbul Zenana as Hassangarlick translates it. His treaty arrangements forbid all intrusions or interferences. I therefore told him very frankly all about it—that it was organized apparently by the Young Women's Christian Association, and by the W.C.T.U. (I explained the term) and incorporated as the *Female Teachers' Educational Mission*. I stated without concealment that I had been looking for 'veiled women,' confessed, as a plain soldier, to their peculiar fascination, and admitted that I had intended, along with Major Boozer, to abduct as many as we could carry. But I strenuously denied all desire to interfere with the females of the Y.W.C.A., the W.C.T.U., or the F.T.E.M. For me, veiled women or none.

To my utter surprise, I began to realize that the Shake's point of view was entirely different. The more he heard of the Y.W.C.A. and the W.C.T.U., the more excited he became. All he asked—he made no secret of it—was an opportunity to get at them. He freely confessed that 'veiled women' were nothing to him. He'd seen too much of them, and in any case he had as many as he wanted of them right there in his harem. But these women of the Y.W.C.A. and W.C.T.U. were different; think of it, young, Christian women! ... The Shake admitted that for him there was something irresistibly attractive about Christians, especially if taken young. And 'temperance' women, whom he had never seen, conveyed a peculiar mystery that reached him where he sat. His only difficulty—I was amazed to learn—was that, under his present circumstances, he had no right to enter the secluded premises. And I learned further, with puzzled surprise and delight, that the Shake was fully willing to grant me my liberty provided I could aid him in making a legitimate and proper acquaintance with the ladies of the Mission. If I could give him an introduction in the ordinary formulas of English or American social life, that would let him enter the compound in a non-political capacity, he would not only grant me my liberty, but give me a free passage home in a vessel leaving the port next day.

This was rare good fortune. There was, of course, the apparent difficulty that I did not *personally* know the ladies of the Mission. But I had known so many like them that it didn't matter. Indeed I realized that to them an introduction to an Eastern potentate would sound so good that it was of no consequence who signed it. As long as it appeared orthodox and decorous it would get by.

Another slight difficulty was that my plans made no provision for Major Boozer. This was, I admit, a matter of lively regret. But I realized that a soldier's life must leave no room for sentiment; and that a man of resource, especially a Boozer, will find a way out of anything. The further thought that I would thus get first home to write memoirs, I put aside as unworthy.

I therefore at once sat and wrote on the tablet supplied to me by the Shake:

The Lady Director,
The Female Teachers' Education Mission,
Persian Gulf Branch,
Hootch.

Dear Madam,

May I present to you by this note of introduction my esteemed friend the Shake ul Fuselem, Sultan of Hootch? You will find in the Shake a charming and cultivated gentleman, a graduate of Harvard, a member of the Lion's Club and an honorary director of the Girl Guides of Omaha. You will be reassured to know that the Shake some years ago not only readily embraced Christianity, but asked if there was any more of it. The Shake would like much to meet some of your young ladies and to take a selection of them to visit his harem. I may add that the Shake never touches liquor except as a beverage.

The Shake on reading the letter, declared that it was exactly what he wanted and with Oriental gratitude threw round my neck a chain of beaten Persian gold—and only removed it on second thoughts as better sent by Express. Meantime he summoned his scribe, arranged for my papers of passport and transit, gave me an excellent cigar, and declared me free. Next morning a courteous official conducted me to the dock, pointed out my steamer and in saying good-bye, gave me another excellent cigar, making two.

I could see from the busy decks and smoking funnels that the steamer gave every evidence of approaching departure. To my utter surprise the first person I saw as I came up the gangway was Major Boozer. His manner, as I greeted him, was singularly constrained, as was also no doubt my own. Indeed for some time we conversed with a certain *malaise*, each of us aware of an *arrière pensée* that set up a *gêne*. This *gêne* was only dispelled over a whiskey and soda, which I may say has always had for me an unrivalled power of dispellation against a *gêne*. It was Boozer who voiced the idea that had arisen in both our minds. 'Tell me, Allhell, did you give a letter to the Shake?' 'I did,' I answered. 'So did I,' said Boozer. 'Shake!' After that our friendship was easily cemented over another whiskey and soda, which, as cement, I consider unequalled. I also gave Boozer one of my cigars.

But a further surprise was in store for both of us. Judge of our utter astonishment, and I may add our chagrin, when we learned on coming out on deck again that Professor McTosh was to travel on the same ship. It appeared that he had just arrived from the buried city of Blob. Our first intimation that he was to be a passenger was the sight of a large number of heavily loaded cases being lowered on a winch into the hold. The boxes were all labelled 'McTosh, Blob to Aberdeen via Hootch and Aden,' and, from the elaborate markings on them, conveyed the idea of great value. The purser of the ship was checking off the consignment and a group of officers and men were watching the operation with the greatest interest. We inquired if the boxes contained specimens of rocks. The purser laughed and said they were mostly filled with gold and silver cups, jugs and ornaments, together with specimens of early beaten gold. The ship's manifest placed them at £50,000 sterling, but the sum, he said, was merely nominal. They represented the first result of Professor McTosh's excavation at Blob.

Major Boozer and I, whatever our resentment at the treachery of McTosh, felt that, as gentlemen, we must conceal our feelings. Indeed, when the Professor presently came on board, we evinced every sign of friendliness, even offering to help him with the transport of his property, and to check over and value for him his gold and silver mugs—in short, to get our hands on them in any way useful. His consistent refusal led to a coolness that lasted throughout the voyage.

A still more embarrassing feature of our life on board ship was the presence of young Charteris. It seemed that he had been picked up by friendly Fusees and carried in safety to Hootch. Delighted though Boozer and I were to see the lad again, we could not but reflect that his return to England would seriously impair our arrangements with his father, Lord Mudloft. Boozer even offered to lend Charteris money to go back to the desert, but all our efforts at conciliation were of no avail.

The return of our expedition to England has given rise to a great deal of misunderstanding and acrimonious controversy. In the first place Lord Mudloft is dissatisfied with the way in which Major Boozer and I carried out our arrangements in regard to his son, and refuses to fulfil his own part of the contract. He admits the necessity of our

abandoning Charteris, but claims that we did not abandon him in the proper way. Boozer and I have offered to begin over again and take the lad out to Brazil and abandon him up the Amazon, but the offer is refused. Lord Mudloft, I believe, is now thinking of the Pole as an opening for the boy.

The Royal Geographical Society also has acted in what seems to me a very narrow spirit. They have refused to print my memoirs as not sufficiently geographical, at the very time when the King's Printer has sent them back to me as not sufficiently Royal. At the same time the Boozers of Hampshire—the well-known Boozers of whom my companion is one—are bringing an action against my using their name in the memoirs. They claim that even if they are Boozers, I have no right to say so, a familiar point of law. Professor McTosh on the other hand has written me a very handsome letter, congratulating Boozer and me on getting out of jail, and refunding a one-and-sixpence overcharge on his Hepatica.

In addition to these personal matters, there has been rather a nasty mess with the Foreign Office in regard to the Shake's letters of protest. He wants them to remove from his harem the ten teachers that he took from the Compound.

I trust that the appearance of these memoirs will help to put matters right.

MODEL MEMOIRS: No. III
UP AND DOWN DOWNING STREET
or
WHO STARTED THE GREAT WAR?

MEMOIRS OF A WAR DIPLOMAT

(The One Hundredth Set of Such)

The lapse of years has only served to heighten the interest in the question of who started the Great War. Indeed to those of us in inner diplomatic circles—I myself am right in the middle—the thing gets positively feverish.

Only last week a former diplomatic opponent of mine, the ex-Crown Prince Halfwitz of Ratz, came into my office in great agitation, threw himself down on a sofa, and sobbed out, 'I didn't start it, I really didn't.' That same evening, at a dinner given by the War Office, General Spittitout, of the Roumanian Staff (who was sitting next to me), after saying nothing for nearly half an hour, turned to me quietly and said, 'I didn't do it.' On my other side Field-Marshal Scratch of Bulgaria, who had said less than nothing for more than half an hour, nodded still more quietly and said, 'I didn't either.' The moment might have been an awkward one for such a topic to be raised, but the French Ambassador, sitting opposite, with characteristic tact said, 'Will you pass across the cucumbers when you've done with them?'

The quiet *savoir faire*, thus exercised to avert an awkward situation, was typical of the courteous diplomatic intercourse of the older school. Frequently by passing cucumbers, or asking for a match, we avoided a European crisis. But, I repeat, to those of us who survive from those exciting days of the great crisis of nearly thirty years ago, the question of who started the war possesses a burning interest, and the continuous publication of memoirs serves only to fan the fire into a flame.

It is the realization of this intense interest which has led me to the publication of these memoirs and with them to divulge the real origins of the Great War. I had intended to keep my lips sealed, and such memoranda as I had written, disclosing what I know of the inner diplomacy that preceded the Great War, were all duly docketed, tied up and sealed, and marked 'Not to be opened till fifty years after my death.' But I found this unsatisfactory. Although I had informed the Press that my memoirs were deposited in the Bank of England and would not be disclosed till I had been dead fifty

years, it failed to occasion any outcry. Indeed I searched in vain for comment on it, except for a brief note in the English Press under the heading, 'Commendable Decision,' and an American item, 'Will Keep Mouth Shut.'

I found also to my chagrin that my colleague in the Cabinet, Lord X——, had also deposited his sealed memoirs with the Bank of England, labelled 'Not to be opened for sixty years,' that Lord Y—— had gone as far as seventy years and the Duke of Z—— had made it a hundred.

Nor was that all. A number of continental diplomats, our former associates, having now no safe place of their own, entrusted us with their sealed memoirs. Then when the market for memoirs opened, they began divulging them. Prince Scratchitoff, now a refugee but formerly of the Czar's entourage, keeps telephoning me to know if his memoirs have yet been divulged. It seems that 'divulged memoirs' command a good price without waiting fifty years.

It is understood, however, that in divulging these memoirs before their time, I am compelled to preserve as far as possible the seal of confidence as the cloak of anonymity. I necessarily refer to my former Cabinet colleagues as X—— and Y—— and even as A, B, and C—none of which, as the reader easily guesses, corresponds to their names. If I refer to the King of Roumania, I call him simply the K. of R., and the German Kaiser I indicate as the G.K., and so on.

The question is often asked me to what extent did we as a Cabinet know what was going on in Europe? Did we know anything? Or were we as ignorant as we looked? To which I can only answer that we know a great deal, but *not as a Cabinet*. Readers, unused to diplomatic memoirs, will have to pause over this phrase and get it as best they can: I say, '*not as a Cabinet*.' The Foreign Office probably knew a great deal that never reached the Colonial Office: while the Colonial Office undoubtedly had information that never got to the Admiralty. On the other hand the Admiralty had on their files secret information that never got off their files and the War Office no doubt had a mass of material that they used for gun wadding. The Home Secretary knew a great deal but had no right to say it.

This system of checks and balances, which has often been called the spirit of British Government, worked admirably. It meant that everybody knew something, somebody knew anything but nobody knew everything. Hence, acting as a Cabinet we knew nothing at all. This gave us a free hand and allowed us to keep an open mind, closing our eyes but having our ear to the ground. But it must not be supposed from my speaking thus of checks and balances that there is implied any division or dissension among us as a Government. Indeed the very contrary was the case. The group of men who formed at that time the Ministry and the diplomatic circle of the Foreign Office, I regard as the most remarkable group of men—not excepting myself—ever gathered together in one Government with me in it. Not only were they signalized by their high intelligence but they worked together like a band of brothers.

Let us speak of them in turn. Lord X—— was a gentleman of the old school with all the culture given by the older universities and the aristocratic circles in which he had been brought up. If there was any fault to be found with him, it was that his brains were ossified and his mind moved so slowly that a man like me couldn't wait for it. I sometimes wonder, perhaps, whether the older universities have not developed a sort of dry rot of which men like Lord X—— are the result. X—— was a poor speaker, and a very indifferent writer.

Y—— and Z——, my other two senior colleagues, were also men of commanding intellect. My only criticism of them would be that their minds, though commanding, were small, and their point of view extremely childish, and their experience of life practically nothing. Beyond that, they were invaluable.

G—— was a man of superb genius, but, I must admit, always seemed half asleep. Q——, at the Exchequer, would have been admirable if he had understood figures. Lord M—— at the Foreign Office was exactly the right man in the right place, but had a very feeble knowledge of geography and couldn't spell and was deaf. Taken all in all the Cabinet were perhaps the most imposing group that had governed England since Queen Anne.

One naturally asks then why such a group of gifted men could not have prevented the outbreak of the Great War. Surely, it is argued, something could have been done. To which I reply that we did prevent the Great War, again and again, and had been preventing it for twenty years. The quiet tact of old war diplomacy before the War had again and again forestalled what seemed an inevitable outbreak. It is not generally known that the German Ambassador had asked for his passports on the news of the Agadir crisis. Lord Z—— gave a grave nod of acquiescence, and said, 'What about a Scotch and soda before you go?' He was still there in the morning. Three or four times the Admiralty were merely

waiting to press a button, the Exchequer were all ready to nail up the Bank of England, when a casual invitation to lunch, or the loan of a cigarette, saved Europe. One must realize also that all this time we continued, nominally at any rate, on the most friendly relations not only with the Quai d'Orsay—which went without saying—but with the Ball Platz and the Quirinal and Escurial and even with the Yildiz Kiosk and with others I can't think of for the moment. Maintaining these foreign relations required a very delicate equilibrium, which was rendered still more unstable by the need of considering also our relations. It was not only the Quai d'Orsay and the Thiergarten that we must consider, but also the Château Laurier at Ottawa, the Nelson Hotel at Cape Town and the Palmer House at Melbourne. We realized that the least shock might shake the Empire to pieces; in fact that the least tap would knock it into fragments. Indeed we felt that nothing held it together but ourselves. With all of these chancelleries we were in constant correspondence, and if at any time one or more of us were fishing in Norway or shooting grouse in Scotland, there were always others to answer his letters. Ultimatums were thus regularly answered by return mail and there was always somebody available who could arrange a *modus vivendi* over the week-end to prevent an *impasse* that might lead to a *cul-de-sac*.

It was the sudden and accidental collapse of this orderly system of diplomatic intercourse that precipitated the War. Those who recall the early summer of 1914 will remember that it was a season of exceptionally beautiful weather; all the world seemed to take holidays by the sea and on the moors. The G.K. was yachting off Norway. The Crown Prince of Serbia was pig-sticking. The President of France was at Vichy drinking Vichy water. The Bavarian Government was at a Bath; the King of Italy was at a circus; while our own Cabinet was scattered through the country, mostly on the moors, but some up the fjords and others on the veldt.

It was under these peculiar circumstances that an ultimatum happened to be sent to Serbia by the Government of Austria. In itself the ultimatum did not differ from a large number of ultimatums sent back and forward in the preceding ten years of crisis. I forget its exact terms, but it stated that unless Serbia was prepared to do so and so within forty-eight hours, Austria would declare war in forty-seven. It spoke of the Serbians as murderers, etc., but not in any offensive way. In the ordinary course of events, Serbia would at least have answered and, even if compelled to reject the ultimatum, would have at least expressed its appreciation of the literary style of the ultimatum and hoped that the rejection of this ultimatum would not prevent the Austrian Government from continuing to submit others.

The case was aggravated by the fact that none of the other governments to whom complimentary copies of the ultimatum had been sent had paid any attention to it. Worse still, no one of them had 'divulged' it. The Austrian Government had thus to undergo the supreme humiliation of having its ultimatum unanswered and undivulged, and was compelled to divulge it to the papers itself.

When at last the diplomatic corps returned from their holidays, it was too late to mend matters. A meeting was called at the Foreign Office in the hope of finding a way out, or at least a *modus vivendi*, accepting the *status quo* as a *res judicata*—and then going fishing again. But it transpired at once that the insult to Austria was not to be overlooked. It was in vain that the French Ambassador offered the Austrian plenipotentiary a cigar—a good one, two for ninepence. He merely put it in his pocket and said he would smoke it when he got home. 'This,' said Prince Halfwitz of Ratz, 'means war.' No one dared contradict him. The Prince, who had been hunting big game in New York, felt that it was all his fault in having left Europe without him for six weeks. 'Where does Roumania come in?' asked General Spittitout, at that time Roumanian *chargé d'affaires*. 'Wait and see,' said Lord G——, 'we'll find a place for you on one side or the other.'

The gathering that evening at the Foreign Office was imposing as the last of the great diplomatic parleys conducted with the old world formal courtesy. When we came together again at Versailles the world had changed, the old courtesy gone.

We sat that evening in the famous conference room of the Foreign Office quietly smoking our cigars, with an occasional sip of whiskey and soda, the map of Europe spread out before us. Many of us, myself, I admit, included, wished that we had studied it sooner and to better purpose. It was difficult to make out which were railways and which were rivers. Many of us, I am sure, felt that it was hard to part and to say good-bye to our pleasant diplomatic gatherings. The German Ambassador, as he took his Scotch whiskey and soda, felt that he might not get any more for years.

Yet, as best we could, we had to construct at this brief notice the alignment of the Great War. 'You had better take Bulgaria,' the German Ambassador said to the Prime Minister. 'Let me see where it is,' he answered. Then he shook his head. 'Is that where Bulgaria is?' he continued, 'No, we can't take it, unless you'll take Turkey on your side.' 'I suppose

we'll have to,' the German Ambassador said reluctantly. 'France,' interrupted the French plenipotentiary, 'will take on her side whatever oppressed nations are striving for liberty.' 'Give him a sandwich,' said Lord X—— and saved the situation. Just as the list was complete, Lord M——, of whom I spoke above, interrupted hurriedly. 'Haven't you forgotten Nevada?' he asked. For a moment there was consternation and a hurried consultation of the map, till a Cabinet member said hesitatingly, 'It's in the United States: I've been there—at Reno.'

And, as he spoke, Big Ben began tolling the fatal hour. Europe was at war.

MODEL MEMOIRS: No. IV
SO THIS IS THE UNITED STATES
A SIX WEEKS' THOROUGH SURVEY

As made by

A LECTURER FROM ENGLAND

The desire to visit the United States had been to me for many years a cherished ambition. My admiration for American life and character, which I am glad to set down here and which my publishers are at liberty to use in any way they like, led me to wish for a nearer view of a country which had so deeply impressed me both physically and geographically, as well as financially. Moreover, the increasing vogue of my books in America guaranteed a warm welcome. My American readers were multiplying rapidly; almost every day I received letters which read:

Dear Sir or Madam (the word 'madam' being carefully crossed out to signify that the writer knew that I was not a woman): As an autograph collector I would be glad to add your autograph to my list which already includes those of Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. H. G. Wells, the King of Siam, and some others which I can't remember. Kindly pay your own postage. The others did.

To such tributes were joined the casual remarks of a number of chance acquaintances. An American gentleman whom I met in the Piccadilly Bar told me that he had read one of my books (he was sure it must have been mine) while suffering from insomnia on a voyage from San Francisco to Pago Pago. He was certain, at any rate, that it was Pago Pago.

To this was added a very cordial, direct invitation from the Cunard White Star Steamship Company, who had apparently heard of my interest in America. The company wrote:

This is travel year. Why not cross the Atlantic? The holding of the International Steamfitters' Convention, the first in a hundred years of steam fitting, at Pittsburgh, Pa., seems to offer a splendid opportunity and invitation.

The final incentive was given by a very flattering proposition sent to me by one of the leading lecture bureaus of the United States. It ran:

Dear Sir or Madam: The increasing popularity in America of your books (book, speeches, or sermons, as the case may be) leads us to invite you to make a lecture tour in the United States, regardless of expense, as we don't pay it, giving us 80 per cent of your gross receipts and the rest in cash. We may add that the holding of the International Steamfitters' Convention at Pittsburgh seems to offer a special opportunity and invitation.

Without fully comprehending the financial terms, expressed with typical American generosity, I decided to come.

My journey across the Atlantic was one of unparalleled pleasure and comfort, and if the Cunard White Star Company care to say I said so, they are at liberty to do so. In the intervals of idle day-dreaming in the saloon bar of the palatial liner in which I had engaged my passage (I will name it if the Company like), I was able to put the finishing touches to the lecture that I was to deliver in the States. The bar-tender to whom I read portions of it said that it seemed to him A1. He said he had heard a lecture at Schenectady, but failed to recall what it was about. The reader may judge with what a thrill of fascinated interest I caught sight, from the sea, of the sky-line of the skyscrapers of New York. One got from the prospect an impression of something one could scarcely convey in words, though I shall keep working on it.

At the Customs House in New York, where I met with every courtesy and politeness, an inspector asked if I had anything of value to declare. I said that, apart from my bag with my personal belongings and my lecture suit, I carried nothing but my lecture itself. He looked at it, shook his head, and said there was nothing to pay, the duty being *ad valorem* only. I said that he had better perhaps read the lecture, and he answered with characteristic American courtesy that he would see me I forget where.

This characteristic American courtesy I soon found to be characteristic of America. In New York, in spite of the rush and pressure of American life, there is always this same courteous desire to please, a willingness to break away from the claims of business in order to extend courtesy to strangers. On my first morning in the city, I presented my letter of recommendation to the manager of one of the biggest banks of the city, remarking on having been impressed, in a way I could scarcely convey, by the sky-line of the skyscrapers. He immediately asked me had I been up on the Empire State building, rang the bell for a clerk and insisted on my going at once, urging me to spend at least an hour, or better still, to stay there all day.

The head librarian of one of the great city libraries, to whom I presented my card, asked me if I was interested in Assyrian literature and at once took me to a roomful of it, and told me, as he closed the door on me, to read it all.

I duly visited the offices of the lecture bureau under whose auspices I was to make my tour, and found the personnel of the bureau extremely friendly and obliging. The courteous manager immediately asked me whether I had enough money for current necessities and hearing that I had more than enough, at once arranged to take charge of the balance. The rapidity with which money is moved like this in America is most gratifying. The manager then asked me whether I had had lunch, and urged me to go and get it without delay.

On returning next day to the bureau, I learned that the opening lecture of my tour was not to be given in New York (owing to the question of overcrowding), but in a place 'up state.' For the benefit of English readers I may explain that the whole of the United States is divided into States, such as New York State, Boston, the District of Columbia, Ontario, and so forth. My lecture, I found, was to be delivered at the Ladies' Musical Club at Hicksville, the subject of the address being 'Charlemagne.'

This was, as a matter of fact, the topic on which I proposed to lecture every time during my tour. Such a thing is easily possible in America: owing to the great size of the country the lecturer can take a train after his lecture, and get away to another State before the news of his last night's meeting. He is thus always twelve hours ahead of his lecture. All that is needed is a second lecture for the return tour, which can, however, without difficulty be written on the back of the first. In my own case, I decided to lecture from New York to San Francisco on 'Charlemagne, the Man,' then to turn round and lecture on the way back on 'Charlemagne, the Boy.' I had selected this subject of Charlemagne because in America it is absolutely necessary that the topic should have novelty, and at the same time there is an unwritten law against bringing

in politics, sex or race, while such topics as religion and Christianity are naturally offensive. Liquor must not be mentioned, nor must the lecturer introduce the name of the President or of God. It is well to keep away from Labour, Fascism and Communism. All of this had been very carefully explained to me and had led me to select the subject of Charlemagne.

My reception at Hicksville was cordiality and kindness itself. From the station, which the Americans call a depot (but they mean a station), I was driven by the husband of one of the ladies to the lady's house, where we had cocktails with a group of friends; after we had had three, at the suggestion of one of the other ladies, we stepped across to her house close by and had three more. The lecture hour, however, being almost come, there was just time for two more at the house of another friend, a minister, who lived just over the street. I found indeed that the habit of giving the lecturer and his audience plenty of cocktails before the talk is universal in America. It might indeed be commended to our restless audiences at home, always loud with interruptions and disturbance. In the United States it is not good form to interrupt a lecture. The audience remain absolutely quiet, the room being suitably darkened. The lecturer, after being introduced, is shown to a quiet corner of the platform with a lamp on it, beside which he reads his lecture. It is thought very bad taste to leave the place while he is still reading, or seeming to read. In fact, the utmost courtesy is extended to him to enable him thus to read to himself till he is finished.

At Hicksville I met the first of such delightful American audiences. It being a leafy night in June, very quiet and balmy, there was an intense stillness, which made it difficult to realize that the audience was there. I read my lecture in a suitably low voice for almost an hour and a half, following Charlemagne from Poitou to Poitiers and then from Poitiers back to Poitou. After the lecture was over we went over to a very pleasant house and had some more cocktails in a large and comfortable library. The minister of whom I spoke, in thanking me for the lecture, said that the small size of the audience—thirty-five—was because the weather was so fine as to keep the young people out of doors, and yet still cool enough to keep the old people in. A Hicksville audience, he said, was very distinctive: it was hard to get them to turn out, and hard to warm them up, and difficult to get them to let themselves go, but if they ever turned out and warmed up and let go, they were a great audience. He said a lot of them were getting a lot more out of my lecture than you'd think they were. He told me that he himself was thinking of going into life insurance as it offered better openings for the ministry.

My experience at Hicksville was pleasantly repeated on later evenings at Heckville in Connecticut and in Huckville, Maine. In each place unfortunately the coolness of the evening still imprisoned the old people, while its freshness tempted away the young. I put down in my notes this temptation of the young and the imprisonment of the old as typical of American life. As I said later on to the janitor of Harvard, there was something psychologically interesting in this idea if one could only seize it. But I admitted that I could not seize it and he said he couldn't either. Naturally it followed as a matter of course that if I couldn't, he couldn't: but it is typical of the equality of American life that he wouldn't see this. Indeed I found so many things in America typical of American life that I found it difficult to get hold of them fast enough. This itself is very characteristic of America.

But I pass over lightly my visits to the various small towns of New England. As my reference to the janitor has suggested, it was my appearance at Harvard University that I anticipated as the chief feature of my tour in the eastern part of the States, in which it lies. I may mention for the benefit of my readers that the eastern half of the United States faces east, and the western half faces west. In between lies the space called the Middle West facing apparently nowhere.

As I said, Harvard was the Mecca of my visit. I recognized in it the intellectual centre of America and was anxious to test it out by trying it on myself. How would it measure up beside me? A great number of English lecturers have tried this comparison but it hasn't worked. All of them, while speaking kindly of Harvard, are forced to admit that it still lacks something.

In my own case I did not have the pleasure of lecturing at Harvard. This was disappointing, as Charlemagne would have been just the right thing for them, whereas in the smaller towns of New England the confusion between Charlemagne and Lake Champlain had been painfully apparent. But a Harvard audience would have grasped in a minute that Charlemagne, pronounced as I do it with a hard N and a liquid G—and I take my time to it—was a Frenchman. However, the arrangement for a lecture at Harvard fell through at the last moment, that is to say, up to the last minute the lecture bureau hadn't made any arrangement, and at the last minute it was too late to make any. I have noticed that a great many English visiting lecturers find their lectures at Harvard fall through at the last moment, some even before.

However, I passed a wonderful day of day-dreaming in and around Harvard, first of all in the hotel because I needed sleep after a night's journey from Pawchunk, Maine, and afterwards at intervals on benches among the elm trees. But I had, at the same time, an excellent opportunity for making a study of the University itself, having the good luck to find a disengaged janitor—it was his day off—who took me round what he called the Yard and showed me the principal buildings, giving me much information in regard to the professoriate and their classes. I was able therefore to make a great many very interesting comparisons as between Harvard and our own universities. The standard of culture at Harvard, though high, is below our own, the janitor not speaking English at all as well as I do. The students at Harvard are marked with great politeness and courteousness, all those whom I met about the entrance of the buildings showing a polite desire to move away instantly on my coming, and a reluctance to answer questions. There were, however, one or two marked exceptions to this, a few students coming forward with information of the greatest use for my notebook—in regard to such things as the new courses on butchering, and the research seminar in hair-cutting for the barbers' post-graduate course. Of the professoriate, unfortunately, I saw nothing, it being the month of June during which, the students told me, they are all either in Europe, or taking their afternoon rest, or doing research work in Boston.

After leaving Harvard I visited a number of the New England colleges, such as Amherst where there is an excellent lunch room close to the railway station, Williams, from which the buses very conveniently leave every half-hour, and Dartmouth, which can only be reached in the middle of the night but which contains the best barber's shop I had yet seen outside of New York. At Smith College, devoted only to women, I was unable to obtain an entrée—I mean, to get in. Of Bowdoin I saw hardly enough to form a judgement, merely changing trains at the junction there. Yet I was glad to have had the opportunity of seeing American academic life and comparing it with our own. The janitors are everywhere a fine class of men, very much interested in their students, and proud of their institution. All of them regretted that I did not have an opportunity to lecture in their college, my lectures, owing to the season of the year, being in the towns only.

I pass over, for the moment, the itinerary of my lecture tour among these smaller places—such as Pleasantville, Massachusetts—Pleasantville, New York—Pleasantville, New Jersey, and Pleasantville, Pennsylvania. I pass it over I say for the moment, but naturally I shall come to it later on if the reader waits for it. But for the moment I am anxious to pass on to Pittsburgh towards which my course was directed and which seemed to me hardly second in interest to New York or Harvard. Pittsburgh, I may explain to those of my readers who don't know the fact already (I didn't, so a lot of them won't), is situated at the junction of the Allegheny, the Monongahela and the Ohio, all three of which here come together. At Pittsburgh I found again the same courtesy among the great business men as in New York. Having mentioned to a great leader of industry to whom I presented my card that I had never seen a blast furnace, he at once rang for a clerk and instructed him to take me to one immediately and to pick a hot one.

After leaving Pittsburgh I had hoped to find myself in the Middle West, an expectation all the keener as I was unusually interested in what my impressions of the Middle West were going to be. So many English lecturers have regretted that they were unable to see the Middle West that I hoped to act as a discoverer. But I confess that as far as my own impressions are concerned, the Middle West is non-existent, as I couldn't find it. In Chicago everyone disclaimed the idea that their City was in the Middle West, they said it was east: so, too, at St. Louis, the Middle West had not begun, and at Omaha, it was all over. In Memphis, Tennessee, I found that I was in the Old South, and in Missouri—among the better-class people—still in the Confederate States. In Minneapolis, I had reached the north, beyond which was only Winnipeg where the price of wheat was too low for me to lecture.

The lecture bureau having arranged this part of my tour in what are called 'long jumps,' I was shot up and down all over the country in nightly leaps, and may have passed through the Middle West in my sleep. I don't mention this arrangement of long jumps in any spirit of criticism or as wishing in any way to discourage other English lecturers. Experience shows that this is the only way to handle an English lecturer in this central part of the United States. He must be moved fast, the people being of a nervous temperament and often acting on impulse.

One peculiar advantage I derived, however, from my transit of the area where the Middle West should begin was that I was enabled to visit the 'centre of population' of the United States. I have no idea how this extraordinary place is selected or nominated, whether by general vote, or by means of what are called 'primaries.' Nor must I attempt to explain to my English reader what a primary is, because he wouldn't get it. Suffice it to say that when a person is to be elected to anything in the United States, he is first elected in a primary, then in a secondary, then in a tertiary, and so on. Hence, for all I know, the centre of population may be chosen by the primaries. But the amazing thing is that there are hardly any people in the place at all. The centre, at present—I say at present advisedly, for they keep changing it—is out in the

country in a state called Indiana, being almost three miles east of Linton Post Office—the only way of keeping track of it. It is characteristic of this restlessness of American democracy that they keep changing the centre of population. In the past, Baltimore and Columbus and other cities have been selected, but the choice now goes to much smaller places. Indeed enquiry on the spot showed that there weren't any people on the spot.

It was while making these reflections that I found myself arrived at Chicago, a vast city, situated at the foot of Lake Michigan, one of the chain of Great Lakes which, as British readers will recall, join the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean. Chicago was to be, contrary to my expectation, the end of my itinerary.

The bureau had decided not to carry my lecture beyond Chicago. There were three reasons for this; (1) that I might find the summer heat very trying; (2) the doubt whether the hotels were comfortable enough for me, and (3) the certainty that there was no money in it. This shortening of my tour was to me a great disappointment. I was most anxious to see what impressions Hollywood might make on me and whether I could set it down in words, or merely convey it into acts. It would be of interest, too, to see my reaction to San Francisco and the Alcatraz Prison. Many Americans had very specially recommended me to see the insides of the prisons, and to stay there. Alcatraz, they said, would be the best.

All this, however, was not to be. Chicago was to be my goal, and from Chicago strangely enough my lecture tour was to change from the quiet itinerary which I have described to the extraordinary sensation which has led finally to my deportation from the United States. To think that all this originated from my casual reference to Chicago, in my opening lecture, as a 'city of murderers.' The words were used in the most harmless way without the least intention to offend. American opinion, however, is so peculiarly sensitive, one might almost say touchy, that a casual remark of this kind, meant in perfect good nature, is apt to be taken up wrongly. But I anticipate—an inveterate habit of mine when I get interesting.

My reference to murderers arose from very simple circumstances. On my arrival in Chicago a courteous member of the committee had called for me with a car and asked me whether I would prefer to go and visit the university, which he said covered two square miles (I forget if it was two or twenty), at any rate, whether I would visit the university, or pay a visit to the art galleries, or would like to drive down town and have a drink at his club.

On our way to his club I was immensely struck by the lake front and said so to my host, telling him at the same time that he might make any use of my remark that he liked. The vast boulevards that carried us along Lake Michigan, the lake at that moment being lashed into what I described to my companion as 'mimic fury' (told him to put it in the papers if he wished to), gave me the impression of size, of water, in fact the idea of a big lake, which, as I said to my host, I seemed able to seize but not to convey. He told me to hold on to it.

At the club my host introduced me to several of his friends, many of them university men and nearly as well educated as I am. Our talk, that of men of culture, fell on drink, prohibition, women, and naturally murder. One of the men present was kind enough to give me some statistics of the subject for my book, which I wrote down with no intention of using them in my lecture. But my reader will be amazed as I was to learn of the appalling growth of homicide in Chicago: the figures given by my informant reached to one hundred per day and perhaps fifty per night, when they can't see so well to get at them.

On the strength of this information, on lecturing on Charlemagne that afternoon before the Ladies' Mandolin and Banjo Club, I used the harmless phrase 'your city of murderers.' The effect was extraordinary. I had hardly returned to the hotel before three young men with flashlight cameras came to get my picture and the newspapers next morning carried headlines '*a city of murderers*.' The next afternoon, by special invitation, I gave a lecture on 'murder' at the university, using, of course, my lecture on Charlemagne but making a parallel between Charlemagne and Al Capone, and deriving both their names from the idea of big stuff. The effect was heightened by the Press christening me the 'Man with the Poison Tongue.' The civic authorities gave me twenty-four hours to get out of the City, beyond which they could not be responsible.

The time, however, was more than what I needed.

I had already received a telegram from the head office of the lecture bureau 'Call Pittsburgh something.' Like a flash, in fact in less than half an hour, I named it 'The City of Filth' and received back an answer:

Special lecture arranged with Clean Government League on the platform and filth as the background.

My return lecture at Pittsburgh was to have been, as already indicated, on 'Charlemagne, the Boy,' to be delivered before the Young People's Astronomical Society. But, as I say, the bureau easily arranged a second lecture on the subject, 'The City of Filth,' at which I had with me on the platform a number of City aldermen and twenty of the clergy of the City, all of them known to be absolutely clean. I used, of course, my prepared lecture on Charlemagne, the Boy, but dealt with him from the point of view of filth. I made it clear all through, by inference, that if Charlemagne had been as dirty as the average Pittsburgh boy even the Franks would have had no use for him.

My Pittsburgh lecture was followed next morning by a telegram from the Boston office of the bureau which read:

Please send names for Cleveland, Detroit, Buffalo, and, if possible, for New York. Meantime every one here is delighted by your calling Harvard the 'Cesspool of Conservatism.' A lecture has been arranged for you in the big hall of the union, the local committee agreeing that you lecture on Charlemagne, the Boy beside the Cesspool. Arrangements are being made for the students to throw you into the Charles River after the lecture.

This was, indeed, a gratifying prospect. The reader will recall that on the occasion of my previous visit my offer to lecture at Harvard, referring to it as the Oxford of America, had come to nothing. The interest shown in the proposal was very small and the attempt of the lecture bureau to get the students to mob me after the lecture met with complete indifference. But now this generous offer to throw me into the Charles guaranteed me the kind of reception a foreign lecturer does not readily forget.

The invitation from Harvard was followed, as might be expected, by a rival invitation from Yale. I say 'as might be expected,' though my English readers cannot possibly tell what I mean until I add that if Harvard is the Oxford of America, Yale, situated at New Haven in Connecticut, may be called its Cambridge. What one does to-day, the other did yesterday. Hence there followed an invitation from Yale accepting my idea of a lecture on 'New Haven as New Heaven' and carrying with it a promise to throw me into Long Island Sound, a greater distance than at Harvard.

I have not space here to narrate my gratifying success, both on the platform and in the river, at Harvard: nor were the Yale students any less enthusiastic: the dean of one of the faculties in introducing me said that he hoped that after the lecture nothing would be done unbecoming to the high reputation of the college for fair play: he had heard, he said, a rumour that the lecturer would be thrown in the river: he hoped not: something has been said of Long Island Sound. Was this wise? But without further ado he would introduce the lecturer.

Unfortunately a students' dance after the lecture absorbed the attention of the undergraduates and they had no time to devote to me, but at any rate, several of them assured me of what they would do if I came again.

After my conspicuous success in the greater cities and colleges, I need say little of my triumphs in lesser places. The indignation created at Rome by my referring to it as 'Water Tank Seventeen, New York Central,' guaranteed a capacity audience. The people of Buffalo turned out in thousands to see the man who called their city the 'Old Man's Home.' In fact, I realized that I had unearthed a profound truth in American psychology. The Americans, if you praise them, fall asleep. Curse them and they are right there. They like it. When I get time I shall hope in my forthcoming *Impressions of America* (copies may be ordered now before I write it), to develop this idea more fully. At present I just state it as it stands. Hence the contrast between the drowsy audiences that heard me talk on 'Charlemagne, the Man,' and the excited crowds who listened to my lecture on 'Charlemagne, the Boy.'

The unsophisticated reader (most of my readers are unsophisticated) may wonder how it was possible for me under these circumstances to deliver a lecture on the boyhood of Charlemagne and have it accepted as matter of interest. The

reason is very simple. The newspapers always explained that the lecture was filled with veiled illusions to city politics.

Take for example my return lecture in Hicksville, the upstate town where I opened my tour. This was to me the most interesting evening, and the most characteristic of what I have elsewhere called the American temperament (I thought of it myself). I have spoken of the drowsy quiet of the town on my first coming. It seemed now an entirely different place inhabited by another set of people. I had called it, to a Boston reporter, the '*moron municipality*.' This led at once to an invitation from the town council to speak as their guest. The hall and the adjacent streets were packed with listeners. In my talk on 'Charlemagne, the Boy,' every hidden reference to Hicksville went right home. In fact it was understood that 'Charlemagne' was just a clever name for 'Charlie Maine' who had been superintendent of education the year before last and was to run again. The mayor of Hicksville, who was in the chair, joined good-naturedly in the laugh over my reference to the mayors of the palace. He told me afterwards that my talk would do a lot to clean up Hicksville town politics, which, it appeared, were inconceivably dirty. The mayor got me out of town in his car from the back-stage door of the hall.

My biggest triumph should have been my concluding lecture in New York. I had called the city 'God's Grave' and there had been a protest from many of the clergy against the blasphemy of the term. Success seemed certain when word came from Washington of the order of my deportation from the United States, and the lecture was cancelled. The order was not unexpected. It had been hinted that I was about to call Washington 'The Whited Sepulchre,' and was trying to find a name for the President, a thing not yet done. The order for deportation has ended all this, and terminates my American visit.

I have prepared for the Press a farewell interview in which I speak of the great heart of America. Anybody who would like this interview can call here at Ellis Island and get it. Meantime an enthusiastic article in the New York Press under the title *Kicked Out*, suggests that I might go and say some dirty things about my own country. The idea strikes me as so good that I wonder I never tried it. The only question is whether they are quite up to it at home.

MODEL MEMOIRS: No. V

THE CRIMINAL MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

Note.—It was announced by the European Powers, after the escape of Napoleon from Elba, that he was a criminal at large. Acting on this idea, after his defeat at Waterloo, they made him a prisoner at St. Helena. Not accepting the view of himself, Napoleon missed a fine chance to write the first of the prison memoirs now so popular. He could have handed them out in a talk to the visiting delegation of Bigger and Better Prisons Society, St. Helena Branch, and sold them at 10s. 6d. a volume with a foreword by Sir Hudson Lowe, the Governor of the Island. Even now they may be reconstructed for him, foreword and all.

FOREWORD BY SIR HUDSON LOWE

I am very glad indeed to grant the necessary permission to the publication of the memoirs written by the prisoner William Napoleon Bonaparte. At the present time he is serving a life sentence following on his conviction for aggression, invasion, and overweening ambition. During his stay here he has, however, ceased to ween entirely and has shown a most laudable contrition and regret for the past and for everything he ever did. At his own desire he is altering his name to William, in recognition of the late Mr. Pitt.

During his stay here, Bonaparte has shown a commendable desire to learn the English language, and has got as far as the verb 'I am.' He has embraced the Protestant faith, as a Presbyterian, and already understands a part of the

Westminster catechism. He has been in every way a model prisoner, having earned already enough good conduct marks to remit one year of his life sentence, retrospectively.

The prisoner strikes me as a man of some intelligence and with a certain knowledge of the world. I feel assured that the publication of his memoirs will aid in deterring others from the errors he has made.

THE MEMOIRS AS GIVEN TO THE DELEGATION

Yes, gentlemen, if I had listened to my good old mother, I should never have been here. Again and again, she said to me, 'Napoleon, keep straight,' and if I had kept straight, gentlemen, I should never have gone crooked.

Since I've been here on the Island I've had access to a lot of good books, for which I want to thank the librarian, and I can see things differently about my career from what I could at the time. I can't thank the English military critics enough for letting me know that I was too fat at Waterloo, too fat, gentlemen, and drowsy. If I had realized, gentlemen, how fat I was, I would never have undertaken that battle. But I just went slamming ahead, the way fat men do, and I lost it.

But you've asked me about my story, and how I came to be here, and above all, how I came to see the light after so much sin. So I'll do my best at telling you. But I'm not much of a hand, I must warn you, gentlemen, at telling a story. I can write a bulletin about battles and victories with anyone; some of you may have seen that one I wrote about the eagles flying from steeple to steeple till they would alight on Notre-Dame. It was good stuff—wicked though it was—and even here, gentlemen, it stirs me, although now I can see the sin of it and how ungrateful I was to the Government of England and other kind friends who had given me a nice home in the Island of Elba.

But perhaps some gentleman would give me a chew of tobacco. It's dry talking without something to chew. Thank you.

Well, then, father and mother had a farm near Ajaccio Post Office in Corsica and there my brothers and I were brought up. I have always felt that I owed much of my energy to those early years on the farm, to being up at sunrise to drive the cows from the pasture. With such a beginning I ought to have grown up a hundred per cent American as all farm boys do.

But I started wrong. I was sent away to school in France with my brother Joe and if we had come home again with the fine education we received at Brienne, we could have started a goat farm and very likely done well. I have to admit that Joe was all in favour of it. Years after, when I made him King of Spain, he used to say, 'I'd rather have goats, they're quieter.'

But there was a wild streak in all of us, and nothing would do than we must go to Paris, Joe and I first, and afterwards Lou and Luce and the girls, down to Jerry, my youngest brother. Jerry was the youngest and wildest of us all and presently he ran away to the United States, and did well, and married into one of the oldest Baltimore families, a big lift for us Bonapartes. But I made Jerry come home, and he sank back again, went soldiering and I last saw him, I think, at the battle of Waterloo. But I was too fat to keep track of him. But I'm running ahead of my story. I suppose none of you gentlemen carry a drop of brandy? Thank you.

Anyway, we went to Paris just at the time of the excitement over the French Revolution and I think you've heard what happened? I joined the army, got in with the wrong crowd, and some of them put me up to the idea of stopping the French Revolution. I stopped it by shooting grapeshot at it, an idea that no one had thought of before. Then I went down with a pretty tough crowd to Toulon and beat up the English, and then one dark night went out with a gang and conquered Belgium. And after that I was always out at night, conquering something, for months together—with the same crowd, Bill Ney, and Joe Murat, and Nick Soult, and dare-devils of that sort.

But you know the whole story, gentlemen, and I needn't repeat it. The wickedness of it was not so much in anything we did as what we planned to do. Do you know that at one time we actually planned to invade England; another time a

lot of the boys went right across Spain and captured Lisbon and made the English sail them home again: and later than that, quite a bit later, a big crowd of us went to Russia and burnt Moscow. Most of those boys, gentlemen, never came back and their poor mothers have no one to thank for it but me. I suppose no gentleman has another drop of brandy? Thank you—I get a little wheezy, you see, with talking. I'm over fifty, gentlemen, and I've led a hard life.

But, as I say, I never realized the mistakes I made till it was all over. Looking over it now with the help of books and military criticism, I can see that my career was one long series of fatal errors. I've spoken of the battle of Waterloo, where I was too fat. On the other hand when I tried to conquer Egypt I was too thin. My fatal mistake at the great battle of Leipzig in 1813—I've read all about it since—was that I didn't keep my rear covered. A true strategist always has his rear resting on something. On the other hand at the big battle at Borodino—that's just outside of Moscow—I lost out by refusing to uncover my rear. In Spain I forgot about the heat. In Russia I miscalculated the cold. In short there was a fatal blunder in every campaign.

Honestly, gentlemen, I don't think I ever ought to have been born. It was a big mistake. But it appears, from what I read, that it had to be. I represented, so it seems, military autocracy emerging from mob rule, and so I had to emerge. My trouble was, as I get it from reading about my career, that I had to represent a lot of things and got no chance to be myself. I represented the fall of feudalism and the birth of imperialism and the rise of nationalism and the fall of Methodism. What chance has a fellow who represents all that to strike out for himself?

Still, I'm not complaining, at least not in that sense. But since some of you have asked me if I have any complaints to make while you're here, I'll say yes, gentlemen, I have. In the first place, I don't like the way my name is already being used in the newspapers, I mean in connection with their advertising matter. I say to myself if this kind of thing has got started already in 1820, what will it be like a hundred years from now?

I'll show you what I mean. Here is a journal that's just come over from the United States with an advertisement for winter blankets. It says, 'Napoleon used to say, "Keep the feet warm and your kidneys will look after themselves,"' I admit, gentlemen, that I did say that, I said it in Russia one day to Marshal Augereau. He was complaining of the cold and I asked him, 'Where does it get you, Augereau?' and he answered, 'Right in the kidneys.' I said, 'Keep your feet warm, Augereau, and your kidneys will never bother you.' But when I said this, it was as a private remark to Marshal Augereau.

Or look at this one, 'Napoleon used to say, "Deep breathing sets up a diaduction of the oxygen in the lungs."' Yes, I said it all right—I said it to the Pope the day of my coronation, for fear he might faint, but I meant it *only* for the Pope, and not for use in connection with a bathroom exercise machine; and I certainly did not say to the Pope, 'Ten minutes on the floor of the bathroom every morning will make a new man of you.' He had no bathroom; never had had.

There's more than that. I don't like the way they are starting to call all sorts of people 'Napoleons.' Here's a fellow who is being named 'the Napoleon of financiers.' I might stand for that. But I don't like this other man, in the tailor business, calling himself the Napoleon of trouser-cutters. That's not fair to me. I never cut trousers. It was all done for me by Marie Louise—she was a good wife, gentlemen, and bred up in Austria as a woman should be. Excuse me, if the remembrance of her affects me for a moment. Thank you, yes, another glass of brandy? You're very kind. Some day I hope they call a brandy after me.

But just as a last word, gentlemen, I'd like to say that when the time comes for me to leave this world, I expect to turn into a spirit and any of you can call me up and have a talk at about half a crown, or fifty cents United States money, for three minutes. But don't ask me about the battle of Austerlitz: just ask me if it's all bright and beautiful where I am and whether Sis and Uncle William are happy. Till then, gentlemen, adieu.

II

MODEL MONOLOGUES: No. I

MRS. UPLIFT BETTERS SOCIETY

Oh, Clara! is it you? Do, do come in—no, no, you don't disturb me at all—I've been having such a morning over these wretched accounts of our Social Betterment Association....

You're a member aren't you? Yes, I thought you were. Well, my dear, the mess it seems to be in! You've no idea—I'm treasurer, you know, so it falls on me; but of course they wanted me to be treasurer as Alfred is in so many things—and the bank has been awfully nice about it—we owe them a lot of money now, you know, but they say as long as they have Alfred's personal signature and one or two others of our husbands, they'll let the account run—isn't it nice of them, I mean, making it a *personal* matter, like that, so homelike?—people say banks haven't got souls, but really I think, in some ways, they're generosity itself. Think of it! You see we owe them about five thousand dollars and the other day I asked the manager, Mr. Bland, what he charged us for lending us the money. My dear, he was almost hurt—'Why, *nothing*,' he said, 'only the interest on the money.' Isn't it good of them?

But dear me, it does seem a mess—the committee is meeting this morning over at Mrs. Gamble's, the president's, in fact they've had meetings for a week, to think out ways and means for the future, and meanwhile I was trying to get these accounts straight. You see, it goes back two or three years—before you were a member, I think, Clara. It began in such a wonderful way—such sympathy—a lot of us felt so terribly bad about the men without work and the poor little babies without milk and the people in the slums without *anything*—and the poor friendless girls, and homeless old people and all that, that we simply had to do *something*—so we started the association and now here we are with a debt of five thousand dollars....

As to the slums—I just don't know where they are in this city—I'd never been in social work before and supposed there *must* be slums but I can't find them. A visiting delegate was here a little while ago and she asked me to drive her to the slums, so I said to the chauffeur, 'drive us to the slums.' But he didn't know of any and he drove all round down town through a lot of narrow dirty streets—but it turned out to be where the *brokers* live—we couldn't find slums—the delegate was quite angry—she said it was scandalous that a city as big as ours had no slums. As for the friendless girls—why, Clara!—there *aren't* any—every time we give a treat for them, their boy-friends bring them in motor cars. And the babies have no milk because they all use prepared food—something out of a tin, what is it, Chipso, or is it Nux Vomica?—anyway, what they give babies now—and the men without work all get their money every week. I'm not complaining about it, Clara, I'm only just saying that social work isn't what it was, and here we have this wretched debt of five thousand dollars and we can't stop or we'd have to pay it. At first the finance was very simple because we just used to collect subscriptions and use the money for the charities. But we soon found that that was too slow, and then so many of the ladies were so terribly behind in their subscriptions....

So we began—oh, that was at least two years ago—trying to *make* money. The first thing we did was to bring Signor Stringi, the great violinist, from New York for a special engagement. He was most kind about it: he told us that his regular fee was a thousand dollars, but for us, as it was a charity, he took off ten per cent, and made it nine hundred. But oh, my dear! such a failure! We put the seats at five dollars, but you know, Clara, the people here are simply not musical, or not so musical as that. They simply wouldn't come....

So there we were with a loss of over nine hundred dollars: of course, the bank was awfully nice about it. They said just to leave it, to pay no attention to it. As long as they had Alfred's personal signature and two others they said it didn't matter....

But, naturally, we wanted to get out of it as soon as ever we could, and so we brought that famous pianist, what was his name? I think you were here then—oh, yes, Herr Thumpit—and he reduced his fee ever so much—simply asked what was the most we could pay and took that—and we put the seats at fifty cents each! Would you believe it, people simply *wouldn't* come! Not at fifty cents! They were *too musical*, you see, to attend any fifty cent performance. The receipts were only forty dollars. Poor Herr Thumpit was awfully hurt. He said he felt like giving back the cheque—he said it again and again, and when we wouldn't take it, he said he'd tear it up—in fact, he did tear a corner off it. But of course the mistake was ours not his....

So there we were with a bigger overdraft than ever—because the advertising had cost such a terrible lot. Do you

know, Clara—it seemed to go that way all the time. The next thing we tried we felt *sure* would make a direct appeal—a concert, just with home talent, on behalf of ragged children. The talent didn't cost anything, but we spent *such* a lot of money on the hall, although the manager said that they made a different price for us, from what they would have for *anybody* else. The idea was—you remember it, don't you, Clara?—to take up a collection. All the people came in free, and of course all the little children—our hope was that the sight of the little ragged children would appeal to all the fathers and mothers and make them give liberally. But, my dear!! They didn't *look ragged at all!* The little girls looked simply sweet in their print dresses, and the boys all so neat and their shoes blacked—and we had spent ever so much on a poster, 'HELP THE BAREFOOT KIDDIES!'

Then after that we had the big amateur theatricals at the Opera House! That's the special mess I've been trying to get straight. My dear, it's simply scandalous what the theatre charged! And the costumes—the bills have been coming in all summer! Those girls—you remember we had a chorus all of debutantes because they would look so fresh and innocent as compared with professionals—the bills those girls sent in for costumes! Would you believe it, one of them bought a dress suit for her father, and another put in a raincoat she got last year—so, of course, there was a terrible deficit.

That's why the committee are meeting to-day to see what we can do: in fact they've been meeting for a week and making plans, to-day is just the final. Mrs. Gamble—she's the president, you know—said she would send me over a note as soon as they make a decision....

Did the bell ring? Perhaps that's it now. Martha, I think the bell rang. You see she would send the note over by a messenger, it's quicker—thank you, Martha, that's it—and I know her writing—now let me see what she says:

Dear Mrs.——

At our final special finance committee this morning, we have been considering ways and means in regard to our very heavy accumulated overdraft, which the bank now tell us is over five thousand dollars. The universal feeling among the ladies of the committee is that the debt must be lifted at once, and that a special effort should be immediately set on foot in this direction. The proposal has been made that the Association should remove the debt at one stroke by holding a garden party, or rather a fête champêtre, on such a large scale as to cancel the whole overdraft. Mrs. Rollinit has been kind enough to offer the use of her beautiful grounds for the afternoon and evening, as a special contribution to the work of the club, with no other charge or expense than what is needed to pay the extra time of her gardeners and groundsmen and the extra effort involved for her inside staff. Apart from this the committee will be called upon to pay no expense beyond that of the special lighting and illumination of the grounds which are to be turned into a sort of fairyland for the occasion....

Oh, Clara, doesn't it sound just too wonderful! You know, the Rollinit's are simply rolling in it—and the grounds!—think of it, ten acres—they have a quarter of a mile of gladioli alone. Imagine it all lighted and illuminated!

—We have already received a very kind offer from the Hook and Gettit Electric Co. to undertake the whole work as a matter of civic service....

—Isn't that splendid of them. My husband is one of the directors, you know, and Mr. Rollinit is the president.

—a matter of civic service without any mention of cost beyond the bare sum needed for labour, material and overhead and contingent charges, insurance and deterioration with an addition of a nominal 10 per cent profit....

—Isn't that kind of them—adding ten per cent extra, after doing all that?...

—*For the matter of refreshments, the committee think it wise to turn the whole thing over to professional hands. The Philanthropic Restaurants Limited have offered to undertake the contract of refreshments, drinks and attendance at an absolutely minimum figure. Their manager is unable to state precisely what the figure will be, but assures the committee that it will be the very least they feel like charging. There is a point, he says, which they simply daren't go below, but they guarantee to charge something above this point. He adds that they will regulate their price partly by what funds they know us to have....*

—I'm sure nothing could be fairer than that could it, Clara?

—*For music the committee have a very kind offer from the Theatrical Musicians Guild offering to supply any quantity of music and to take merely what they can get.*

Isn't that like musicians? So generous always!

It is suggested, too, that we obtain special attractions for the occasion, among which, perhaps, will be Mr. Angus Macfoozle—whose wife is a member of the association—our local bagpipe expert, and who offers to play without any fee at all—merely accepting a honorarium...

That's terribly good, but really they shouldn't let him, he's too generous: when he played for our church last winter, he cut his fee down to three-fifths; we insisted on raising it to three-eighths; but he said no, absolutely—only three-fifths.

The suggestion is made that the guests should pay a single uniform fee for entrance to the grounds, music and refreshment, and that this fee should be twenty-five cents with complimentary tickets to the ladies of the committee and their families, and guests and friends; this should easily...

Oh, is that the telephone? Excuse me just a minute, Clara—Hullo, oh, is that you, Mrs. Gamble—yes, I've just been reading it! I think it's just too wonderful! Oh, yes, of course, we must start right away, and yes, certainly we must begin ordering the printing, and the decorations—and, of course, we shall need some money shan't we, to go on with? The bank said—oh, you're *speaking* from the bank! They're letting us have another five thousand? Isn't that good of them—really banks nowadays do take a wonderful interest in social work. They're putting five thousand to our credit, you say, and no charge at all, except the interest? Isn't it generous—and they want our husbands' signatures—yes, exactly, as a matter of form—I'll send my husband in to sign after lunch—and I'll come over and join you at the committee rooms with a cheque-book. Good-bye.

Ah, now I do feel that the Association is at the end of all its troubles.

MODEL MONOLOGUES: No. II

MRS. NEWRICH BUYS ANTIQUES

Oh, my dear, I'm so delighted to see you! It's so charming of you to come—Jane, take Mrs. Overworld's coat, please—do come on in—Jane, take Mrs. Overworld's gloves. It's just delightful to see you. Ever since we came back from Europe, Charles and I have been just *dying* to have you see our things—(raising her voice): *Charles! Mrs. Overworld's come over to see our new antiques. Isn't it sweet of her?... He's in his study but I don't know whether he hears. He just gets buried in reading. Charles, you know, has always been so scholarly and so every time he gets a new price-list he just gets absorbed in it....*

But there's such a lot I want to show you that I can't even wait till you've had a cup of tea.... This clock in the hall? An antique? Oh, yes, indeed! Isn't it just marvellous! It's a *Salvolatile*! Does it keep good time? Gracious! what an idea! Of course not! It doesn't keep time at all. It doesn't go, I understand it never did go. That's why there's such a demand for the *Salvolatile* clocks. You see he was one of *the* really *great* clock makers. None of his clocks ever went.

Charles, did any of the Salvolatile clocks ever go? What? Only the imitation ones. Thank you.... You see, that's one way you can tell a *Salvolatile* clock. If it is *genuine*, it won't go. You say, it hasn't got any hands left. My dear! Why, of course, it never *had* any—not supposed to. We picked it up in a queer little shop in Amalfi and the man assured us that it never had had any hands. He guaranteed it. That's one of the things, you know, that you can tell by. Charles and I were terribly keen about clocks at that time and really studied them, and the books all agreed that no *genuine Salvolatile* has any hands. See what it says on the little label—it was gummed on it when we got it—so we left it still there—(reading):

No. 5661. X Salvolatile Wall clock, no hands, never had, won't go, never would, no pendulum (breaking off her reading with animation)—of course, I'd forgotten that—no pendulum—that makes it more valuable still....

That break in the side? Ah, my dear, I saw you looking at that—but I won't try to lie about it ... the broken side isn't *genuine*—we had it broken by an expert in New York after we got back. Isn't it exquisitely done? You see, he has made the break to look exactly as if some one had rolled the clock over and stamped on it. Every *genuine Salvolatile* is said to have been stamped upon like that.

Of course, our break is only imitation, but it's extremely well done, isn't it? We go to Ferrugi's, that little place on Fourth Avenue, you know, for everything that we want broken. They have a splendid man there. He can break anything....

Yes, and the day when we wanted the clock done, Charles and I went down to see him do it. *It was really quite wonderful, wasn't it, Charles? (raising her voice). You remember the man in Ferrugi's who broke the clock for us! I'm afraid he doesn't hear. But the man really was a wonderful expert. He just laid the clock on the floor, and turned it on its side and then stood looking at it intently, and walking round and round it and murmuring in Italian as if he were swearing at it. Then he jumped in the air and came down on it with both feet ... with such wonderful accuracy.*

Our friend Mr. Appin-Hyphen-Smith—the great expert, you know—was looking at our clock last week and he said it was marvellous, hardly to be distinguished from a *genuine fractura*.... But he did say, I remember, that the better way is to throw a clock out of a fourth-storey window. You see, that was the height of the Italian houses in the thirteenth century—is it the thirteenth century I mean, Charles? *Charles! Do I mean the thirteenth century? I mean the proper time for throwing an Italian clock out of the window—the fourteenth? Oh, thank you, darling!*—I'm always so silly about remembering the centuries of the Italian things....

Of course, you see, with antiques you simply *must* know the century or you make the silliest blunders. The other day I made the most atrocious mistake about a *spoon*—I called it a twelfth-century spoon and in reality it was only eleven and a half—of course my hostess, who owned the spoon (she collects them), was terribly put out. You see, a twelfth-

century spoon is practically worthless. None of the great Italian spoon-makers were *born* till the eleventh century—or have I got it backwards—anyway, till then, my dear, the spoons made were only good for eating with—and then the great spoon-maker—*Charles! what was that great Italian spoon-maker's name—Spoonuchi! of course, how silly of me!*—Spoonuchi made spoons that couldn't be eaten with, and of course that started the craze....

That glass case, that's very interesting, isn't it?—I'm afraid you can't see them very well without a magnifying-glass—there, try this one—they're *signatures*, all mounted and framed—some are perfectly wonderful—that's Queen Elizabeth—of course, you simply couldn't tell it if you didn't know. But if you look you can see the Q—or no, I think it's Peter the Great—you can't tell any of the really good ones—but Charles has a key to them....

We have a little man in Highgate who picks them up for us here and there and he always tells us what they are—that's Napoleon! Doesn't it seem wonderful to think of his *actually* writing it—or no, I beg your pardon, that's not Napoleon—that's P. T. Barnum, he was one of Napoleon's marshals, I believe—*Charles! was P. T. Barnum one of Napoleon's marshals? His private secretary!*—oh, of course. But I'm forgetting your tea—do pardon me—you know I get so absorbed in my antiques that I forget everything. Do come into the drawing-room and have tea—but, oh, just a minute before you sit down, do let me show this tea-pot—oh, no, I don't mean *that one*, that's the one that the tea has been made in—but it's *nothing*. We got that here in New York at Hoffany's—to make tea in. It is made of solid silver, of course, and all that, but even Hoffany's admitted that it was made in America and was probably not more than a year or so old and had never been used by anybody else. In fact, they couldn't guarantee it in any way.

But let me pour you out tea from it and then do look at the perfectly darling tea-pot on the shelf beside you. Oh, don't touch it, please, it won't stand up.... No.... That's one of the tests. We know from that it is genuine *Swaatsmaacher*. None of them stand up.

Did I buy it here? Oh, heavens, no, you couldn't buy a thing like that here! As a matter of fact, we picked it up in a little gin shop in—what was the name of that place in Holland? *Charles, what was the name of the place in Holland where there was a gin shop? What? Ober—what?—oh, yes, of course, Oberhellendam!*

Those Dutch names are all so picturesque, aren't they? Do you know Oberhellendam? No—well, it's just the dearest little place, nothing but little wee smelly shops filled with most delightful things—all antique, everything broken. They guarantee that there is nothing in the shop that wasn't smashed at least a hundred years ago ... see the label on it.... It's in Dutch... *Tay poot*—I think that is Dutch for tea-pot—*gesmosh*—that means, smashed—hog—*Charles! what is 'hog' in Dutch—on the tea-pot darling—hog wort—high value!* Oh, of course!...

Would it make good tea—oh, I imagine it would make wonderful tea—only it leaks—that's one of the things to know it by. It's what the experts always look for in a *Swaatsmaacher*. If it doesn't leak, it's probably just a faked-up thing not twenty years old.... Silver?—oh, no, that's another test. The real *Swaatsmaachers* were always made of pewter bound with barrel-iron off the gin barrels. They try to imitate it now by using silver, but they can't get it. You see the silver won't take the tarnish.

It's the same way with ever so many of the old things. They rust and rot in a way that you simply cannot imitate. I have an old drinking horn that I'll show you presently—*ninth century, isn't it, Charles?*—that is all coated inside with the most beautiful green slime, absolutely impossible to reproduce ... really and truly impossible, they say. Yes, I took it to Squeziou's, the Italian place in London. (They are the great experts on horns, you know; they can tell exactly the century and the breed of cow.) And they told me that they had tried in vain to reproduce that peculiar and beautiful rot. One of their head men said that he thought that this horn had probably been taken from a dead cow that had been buried for fifty years. That's what gives it its value, you know. We asked him—the head man, I mean—how long he thought a cow had to be dead to be of use as an antique, and he said it was very hard to say; but it had to be dead for years and years anyway....

That's what the man said in London, but of course we didn't buy the tea-pot in London. London is simply impossible, just as hopeless as New York. You can't buy anything real there at all.... So, we pick things up here and there, just in any out-of-the-way corners.

That little stool we found at the back of a cow stable in Loch Aberlocherty. They were actually using it for milking.

And the two others—aren't they beautiful? though really it's quite wrong to have two chairs alike in the same room—came from the back of a tiny little whiskey shop in Galway. Such a delight of an old Irishman sold them to us and he admitted that he himself had no idea how old they were. They might, he said, be fifteenth-century, or they might not ... oh, and that reminds me I've just had a letter from Jane (Jane is my sister, you know) that is terribly exciting. She's found a table at a tiny place in Brittany that she thinks would exactly do in our card room. She says that it is utterly unlike anything else in the room and has quite obviously no connection with cards. But let me read what she says—let me see, yes, here's where it begins:

... a perfectly sweet-little table. It probably had four legs originally and even now has two which, I am told, is a great find, as most people have to be content with one. The man explained that it could either be leaned up against the wall or else suspended from the ceiling on a silver chain. One of the boards of the top is gone, but I am told that that is of no consequence, as all the best specimens of Brittany tables have at least one board out.

Doesn't that sound fascinating? Charles! I was just reading to Mrs. Overworld, Jane's letter about the table in Brittany—don't you think you'd better cable for it right away—yes, so do I—and Charles! ask them how much extra they would charge to smash one of the legs—and now, my dear, do have some tea. You'll like it—it's a special kind I get—it's Ogosh—a very old China tea, that has been let rot in a coal-oil barrel—you'll love it.

MODEL MONOLOGUES: No. III

MRS. EIDERDOWN ROUGHS IT IN THE BUSH*

* See Preface.

Yes, we come up every autumn. We're both so passionately fond of the open air. Ransome, will you close that window? There's a draught...

And we love to do everything for ourselves. Ransome, will you please pass me that ash-tray from across the table?

And we live here quite without form or ceremony—that's what makes it so nice, it's all so simple. Gwendoline, you may put on the finger-bowls, and tell William to serve the coffee in the card-room...

We like the roughness of it, you know, the journey up, and everything. Of course, it's not quite so rough to come up now as it used to be, now that they have built the new main highway. This time we were able to drive up both the town cars, and before that it was always a question just what we could bring up.

I do think the big closed cars are so much nicer when one is roughing it—Gwendoline, the cigarettes, please—they keep the air out so much better, and our new one, perhaps you noticed it, is the kind in which you can draw the curtains and arrange it something like a drawing-room on a train. We are able to come up at night in it. I always think it much nicer—don't you?—to come up through the mountains at night. One sleeps better than in the day.

Of course, it is not all so easy. The food up here is always such a question. Of course, we can always get meat from the village—there is quite a village now, you know, though when my husband first came up twenty years ago there was nothing—and we can get milk and eggs and vegetables from the farmers, and, of course, the men bring in fish all the time,

and our gardener manages now to raise a good deal of fruit under glass, but beyond that it is very difficult to get anything.

Only yesterday, the housekeeper came to tell me that we had not enough broilers for lunch; somebody had made a silly mistake and we were one short. We had to send Alfred (he drives fastest) back to the city with the big car to get one. Even then, lunch was half an hour late. Things like that happen all the time. One has to learn to be philosophical.

But surely it is worth it— isn't it?—for the pleasure of being up here in the wilderness, so far away from everything and everybody. I sometimes feel up here as if one were cut off from the whole world—William, will you turn on the radio?

I think there will be news of the municipal elections and, of course, my husband is tremendously interested. His company has been trying to get better city government for so long; they need pure government because of their franchises, and it has been costing them a tremendous lot of money to get. What do you say, William, not working? Then will you please ask Jones to tell the electrician to look at it?

Gwendoline, I think you had better tell James to give us more furnace heat and see that there are fires in the upper bedrooms to-night. It's turning a little chilly.

I always like to see to everything myself. It takes trouble, but it's the only way. But, I beg your pardon, you were asking me something. Fishing! Oh, yes, there is the most glorious fishing up here. I must tell Gwendoline to tell Mrs. Edwards to see that they give you fish at breakfast. It's just an ideal fishing country, my husband says. We send William out every morning, and sometimes William and Ransome both. Often, so my husband tells me, when the weather is really clear he has William up and out by four o'clock—my husband is so fond of early rising, though he can't get up now himself the way he used to—but he always likes to get William and Ransome out early.

They bring back the most beautiful fish. Trout, I think. I don't precisely know because, of course, I never go myself, but I think trout and sea-bass and finnan-haddock—they keep us beautifully supplied. William caught some finnan-haddie this morning, I think—or did he say dory?...

Thank you, William, you can take the glasses; we're done with them. You see, William knows all about fish, as he comes from Newfoundland, or some place of the sort.

You say, doesn't my husband go fishing himself? Oh yes, indeed, Peter's a tremendous fisherman!—simply adores it! But of course, he can't go in the early morning—the *chill*, you know, my dear—he has to avoid a *chill*.

Our doctor, Dr. Snyder, a very old friend, always says to Peter:—'Remember, Eiderdown, a chill simply won't do!' So my husband is positively cut off from early rising, the thing he'd love best to do if he dared.... But Dr. Snyder—he comes up here himself, you know, and goes fishing with Peter, Dr. Snyder says—'Absolutely no! I forbid it.' He insists that neither of them get up before ten-thirty and then they go and fish together. Dr. Snyder is just as keen on fishing as my husband is—in fact, they're both experts.

They go and fish about the middle of the day—they like to go in a very simple way—just in the large motor launch you may have seen as you passed the corner of the lake. My husband would have preferred an ordinary fishing-smack, but he couldn't get one here—he's having one made in New York.

They just take Edward, the mechanic, for the engine, and Thomas, the fisherman, to look after the lines (Dr. Snyder forbids my husband to handle his own hooks for fear of infection)—and of course, one of the indoor men for the lunch—even that very simple—a little cold salmon on ice and a bottle or two of champagne—my husband says it's amazing how little you eat when you are fishing—a little salmon, a salad, and a meat pie—is all that he and the doctor ever take. But they do take champagne because Dr. Snyder insists that in Peter's case he must take it as a preventative—with just a little spirits—cognac—after it. Dr. Snyder is very strict as to cognac.

They generally fish a little, while the men prepare the lunch on the shore,—you noticed the little islands no doubt—and then after lunch, just a little nap. Dr. Snyder refuses to let Peter fish for an hour after a meal, and then off they go again till it's time for afternoon tea. But of course it's a little too late in the year now. Several times lately Dr. Snyder has

insisted on their playing billiards instead.

You say, 'Do we have any trouble getting servants up here?' My dear, it was simply the bane of my life trying to get them, until at last we decided to import them from England and Scotland. The people round here—I really don't know why—seem quite unfitted to be servants. So, as I say, we bring them out.

You may have noticed McAlister in the garden—or no, perhaps, he was in his greenhouse (he goes there when he doesn't want to be disturbed)—well, my dear, he's a perfect *treasure*—and such a character. I don't know how we could get another like him. And yet in a way McAlister is a perfect *tyrant*. My dear, he simply won't allow us to pick the roses; and if any of us walk across the grass he is furious. And he positively refuses to let us use the vegetables. He told me quite plainly that if we took any of his young peas or his early cucumbers he would leave. We are to have them later on when he's finished growing them.

Of course we have trouble with McAlister at times, but he's always very reasonable when we put things in the right light. Last week, for example, I was afraid that we had gone too far with him. He is always accustomed to have a quart of beer every morning at half-past ten—the maids are told to bring it out to him—and after that he goes to sleep in the little arbour beside the tulip bed. And the other day when he went there he found that one of our guests, who hadn't been told, was actually sitting in there reading. Of course he was furious. I was afraid for the moment that he would give notice on the spot. But we explained to him that it was only an accident and that the person hadn't known, and that it wouldn't occur again. After that he was softened a little, but he went off muttering to himself, and that evening he dug up all the new tulips and threw them over the fence. We saw him do it, but of course we didn't dare say anything. You see if we had, we might have lost McAlister, and I don't know where we could possibly get another man like him: at least not on this side of the water....

What society we have in a place so isolated as this? Do you know, my dear, people so often ask me that and I simply answer, 'none at all.' We don't need it—we come here to be isolated and what we want is to be just quietly alone by ourselves. Of course, Peter generally brings Dr. Slyder with him because the doctor says he never feels quite comfortable about what Peter eats and drinks unless he's with him, and very often Major Boozer and Mr. Ace come—you met them before dinner, didn't you?—because they are Peter's partners and Peter feels it wise to keep in touch with them and know what they're doing. But beyond that we bring no one except any odd guests one happens to want to bring—you noticed at dinner that we weren't more than a dozen—we seldom go beyond that—so here we always are as a sort of life in ourselves.

There are, of course, a few people around. The Upstocks have laid out a very beautiful place at the other end of the lake. And the Brokes have built a really handsome place, done in stone in a simple Roman style that suits the rough country—these and a few others, but, of course, nothing like the crush of the city. And they all get into the same simple ways. Mrs. Upstock always comes over just as she is, and I go over there in the launch just as I am: and Mr. Upstock is terribly informal: often walks over here just in his braces. So you see it isn't society.

What do you say—our amusements here? Oh, we simply don't have any. We have always both felt that up here in this beautiful air (that french window at the end of the room needs closing, Ransome) it is amusement enough just to be alive. So we have never bothered to think about amusements. Of course, my husband had the billiard-room built because that is really his one pastime, and this card-room because it is mine, and we put in the tennis courts, though it was hard to do so, so as to have them for the children. But that is all. We have the golf links, of course—perhaps you noticed them as you came up.

It was really quite a triumph for my husband making the courses here. He did every bit of it himself. At one time he had nearly two hundred Italians working. My husband, as you know, is terribly energetic; I often call him a dynamo. The summer when he was building the golf course he never seemed to stop; always sitting with his cigar in his mouth, first under a tree on one side, looking at his Italians, and then on the other side—in fact, he was always *somewhere*. I used to wonder how he could keep it up.

It was just the same way when my husband was putting in the tennis courts—I must show it you in the morning. Peter was determined that one thing we must have was proper *en tout cas* tennis courts. But Peter, as I say, is such a dynamo that he went right at it, taking it over and doing it all himself. Do you know that he blasted through ten feet of rock to get

the foundations he wanted? Two of the Italians were blown up with the dynamite, but Peter wasn't discouraged for a minute—he sent for two more and went right on—and of course Peter paid all the expenses of the two he had blown up, funeral, insurance, everything. He said that it was only fair as it was his risk not theirs. Peter is like that.

But, I am so sorry, I am afraid it is time I was ordering you all off to bed. We keep such early hours here that we go to bed at midnight.

But perhaps you'd rather stay up a little and play billiards or cards, and there are always one or two of the servants up—at any rate till about three, and then I think my husband is sending William fishing. Good night.

MODEL MONOLOGUES: No. IV

MRS. EASY HAS HER FORTUNE TOLD

Mrs. Easy entering her apartment to find a friend waiting for her.

Oh, my dear Mary, I'm so sorry, I'm just exhausted. Martha, put the chain back on the door, please—I do hope I haven't kept you waiting long—about twenty minutes? Oh, what a shame!

But I've just had such an exciting experience! I'm just done out! I *must* tell you all about it. But just wait a minute till I ring and tell Martha to make a cocktail. You'll have one, won't you? Martha, make two cocktails—no, make four—or no (*calling louder as Martha has left*)—Martha—make *six*. My dear Mary, I *need* it. I'm just all done in.

I've just come from having my fortune told, at least I don't mean that, I mean having my *horoscope* read. You must excuse my being so breathless, I'm not really breathless, it's just the excitement. My dear Mary, I *must* say it, I can't keep it to myself—I'm going to be *kidnapped*! Yes, *kidnapped*, now, at any minute, right here! Martha, is the chain on the door? Don't open it for anyone....

Ah! thank goodness for that cocktail—excuse me if I drink it right off (*noise of drinking*)—ah! that's better: it makes one feel calmer, doesn't it? I think I'll take another—yes, my dear (*more resignedly*), I'm expecting to be kidnapped at any moment.

Did Mrs. *Brown* say that was my fortune? Oh, goodness, no! I don't mean I went to old Mrs. Brown, or anybody of that class—she's all right, of course, Mrs. Brown, I've often been to her and she's a dear old soul. I must have gone to her nearly once a week last winter. But she never says anything, and even what she says is so *ordinary*, don't you know.

She prophesied that Henry would live to ninety. That's all right. I hope he does, I'm sure, and Henry's as good as husbands go anyway. But ninety! And after all that's not the kind of thing you pay to hear. Of course, she *did* prophesy that we'd go to Bermuda at Easter. But that had been in the paper anyway....

But this fortune-teller (*sinking her voice to mystery*), is utterly different. He's not just a fortune-teller. He's a Yogi soothsayer—it's quite different, he's Mr. Yahi-Bahi, and he's a Parsee, you know what that is—it means a sort of Hindu, only higher up. You know how all the Hindus are divided into castes; if you're in the lowest caste, you have to live on garbage and you mustn't speak to anyone, and then there are a lot of in-between castes who have to be vegetarians and worship cows. You see, I know all about India because Henry and I were on a round-the-world-cruise and we had a whole day in Bombay, and there was a Chinese gentleman on board with us, a Mr. O-Hoo, and he was all right, he'd been at Harvard for four months and he told us all about the Hindu religion and why it is so far ahead of Christianity.

So that's how I know about castes and Mr. Yahi-Bahi's caste is at the top of all. They don't eat. They don't speak—they just *contemplate*. Oh, thank you, Martha, put them down here beside the others. Now that's not too strong, is it? (*drinks*). Oh! Goodness! I needed that! Well, I was saying, would you believe it, that Mr. Yahi-Bahi, before he came

here, sat on the top of a post for a month—with just a loin cloth on—and just *meditated*. Think of the flies!

So then he came here (I don't just know how long ago), and began casting horoscopes—that's what it's called—and Mary! such wonderful results! Do you know that he told Mrs. Faith that something dark was hanging over her—and that very month her chauffeur left her; and he told Mrs. Gull that there was a fate over her youngest son, the one at college: and there *was*. He was sent home for drinking at the end of the term.

Oh, he's just wonderful. And my dear! No money! He scorns it! That's the first thing you learn about Yahi-Bahi. You can *offer* it if you like just as a courtesy, but he just quietly refuses. Money, to him, is just *dirt*. You see his expenses are nothing; contemplation doesn't cost anything.

So it's very hard to get an interview. Why, my dear, I had to wait for ever so long. You see, I couldn't have my fortune told—only it is not really called that, it's *receiving a revelation*—I couldn't receive a revelation till I was fit to receive it—that's part of the method.

So I had to qualify by *contemplation*: I had to send in ten dollars (not to Mr. Yahi-Bahi, of course; to his assistant) and then contemplate for a week. At first it was *awfully* hard, I don't mean the ten dollars, that was *easy*, but to contemplate. You see, you have to think of *nothing*. And at first I'd keep thinking of shopping I'd had to do and whether Martha had given Ouiji his bath and about telephoning to Henry to be sure to cash a cheque—and about what to wear that afternoon—well, you know, all the regular round of work that makes up one's day. But I managed to learn fairly well, and at the end of the week, I got a *thought* message—think of it! a *thought* message (it was sent by post) to tell me to send ten dollars again and keep on contemplating. So I knew I had succeeded....

Well, after contemplating like that for four weeks they let me become a neophyte—that means a person just starting to be a Yogi—only it takes years. And then I went to see Mr. Yahi-Bahi himself for the first time—such a strange place, at least not the outside—it was just a little apartment on a side street. But I mean, once you got in, all the stairway going up, and the ante-room, where you waited, were hung with curtains with figures of snakes and Indian gods, perfectly weird! And the man who met me—not Mr. Yahi-Bahi himself, of course, but his assistant, the strangest little being. His name is Mr. Ram Spudd, a little round man, a Bengalee, I think. He put his arms across the stomach and bowed ever so low and said, 'Isis guard you!'—my dear! it was *most* impressive.

I asked if I could see Mr. Yahi-Bahi, but Mr. Ram Spudd shook his head and said no, Mr. Yahi was in meditation, and mustn't be disturbed. I laid down ten dollars on a little side table—just unobtrusively so as not to insult him. But Mr. Spudd just waved the idea aside with his hand, with such a kindly smile and a shrug of the shoulders, and explained that money didn't enter into Mr. Yahi's life. Then he waved his hand again, and would you believe it, the ten dollars had gone! My dear! he had *de-astralized* it! not a doubt of it. I saw it myself. One minute it was there! and next gone!

So I came like that three more times, I mean three days running—and each time Mr. Spudd received me with the same gentle way and shook his head. Mr. Yahi was meditating still.... I laid ten dollars on the table and each time it was de-astralized!

Then I got afraid that it was bad taste and might hurt his feelings to force him to de-astralize ten dollars every day—so next day I didn't put any money down—and perhaps the shock—you see it's all so subtle, my dear—the *shock* woke Mr. Yahi out of his meditation—I heard him call to Mr. Spudd in Hindu, I suppose, and Mr. Spudd said Mr. Yahi would see me.

So Mr. Yahi-Bahi came out from behind the curtains—such a strange-looking man, so tall and yet he wasn't really tall, I suppose it was his long gown, all figured over with sacred snakes and lizards—and his eyes—my dear! so deep—like pools of molasses! and he took my hand flat between his and he said, '*Osiris keep you!*'

Then he made me sit down in a chair and he looked into my eyes and held my hand a long while and then he said—'You have a soul!' and then he looked at me again and said—'Dark Things are impending over you,' and I said, 'What are they?' But he just shook his head and in a minute he was gone! I had just half closed my eyes and he vanished! Perhaps he went behind the curtain.

Well, would you believe it, my dear—(*bell rings*)—see who it is at the telephone, Martha, and say I can't come—would you believe it, I went time after time—what do you say, Martha? The *Evening Times* want to speak to me—say I'm out—I went, as I say, time after time, and Mr. Yahi said he would get my horoscope ready to read but he never got it till to-day—and, oh, goodness, I'm all shaken up with it; it's so dark, it's terrible. But I must tell you first. Each time I went to Mr. Yahi, Mr. Spudd said I'd have to wait a week or two for my horoscope but that if I liked (he was awfully nice about it), he would call up some spirits and I could talk to them.

It was wonderful. He called up the spirit of Napoleon, and I talked to Napoleon, behind a curtain, just as easily as I'm talking to you. I asked him if he had been lonely at St. Helena and he said, 'Yes.' And I asked him whether it was the battle of Trafalgar that did most to defeat him and he said, yes, he hadn't enough cavalry.

And I talked with the spirit of Benjamin Franklin but he seemed a little dull; perhaps his brain got damaged after he was dead, but anyway he said that it was all bright and beautiful where he was. But a funny thing about the spirits, my dear, some of them—they asked such *queer* questions. Napoleon asked me if I had an extra key of my apartment, and I said I had and he said he might need it and please leave it with Mr. Yahi. So I *did*, but I don't want Napoleon coming over and able to get in at night. I said to Mr. Yahi I'd have an extra lock put on—and just imagine, my dear, the spirit of *Joan of Arc* (next *séance*) warned me not to. She said it was all right: and of course if *she* thought so, it was all right for me. But if Mr. Yahi gives the key to Napoleon I hope he lets me know.

Well, at last I managed to get a revelation from Mr. Yahi. That was two days ago. First he talked about Henry. He wouldn't say what is going to happen to him. But it's something terrible. He said it hangs over him ready to fall and he said the sand is low in his glass. He says Henry must leave town at once, and take nothing with him of any value, leave all his valuables here in the apartment. Osiris will look after them. I called Henry up on the telephone as soon as ever I got home: he was at the golf club and I said, 'Henry, Mr. Yahi, the Parsee magician, says there's something hanging over you,' and he said, 'Is that so? Say! I made the fourth hole under par': and I said, 'Mr. Yahi says the sand is low in your glass,' and Henry said, 'I fell down badly in the waterhole,' and I said, 'Henry, you've got to get under the protection of Osiris,' and he said, 'What's wrong with the police?' You know that mocking way Henry has.

But when he came home, I told him all about it and this time he listened, especially about Napoleon having our key. I think he was jealous. But I said, 'Henry, Napoleon is only a spirit, and anyway Napoleon was not that sort of man.'

Well, that was yesterday and I went round again to-day and Mr. Yahi was there—not meditating—and he told me my horoscope. He said I'm going to lose Henry—I'd guessed that already, and then he said—I'm just shuddering at the thought of it—Martha, is that door *locked*, see that it is—he said that I'm in hourly danger of being kidnapped!

Yes, kidnapped! and held for ransom! Think of it—I asked him for how much and he said he would try to find out and looked into a crystal ball, all dark and shining—looked into it ever so fixedly and said the figures were there but were hard to read and asked how much would I pay, and I said it would depend on Henry and Mr. Yahi shook his head and said the figures looked like a hundred thousand to him. I said I was glad it wasn't more; and he looked again and said he believed it was a hundred and fifty thousand....

I asked Mr. Yahi what I would do, and he said the first thing was to put myself under the protection of Isis and Osiris. He said to pack up everything I had of value and leave it here, with the secret mark of Osiris—he showed me how to make it—to guard it. He said, put the mark on anything valuable, like jewels, but not on other things and Osiris would look after them, and if I decided for a ransom to leave it, marked plainly RANSOM. Then he said for me to leave town instantly and take nothing with me. You see he explained that protection in the Yogi doctrine is only for the weak—and I must leave behind even all my money, except just enough for a few days—in fact he said to take any cash in my cash account, mark it Osiris and leave it here. He said Osiris would ...

Is that some one at the door?—don't take the chain off it, gracious—don't let any one in, Martha—a young man from the *Evening Times*, you say, about the '*sensational arrest*'? I don't know about the '*sensational arrest*'—shut him out, Martha. But my goodness, '*sensational arrest*,' does that mean that the kidnappers are caught already? Isn't Osiris wonderful—just think of divining what they were going to do before they did it! Well, thank goodness...

There's the telephone again, Martha.

My husband—yes—of course, I'll speak. Hullo, Henry, what is it? did you hear about—what are you saying—my two crooks arrested—*my* two—why do you call them *my* two? Mr. Yahi-Bahi and Mr. Ram Spudd! But Henry *they're* not crooks—they're Parsees! Mr. Ram Spudd is a Bengalee and is one of the most spiritual men, Henry, I've ever seen. Just to hear him talk lifts one up.... What are you laughing at? You say I should have heard him talk to-day?—what do you mean?—he's not a Bengalee, you say, he's just coloured and Mr. Yahi is Irish—well, what's the laugh?—what did Ram Spudd say? He said *that!* Just you repeat that, Henry—Ram Spudd said they nearly caught the old hen! Meaning me! *me!* An old hen! Well, he's a dirty little crook and I hope he gets—what do you say—he'll get five years? I hope so!—but not poor Mr. Yahi; he's all soul—oh, he laughed too!! What! An '*old sheep*'—I hope he gets ten.

III

THE DISSOLUTION OF OUR DINNER CLUB

As it is now definitely understood that our dinner club is dissolved, it is proper to let people know the circumstances of its dissolution. This all the more so, as already I begin to hear it mentioned with a sort of regret as 'the old Dinner Club,' although the last meeting—the one of the Hungarian *Goulash*—was only on Tuesday of last week. I remember that it was Tuesday because I was a little laid up on the Wednesday.

Yet, in a way, it is only right to regret the ending of the club, as I never knew of anything that started off with greater enthusiasm, with greater what the French call *éclat*. The idea of it just came up one day in a sort of spontaneous way among a group of us who were sitting around having a drink and talking in our club—I mean the regular city club to which we belonged. The talk had been really worth while; Merrill, who is a really brilliant talker, had been speaking, I remember, of Mr. Roosevelt, making an analysis of him—we had three or four drinks while he was making it—and someone said that if you want to have really good conversation the thing is to start a dinner club—you know, a club to meet every fortnight or so, and hold a dinner and have brilliant conversation. This man said he'd once been a member of a club like that in Edinburgh—he's Scotch, his name is Stewart—Cluny Macpherson Stewart—a Scotchman—and one night they'd discuss (I mean this club in Edinburgh) say Greek architecture, or another night perhaps the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, or another night, the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. So hearing all that, we got off to a good start with all of us talking at once.

Of course, everybody agreed that, with a dinner club, you have to hold it somewhere else than in your own regular club. That gives a sort of novelty to the evening and lets you take in other fellows who don't happen to be in your own club. It was agreed that men get stale if they just stick around with their own same crowd in their own same club, whereas a man in a dinner club gets what you might call mental friction.

Then one of the group, a man called Watergrass, a poetical sort of fellow, said that the idea was to have your dinner club meet at some place right away out in the suburbs, so that you could have a good bracing three-hour walk before you sat down. He said that a walk like that put a man just in shape for brilliant talk—blows away the cobwebs, that was his phrase—and he said that that season of the year—it was November when we began—was just right for walking. What you needed for real walking was rough weather, the rougher the better, wind and storm so that you could turn up your coat collar, grip your stick and just buffet right into it. He quoted the case of men like Tennyson and Longfellow, tremendous walkers both of them. It appears that Tennyson—even to write just a small unimportant poem like *Break, break, break*—would walk forty miles as hard as he could go: I think Watergrass said forty. Anyway he said that when Longfellow wrote about how he stood on the bridge at midnight, he actually went and stood on it: that, I gathered, was what gave him the idea of standing on it.

Well, of course, that part of the plan was instantly and eagerly adopted. All the more so as one of the men was able

to tell us of a new eating-place that had just been opened right outside city limits, ten miles away, an awfully artistic place called *The Old Cow-stable*. You see, it actually had been an old cow-stable—I mean it really was one before—with heavy stone walls and a high peaked roof—and it had been done over inside and opened up as a sort of roadside restaurant, and somebody had hit on the clever idea of calling it *The Old Cow-stable*. Clever, wasn't it?

But the biggest idea of all, the thing that gave the Club its real impetus, was the idea of having the bill of fare for the dinner utterly different each time, and represent different kinds of national dinners. For instance, it was suggested right away that we could have a typical 'New England Dinner'—the thing the early settlers used to have, at the time when they had only one big pot over the fire to cook in, and put everything in together; or as someone called it, 'a real old-fashioned New England dinner.' Then Des Rois, who is French, said, why not have a typical Marseilles dinner like what they eat in Marseilles: and he told us about *bouillabaisse*, the great Marseilles dish, along with *tripe à la mode de Caen*. He spelt them later for the committee. We generally spell Caen as Cannes, but anyway it is close to Marseilles. Des Rois certainly got us going by telling about eating *bouillabaisse* and drinking the real Marseilles wine *pisco*, and then driving out along the Corniche Road overlooking the Mediterranean. He said he would arrange a dinner like that, that would take us right to Marseilles.

Then, of course, there was suggested a Mexican dinner—*chile con carne* with hot *tamales*—and a Bengal dinner with mangoes and curried duck—in fact I can't remember them all—and, of course, the Hungarian *Goulash*, that I mentioned before; that came last, and that we had last Tuesday. I was sick Wednesday.

We limited the club to a membership of twenty—we had to limit it or we'd have had all the city in—and invented for it the happy name of the *Dinner Club*, to mean that it was just a club for dining. Other names were suggested. One of the crowd, a man called Woodenbean, who lectures in Greek in the Faculty here, wanted to give it a Greek name. *Hoi* something. *Hoi Pants* something. I can't quite get it, but he said it was a delightfully witty name. I am sure it was.

Looking back on the *Dinner Club* now that it is all over, upon my word I find it hard to see why it failed—or I won't say failed—I mean came to an end. I am inclined to think that it was a case of hard luck; so many little things went wrong with it. For instance, on the day we began—it was in November—the weather was all wrong. Just one of those quiet clear days with a blue sky, no snow, hardly a breath of wind—nothing to buffet. Some of us had met at the town club at four to walk out with heavy coats and big sticks, but it seemed silly to start out like that—still broad daylight in the middle of the afternoon—to hoof it for three hours, when you could go out in a taxi in twenty minutes. So we just sat around the club and had a few drinks and talked—mostly about Mr. Roosevelt—and then went out in a couple of taxis. We found that practically all the other members had come the same way, the weather being no good for walking, but they all had big rough coats on and carried thick heavy sticks, which gave the thing a kind of touch. The only one who had walked was Watergrass and he looked pretty tuckered out, and fed up with being the only one.

So that was the start, not quite in the right key. And it made things a little worse when one of the members—it was Macpherson Stewart, who hadn't ever seen *The Old Cow-stable* before—as soon as he came in, said, 'Phew!'—like that—'Phew.' Somebody said, 'Well, Cluny, you can't expect to cook a New England dinner and not have a certain smell of cooking,' and he said, 'Oh! it's not the England dinner! Oh, no, phew!' Of course, the idea was ridiculous. The whole place had been renovated, with a beautiful hardwood floor and an open fire-place. I admit that in the little sort of partitioned-off place in the corner where we put our hats and coats, you might notice something—but not really anything. And for the matter of that over in Scotland I've been in places like Edinburgh Castle and Carlyle's Cottage that were something awful! Anyway, Macpherson dropped out.

Still I think it was mistaken judgement to begin with a New England dinner. Those old colonial settlers, you've got to remember, were a pretty tough lot, out of doors in the open air all day, and, of course, they'd never been really used to anything; and they hadn't had four cocktails before they sat down. And I hadn't realized before what it meant cooking all the stuff in one big pot; it all comes out, meat and cabbage and vegetables and bones, in one great wet *flop!* I thought of stuff I'd read about Indian dog feasts (that was the same time as the Puritans, wasn't it?) and I couldn't eat it. That was all about it. I couldn't.

Still I don't mean the evening was so bad. All the twenty members were on hand and there was such a lot of initial enthusiasm it was bound to carry the thing through. Watergrass kept dozing off to sleep from having walked there, and

Stewart, of course, was peeved, but on the whole it went pretty well. The conversation was good but not quite of the kind that I'd been expecting. There wasn't any architecture or archaeology stuff. We talked mostly about Mr. Roosevelt. Merrill made an analysis of him: it was certainly brilliant—I couldn't follow most of it. But the idea was to show that Roosevelt is a world force and, if I got it right, should have been expected even if he hadn't turned up. We broke up about ten-thirty, with pretty good feeling all round, and with everybody promising to be on deck two weeks later for the Marseilles dinner that Des Rois was to arrange.

That, I will admit straight out, was a mistake—that *bouillabaisse* stuff. I don't say the Marseilles people don't eat it. They're fishermen and they're in sea air all the time and in sea air you can eat anything. But that stuff! Did you ever see it? And the thing after it called *tripe à la mode de Caen*—it's French and means 'canned tripe'—of all the ghastly-looking mess! Taste? I've no notion—I couldn't touch it. One rather dirty thing was that Des Rois didn't eat it. He'd ordered an English mutton chop for himself. I had some cheese, all full of holes, and some figs—but, of course, I'm not kicking at that—I ate when I got home. The talk, though, was really good. Merrill got talking of Mr. Roosevelt and made an analysis of him—a new one, it was two weeks since the other one—and that led us to talk of a wide range of things like the New Deal and Mr. Roosevelt's attitude to the courts and what Mr. Roosevelt would do with 'big business'—in fact, we ranged all over the place.

One thing, though, bothered us, which we hadn't noticed so much the first night—the seats. You see, they had no backs to them. *The Old Cow-stable* is all done up artistically with long narrow tables of heavy old wood—the kind the monks used to eat at in the place called, what was it?—the refractory, or the penitentiary, or something—anyway, those narrow tables. With tables of that sort the seats have to be just long heavy benches with no backs: anything else would be hopelessly inartistic. But you sit on that thing for two hours and a half and you'll see where you are. With monks it was different: they were looking for it. But we weren't. So that meant we broke up about nine-fifteen: and as a matter of fact, three or four of the men—I mean apart from Watergrass and Cluny Stewart—hadn't turned up at all.

But the next meeting wasn't so bad. That Mexican stuff, if you only take a little of it, is *good*. A little of that hot *chili-tobasco* stuff on a little edge of bread is all right and helps you to wash a drink down. I guess the Mexicans eat it all right; they would. But you see, at a dinner club you don't really need much to *eat*—that is not the idea—it's a way of bringing fellows together and then they can go off and get something to eat elsewhere later. So we just sat around and had smokes and drinks, and dipped bits of toast in the *chile con carne*. The talk was all right, too. We were discussing Mr. Roosevelt, and some of the fellows were saying that he really represented a sort of world force—well, you know, that we have to put up with him. We broke up at eight-thirty and got back into town in time for a bite at the club—just a snack of cold lobster or something. But I was sorry to see that there were only thirteen present—and even at that several fellows offered to drop out so as to break the hoodoo of thirteen. In fact three went.

The Hungarian dinner was the last, so there's no use in getting mad about it. That stuff, that *Goulash*, is just poison! And anyway how can you eat—I mean men of our age, we're all around forty to fifty—if you're not getting any exercise, and are sitting around drinking cocktails? You *can't* eat! I just hated the idea as I felt that Hungarian dinner getting nearer, that *Goulash*, I mean! You don't know how the notion gets you when you belong to a dinner club that you've *got* to eat! Eat? Who wants to eat? I heard after though I didn't know it at the time that one or two members were knocked right out, knocked flat, after that *Goulash*! They were crazy enough to eat it. And that sour Hungarian wine—*Magyak-Buda*—ugh! The Hungarians after all—as somebody said after dinner—are not a civilized people: we were discussing Mr. Roosevelt and that had led up to the idea of civilization. Look at their government! or for the matter of fact, their religion—I don't mean I know what they are; I mean that the fellow who had eaten the *Goulash* said, look at them!

Anyway, the *Goulash* dinner ended it. We all knew it at the time. One of the members who had been in India and knew a cousin of Kipling's, was supposed to be getting up a Bengal dinner—curried duck with mangoes. But he says he can't get any mangoes. That's all right. We understand. The Club is over.

And yet, isn't human nature queer! Within a few months, or a year, they'll be calling it the 'good old Dinner Club'—and talking about the dinners of *chile con carne* and *bouillabaisse* with the wonderful talk about Mr. Roosevelt.

HOW TEACHERS SWIM

When I was teaching at Upper Canada College, ever so many years ago, some benefactor of the school endowed and equipped a big swimming tank for the boys. So the question arose of getting a swimming teacher.

At a masters' meeting the principal announced to us that he had found a teacher.

'He seems,' he said, 'just the man for the job. He's young and he's an athletic-looking fellow, civil-spoken and with the best references. He has certificates for boxing, and several medals for gymnastics. I think he's just what we want.'

There was a general murmur of assent. No one seemed inclined to offer any objection. But the principal, an honourable man, had an afterthought in his mind and felt that he had to mention it.

'There's only one possible objection to this young man,' he added, 'he has never—he doesn't know—that is, *he can't swim.*'

There was a momentary sensation but not much. We were all experienced teachers. We knew how little that mattered.

The young man was engaged and some of the boys taught him to swim and he turned out a huge success...

As a matter of fact there is an educational principle involved in that. You can teach best a thing that you don't know. That is, you're learning it yourself.

I remember a similar instance at the same school when I was the senior master and made the timetable. One of my colleagues came to me and said, 'I wish you could arrange to put me down to teach German to the lower commercial.'

'I didn't know that you knew German,' I said.

'I don't,' he answered, 'that's just it. I studied it a little, years ago, but I've forgotten it all completely.'

'All right,' I said, and I arranged it. It worked fine. There were two or three German-speaking boys from Berlin, Ontario, in the class and they told him the pronunciation. He moved with them next year to a higher class and kept nearly even with them till matriculation.

IV

HOW TO LOSE MONEY

(FOR AMATEURS)

We may define business in a broad, general way as the art of losing money. This is only a rough-and-ready definition to which numerous exceptions will be found.

Indeed, very often business, even if losing a certain amount of money, is carried on for other reasons. As one of my big business friends said to me the other day, 'What else can I do?' Many of my business friends—the big ones—ask me that: what else can they do? I don't know what else they can do.

Or very often a business connection is of such long standing, of generations, perhaps, that it is difficult to stop. I am

thinking here of my friend Sir John Overwarp, the big thread man. Sir John is the senior partner of Overwarp, Underwarp, and Shuttle. In fact he *is* Overwarp, Underwarp, and Shuttle. They are probably the biggest thread people in the world. They are *the* thread people. They have works in Sheffield, Bradfield, Oldfield—in short, they have so many works they don't know where they are.

Well, the other day Sir John said to me (he speaks to me): 'We've been in thread now for five generations. I don't know how I could get out of it.' After five generations in thread you get all tangled up in it. Somebody told me that Sir John's shareholders are going to let him out. It'll be nice of them if they do.

But business habit is business habit. I knew a man, one of the McDuffs of Duff (they came from Duff), who had been in Scotch whiskey, and in nothing else, for years and years. He had travelled round the world in it four times. It seemed to follow him. You could notice it.

Then there's the sense of responsibility—I mean, responsibility to other people. I know quite well the French financier, the Baron de Citrouille (it is pronounced *Citrouille*), who brought a great quantity of French money out to America, and lost it here. He couldn't have lost the half of it in France, but here he was able to do what is called 'spread his loss.' Some of the big men can spread their loss over half the continent.

But these, of course, *are* the big men—what are called the captains of industry. It is not wise to try to begin with discussing such large-scale operations as theirs. It might give the beginner a sense of despair. Some of these men are known to lose a million dollars a day. The business beginner asks, 'Can I do that?' I answer, 'Not yet, but you can learn.'

One has to realize that these are selected men winnowed out, as it were, from the crowd; they are men who probably had even at the beginning a flair for business and kept on getting more and more flair. The word flair is French. It is pronounced flair and means in a general way more or less what we call in English a flair.

These big men, indeed, are distinguished not so much by what they do as by what they can't do or won't do. I once knew (I knew him only once) Sir Humphrey Dumphrey, the big electrical man: he was probably the biggest electrical man in Europe, except perhaps the Italians Nitti and Dotti. Sir Humphrey said to me: 'Look at me. I can't do fractions.' I looked at him. He couldn't do them.

Or take Sir Hamstein Gorfinkel, the great British financier. He said he couldn't recite the Lord's Prayer: couldn't or wouldn't.

But these men are in a class by themselves.

When I say I want to talk about business and how money can be lost, even in a small way, I naturally wish to begin with simple things. Young people just entering on life realize that if only they had money now, even a moderate sum, they could find opportunities to lose it that would never come later.

There are so many choices to be made, such a difficulty in selecting a career, that young people need help. 'Should I live in the country?' a young lady asked me at a reception. 'Yes,' I said, 'away in, as far as you can get.'

'My son,' wrote an old friend, 'shows every disposition to be a stock-broker. What should I do about it?'

'Shoot him,' I answered.

One should start with some of the simpler ways of losing money, such as chicken-raising, dry duck farming, keeping bees and wasps, along with such things as horticulture and germicide. Bigger things could come later, such as how to build a transcontinental navy. One must start humbly.

THE FAMILIAR MAGIC OF FISHING

A PULLMAN CAR TRANSFORMED INTO A TROUT STREAM

They sat together in the smokers' end of a Pullman car. They didn't know one another. They were strangers. They weren't talking to one another—why talk anyway? A man always feels tough and only half alive in the morning on a Pullman car—no need to make conversation with the damn fool, so thought each of them.

Outside, the February snow blew against the windows. One saw dim outlines of trees, mostly spruce. 'Where are we?' said one of the men. He said it half by accident. He hadn't spoken for an hour.

'Just at the end of the bush country,' the other man answered. 'That's Washago Junction. I recognize it by that piece of bush.'

'You know this country?' said the first man.

'Oh, yes, I come up here fishing all the time.'

'Is that so? ARE THERE FISH HERE?'

'Trout.'

'Trout, eh?' said the second man, trying to get his face close to the pane so as to see the trout. 'There are trout streams here?'

He spoke almost reverently, as if in a church.

'Oh, yes, lots of them, all through here. There are some little lakes further in, but here it's mostly streams.'

'You fish with flies?'

'Well, you can all right where it's a little open but of course there's a lot of it where the bush is so thick that you can't get room to cast. I don't mind admitting it, when I can't get room to cast, I'll fish with bait every time, with worms.'

'I'll say so!' said the other man. 'And mind you, there's a whole lot more skill in fishing with worms than people think. You get a place where the stream takes a sharp turn right under a big log in the water—say, for instance, there was a log over there...' He pointed at the other side of the little room.

'Yes,' said the listener. He could see the log, too. Being fishermen, it was very clearly right there for both of them.

'—now, we'll say it's all thick brush—'

'Yes,' assented the other man; in fact, he could feel the brush all round him. He couldn't have moved his arm if he'd tried.

'—now, you see, you get your line on the bottom—there's apt to be a little bit of hard sand or gravel in a place like this right in the middle of the channel—and you reach out your line...'

The speaker sat forward in his chair till he was—or thought he was—on his hands and knees. The other man bent his back a little—(the brush wouldn't let him bend much), and they were *both* on their hands and knees.

'—you get a good bait on your hook, the bigger the better, it travels easier and won't catch, and you let it just—roll—roll—along with the water...'

There was tense excitement in the little room. Both men followed breathlessly the rolling line.... 'You'll never get snagged,' the speaker continued, talking low, as trout are easily frightened, 'if you let the line take its own way. It'll go

into the deepest hole—and then, by George! you feel Mr. Trout take a snap at it, and out he comes!

He landed the trout right on the floor of the room, a perfect beauty with white-edged fins and bright vermilion spots on the deep, firm-fleshed sides.

And with that the two men went on to discuss telescope rods and whether the damn things really work, or whether one wouldn't rather have a bamboo rod in little sections—you can put it all into your valise. And then they talked of whether you can really make a cast with a rod made in small sections, and the second man showed that you could by making a cast right there in the car, of over sixty feet—and landed another trout.

And the man who didn't know the Washago section said he came from West Virginia, so the first man asked him if it wasn't too hot for trout down there, but it seems not, or at least not up in the hills. In fact, the second man took the first man away up into the hills above the Kenowsha and cooled him right off, and then fed him on trout with West Virginia bacon that he cooked over a brush fire.

So that led to talk about how a *brown* trout can stay in water up to seventy degrees; but after all, is a brown trout any damn good anyway: would you call it a *trout* in the real sense? ... and for the matter of that even a rainbow trout isn't in it with a straight speckled brook trout: the colour may be all right, but for sport and for eating, there's no comparison.

And incidentally they told one another who they were and the first man said that he was in hardware and the second man, it seemed, was in paper boxes; but they weren't really. They were both in trout.

And when the porter came to the door and said to one of them, 'Toronto, sir, you change here!' they said good-bye like old friends.

And the first man said to the second man that if he ever got as far down as Buckhannon, he must certainly take him to the Kenowsha; and the second man said that if the first man ever got as far up as Toronto, he must certainly take him up into the Washago country....

And each, when he got home, said to his wife, 'I met a hell of a nice feller on the train coming down.'

And that's why fishermen's wives are never jealous of them when they leave home.

VI

OVERWORKING THE ALPHABET

I admit that this is the age of brevity. Our rapid life demands condensed speech. We have not enough leisure to talk like Daniel Webster. Even our words must be cut to the shortest limits. We have no time to say *telephone* and *debutante* and *cinematograph* and *automobile*. Not at all: we *phone* an invitation to the *cinema*, and our *debs* ride in *cars* and *planes*.

But when it comes to cutting out words altogether and falling back on letters, it is time to ask where we are 'at.' I mean is it really O.K. to talk about the C.I.O.? And if the C.I.O. joins with the A.F.L. does the mixture become the C.A.I.F.O.L. or the A.C.F.I.L.O.? Similarly, is a man a D.F. if he finds that he can't remember what the O.G.P.U. is, and whether it is in Spain or Russia?

Our grandfathers with their pioneer thoroughness knew nothing of this haste. If they founded a farmers' society they were willing to call it the Oro Township Agricultural Autumn Fair and Flower Show Association, and let it go at that.

The more often they said it the better they liked it.

But nowadays three or more people no sooner get together in anything than they fuse themselves with the alphabet. A ladies' sewing circle formed overnight appears as an L.S.C. in the morning. If the Junior Pygmies of equatorial Africa ever get organised, the Press will call them J.P.E.A. next morning.

I think the Great War started it. Before the War came we made use of alphabet abbreviations but they were kept fairly within reason. We spoke of the U.S.A. and the Y.M.C.A. and with an effort of brain power we could understand what the Y.W.C.A. ought to mean.

Before the War, business used the letters of the alphabet, but not too much. People signed I.O.U.'s or had to pay C.O.D., and business men sent things F.O.B., though no one else knew what it meant. Before the War, teachers in the schools used to make use of A, B and C to work arithmetic, and long ago, 200 years before Christ (B.J.C.), Euclid used to sign his theorems Q.E.D. to mean that that was the end. But the letters were only used to give a touch of finality, just as on a tombstone they put R.I.P., to mean that the man was dead and there was no need to waste words on him.

In fiction, too, especially detective and comic fiction, letters were used to give a touch of mystery, to indicate the unsolvable. I mean, a passage would run something like this:

My friend X had taken the early train to Q where he met Miss M. on the platform accompanied by her uncle, the Bishop of Asterisk, waiting, apparently, to take the down train to H—.

All this excited in the reader's mind a queer suspicion that perhaps X was not the man's name and that the bishop was not going to H—.

But beyond such usages the Alphabetical Contractions never extended till the Great War came and flooded us with them. I think I can see how the War started it. In war time at the front if a man took full time to say 'General Headquarters,' he might get shot before he finished it, whereas if he said 'G.H.Q.' he still had a chance for his life. So when the soldiers came back, we heard them all talking in the new alphabetical jargon about the G.H.Q. and the C.O. and who gave the D.S.O. to a V.A.D.

Naturally, we started to imitate them and the thing spread till the alphabet invaded all our Government and civil administration, then overwhelmed all corporate business and labour organizations, and now threatens to submerge private life. The United States began it with the N.R.A. (even before F.D.), and when we had learned that, lengthened it to the N.R.A.A. and then hurried us on to the P.W.A. and its fellows. The only trouble is to remember what they all do for everybody. In an emergency, people can fall back on the F.E.R.A.; or enjoy a cosy sense of security under the S.S.B. There's a peculiar protection against want in F.S.C.C., and a man who wants to break up his home can do it under the F.H.I.B.B.

But many of us now find that we are losing our grip on what these things mean, and when we hear that the Supreme Court has set aside the P.D.Q. we don't know whether to get mad about it or not. The spread of the same thing across the field of labour has given us the A.F.L.—not difficult if you remember F for federation—and the C.I.O. (not to be confused with the one that means the high explosive).

If things are difficult at home on our own continent, think what they must seem abroad. Tell a foreigner that the allegiance of the United States Navy is undermined by the Y.W.C.A. and he'll believe it. Offer to give to Hitler the order of a D.F. in the W.C.T.U. and he'll accept it. The use of the overworked alphabet is creating a sort of new language. We are getting so accustomed to it that things written out in full look needlessly prolix. If we want to keep our history alive, it will have to be rewritten. A new outline of history (O. of H.) will contain an account of the American Revolution (the A.R.) as follows:

SIGNING OF THE D.O.I. AND THE BIRTH OF THE U.S.A.

The excitement over the S.A. and the B.T. (it means the Stamp Act and the Boston Tea Party) soon led to open resistance (O.R.). The battle of B.H., outside of Boston, was followed by the appointment of G.W. as C.I.C. of the C.A., and a congress of delegates (F.O.B. Philadelphia) signed on July 4, 1776, the famous D.O.I., written by T.J. The stubborn K.O.E.—G.3—refused all conciliation, looking upon G.W. as P.E. No. 1 of his Empire. The war ended in a C.V. (complete victory) at Yorktown, presently followed by the drawing up of the T.O.V. in which G.3 recognized the I.O.U.S.A. G.W. became the first P.U.S., and was recognized in history as the F.O.H.C.

But I perceive as I go on thinking about it, that it is not only our history but our English and American literature of the past that must be revised to make it properly alphabetical. Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*—renamed as the C.L.B.—will read:

*Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward!
Into the V.O.D. rode the S.H.*

Gray's immortal *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*—the E.C.C.—will explain how the 'Curfew tolls the K.P.D.,' while 'the ploughman homeward plods his W.W.'

It will reach its climax in the immortal stanza read aloud by General Wolfe to his officers as their boat stole up the St. Lawrence in the dusk of an autumn evening—the evening before the battle of the P.O.A. The stanza, as revised, reads:

*The B.O.H., the P.O.P.,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the I.H.:
The P.O.G. lead but to the capital G.*

But one last despairing stand must be made to keep the alphabet of private life. Don't call your stoker 'my S.,' or your dearest friend 'my D.F.' Invite your guests to a week-end cocktail party but not to a W.E.C.P. As you grow old let people call you a venerable old gentleman but never a V.O.G., and when you die arrange for a private funeral, but not a P.F.

Stephen Leacock

Self-appointed Secretary Anti-Alphabet Association
(or better, S.A.S.A.A.A.)

ON THE NEED FOR A QUIET COLLEGE

If somebody would give me about two dozen very old elm trees and about fifty acres of wooded ground and lawn—not too near anywhere and not too far from everywhere—I think I could set up a college that would put all the big universities of to-day in the shade. I am not saying that it would be better. But it would be different.

I would need a few buildings—but it doesn't take many—stone, if possible—and a belfry, and a clock. The clock wouldn't need to go; it might be better if it didn't. I would want some books—a few thousand would do—and some apparatus. But it's amazing how little apparatus is needed for scientific work of the highest quality: in fact 'the higher the fewer.'

Most of all I should need a set of professors. I would only need a dozen of them—but they'd have to be real ones: disinterested men of learning, who didn't even know they were disinterested. And, mind you, these professors of mine wouldn't sit in 'offices' dictating letters on 'cases' to stenographers, and only leaving their offices to go to 'committees' and 'conferences.' There would be no 'offices' in my college and no 'committees,' and my professors would have no time for conferences, because the job they were on would need all eternity and would never be finished.

My professors would never be findable at any fixed place except when they were actually giving lectures. Men of thought have no business in an office. Learning runs away from 'committees.' There would be no 'check up' on the time of the professors; there would be no 'hire and fire,' or 'judge by results' or standards or norms of work for them: nor any fixed number of hours.

But on the other hand they would, if I got the ones I want, be well worth their apparent irresponsibility: and when they lectured each one would be, though he wouldn't know it, a magician—with such an interest and absorption that those who listened would catch the infection of it, and hurry from the lecture to the library, still warm with thought.

It must be understood that the work of professors is peculiar. Few professors, real ones, ever complete their work: what they give to the world is fragments. The rest remains. Their contribution must be added up, not measured singly. Every professor has his 'life work' and sometimes does it, and sometimes dies first.

I can recall—I say it by way of digression—one such, who was working on Machiavelli. When I first met him he had worked fourteen years. He worked in a large room covered a foot deep with Machiavelli—notes, pamphlets, remains. I asked him—it seemed a simple question—what he thought of Machiavelli. He shook his head. He said it was too soon to form an opinion. Later—ten years later—he published his book, *Machiavelli*. One of the great continental reviews—of the really great ones; you and I never hear of them: they have a circulation of about 300—said his work was based on premature judgements. He was hurt, but he felt it was true. He had rushed into print too soon.

Another such devoted himself—he began years ago—to the history of the tariff. He began in a quiet lull of tariff changes when for three or four years public attention was elsewhere. He brought his work up to within a year or so of actual up-to-date completeness. Then the tariff began to move: two years later he was three years behind it. Presently, though he worked hard, he was five years behind it. The tariff moved quicker than he did. He has never caught it. His only hope now is that the tariff will move back towards free trade, and meet him.

Not that I mean to imply that my professors would be a pack of nuts or freaks. Not at all: their manners might be dreamy and their clothes untidy but they'd be—they'd have to be—the most eminent men in their subjects. To get them would be the main effort of the college: to coax them, buy them, if need be, to kidnap them. Nothing counts beside that. A college is made of men—not by the size of buildings, number of students and football records. But no trustees know this, or, at best, only catch a glimmer of it and lose it. Within a generation all the greatest books on the humanities would come from my college.

The professors bring the students. The students bring, unsought, the benefactions. The thing feeds itself like a flame in straw. But it's the men that count. A college doesn't need students: it's the students that need the college.

After twenty years my college would stand all alone. There are little colleges now but they ape bigness. There are quiet colleges but they try to be noisy. There are colleges without big games but they boom little ones. Mine would seem the only one, because the chance is there, wide open, and no one takes it. After twenty years people will drive in motor cars to see my college: and won't be let in.

Round such a college there must be no thought of money. Money ruins life: I mean to have to think of it, to take account of it, to know that it is there. Men apart from money—men in an army, men on an expedition of exploration, emerge to a new life. Money is gone. At times and places whole classes thus lift up—or partly: as in older countries like England the class called 'gentry' that once was. These people lived on land and money from the past—stolen, perhaps, five hundred years ago—and so thought no more of it. They couldn't earn more, they didn't know how. They kept what they had, or dropped out, fell through a trestle bridge of social structure and were gone in the stream. This class, in America, we never had. They grow rare everywhere. Perhaps we don't want them. But they had the good luck that in their lives money in the sense here meant, didn't enter. Certain money limits circumscribed their life, but from day to day they never thought of it. A cow in a pasture, a fairly generous pasture, doesn't know it's in. It thinks it's outside. So did they.

So I would have it in my college: students not rich and not poor—or not using their wealth and not feeling their poverty, an equality as unconscious as that where Evangeline lived....

Nor would their studies lead to, or aim at, or connect with wealth. The so-called practical studies are all astray. Real study, real learning must, for the individual, be quite valueless or it loses its value. The proper studies for my college are history and literature, and philosophy, and thought and poetry and speculation, in the pursuit of which each shall repeat the eager search, the unending quest, of the past. Looking for one thing he shall find another. Looking for ultimate truth, which is unfindable, they will learn at least to repudiate all that is false.

I leave out at one sweep great masses of stuff usually taught: all that goes under such a name as a university faculty of commerce. There is no such thing. The faculty of commerce is down at the docks, at Wall Street, in the steel mills. A 'degree' in commerce is a salary of ten thousand a year. Those who fail to pass, go to Atlanta—and stay there. Certain things in commerce are teachable—accountancy, corporate organization, and the principles of embezzlement. But that's not a university.

Out goes economics—except as speculation: not a thing to teach in instalments and propositions like geometry. You *can't* teach it. No one knows it. It's the riddle of the Sphinx. My graduates will be just nicely fitted to think about it when they come out. A first-year girl studying economics is as wide of the mark as an old man studying cosmetics. The philosophical speculative analysis of our economic life is the highest study of all—next to the riddle of our existence. But to cut it into classes and credits is a parody. Out it goes.

Out—but to come back again—goes medicine. Medicine is a great reality: it belongs in a *school* not a college. My college fits people to study medicine—study it in crowded cities among gas-lights and ambulances and hospitals and human suffering—and keeps their souls alive while they do it. Then later, as trained men in the noblest profession in the world, the atmosphere of the college which they imbibed among my elm trees, grows about them again. The last word in cultivation is, and always has been, the cultivated 'medicine man.'

The engineers?—that's different. Theirs is the most 'manly' of all the professions—among water power and gold mines and throwing bridges half a mile at a throw. But it's a *school* that trains them, not a college. They go to my college but they don't like it. They say it's too damn dreamy. So they kick out of it into engineering. For a time they remember the Latin third declension. Presently they forget it. Doctors grow cultivated as they grow older. Engineers get rougher and rougher.

What I mean is that our studies have drifted away, away from the single-minded absorption of learning. Our students of to-day live in a whirl and clatter of 'student activities.' They have, in any large college, at least a hundred organizations and societies. They are 'all up!' for this to-day and 'all out!' for that to-morrow. Life is a continuous rally! a rah, rah! a parade! They play no games: they use teams for that. But exercise, and air, is their life. They *root*, in an

organized hysteria—a code of signals telling them what to feel. They root, they rush, they organize, they play politics, run newspapers—and when they step from college into life, they fit it absolutely, having lived already.

No one is denying here what fine men and women college makes, physically and mentally alert. Any one of them could operate a lift the day he steps out of college.

But there's something wanting—do they *think*, or is there anything after all to think about?—and yet, surely, in the long run the world has lived on its speculative minds—or hasn't it?

Some who think, or course, there must be. You can't submerge humanity in two generations. But mostly, I believe, the little poets fade out on their first-year benches, and the wistful intelligence learns to say '*Rah! Rah!*' and is lost.

Not so in my college. There will be no newspaper, except a last week's paper from the back counties of New England. There will be no politics because there will be no offices to run for. My students will control nothing. The whole movement of student control is a mistake. They're so busy controlling that they're not students.

They shall play games all they want to, but as games, not as a profession, not as college advertising—and no gate receipts. Till only a few years ago the country that taught the world its games played them as apart from money—as far apart as sheer necessity allowed. If Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton (it wasn't really: it was won in Belgium), there was at least no stadium at two dollars a seat.

One asks, perhaps, about the endowments, about the benefactors of my ideal college. The benefactors are all dead: or at least they must act as if they were. Years ago on the prairies many authorities claimed that the only good Indian was a dead Indian. It may not have been true. But it is certainly true that the best college benefactor is a dead one. After all, the reward in the long run is his—those sculptured letters graven in the stone, 'To the greater glory of God and in memory of Johannes Smith'—that, in a college among elm trees—that's worth a lifetime of gifts—given and given gladly. Such things should best be graven in Latin. In my college they will be—Latin and lots of it, all over the place, with the mystic conspiracy of pretence, the wholesome humbug, that those who see it know what it means. Latin lasts. English seems to alter every thousand years or so. It's like the tariff that I named above—too mobile for academic use.

As with the benefactors, so with the managing trustees who look after the money and never lose it. Not dead, these, but very silent: solid men who don't need to talk and don't, but who can invest a million dollars over three depressions, and there it still is, like gold in a pot in the pyramids. You find them chiefly in New England—at least I seem to have seen them there more than anywhere else. They are at the head of huge investment businesses, so big that you never hear of them. Mostly, if they don't talk, it means that they are thinking where to place fifty million dollars. You see, they hate to break it.

And women? The arrangements in my college for the women students, and the women's dormitories? Oh no—no, thank you. There aren't any women. Co-education is a wonderful thing for women: college girls under co-education leave college more fit to leave college than any others. College girls are better companions, better wives (as your own or as someone else's) than any others. It's the women who have made our college life the bright happy thing it is—too bright, too happy.

But men can't *study* when women are around. And it's not only the students. If I let the women in, they get round some of my dusty old professors, and marry them—and good-bye to Machiavelli, and the higher thought.

REMOVAL PROBLEM SOLVED

Having retired from the service of McGill University, I was invited a little while ago to go out and join the staff of

the University of British Columbia.

News of the invitation appeared in the papers and the manager of a removal company called me up by telephone and said:

'Mr. Leacock, we understand that you are making a move to British Columbia. Now you just leave it to us and we'll arrange to move you the whole way out there.'

I answered, 'Oh, no, I'm not going. When I move next it will be much further than that.'

'All right,' he said, 'we'll take you. Where is it?'

'Eternity,' I answered. I thought I had him floored, but not at all. He came back, almost instantly:

'All right. You leave that to us.'

I am still wondering just what he meant. Wonderful thing a removal van, isn't it?

VIII

TURN BACK THE CLOCK

OR, AT LEAST, MAKE IT SLOWER

All of us who are old look back with a sort of wistful admiration to the education that we received long ago—so different from the education of to-day. I remember many years ago, when I was a junior professor at McGill University, meeting an elderly Scottish divine who questioned me about the nature of our curriculum. He was horrified to find that the students were actually allowed a certain amount of choice, or election, in making up the programme of their studies. 'When I was at Edinburgh,' he said, shaking his head, 'the whole of the studies were absolutely compulsory.' With that he shuffled off, smacking his lips over the word *compulsory*, and musing, no doubt, on the degeneracy of the time.

A similar point of view, as I have mentioned in another connection, was expressed once in a discussion at my club about education, involving the topic of the classics. A scholarly English visitor to the club, a bishop, said very emphatically—'Well, all I can say is that I regard Greek as having practically made me what I am.' There was a silence, and then an American present said, 'Exactly!' But the bishop didn't see it—one of the advantages, no doubt, of learning Greek.

Such views of our own past education belong, I do not doubt, to the illusions of retrospect. They have all the soft colour and mellow tints that surround the 'good old times,' and the 'old school' and reach away back to the distant past of 'Merrie England' and the 'brave days of old.' The pain and distress dies out of our human record as we look back on it.

But even if we grant that modern education has in the main meant progress, we may still note many things of value that have somehow been dropped by the way—and the faster the pace of progress the larger the likelihood of such losses. One grants, I said, the progress, the improvement. The 'little red school house' of sixty years ago, taken as a reality, looks but a poor structure, ill-lighted and unventilated beside the 'academy' of to-day—its windows all to the sun, its rooms as neat and bright as day, its wide corridors decorated with the framed pictures of great men. In it is its teacher, as highly certified and as guaranteed as a patent pump, and at his command a whole battery of instruction by radio and screen, and loud speaker, with apparatus to illustrate everything so clearly as to obviate all thought.

More than that. The new teacher is very different from the old 'dominie' and the bye-gone 'school-marm,' in that he is a 'pedagogue' with a pedagogical certificate to prove it. He knows the principles of education, whereas sixty years

ago none of us dreamed that there were any. He knows that education must proceed from the known to the unknown and from the concrete to the abstract. He knows, or he thinks he knows, that learning things is of no value unless you clearly understand what they mean: otherwise your knowledge is just that of a parrot. He does not realize that the bishop and I—I mean the bishop of whom I just spoke—having been very largely trained as 'parrots' along with a whole generation of other young parrots, would regret very much to admit that there is absolutely nothing in the bird at all.

f

The field that is suggested is so wide—this problem as to what our rational education may have lost in becoming so—that one can do no more than skirt its outline, or indicate one or two of the eminences or depressions of its landscape that seem of peculiar significance. Here is one broad feature of the prospect—the element of hardship, of compulsion, of disagreeableness. Modern education has set itself to make its processes attractive, to substitute the element of spontaneous interest for the element of compulsion by force. Learning at the point of a stick, corporal punishment, and learning under the threat of detention—the school-world equivalent of the gallows and the jail—are out of fashion now. It is the idea of our education that learning must be free and happy, carrying its own interest, and at least relying more on rewards than on punishments. Seen thus the interest of each bright little school building becomes for the child a vision of what the world might be, could we so order it; and above all, for the children of poverty, some little taste of the warmth and amenity of life.

These tendencies and these ideas must in the main be true. I may say, indeed, that I am sure they are, for I can look back over sixty-four years of school and college classrooms and I have seen the change. I recall that when I first went to school in England, as a child of four, there had newly come into use a little text called *Reading Without Tears*. Observe the revolutionary title. Older people shook their heads at it. Till then, the tears that fell upon the page softened it to its value. The Beth-el of education was built of the stone blocks of hardship. The steeper the road to Parnassus the more was the body fortified in climbing it.

We are at too great pains now to make our education easy, at too great pains to avoid sustained hardship. We prefer to give to the children the pretty little mechanical fancies that belong to the nursery in place of tears. Our text-books multiply the devices of ease—the little résumé that replaces the ensemble, the quick and easy 'selection' that reduces a poem to a verse and a stanza to a line; the total omission of factors that seem 'too difficult,' such as the 'quantities' of Latin words. In place of Plato, students study a 'Plato-made-easy'—by ceasing to be Plato. I know of a great university—I won't name it; it begins with an 'M'—which gave up first year physics as a compulsory subject because 'the girls couldn't learn it.'

Every foot of this ground, of course, is uncertain with doubt, and undermined with controversy. But I incline to think that we overdo now the elements that were of such high value when they came as over-needed innovations. The point is that our new mechanical environment—radio, motion pictures, the voices in the air and the figures on the screen—make presentation so direct, so easy, so physical that they tend to put the human imagination to sleep. The sheer rapidity of them precludes depth; the multiplicity of them defies memory. There are no 'indelible impressions' left.

To the child of fifty years ago the world of books was one of intense imaginative creations—the work of its own responsive mind. What child could forget its conjured vision of Robinson Crusoe bending over the yellow sand that bore the imprint of Friday's foot? What reader of *Tom Sawyer* could forget the gloomy horror of the great cave—with Indian Joe walled up in it—the great cave of which he himself—his own imagination—was, under Mark Twain's guidance—the sole architect? All of our pictured world was ours. But compare with it the typical modern child of the cities, lolling at his movies, saturated and unsurprising, impervious, after the age of about ten, to further impressions of scenery, an expert in murder, a cynic on women—for whom all the world's masterpieces have been done over into flickered sensationalism.

What such a child needs when he goes to school is not the primrose path of ease, the escalator to Parnassus, but a touch of the good old hard stuff such as the bishop and I got, and the Edinburgh divine. If he doesn't, there will soon be no more men left like us, and that would be too bad.

QUALITY DOES IT

A man who had served in the War once said to me—'Your books were just a godsend to us in the hospital!'

I thanked him.

He then added—'You see, in the shape we were in, we could only read rot.'

A parallel compliment was once paid to me years ago, by that charming and courtly scholar, Dr. B——t W——l, of Harvard. He himself moved on such an exalted plane of English literature that it was difficult for him to descend to the level of a mere writer of burlesque and such nonsense. But he did his best, when I was introduced to him, to recognize my merit.

'I'm so glad to meet you,' he said, as he shook hands, 'my children love your books.'

'And my mother,' I answered enthusiastically, 'is just crazy over yours.'

IX

COME OUT INTO THE GARDEN

PART ONE: A MEMORY OF SPRING

No, don't trouble me with the afternoon newspaper. I've no time to read it. I want to get out into the garden and get in some good licks before it gets too dark. You say the news from Czecho-Slovakia looks pretty ominous, eh? Well, let it. You tell me that the Czechs will very likely declare war against the Latts? Did you say the Latts or the Slatts? I mix these people up. But it doesn't matter, I want to hustle out into the garden. Wait till I tie these trousers up: no, I never use braces in the garden; just trousers like these tied up with an old necktie.

You just sit there, Bill, and take a drink while I finish getting ready; there's soda just near you on that tray.... And light your pipe, and then come out with me to the garden and you can get a smoke out there while I work.

Yes, this is my garden suit. No, I didn't *buy* it. You can't *buy* suits like this. Oh, I know that makers advertise what they call garden suits but they're not the real thing. You see this suit was originally made much too large by mistake, so I didn't care to wear it and then by accident the moths got at it—not much, I don't mean they really hurt it—and then when it was out on a clothes line someone put a charge of bird-shot through it, and so I thought I would just keep it for the garden. See the way it sets behind—look—you see when you're working on your hands and knees a suit gets bulged like that, in the seat, I mean, and at the knees. There's no waistcoat, of course, just a loose shirt. Now if you get that suit on and then take the coat off, why, there you are! Get right down on your hands and knees and you can move! You're free, you don't choke.

Say, don't fidget with that darned newspaper, Bill. You say it looks as if Che-Foo would have to fall? Fall where? Oh, Che-Foo in China—going to fall, eh? Too bad. Mind you the Chinese are darned good gardeners. Did you ever hear of the way they plant seeds? I'm trying it out this year. They crumble earth up between their fingers, fine, ever so fine, and keep crumbling it till it's like dust, and put the seeds into that. I heard about that last winter, one night at a banquet. I sat next a man who was a Ph.D.—no a D.D., or a D.D.F.—anyway he'd been a college missionary in China—seemed

dumb as a nut, till he got talking about how to grow cucumbers, and then he was fine and told me about how the Chinese plant seeds and all about bird manure. These missionaries learn a lot, eh—I guess we ought to support them.

There, I'm ready. Finish your drink and leave your paper there—all right, stick it in your pocket, if you like. Now, we'll go out through the kitchen and by the back door, if you don't mind, and into the garden.... You might just pick up that spade, if you will, and I'll take this hoe.... I'll hold the door for you.... Oh, thanks.

Now, this little space you see behind the kitchen, I fenced off so as to have it for a sort of yard for drying clothes, and that sort of thing, and then I ran the hedge and fence across to separate off the rest of the ground as a garden. This hedge—of course it doesn't show to much advantage yet as the leaves are only starting to bud—this hedge is quick-set, or quick-something, I forget what. I put it in five years ago; it hasn't come along very fast, but when it *does*—it'll reach high up overhead—away up as high as my hand or higher—fine, isn't it?

Just excuse me a minute, this darn gate doesn't seem to be working this spring—you have to pick it up and lift it. There! I've been meaning to fix up a patent rig so that the gate would pull open and then shut of itself. I thought it out one day in church last winter.

Now, there we are! Quite a lay-out, isn't it? I forget how many feet this way and how many that. But, of course, at this time of year, before the leaves are out, it doesn't look so large. The first evening—five nights ago when I started work—Gee! it looked small. But it's getting bigger now. And, you see, later on you don't see the other premises at all. All those bushes are right out in leaf, and the apple tree at the end—you wait and see it in blossom in June—in fact, the whole place is literally what you'd call a bower. And I always put a heavy row of sunflowers across that end!—just what you'd call a blaze of colour. But hold on now, sling down that spade and you sit down on this rustic bench and light up a pipe and just make yourself easy. I made the bench myself—I like making things like that—solid and heavy, no pretence at art, but—oh, say, I'm sorry—you're not hurt?—it's that darn end leg. It did that last spring, too. Wait, I know how to fix it in a minute; or, all right, sit at the other end, it's as solid as anything.

Now, you light up your pipe and be comfortable and I'll just smoke a cigarette while I sort out some seeds before I get to work—no, no, you keep the bench, I'll just turn this box up and sit on it.... There!

Do I do all the garden myself? Oh, yes! there isn't any fun in it if you don't do it yourself. That's the whole idea of gardening. *Dig* it? No, I didn't *dig* it. That's pretty darn heavy work. Every spring I get a man to dig it. Of course everybody finds that there are different things round a house you have to get a man for. I tried last week fixing the tap in the kitchen sink but I had to get a man; and for the electric stuff, it's always best to get a man, and for anything round a garage you need a man—in fact, for anything, don't you know, that's a little complicated or needs brain, it pays to get a man. So you see even round a garden, for a thing like heavy digging—it's really back-breaking work—I get a man. He's a queer old character, old William, sort of crooked-backed old fellow, I don't know how old he is—but you should see him dig! He's not round here to-night or I'd show him to you. I suppose old fellows like that they just don't mind digging, eh? Anyway I get him to come and do the digging, and then a boy for the weeding—it's mean work, you need a boy for it—and perhaps now and then I get a woman in to do the picking—you know, gooseberries and currants—and things like that. It's tiresome work—you need a woman for it. But beyond that I do the whole thing myself: especially the planning. You see in a garden there's a whole lot of planning to do; where everything is to go and a sort of timing and rotation. I made out a whole card of it one night last winter but I can't find it. I made it out one evening during a show given by our Repertory Theatre Company—ever see them?—they're great! I took nearly the whole evening to do it, on the back of the programme, and I put it in my dinner-jacket pocket, and I forgot it and I suppose it got thrown away. Anyway, I know it pretty well.

Now these seeds—look at the packet—see these are *Bordigiana*! They're for flowers all along the path (to make a border) and they come out in those beautiful masses of dense flowers low and close to the ground—no, I never grew them before, never heard of them till a fellow told me about them one day last winter at a funeral—but look what it says—'form a heavy border of deep *calceolaria*'—what the hell is it? Latin, perhaps—anyway you can see the effect. It explains, see, that you make a sort of little trench by pulling out all the stones—William's doing it to-morrow—and that's where they go. So I have to get this packet out marked ready, as you see, with a label *Bordigiana*, and such and such a date—that's to-morrow—he'll put them in then—and that's what you call system.

I wonder if you'd like some kind of a cool drink, eh! perhaps something with a stick in it? You take these packets of seed, if you don't mind, and mark the date on each—no, not to-night, to-morrow: I'll let the old fellow plant them; he'll be flattered to death. And I'll just go back into the house and fetch out something to drink. Just a second....

Now, I'll put the glasses and the bottle on this rustic table—neat, isn't it? Solid but sort of artistic too—I made it myself—stop, steady! I'm afraid the damn thing's a little shaky. You don't mind if I set the stuff on the ground? There! Ice in it, or not? Say when! Right! ... You see, I always feel when I get out for an evening's gardening, there's nothing like an odd drink, just to keep a man from feeling tired: and anyway it's nice to have it here out of doors in the evening, among all the foliage, or where it's going to be—I just love nature, don't you?—Here's luck!

Now let me just have half a smoke and explain to you the layout. You see it's partly flowers and partly vegetables! Do I grow vegetables! Well, I should say so. You see that's the mistake made by so many fellows—amateurs, I mean—to think that gardening means only flowers! Not at all, there's a fascination about growing vegetables—I mean really fine prize stuff. I had some lettuce here last year that I wish you could have seen: great big heads of it—I was so proud of them I took two of them over to my grocer, perfect beauties—he gave me five cents each for them—and took two more next day. Well, you might say that that was just partly because I have a big account there, but all the same that kind of thing mounts up. Last season I took him over a cucumber, a perfect prize, I never saw anything like it—he gave me fifteen cents for it—and said that any year I had another like it, he'd be glad to take it. And early peas—very often, in fact, only four or five years ago, I had a whole basket of the earliest in town—I sold them to our club: you may have eaten some of them—forty cents, thank you, for that one little transaction! So you see that kind of thing keeps adding up. It all cuts down your overhead.

But mind you, *mainly* I grow vegetables just for the pride and beauty of it. You see that flat patch over there, all smooth, just planted—well, those are early peas, English marrowfat peas—unless William forgot to put them in this morning. I never saw them before, I never heard of them till a man told me about them at a board meeting last winter. Here's the packet I took them from to give them to William: I wanted to keep the picture. Aren't they lovely?

See what it says—'English marrow peas, full-podded variety, reach a height of five to six feet, carrying pods eight to ten inches in length!' Get that! Now those peas by July, they come on early, will just fill that space up so that you can't see over them. Just wait till July. I'll grow them on high sticks—it's a lot of trouble but I don't mind it. I'll get the boy—the kid that does the weeding—to go and cut a lot of brush—I'll tell him just the kind of brush to cut, and there you are!

Of course, I admit that vegetables would be nothing without flowers mixed in. I always have them here in borders or patches: right over there along the side I had a patch of nasturtiums. You ought to be here in July to see them, just a blaze of colour! and down that way a line of dahlias. You ought to see them in August. You just wait till August!...

Sweet-peas, you say? Well, no, I never had any luck with them. The damn things don't ever seem to come up. I've tried again and again. But I'm going to have another go at them. A friend of mine was telling me about them one day last January. It was up at the college at the inauguration of the new president—I think I saw you there—and the president made his inaugural address, you remember?—fine, wasn't it? I call it masterly—and we were right away at the back of the hall—and my friend was telling me about sweet-peas. It seems you make a deep trench—oh, just as deep as you can—and then put in a base of old rotten manure—and then some earth, and more manure as rotten as you can get it—the real stuff—and then the sweet-peas! And will they grow! Five feet is nothing! and blossoms as big as saucers. You wait till about the end of August and you'll see! I'll have a centre line of them right across the garden. Oh, I'm going to go right at it! No half measures—I'll have William dig that trench right slap across the garden from side to side. If you garden at all you've got to be thorough about it.

Ah, here's William now! Isn't he a queer-looking bird? No, he's not so old, not seventy or only just. That's his own shovel he's got over his shoulder—a shovel with a long handle. These old birds never dig with a spade, always with a long shovel—excuse me; I'll just call to him a minute—William, you might just be getting that patch ready for the early corn where I showed you last night. I'll be talking to my friend here for a while. You just go ahead, eh? Where to make the line? Oh, just make it—make it—oh, I tell you—just make it where it seems about all right, eh! all right.

Now, what about just another little tinkle of the ice, eh? Isn't it great out here in the garden on a night like this—so

soft, eh?—and yet the light seems to fade so soon, doesn't it—going already—thanks, that's plenty, whoa! stop!... You were asking me do I grow asparagus? No, I don't, I'm sorry to say. I always mean to and I don't. You see, there are a lot of things like asparagus that you have to start last year—or for asparagus itself, you have to start the year before last. You lay down a bed the year before last and then let it grow its first year untouched and even the last year only just trimmed, and the third year, this year, there's your asparagus! I was thinking only last night that if I had started three years ago I could have had a good bed all along the bottom side of the garden—that way—just under the sunflowers—I mean, where the sunflowers will be—I showed you, you remember. But I'll get at it this year all right. You have to make the bed in August, and I think I'll hire old William for the whole of August (I'll be away at the sea, myself), and I'll go right at it.

What! You say you have to leave?—no, no, don't go. It's hardly dusk yet. I can work later. Often I come out here and work when it's practically dark, or sit and smoke on the bench. Stay right on. You have to go round to the club. Jack Conway there! No! not old Jack who was at college with us? I haven't seen Jack for years. Darn, I wish I could go over! You're going to have a game of poker, you say: but then, I'd be one too many? No? Is that so? I'd love to go over too. Wait till I just call over to William—or no, to hell with William, let him dig. Come on. Drink that up and we'll go into the house and I'll get these darn-fool trousers off: it won't take a second.... No, no, that's all right. You didn't upset my gardening. I'll be at it again to-morrow—it's Saturday, and I'm planning a regular field day! Old William is to bring another old fellow like himself and I expect to have them digging from right after lunch (my lunch) till dark. It's an exercise like that, I find, that keeps a man fit. Come on!

PART TWO: A MEMORY OF AUTUMN

'Another year,' he said, 'I mean to get at it a little earlier in the spring, so as to get the weeds out of it.'

We were standing looking at the autumn wreck of what he called his garden. It was a little angle of ground about so far this way and so far that—you know how big—a quarter of an acre? I guess so, or no, not that much—well, just a garden. The hedges and trees about it must, I suppose, in the summer have made it look like a bower. But now the leaves were mostly fallen, or thin and yellow. The wind whistled through it. Running across it were some ragged stalks of corn still standing—the leaves—or whatever you call them—a faded brown with streaks of mildew. It all seemed pretty empty and forlorn.

'A snug spot, isn't it?' said my gardener friend. Lord knows he didn't seem to see the desolation of it. To him it was the same little embowered enchantment where he had worked on his hands and knees in the long June twilight, his wife holding the trowel for him while he planted—what was it?—oh, yes, the Dutch bulbs for a border, the ones that grow six feet high—no, they didn't come up. He thinks he planted them too deep.

'Another year,' he said, 'I'll set them just almost on the surface.' 'Another year'—that's always the tenor of his and other gardeners' talk. 'Another year!' And each year they try again, and the garden ends in weeds, and frost and wind, and little clumps of half-sized beetroots under a mist of fox-grass, and a thick patch of long grass that to their fond eye is still the strawberry bed, and still they say, 'Another year!' Our human kind, so we read in the scripture, began in a garden. So we never want to leave it. I have no doubt that Adam said to Eve, 'Another year I'll try pruning the apple trees earlier.'

'These strawberries,' said my friend, pointing to what I saw as a patch of grass and what he saw as a bed of strawberry plants with invisible weeds, 'would have done better if we had kept the grass down. I really meant to cut the runners off and make a new bed, but I didn't get time. Another year I certainly will.'

'Did you have any strawberries this year?' I asked.

'Oh, my! Yes, lots, or well, at any rate, once or twice my wife and I had a great bowl of them—all we could eat.'

I know just how much a loving wife can eat, or fail to eat, under those circumstances. She reaches repletion at a cost—if they bought the strawberries—at about two cents. But there's no use applying cost or accounting to amateur

gardening. It won't stand it.

'Those beets,' began my friend.

'Which beets?' I asked.

'Here, you see them—just along past your feet in a row. They go right across the garden.'

Then I saw them, the half-withered tops above the fox-grass and the roots, or bodies, or bottoms, or whatever you call them, just feebly out of the ground.

'The beets,' continued the gardener, 'are a failure.' It is characteristic of amateur gardeners that they like at times to admit failure in an offhand way. It seems to indicate huge success elsewhere.

'I think,' he said, 'I gave them too heavy a dose of nitrate.'

'Nitrate' is the name of a white powder that my friend keeps in his 'garden house' (a little shed four by three at the corner of the lot). I have noticed him often in the spring when the gardening is at its height, and green bursting out everywhere, crawling along on his hands and knees and dusting on nitrate. If nothing else will kill the stuff, that will.

But it seems that you don't need in such a garden to take steps to kill *everything*. The birds, it appears, will look after a lot of it.

'These were the peas,' he said, 'the birds got them.' He pointed to a sort of trellis work of lath sticks with fragments of dried yellow vines, or leaves, clinging to them or even tied to them. It must have taken hours and hours to make that trellis. But it has the effect, I believe, of holding the peas down from growing. All amateur gardeners use it.

'Didn't you have any?' I asked. 'Oh, goodness, yes, we had one elegant feed of them—all we could eat—and then a flock of birds cleaned them out. Another year I'm going to put a sort of cover over them, a kind of movable net that I've invented.'

I have long since observed that my gardening friends live on *invention*. They never *make* the things. They just invent them, mostly in winter time—as sorts of ingenious contrivances for automatic watering, for bleaching celery, and spraying with nicotine where nitrate couldn't reach.

'These beans,' said my friend, 'were fine.' This time I didn't ask which beans. I knew there must be beans in the grass somewhere.

'The only trouble with beans,' he added, 'is that they get old so soon.'

It is a common trouble in life. But I have often noticed its application in the gardens of my gardening friends. One day the beans are too young to pick, and a day passes and they are too old to eat. There is something about it, or like it, in the Epistle to the Corinthians. I think I've heard it at funerals.

A colder wind rustled through the little garden, shaking the leaves.

'Another year,' said my friend, 'I think I'll put in a cedar hedge. It will keep the garden warmer, either that, or a sort of movable fence in sections, that I invented one day on the way to work.'

The wind blew again, colder and with a fleck of rain in it. The branches shook as if in denial of the fence or hedge.

'Come into the house,' he said, 'it's a little cold here.' 'A little!' I had been half frozen ever since we looked at the first empty hotbed. 'Come into the house,' he said, 'and I'll give you a Scotch and soda.'

We went into the house. There was a flaming fire of crisp autumn sticks burning in the grate. It was warm and bright. Glasses and a decanter glittered on a tray. The light shot back in amber streaks from the whiskey in the decanter.

'Now then,' said my friend, 'a Scotch, eh?' as he moved to pour it out.

'Do you grow your own whiskey?' I asked.

'Good Heavens, no!' he laughed. 'What an idea!'

ALL NICE PEOPLE

The word 'landlord' generally carries a bad significance. It seems to mean a man eager and grasping for rent, and putting the screws on delinquent tenants. But the truth isn't always so. There are landlords and landlords.

I had a proof of this some years ago, one summer when I was house hunting—visiting old houses and new houses, and going through apartment buildings—brand-new, half-finished, or not finished at all. Everybody who has done it knows how fatiguing it is. There's no fun in it. But if you want to get what you want you have to go through with it.

One hot summer evening I came across a new apartment building, just about the type I was interested in. It wasn't quite finished, at least the lower part was pretty complete, but the top mostly ladders and platforms.

It was getting towards dusk but there were a few carpenters or workmen still around. I asked where the landlord lived.

'He's right here,' they said, 'sitting over there.' I went over to him. 'I'd like to have a look over these apartments,' I said, 'if it's not too late.'

'Not too late at all,' said the obliging man, rising and slipping on his coat, 'not a bit too late. You don't mind climbing one or two ladders, do you?'

'Not a bit,' I answered.

'Now this,' he said, showing a ground floor apartment, 'is, I think, a pretty good affair. You've got an open fire in both the living-room and the dining-room, and you see the way the service pantry is arranged.'

'I'm afraid,' I said, 'I couldn't rent that one. It's a little too large.'

'Oh, it's rented,' said the genial landlord, 'a little couple from Pittsburgh, nicest people I ever saw. They'll be in on the first of next month.'

'But look at this,' he continued, as we climbed up one flight, 'this one's practically ready. Isn't that pretty complete? How do you like that kitchenette, eh?'

'Very good,' I said, 'this is more what I wanted. How much is it?'

'Oh, it's taken,' he answered, 'a little couple from Cleveland, mighty nice people.'

We were climbing again. 'But here's the mate to it, see—wait while I open this folding door, this is practically the same thing, except for the bow window ... fine view out of that, eh, if it was more daylight.'

'Could I have this one at the same price as the one below?'

'No—it's gone: lady and her brother from Schenectady: nicer people I never saw ... but I think I can show you the very thing you're after, if you don't mind climbing up three more floors to the top—just watch those ladders. Eh? On this floor? No, not this one, nor on the floor above, they're taken—but up here at the top is the one I especially want to show

you.'

'Now,' he said, himself a little out of breath, as we got to the top floor, and stood on the unfinished studding and gaping doorways. 'This is the apartment, living-room, kitchen, bath and two bedrooms, about as complete a little layout as you can fancy. That's the sort of thing you're looking for, eh?'

'Yes,' I said, 'It is. But if I take this, how soon could it be finished?'

'Oh,' he answered, 'you couldn't *take* it. It's been let a month back, a little couple from Winnipeg, musical both of them, never met nicer people, oh, no, you couldn't *take* it, but I thought you'd be interested to *see* it.'

'Why, thank you,' I said, 'but I'd rather look at the apartments that are still to rent.'

'Oh, I haven't got any,' answered the landlord, 'all gone weeks back. But I thought you'd like to have a look over them anyway. Watch that ladder; it doesn't seem quite firm!'

We climbed down.

X

THE ANATOMY OF GLOOM

To bring this essay into line with the dignity of a professor I have at least to pretend that it is part of the 'psychology of business.' As everyone knows, there has grown up now in the colleges an entire department of wisdom called by that name, the 'psychology of business.' This shows how you can sell insurance to a 'prospect' by looking him in the eye; or find out the saturation point of the sale for braces—what's called the elasticity of the demand—by saying to a number of men in succession 'your trousers are slipping.' There are other tests for women.

So, in a way, this essay dealing with the business value of cheerfulness as a collective business asset is not to be ruled out as a mere attempt at humour, a thing not to be tolerated.

Let me first put in a few words what I want to say with all the dignity and seriousness that befit a professor—and then try to say it over so as to make it worth hearing. I think that we, speaking collectively for about a hundred million people, are greatly adding to the burden of our world by our new mentality of distress. Anxiety is becoming a habit. We cultivate the expectation of disaster. This attitude works towards our destruction. We are all afraid together. We have lost courage. Mediaeval superstition, with its fear of hell, wasn't in it with our new fear of depression, our new alarm of war. We see it everywhere. Bankers tremble. Newspapers croak. Professors prophesy. Farmers whine. Business slackens. Credit shrinks. Even the criminals are discouraged, losing nerve.

We are only kept going at all because youth will have its way: will ride in motor cars: will spend money in cabarets—and because at all ages pleasure beckons: people take trips and buy what they can't afford. The pump sucked dry with fear, is primed extravagance. Never mind the economics of this. Just take it as a fact. It always has been so. Nero, it is said, fiddled while Rome was burning; quite so, and saved the violin industry. We are dancing, it is said, on the edge of a volcano. Good, keep it up! 'Forward and back, and doh-see-do!' as they called out in the barn dances.

I think we get the theme, or shall I say it over again?—business and industry are being paralysed by apprehension. The world is becoming too serious to-day, even to do its serious work properly.

Take first, as the most obviously striking example in the present instance, the case of banking. What a serious trade it has become! As I first remember it in my home town of Mariposa (population 4,000 but locally estimated more) it was a profession calculated to enlarge the amenity of life. A bank manager was supposed to turn up with the key of the bank

about ten, the clerks dropped in soon after. The manager only stayed till a customer asked him out for a drink, the usual civility after receiving a loan, or until he asked a customer out for a drink, the usual courtesy after refusing a loan.

This kept the manager in and out of the bank all day, seeing the public all the time, always pleasant and agreeable—why not? And thus gathering business without trying for it. For business, like happiness, comes easiest when least sought. The banker's clerks never studied books on banking—there weren't any—didn't bother with graphs or charts—except for the races, went home at three o'clock, played tennis till dark, and poker (ten matches to a cent) till daylight. And yet, in the words of an old song, 'the world went very well then.'

Take, if you will, the terrible change that has come over journalism. The old-time newspaper—I'm thinking of the country type—told the best of everything. The huge city papers that we read now tell the worst of everything—a daily scare of apprehension of approaching war, of imminent disaster, of deepening depression. We get to expect it, to ask for it, like martyrs asking for suffering. The old-fashioned country newspaper tried to find pleasant news such as: 'We see that Mr. Silas Aimes of the Fourth Concession has got the frame of the new big barn up. Well done, Si!'—or—'We learn that Mr. Lemuel Crowder and his daughter Posie are back from a trip to the old country. They spent a week going all over England and Scotland, and report the old country a great place, right up to the modern standard!' Now, why can't we train our journalists to give us a little of that sort of stuff! If we must talk of foreigners let's get them on to the Fourth Concession. Like this: 'Mr. Adolf Hitler is putting a new tin roof on his house at Berchtesgarden. Well done, Alf, you'll need it.' Or this: 'Dooce Mussolini, of Appian Way Corners, has stocked in a new line of gent's shirting, done in a heavy black material, and well suited for chores and dirty work. Dooce's slogan is, "You can change later." A lot of the boys are buying.' Or this one: 'Advices from northern Spain show that Frankie Franco's circus will be on tour all through Catalonia in early summer. The little ones are on the look-out already. Give them something good, Frankie!'

I don't mean to say that old-time newspapers in the city didn't contain sensation and disaster. Of course they did. But it was other people's disaster. We just got the sensation. We read, for example, that a subterranean earthquake had destroyed an island in the Pacific, killing over a thousand Kanakas—poor fellows! Some of them were blown a hundred feet in the air—poor lads! Quite a lift, eh? Or we read that the Russians had overrun Turkestan and that General Itch had executed Fatash Pasha, the rebel leader. It was all so far away: just quiet reading for breakfast. But now the daily newspaper is the day's anxiety.

Our trouble is too much fuss over foreigners. A generation ago if we had heard that they were making a new anschluss—or anschlitz—what is it called?—we would have thought it had something to do with beer. Let's let it go at that.

Our trouble is statistics. We do everything with charts and graphs. A baby starts with a chart, where it used to get a kiss. All through our lives, charts follow us, to show how depressed we are, how much in debt we are, how much married we are, and how criminal we are becoming: at the end, a little chart beside a hospital bed, runs out with us to zero. But the real things of life—the endeavour, the hope, the will, that make it—are things no chart can show.

Our trouble is prophecy. We are too much troubled about the future. It sticks in my mind that there is a warning against that in the New Testament somewhere, but it is little read now. We attempt to peer into the future with a little apparatus of statistics, like looking into a fog with opera glasses. Prophecy is all right in its way, but to get the good of it you have to make it bold and long. When I was a professor—an occupation I followed for thirty-five years—I dealt freely in my lectures in prophecy. '*Mark my words, gentlemen, in a hundred years you will see the structure of our Government basically altered,*' or—'*The continent of America, gentlemen, is understood to be moving westward away from Europe and towards Japan at the rate of nearly fifty feet a year. I venture to prophesy that we shall find means to alter our foreign policy in time to meet this new rapprochement.*' Unfortunately I made some of my prophecies a little too short and just got out of college in time before they were due.

But I am saying, make your prophecy long and bold and it's good, if only as a stimulus to thought. One recalls the weather prophecy of the old farmers' almanac, a whole year of weather at a time—'July, wind, with rain and sun. No snow. Fair with spells of heat and cold. The sun in Sagittarius.' Putting the sun in Sagittarius was a good touch: not so much where it was, but knowing it was there.

The truth is we can't see far. Life is veiled. It has to be. Biology has long since exploded all the nonsense about

'signs of a hard winter,' and so forth, that used to be the stock-in-trade of trappers and hunters. One remembers Longfellow's *Evangeline*:

*'All of the hunters predicted a winter long and inclement
Seeing how thick was the fur on the back sides of lynxes and foxes.'*

The quotation is not exact but it will do, especially as there's nothing in it biologically. The fur on the animals has only to do with what is past and not with what is coming. You might as well say:

*All of the brokers predicted a terrible slump in the market,
Seeing their clients arriving no longer in seal-skins but coon-skins.*

Yet we fret ourselves needlessly with our unending preoccupation over to-morrow. Wiser men in older time have warned us to seize the present moment while we can—to 'eat, drink, and be merry.'

*Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying,
And that same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.*

But I am saying more than this. I am saying that it is *good business* to do so. Let me stress again the main theme I am trying to follow, and as difficult to walk as a tightrope: I am saying that there is money in cheerfulness, business salvation in hope and collective security in collective forgetfulness.

That cheerfulness is good business I was once called upon to prove (to a law court) as an economic expert. I was commissioned to prepare a 'factum' to that effect on behalf of a great corporation which had been foolish enough to subscribe money to a sick children's hospital. This seemed a pretty dirty thing to do. No wonder a shareholder complained and brought suit. The only possible rebuttal was to show that charity was good business. The corporation repudiated all idea that they cared about sick children, a ridiculous thought—or took an interest in hospitals: they claimed they were just out for money. And I proved it. I showed that even hardened economists like Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill had admitted that there's money in charity and profit in good will. Any firm in the toy and Christmas business will see it at once: so what we want is more toys and more Christmas.

The corporation for whom I wrote the factum were so delighted with my argument that they were going to give me a fountain-pen with an inscription on it, till I showed them a better idea.

Incidentally—I say it as an *obiter dictum*, a digression father against my theme—I got in this connection an instance of the practical working of the law as an instrument of prophecy. The lawyer in charge of the case showed me a pile of typed sheets. 'That's the evidence of our witnesses,' he said. 'Have they given it already?' I asked. 'Oh, no,' he answered, 'they won't give it for a month.' 'Oh, I understand, you mean they've written it out beforehand.' 'Oh, no,' the lawyer said, 'they haven't seen it yet.'

As I look about me I seem to see a gathering pall of over-seriousness pervading all our civilization: of over-apprehension, over-anxiety. We take too much thought for the future. In fear of life we drag out our preparation for it, our education, too long. When it is done, life itself has passed by: apprehension of the future makes everything too late—marriage ten years beyond its time, children ten years late, and Grim Death reaps down too soon what should have lived

as a grandfather.

We are losing the key to happiness. I realized this anew and vividly when I went the other day to see, as all the world has, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. What a wonder of light and colour and, above all, what a world of happiness! One could feel the audience reach forward as if wanting to step from our world into theirs—the fawns, the little animals, so kind in every gesture, in every tremor, the merry melody of the dwarfs' evening gaiety, the mutual willingness and goodwill—oh! give us that—and we can afford to have all our evil segregated into one hideous witch—forgotten as soon as gone.

If it is true that a heavy pall of gloom is spreading over us: if it is true that it debilitates our collective energy, and lowers our collective confidence, what is there that we can do about it? Nothing that I know of—or nothing by rule, line, or statute. Changes are made not by the law but by the spirit. The law merely registers the fact. The law against theft proves that the world hates stealing. A compulsory law compelling cheerfulness—forcing a banker to smile and compelling a professor to stop talking—would fail of its end. But it is at least something to know what's wrong with us.

A DIP INTO PSYCHOLOGY

It struck me one morning with sudden apprehension that I was growing deaf. It was not a thing to neglect for a moment. The mere notion of it set all my senses alert. I telephoned at once to an old friend of mine, a specialist, to make an appointment. Then I started to walk to his office.

The distance was about a mile. The day one of those bracing autumn mornings that just put life into your veins. By the time I entered the doctor's office, I felt fine.

'Henry,' I said, 'I think I'm going deaf.'

'Eh?' he said mildly.

'I think I'm going deaf,' I repeated.

'Oh, *deaf!* Well, we'll soon see about that.'

The doctor picked up a little sounding fork and made it twang.

'Do you hear that?' he asked.

'Why, of course,' I said. 'Hear it? I could have heard it half a mile away.'

'Try this,' he said, and made it lower.

'Why, yes, it sounds quite loud.'

He tried it lower still.

'I hear it quite easily,' I said.

'Impossible,' he muttered, with a kind of anxiety in his voice, 'now then, this one.'

It was faint, but I could hear it.

'You can hear that?' questioned the doctor.

'Can't you?' I asked.

'Why, no, damn it, I can't hear any of the last three!'

'You don't say so!' I said. 'Give me the sounding fork! Now! Can you hear this, Henry?'

'No!'

I hit the fork harder—'And this? Try now, can't you get it?'

Louder still—'No!'

I hit the fork harder—'And this? Try now, can't you get it?'

Louder still—'No!'

'By gosh!' my specialist friend said in alarm, 'I believe I'm going deaf: strike it again—no, I don't hear a thing!'

'Henry,' I said, as I laid the fork down, 'your hearing is in a bad way. Whether it comes from drinking or merely from a general breakdown of your system, I don't know. But what you need is air, vigorous exercise. Good-bye!'

I left him, having learned, if I didn't know it before, that ophthalmologists are always deaf, that oculists are blind, that sailors can't swim, distillers hate whiskey, and barbers are all bald.

There's a psychological law for this, but I forget it.

XI

THEN AND NOW

WERE WE HAPPIER FIFTY YEARS AGO?

Old people always think that the world is going to pieces and young people that it is just beginning. To old people things are closing in; to young people they are opening out. To old people of to-day the world seems filled with dangers, terrors, with imminence of world war, and world destruction, of social revolution and social catastrophe. I suppose it always did. I suppose that fifty years ago people thought of Nihilists and Anarchists in the same terms of terror; and fifty years before that all England shuddered at 'Chartists,' at 'Trade Unions,' and 'Agnostics,' and 'Rationalists,' and wondered what the world was coming to.

So, on general principles, the apprehensions of old age are a mere part of old age itself and the world is not coming or going anywhere in particular except round its orbit, first turn to the left and straight on. But exceptions prove a rule. I'm not just so sure that in our own day, this present moment, we have not a bad case of a world greatly changed for the worse in ever so many things in its last fifty years.

Now I make, of course, great reservations here. I leave out of count all sorts of things. I admit *that human life now averages fifty-five years* whereas it only used to be thirty-five. Hence the expectation of life is now longer, but then few people expect to reach it anyway, like the farmer whose crops hadn't turned out so well as he thought they would—but then he didn't think they would. I admit that the hideous poverty of the slums of 1887 is alleviated a lot. But then I don't live in the slums and don't care to know people who do. I admit that prisons are greatly improved and that a first-class penitentiary now is as good as a club. But I have a club of my own just as good anyway. I admit that the old saloon is gone and I'm sorry. I admit that women have largely emancipated themselves from the dominance of men and I'm sorry

for that too, and I don't believe it anyway. I acknowledge all the progress of machinery and science but I fail to see that it has got us anywhere. As far as the explanation of the universe goes, science is utterly hopeless. As far as its application to human wants goes, it has reached an absolute deadlock. As far as the means of death goes, science is triumphant over human happiness.

But I am thinking of the ordinary life of ordinary people, then as now, fifty years ago and to-day. Then it was all so simple; now so complex. Take the earliest thing—education. Then it was relatively short, a prelude to life. Now it stretches out into an appalling vista of years, an unspeakable prospect of expense. Fifty years ago a course in medicine was all accomplished in three years—one in a sawmill and two at college. You got admitted to the church by putting in four summers on a farm and one winter in a divinity school. Entrance to the bar was by hanging round the bar, or bars, in the city for three or four years and defending a negro in a police court. Teachers became teachers without any technical qualifications except that they needed the job and had nothing else that they could do. The entry to journalism was by setting type, and a banker became one by being able to add two columns at a time and live on twenty dollars a month. These are not exaggerations or attempts at pleasantries. They are just facts. Few people realize the tremendous burden of added cost, of added complexity that fifty years has piled on to the average life of those not rich and not criminal.

Turn from education to the softer aspect of opening life—love and courtship and marriage. Fifty years ago, you didn't take a girl out in a taxi, there weren't any. And you didn't take her in a cab. Cabs were only used for weddings or when people were knocked down in the street. No, the girl walked. And if you made a hit with her at the party then you asked if you could take her out for a walk next day. Some of those girls, the popular ones, must have walked a hundred miles a week. And after a party you didn't have to take her to supper to a night restaurant or cabaret. There weren't any. You took her back to her own house and she—not you—had to supply lemonade and bread-and-butter sandwiches. Of course her mother was there. I admit that you had to see far more of a girl's mother in those days than you do now. But perhaps it was just as well; you knew the worst sooner. You also took her out to the big football games and the cricket matches—no admission to pay for either of them. Can you wonder that lots of fellows spent practically all their time with girls?

The result was early marriage. You see you didn't have to save up to buy a car, or a radio, or a refrigerator—you rented a house for \$8.00 a month and had all the rest of your money over. An evening party (Euchre, beer, and cold turkey) cost \$1.50 and a summer vacation (spent in a canvas tent) cost \$25.00. Life was all so simple. Can you wonder that people died at thirty-five? They'd finished it.

Or the outside world? How beautifully far away. No submarines, no aeroplanes, no bombs, no gas. War was adventure, far away. It had no meaning in home life.

Social revolution? For most people there wasn't enough to revolve. There were of course, a few big cities, with occasional upheavals—but it didn't touch your life or mine. You read that it had been necessary to charge the rioters with cavalry; or fire a volley into them—or perhaps a couple of volleys—too bad, nothing else to do. That the riot could spread, could engulf the world, could spread death in the last corners of the countryside—no, no one ever thought of it.

And the far away countries. China! One read—I mean it literally, and I remember it though I forget the year—that a million Chinese were drowned in a flood. Hard luck, eh? One didn't think they had so much water power in China.

Fun! Amusement! But that all depends on your capacity for it. The moving pictures have made every little snipe in the city brain-drowsy at twelve years old. He's seen earthquakes, shipwrecks, riots, bombs, kings, courtesans, savagery—he's finished. You couldn't knock another spark of intelligence out of him. His little flint has finished all its fire; there's nothing left for him now except over-effect, perverted sensation, crime... It is quite possible indeed that the world will swing upside down, like a revolving pyramid, with crime, the criminal class, at the top.

THROWN OUT

I was sitting in the rotunda of the hotel, one of those old-fashioned rotundas—it was years ago—where the chairs were in a sort of big horseshoe, with a huge open fire-place in the centre. It was the custom of the guests—these were called 'guests' in those days—to sit around the rotunda in their off hours and the manager would sit among them.

I was at the end of the row but one, and the end one was the manager. He and I were old friends. I said to him, 'What's the matter with you to-night? You look as if you had something on your mind.' I knew him as well as that.

'I have,' he answered. 'I've just had a mean business to get through, one of those things that you've got to do in the hotel business, whether you like it or not.'

The manager spoke in a low, throaty tone, as soft and easy as a gargle. He was too heavy a man to shout. Anyway hotel men talk low. They have to.

'What was the trouble?' I asked.

'Case of getting rid of a loafer,' the manager continued in his low, confidential tone. 'Fellow you may have seen round—been here for two months or more—never paid for his room, not a cent, hung up the dining-room, and as for the bar, he seemed to think he could drink free in there all day.'

The manager's rising indignation began to raise his voice with it. He began to speak with animation and anger, looking me right in the face as he spoke. Some of the guests had half turned to listen.

'So at last I said to him,' the manager said, dropping as best he could into his quiet tone, but losing it entirely as he continued, 'Look here, you loafer!' As he said this, the manager stood up, turned squarely in front of me and smacked one hand with the palm of the other (that made every one turn and listen), as he went on, 'Listen to me. You've loafed round this hotel for two months. You haven't paid a cent on your room or your board—and I'm sick of it. Out you go, to-night!'

With that, the manager put his hands in his pockets, and walked off about his business, cooling down as he went.

But the news round town that I'd been thrown out of the hotel for debt nearly cost me my job!

XII

WHAT I READ THEN; WHAT YOU READ NOW

AN ESSAY FOR THE YOUNG

I am sixty-eight years old. Sixty years ago, able to 'read for myself,' I first passed through that magic gateway into the Garden of Imagination. How greatly has it changed in sixty years to become the very different garden, the very different world that you young people know to-day.

The world in which I lived, as compared with yours, was vast and empty and voiceless. Look at the map of it as it hung on the walls of our school-room. There was Africa, a huge continent with nothing but an outside rim to it, rivers that seemed to come from nowhere, and queer names along the coast now mostly vanished—Mozambique, Zanzibar, Sofala; Asia, a lot of it just about as empty, with a great desert smeared across the middle, with its northern coast, inaccessible and unknown, washing into the Arctic Sea. Over the heart of the continent were still inscribed such queer and romantic names as Turkestan and Bokhara and the Kurghis Steppes. Arabia was marked as a great empty desert, closed and forbidden. Of our own continent great stretches were still one vast emptiness of prairie and forest, the Rocky Mountains infinitely far away, as yet pierced only with the thin thread of two or three railway lines; in Canada still huge and impenetrable. South America seemed on the map, as far as its insides went, an unexplored jungle.

In such a world the sense of distance, of mystery and of the unknown was far more impressive than is possible today. Your little world is shrunken, crowded—noisy and quarrelsome—it is like a street alley where was once a silent wood.

I went the other day to the 'pictures' and there before me on the screen was the young King Farouk of Egypt in a tarboosh and his Queen Farida in a Paris dress, just bowing themselves off in time to give the Japanese a chance to bomb Shanghai—also in a hurry, because Dartmouth was going to play hockey against McGill in a minute. The game was timed to allow Mussolini to come out on the roof of the Vatican (it went fast, I'm not sure what roof it was) and give a talk meant for Hitler, who appeared on the terrace of the Tiergarten—followed by the last minute of a fight in Madison Square Garden... What a world! Rushing with voices that come from currents of cosmic force running through our very bodies themselves—quivering with power we cannot control, dangers we can see but not avoid.

I am not placing my world *above* yours—I am only exchanging one mystery for another. Our life, in any case, is framed in mystery, floating in the unknown; but the world of to-day seems to me, as an old man, in a way terrifying, like a thing rushing to its doom! But don't worry over that, my young friends. Old men have always thought the world was hurrying to its doom: and the joke is, it wasn't the *world* at all, but just the old men themselves.

But at least the contrast is great. Oh, to be back in the silent world of sixty years ago, in which a little boy with a book under an apple tree could be transported to the Rocky Mountains, and there sit with Trapper Ben and Siwash Jo, beside a crackling fire of resinous pine, over a dish of buffalo meat. You can't sit there, you see, because if you did, Trapper Ben would say to Siwash Jo, 'Turn on the radio, Jo and let's hear what's doin'!' and Siwash Jo would say, 'Me thinkum King Farouk of Egypt he marry one nicey piece-Squaw.'

From such a setting you will easily understand that our reading of sixty years ago was based on the 'bigness' and mystery of the world, of adventure in 'distant lands' and 'overseas,' of people disappearing on long voyages to return as heroes or millionaires—back from the 'diggings' or the 'Cannibal Isles,' or places like that. Notice the queer, fascinating names of our world. You'd call the 'diggings' the 'Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company,' and the 'Cannibal Isles' the 'Municipality of Honolulu.'

But of course we were strongest of all on 'desert islands.' The height of every boy's imagination was to share the fate of that lucky man Robinson Crusoe and be shipwrecked on a desert island, with one or two 'other fellers'—no girls and no grown-up people. Desert islands always contained in abundance everything needed for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, such as bread-fruit, yams, mangoes, coconuts—the stuff we never got at home except at Christmas. Of course, the world's best desert island story was *Robinson Crusoe*, and no doubt you still read it. But it's really upside down. Defoe, who wrote it in 1719, meant it as a picture of loneliness and hardship, but the story, as stories do, turned into something else. Hence all boys envy Robinson his island and his goats and his parrot, and above all his man Friday. What they like is the fun of *being* there. When the Spaniards come into the story and the 'adventures' begin, it is all off.

The second best-known desert story, written a hundred years ago, was the *Swiss Family Robinson*. Its author was a Swiss professor of philosophy so that shows how much he knew about desert islands. His story was no good after you were ten years old—too namby-pamby: the Island too easy. And then how silly to have Mr. and Mrs. Robinson there! If you're lucky enough to hit on a desert island, you don't want your father and mother around.

But the best island story of the lot was Jules Verne's *Mysterious Island*. Verne was a Frenchman, but the boys of England and America adopted him so completely that his books that ran from about 1870 to 1900 were put into English as soon as written. Everybody has heard of his 'prophecy' stories. *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* and *The Clipper of the Clouds*, both come true, and his *Journey to the Moon*, still waiting. But best of all was the wonderful island on which there lands a group of castaways carried in a great storm in a balloon—days and days in dark and wind and clouds, and blow to land—heaven knows where, over such great spaces as we knew and you can't *ever* know. They all landed empty-handed. They begin as children of civilization, from nothing, make and contrive everything, melting iron for tools and mixing gunpowder—but read it. *It's still good.*

Of course, our adventures turned mainly on the sea. Say what you like, the sea can never be the same again since

steam and wireless and radio.

Where are now

*... The Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the mystery and beauty of the ships
And the magic of the sea?*

Never again can be reproduced the wonder and beauty of the great sailing ships outward bound in the sunset a hundred years ago. Kipling has tried, in his *MacAndrew's Hymn*, to lift the huge floating machine called a steamship to a par of mystery and wonder. But it can't be done. The things are different. The one is man, the other is machine.

Never again can literature have such a romantic basis as in those great days of the sea. You can read it now but it's all altered by your knowledge of radio and wireless. To you all great sea stories suggest the idea, what a pity they didn't have wireless! But as for us, we just plunged from shipwreck to shipwreck, buffeted, tossed about, battered by a rush of nautical terms that we didn't understand! We saw the *Grosvenor* strike on the breakers and founder off the coast of South Africa—infinite desolation!—foundering with all hands—well, perhaps a few did reach shore to wander among the savages. We saw the Indiaman *Kent* burned to the water's edge, and the *Dunbar* beaten to pieces off Sydney Heads in the dark, and Masterman Ready in the wreck of the *Pacific*. Such writers as Captain Marryat, Fenimore Cooper and Clark Russell went literally round the world.

You can't read them now, my young friends, I am sure. But don't call them *slow*: the reason is not in them but in you. You are not, I say it very politely, fit to read them. You see, you are a child of machinery and electricity and so you want machinery at every turn. In my day, for example, in a sea story we used 'to sweep the pirates off the deck with our cutlasses'—just a loud 'Hurrah!' and over they went still gnashing their teeth and biting their nails. But you would want to defeat them with 'heat ray' or a 'detonating bomb' or some such deviltry as that. Poor creatures! We just swept them off the deck—surely that doesn't hurt anybody.

But above all we loved the technical language of the sea—the hundred ropes with every one a name, and all the parts of the ship that we knew so well by name but only vaguely by location. The 'bitts,' the 'main chains,' the 'scuppers'—were they parts of the 'binnacle' or of the 'taffrail'? The 'tops,' the 'cross trees,' the 'main-royal-yard'—how high up are we? Don't look down!

When your teachers teach you Shakespeare they explain to you what a wonderful knowledge of the sea Shakespeare had, just because of a little biff of sea language, or an attempt at it, in a play called *The Tempest*.

Master: *Good, speak to the mariners: fall to't yarely, or we run ourselves aground: bestir, bestir.*

Boatswain: *Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! yare, yare! Take in the topsail; tend to the master's whistle. Down with the topsail, yare!*

Tut! That's poor stuff, as Mark Twain once showed (I am quoting his example)—just elementary. Compare it with the language of a real sailor like R. H. Dana, who wrote for us *Two Years before the Mast*.

Having hove short, cast off the gaskets, and made the bunt of each sail fast by the jigger, with a man on each yard, at a word the whole canvas on the ship was loosed, and with the greatest rapidity possible everything was sheeted home and hoisted up, the anchor tripped and cat-headed, and the ship under headway.

But of course for *you* to-day there is no more 'cat-heading' and 'sheeting.' Here is the kind of passage that you would expect in one of *your* books:

Ned brought the radio message to the captain. 'A radio message, Sir,' he said, 'in code.' 'Decode it,' cried Captain Carburettor. Ned, who was a skilled decoder, decoded the coded radio.

'What does it say, Ned?' asked the Captain.

'It's from an aeroplane, Sir,' said Ned, 'warning us that they can see an enemy submarine approaching us at a narrow angle.'

'How narrow?' asked Captain Carburettor.

'One degree, two minutes, log 5 1/2,' answered Ned.

'How long have we got?' asked the Captain.

'Forty-six seconds, Sir,' said Ned.

'Plenty!' said the Captain. 'Pass me a depth bomb. Or here, boy,' he added, putting his hand, not unkindly, on the youngster's shoulder, 'you jump over with it yourself.'

But don't think for a moment that our adventure books were all and only on the sea. Not at all. We were just as much at home on land—in the heart of the forest or out on the prairie, with just enough savages 'lurking' round to make things creepy. What they did was always called 'lurking': they never came straight at you, in an open manly way, they 'lurked.' The only notice you got of their approach was of the snapping of a dry twig: if you heard that, watch out!—there was 'a pesky red-skin' somewhere around. Not that you yourself could hear it, but it was heard by the quick trained ear of your guide and companion, Old Pigskin or Deerskin or whatever he was. I am thinking here, as you guess, perhaps, of Fenimore Cooper, whose books went all over the world in all the languages. Sixty years ago our continent was still young enough and open enough to keep Cooper's books near and intelligible; the prairie was still there and Sitting Bull's massacre of Custer's force recent enough to thrill us with its horror. It is strange to think of the marvellous vogue and influence of writers like Cooper, Scott and Dickens, writing for all the world. What *they* did can never be done again. The times forbid it. A writer nowadays may make a huge hit with a 'best seller,' *Gone with the Tide* or *Off with the Wind*—half a million copies in a year, and in five years as dead and forgotten as dry grass.

Compare that with the world significance of *The Last of the Mohicans*. For the sake of *that* book, little boys in France and Germany dressed themselves up in what they meant for 'leggings,' with feathers and scalp-locks, and crawled round in the bushes of suburban gardens, avoiding the snapping of a dry twig. Remember the name if you don't know it already—*The Last of the Mohicans*, and don't pronounce it, as we *always* did in England, as if *Mohican* rhymed with 'Joey can': it's *Moheegan*—with a sort of Irish sound to it.

Later on, of course, we moved from pure adventure to adventure-romance—Walter Scott for all time the master of it. I am afraid that many young people, perhaps most, can't read Walter Scott to-day. They find him too 'long-winded.' That seems a queer accusation from a generation that makes its novels longer and longer, and thinks nothing of 600 pages. I admit that our books were 'long-winded,' but so are the books of to-day. Only they are long-winded in a different way. We took our 'long-wind' in the beginning, in the way of an 'introduction'; nowadays you get the 'long-wind' all through: the book just goes on and on, like sawing wood. There's no need for it to stop: the end could be the beginning: just like films in the cinema, where we come in late and take the story backwards. We see the final death scene and then learn who it is that died and what killed him. In fact the 'pictures' have shown us that a story is a circle. You begin anywhere.

But in *our* good old books you began at the beginning. Very much so. In fact, away before the beginning. If the story

was laid in the Highlands you had to have first the history and description of the Highlands and how they got high. Then as the hero of the story is going to be Hoosh McQuoosh, you have to learn quietly and slowly all about the ancestry of the Hoosh McQuoosh family, one of whom fell at Bannockburn, one at Flodden—in fact they fell all over the place. But the reward was that by the time you got, slowly and gradually, into the story, you were right at home in it; it felt like part of you.

In one department I am willing to confess our books of sixty years ago were weak. That was in the matter of the heroines. I am afraid, as I look back at them, that our heroines were 'simps.' True, they were given large 'lustrous eyes' like a startled fawn, mouths like 'rosebuds' and a complexion that shot over with blushes as rapidly as a neon sign. But they were 'simps.' There was no sport in them. They wouldn't go out at night. If you dared to touch them they cried out, 'Unhand me, foul villain!' In fact their rhetoric—talk like *that*, only longer—was their strong point, their chief defence. Alone with a foul villain in a ruined castle they could blast him with it. Even in the forest they could knock out an Indian at ten yards. 'Despicable man,' cried Ethelinda, as the fierce Mohawk raised his tomahawk, 'alone and defenceless, beyond human help, a prey at once to treachery and menace, with nothing on which to rely save only the promptings of my own innocence, I command you to restrain your hand!' The Mohawk lowered his tomahawk with a groan: a blush as of shame (it really wasn't) mantled his dusky countenance, and with a couple more groans, he vanished into the brush!

When I compare those heroines with the kind of girls I see in the films to-day, skipping around on beaches and eating midnight supper under rubber trees, I feel sorry to think what we missed.

But you must excuse my writing further—there's a film I must go to see—racketeers, gangsters, murders, trials, jails, all our bright new world spinning at its best.

FEEDING TIME

Feeding time at the Zoo is said to be most interesting to watch. But it's pretty good too in any first-class hotel. You notice that man, at the little table by himself, who has just called the waiter to him. You observe the suffering look on his face, the peculiar whine in his voice. What is it he's saying?

'Waiter, when I asked for the toast well browned, I didn't want it all burnt up like that, into a black crisp!'

Poor fellow, how he must have suffered! Got black toast instead of brown, too bad! But as a matter of fact, that type lives on suffering like that. He can't eat without it.

If the waiter could talk back he'd say, 'Got burnt toast, did you, you poor fish—well, even at that, it's too good for you!'

But the waiter can't talk back, he just says, 'I'm sorry, sir.' He isn't really. He hopes the fellow chokes.

But look at this other man, pink and complacent, and smiling at the bill of fare. 'Waiter,' he is saying, 'I want a *nice* lamb chop—and some *nice* fried potatoes, with a *nice* piece of toast and a *nice* pot of hot tea.'

The proper answer from the waiter to say to him would be, 'I'm sorry, sir, we have no *nice* lamb chop. It's no good!' But he doesn't give it. He says, 'Yes, sir,' and writes it all down. He knows this man has such a good digestion that his breakfast seems nice to him before he eats it.

The most usual type of man in the room, representing, at least, three-quarters of them all, is the man who sits with the menu card in his hand and holds a dialogue with the waiter like this:

'Waiter, is there fresh fish this morning?'

'Oh, yes, sir.'

'How is it?'

'Excellent, sir.'

Here there falls silence and a little more study and then:

'How's the steak this morning?'

'Very good indeed, sir.'

More study:

'Are there cod fish-cakes on the bill of fare to-day?'

'I'll just go and see, sir.'

'No, wait a minute. What about liver and bacon?'

'Yes, sir, always; very good indeed, sir.'

The man puts down the bill of fare.

'Bring me bacon and eggs,' he says, and picks up his newspaper.

As a matter of fact this man has eaten bacon and eggs every day for ten years, never eats anything else, and he knows it and the waiter knows it.

But he can't help having a sort of longing look at the things he would eat if he didn't eat bacon and eggs. It's like thinking of having married someone else instead; not exactly regret, just wonder.

'Waiter! Is my order coming?'

XIII

HAND ME DOWN THAT BOOK

It is an old dispute whether fancy is greater than fact, fiction superior to reality, and the creation of the imagination more significant than the literal truth of the intellect. To put it more simply—which do you find more real, Mr. Pickwick whom you know from the garters up and from the heart out, or Mr. Jones, next door? Night after night you've talked with Mr. Jones while he sprinkled his lawn with a hose. He has expressed his opinion on the extent which grass can be kept green all summer and he has agreed with you that after all the City in the summer is the best summer resort that there is. But apart from that, do you *know* him? No, practically not. Would he lend you money? Oh, no! Would Mr. Pickwick? My dear sir, you'd only have to ask. He'd send it over by Sam Weller within ten minutes with a warning that there must be no thought of repayment.

That's what 'people in books' are like—real people to whom your heart responds and who mean more to you than the people of your everyday life. Many of them have come down with you from your childhood. With some of them you have faced danger on the sea, when one more crack in the top-gallant-mast might mean instant disaster—or in the pathless woods of North America where the careless cracking of a dry twig under the foot of either of you could have brought an arrow whizzing past your head. It wouldn't have hit you, of course. In the glorious world of books, arrows

never *hit* you, they just 'whizz past'; and bullets 'sing'; or even 'rattle' when thick enough—but you come out of it all right, always. Another contrast this with real life, whose poor disasters are so mean, so desolating, so shabby and so unrelieved.

What a cavalcade they form, these 'people out of books' as they come from away back down the centuries. Some are in the very dawn of history, the mist still all about them. Here is Hector with his tall helmet, and Achilles who dragged him around the walls of Troy—or, wait a bit, was it Achilles who dragged Hector, or was it Hector who dragged Achilles? And, let me think, were they dragged or *drugged*?—I'm afraid I'm mixing it up with the latest film; did you see it? I can't quite remember the name—anyway, the one where the Chinaman, Hong something, drugs the detective—at least he *thinks* he's a detective.

The trouble is, of course, that in these later days—nobody's fault—the old outlines are getting dim—all sorts of other and newer and quicker impressions are being written over them. The flash of the cinematograph fuses our history like a burnt-out wire, till the pictures melt and run and mix and somehow reform to make a kaleidoscope of moving mice, flying rabbits, of dancing scenery, of rushing trains, fleeing criminals, detectives ... and throughout all, to-day's news, crashing with bombs, louder than the ten years' siege of Troy, and forgotten in a week.

Those of us old enough can still look through this foreground of the moment to the cavalcade of giants, heroes, warriors, knights, and ladies, that gradually made the literature of the world. We can still hear the laughter of Chaucer's Pilgrims of Canterbury, easy and sauntering, with always time for a joke, the worse the better—how different from the hurrying tourist of to-day with his radio in his ear as he sleeps. We can still wander with Don Quixote, driving full speed at windmills, with the haunting feeling that there's a double meaning in it all if we could only catch it. Or here, closer at hand is Falstaff—it's a pity the young people of to-day don't know him; they'd find him 'some boy.' Or here is *Sir Roger de Coverley*—never read it? Oh, you must—and *The Vicar of Wakefield*—and then round the corner into the full noonday sun of the nineteenth century, with its whole procession of *Waverleys* and *Ivanhoes*, its Pickwicks and its Wellers, Pendennis, and Newcomes. Lord bless us! How the sun once shone on them. And with that what a marvellous side procession to join from America, brought over in stately ships by Washington Irving and Fenimore Cooper, on rafts by Huck Finn, and as (first-class) *Innocents Abroad*, by Mark Twain. On these, as on their British peers and predecessors, it seemed as if the illumination would never fail, and that there never could be a boy who hadn't heard of Mr. Squeers or a girl who hadn't wept over Evangeline.

And now, how great a change! It seems—so I am credibly informed and so I constantly notice—it seems that a great many of the young people of to-day (young people anywhere from six to sixty) have never heard of the *Knights of the Round Table* or at least mix them up with *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*. They think that Robin Hood was 'Doug' Fairbanks when he was younger, and that Lady Godiva is the name of a flesh paint.

There is no need to get angry over it. No need even for a professor to lecture about it. The fact is that the world to-day is so closely interconnected on the surface, that it loses its connection downwards with the past. Let me try to say that more simply, and then I'll get it better myself. In the world in which we live you may 'sit in' at any aerial bombing going on in Barcelona or Shanghai, you can watch and hear the French people going crazy over King George VI, get all the wars in fifteen minutes, three wars going on and four practically guaranteed, get prize-fights, horse races, beauty shows—all hot over the wire or the wireless and fused again into nothing in a moment, as printers melt up type to use the lead again, and so convert a sermon into a love story. Thus does the type of life melt and run over the radio and the cinema. Now I think we all get it.

And yet—even granting that this hurrying world exceeds and surpasses the older one—its technique, immeasurably superior, in its possibilities of vivid depiction, its power of annihilating time and distance in the interest of narrative, and, perhaps, in many ways surpasses it in imaginative power—if only in its command of the grotesque, the lurid, the pathological forms of literary creation—grant all that, and yet something is irretrievably gone if we let go the thread of connection with the literature of the past.

We cannot live in a world of two dimensions, and literature, like life, must have its third. Our literature, common more or less, in its greatest sense, to all Western Europe, and laid as a present in the cradle of America—goes back hundreds and hundreds of years. It has to. It is a continuous growth. Mr. Pickwick, don't you see, is directly descended from Sir Roger de Coverley, and Charles O'Malley, and Masterman Ready (never mind who they were: ask someone

eighty years old), all such, and a host of heroes like them, are the Knights of the Round Table, still seeking for adventure. As the professorate would say, the continuity of a national literature is an essential condition of the continuation of national life.

Fetch me the old books and the old favourites—a whole real collection of them. I'll tell you what I'll do, if *you* will. I'll start all over again, beginning with the Trojan war, with Flaxman's illustrations, and then live over again the Last Days of Pompeii (look out for the lava, it's dangerous): we'll sit and watch the hundred coloured bannerets that flaunt in the breeze on the tourney ground of Ashby de la Zouche: drink sack with Falstaff; smoke long pipes with my Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim: and, in our heroic moods, wrap our colours round our breast (over our vest) on the fields of Spain, or climb the mast right up to the royal flush (I forget its exact name) and listen to the guns thunder on the deck below!

And, do you know, I think that such perusal, lost and absorbed in the fancied creature of which our own imagination must supply one half—and gives more than, if we sit, full of peanuts and popcorn, allowing flickering shadows, created by someone else, and sound and melody, contrived by someone else, to fill us up with a story—as you feed porridge to a duck.

Fetch me the books. I'm going to read.

XIV

WHO KNOWS IT?

OUR PASSION FOR INFORMATION

The other night I heard a voice on the radio in my living-room asking who was King George's great-grandmother. I felt terribly pleased—because I knew the answer—Queen Victoria! In fact I remember her quite well. Then it asked how high is Mount Popocatepetl, and I was clean out of it. In all these years I had never stopped to enquire. When the voice went on to ask how many gallons there are in a cubic foot, and who fought the battle of Actium, I had to switch it off.

Odd, isn't it, this sudden new passion for information that seems to have swept over us like a wave. Questionnaires, intelligence tests, quiz classes held by Professor Knowit, puzzles, problems—anything that can stand for information given and received, knowledge checked up and proved. And even when we are listening to other people being questioned, it's really ourselves that we are checking up on. 'Who was the bosom friend of Damon?' asks the radio—and we *know* it: Pythias, eh, what? Where was Napoleon born? Corsica!—we got it the first time—ask us another.

The wave of questions sweeps the whole coast of human knowledge. Sometimes it's history: 'Where was General Burgoyne defeated?' That's just a sort of come-along, made easy, to coax us into the water. 'In what year was America discovered?' That gets us right in up to the neck; and then, 'Who was John Wilkes?' 'Who was Vasco da Gama?' 'Who defeated Hannibal?' 'Who were the Sumerians?' We're swamped and drowned.

Often the questions branch into poetry, 'The curfew tolls the knell'—of what? 'The boy stood on the burning deck'—what boy? 'Father, dear father, come home with me now'—home from where? 'The shades of night were'—doing what?

A person who stands up to questions like that feels that he's getting a grip on literature.

Sometimes we drop into straight mathematics, which has the same attraction as playing with fire; for example:—*If a frog falls into a sand-pit twenty feet deep and gets up the side in jumps two feet at a time, but slips back one foot on the sand while taking his breath after each jump, how many jumps would it take him to get out of the pit?*

There, be careful with it. Don't say you can do it by algebra—that's cheap stuff—and anyway you can't.

A side-line of this new question-and-answer craze is the 'information-questionnaire' as used in business.

The idea of it is to find out all about a person by reducing him to a set of questions and answers. As a recommendation of a candidate for a job we no longer want a few words of glowing praise, but something by which we can 'measure him up' on a scale. Perhaps as the light of the spirit grows dim, we turn on the artificial lamp of science.

Fifty years ago, if a business house wrote to a college for a recommendation of a young man seeking a job, they merely asked in general terms what sort of young man he was. They received in reply from a dean, or other academic authority, a letter which said that Mr. Jones was 'a young man of high Christian character who had earned the esteem of his teachers, both for his assiduity and his intelligence.' But nowadays, that kind of recommendation wouldn't get the young man very far. The business house want him 'measured.' So they send out a printed form of questions. It says:

'We understand that Mr. Jones was at your college. Kindly fill up the data as requested in the questions below.

(1) What percentage of character has he got?

(2) What is his percentage of Christianity?

(3) How is his assiduity (state how many hours he can sit still).

(4) How would you class his intelligence— (a) normal? (b) super-normal? (c) subnormal? Compare him with a higher ape.'

The college, of course, meets the situation on its own terms. It keeps books like ledgers in which Mr. Jones is reduced to credits, merits, hours per week, and weeks per year. They can fill him out in five minutes as sixty per cent Christian, forty-five per cent normal, assiduity guaranteed up to fourteen hours a day—saturation point—and intelligence tested five times under high pressure and never burst.

Some of the question sheets (I've filled in dozens of them) go further. They want to know not only what Mr. Jones is and does, but what he would be and do under circumstances that haven't happened yet. Such questions as:

(1) How would Mr. Jones measure up in an emergency?

(2) If we left a hundred dollars on our office table would he steal it?

(3) If not a hundred, at what sum would he reach the stealing point?

(4) If burglars entered our office and shot at him, how would he react?

(5) If they hit him, what then?

As a natural result of this 'questionnaire' system, once it got started, there arose the 'intelligence test,' as applied direct to an applicant, the last word in the attempt at quantitative measurement of human capacity. It has since run riot. It proved a godsend to college psychology just at the time when the lamp of the old metaphysics burnt dim. It overspread business. It invaded the army. There was no end to it.

It works like this—you want to know what a piece of steel is like. Test it. You want to know what a young man is like—test him. Here, for example, is a young man who wants to marry your daughter. All right—have him tested. Send him up to the college psychological laboratory and let the professor test him. Don't send your daughter up, though—just the young man.

To test him they find out whether he can remember how many windows there are in the corridor he passed through—how many steps he came up to get in—and what kind of trees he passed by in the college grounds. In reality, anybody who remembers windows and trees and steps has a mind as empty as a dried nut. What he needs is furniture. A hen, which can see, but can't think, would pass an intelligence test in Class One ... Isaac Newton couldn't touch it. To my mind

an 'intelligence test,' if it means anything more than talking to a person as a way of getting to know him, is just a piece of pretentious nonsense, as ineffective as it is ancient.

But what does all this mean, this everlasting searching of our brains, testing our knowledge of fact, this passion for information, this desire for accurate measurement? Does it mean that there's something going wrong with us? 'Is civilization a failure, and is the Caucasian played out?' asked the Truthful James of Bret Harte seventy years ago. Indeed, every nation is always asking itself if it is getting played out. The Greeks complained of it. The Romans talked of it so much that at last they got it. Every nation likes to hark back to the 'men of old' and pity themselves as degenerate descendants. Just now we are running through a phase of pretending that western civilization—the name we give ourselves—is playing out; that presently it will 'crash'—a new metaphor brought down from the air—and when it 'crashes' we'll pass into a form of nebula called 'world-chaos.'

Seen in this light, the present craze for 'questions,' for 'facts' means that earlier faith having gone, the minds run to seed in meaningless intellectuality; that 'purpose' is being replaced by purposeless capacity, just as the 'helmsman' is replaced by the gyro-compass, and machines with steel fingers replace the human agent.

There's no end to it. People can get as mournful as ever they like about it, but if you come to the reality of things you will find that the present puzzle-and-quiz-and-fact craze has no particular meaning and no particular novelty. It's the kind of thing that comes and goes and always has come and gone. The trouble with humanity is not that it changes so much but that it changes so little. The 'men of old' never existed, or, when they did, were pretty much like ourselves. Later on, we'll be the 'men of old'—rugged, honest, but all dead.

So what I am saying is that the new 'question-and-answer' mentality is just a passing phase, not so new as it seems, and, in one form or the other, often in the world before.

Let me start at some of the simpler phases of it. There are people, and always have been, who have a weakness for 'facts' rather than 'fancies': and others who prefer 'fancies' to 'fact.' Some people read romances and others prefer an almanac. Some lose themselves in a poem, others bury themselves in a railway folder. But the motive is one and the same, the desire to *escape* from the little prison of our consciousness in which we are compelled to dwell. Some attempt to fly out on the wings of the imagination, blown up as light as helium, and others make an aeroplane of the solid metal of facts.

But it was always so. The biggest encyclopaedia ever written was compiled in China several thousand years ago: the 'romances' of the troubadours took a week to sing. Archimedes was as deeply buried in thought as Omar Khayyám was lost in imagination. Fact and fancy have always divided us.

Personally, I am willing to plead guilty, along with thousands of other people, to this passion for facts. Say what you will against statistics, I must admit that I like them. I can open a guide book or a compendium or a digest at any time and get absorbed in it; absorbed, for instance, in that marvellous and vivid description of the United States (who hasn't read it with delight?) which says:

The United States has a continental area of 3,026,789 square miles with a non-contiguous territory of 711,606 square miles, making a total area of 3,738,395—think of that! Just by adding them together the continental population at the census of 1930 was 122,775,046. The national wealth was \$361,800,000,000 or \$2,977 per capita.

Everyone had a share. That's great stuff: it's vivid—and with it are mixed streaks of higher colour, such as:

The number of children enrolled in the public schools in 1934 was 27,157,601 (that one boy may have left since); the number of mules in the United States was 4,925,000. There were on July 1st, 1933, 50,000 miles of natural gas-pipe lines.

After you've read an account like that you feel you know the country. So, too, with its people: what you want is their actual statistical measure. The old-fashioned way of talking about them was in such general terms as:—'The average American is a volatile individual, restless, energetic, and with a passion for novelty and experiment.' How much superior is the newer method; 'The average adult American is 5 feet 7 1/2 inches in height; he weighs 138 lb., with a chest measurement of 30 inches. He has (approximately) two ears, one on each side of his face. He has 2.1 children and dies at 51.' There—with that you feel you know the fellow, or, at least, lots like him.

But certain statistical figures appeal not so much by their exactness as by their size, by their very magnitude. People like to be staggered with huge figures, just as they like exaggeration in humour and in romance. The little child who reads of the dog with eyes as big as the Round Tower of Copenhagen (see under Hans Andersen) will grow into the man who reads that the estimated original natural stock of coal in the United States was 3,214,898,000,000 tons.

But if you want to get a real stagger you have to turn to astronomy. That's where you get the real stuff! How's this:—'The diameter of the star Betelgeuse is estimated at 240,000,000 miles.' How's that for size? Almost difficult to visualize, isn't it? Or take this one—'The beams of light from the great nebula in the constellation something or other, which started during the Trojan War and have been moving ever since at the rate of 186,000 miles a second, are not here yet.' It makes you feel like going out and watching for them to come.

But what I am saying is that this passion for big figures is as old as humanity. In earlier times they had no statistics and so they had to fall back on lies. Hence the huge exaggerations of primitive literature, giants, miracles, wonders! It's the size that counts. They did it with lies and we do it with statistics: but it's all the same.

In the same way our present passion for puzzles and puzzle-questions is nothing new. The puzzle-man is probably a type as old as humanity. They must have had him in Babylon and on the Nile.

Everybody knows him as we see him with us to-day—never happy unless he is working out a puzzle. He carries it round with him, as men used to carry a chew of tobacco. You see him sitting in a railway train gazing fixedly out of the window. But he sees nothing. He doesn't know whether he's going through the Adirondacks or over the Susquehanna. He's got a puzzle inside him: he's trying to think how a farmer with a ten-gallon can and a three-gallon can and a two-gallon can, manages to measure out six gallons of milk.

These puzzle-men, when you understand them, are singularly easy to entertain if you have them on your hands in your house. Just throw them a puzzle. All you do is to say to such a man—'Bentley, I saw a good puzzle the other day but I couldn't solve it. It said, "A shopkeeper has a piece of linoleum twelve feet by twelve feet, and a customer wants a piece sixteen feet by nine feet—same number of square yards but different shape. The shopkeeper says, 'All you need to do is to cut this twelve by twelve piece into two parts and place them together.' 'Only two parts?' asks the perplexed customer. 'Only two,' says the shopkeeper." Now how could he do that, Bentley?'

And with that Bentley is off. You don't need to think of him any more all evening. He'll just sit round and murmur, 'Sixteen feet by nine, eh?' Then he won't speak for a long time, till he says, 'Linoleum, eh?' You don't need to talk to him, or amuse him, or to let him cut in at bridge. Just turn from the card table now and then to say, 'Linoleum, that's right, Bentley.' If he gets restless, give him a Scotch and soda and let him walk up and down, and mutter, 'Twelve by twelve.' He's all set for the evening.

But be sure to tell him the answer before he goes home. Even if he protests, tell it to him. Otherwise he'll call you up by phone at two in the morning, jubilant, to say he got it. He thinks you'll be too glad to sleep.

But this puzzle stuff, as I say, is as old as human thought. As soon as mankind began to have brains they must have loved to exercise them for exercise' sake. The 'jig-saw' puzzles come from China where they had them four thousand years ago. So did the famous 'sixteen puzzle' (fifteen movable squares and one empty space) over which we racked our brains in the middle eighties. The mathematical puzzles come from the Greeks who left some behind them never yet solved. For example:—If Achilles is chasing a tortoise and moves at such a rate that he catches up half the distance in the first minute, and half the remaining distance in the second minute, then, as he is always moving faster than the tortoise is, he must sooner or later catch up with it. But as there is always half the distance left at the end of each minute, it is equally certain that he will never catch up with it. The Greeks died without knowing the answer.

Or take all the 'crossword,' 'catchword' stuff. That carries back to the Middle Ages, otherwise the Muddled Ages, when all life was one big puzzle. The monks and the few people who could read used to divert themselves with 'acrostics,' 'anagrams,' and 'magic squares.'

Even the word 'puzzle' is so old that nobody knows what it's derived from, and they think 'puzzle' must go back to the twilight beginnings of human thought. Most people know, by reproduction in pictures, the wonderful statue of a primitive man, made by the French sculptor Rodin, and called *Le Penseur*. The figure is that of a huge creature, just emerged above the ape—seated—the narrow head bent on the hands—the rude face immobile and furrowed with a fierce attempt at constructive thought. In looking at it one realizes that the man is probably muttering—'Linoleum, eh? Twelve by twelve.'

As to the 'intelligence test,' ask anybody old enough to recall the Spanish American War of 1898 to tell you the famous story of the Message to Garcia. Then work back from that to the story of King Solomon and the undistributed baby—and you'll realize that tests are as old as intelligence.

No, no—it's all old stuff come back again in a new form that suits our ideas. Let's turn on the radio and hear Professor Knowit asking about Christopher Columbus.

XV

HOW MUCH DOES LANGUAGE CHANGE?

About forty years ago one of England's ripest scholars—you know what that means: they get so ripe, they fall off like pumpkins—said that as far as grammar and structure went, the English language was 'probably a finished process.' He admitted that new words might come and old words might go, but as for language-making, in the structural sense, it is all over. 'The grammar will remain for centuries what it is now.' Odd, isn't it? the way old men have of thinking that things have reached the full stop of betterment in their own time! John Stuart Mill thought that political economy was as fixed as Euclid: and now, political economy is a wreck and Euclid is called Einstein.

How does it stand with this idea of an unchanging language? In the forty years since the ripe scholar ripened, has grammar 'stayed put,' as he expected, or has it moved on?

Of course, in one sense there is an aspect of language that can't change. It has a vertebrate anatomy that is, and always has been, the same. The distinction of 'parts of speech' rests on fundamental modes of thought, not on shifts of language. A noun will still be a noun in heaven; and a verb is a verb, even in Japanese: put the two together and, even in Japanese, you get what can be charitably called a sentence.

The general notions implied in 'parts of speech,' and 'parsing,' and 'analysis' are of a fundamental and unchanging character. But 'changes of grammar' mean new modes of structure inside this frame. To give an example, the Latin language, the kind we learnt or nearly learnt at school, was succeeded by what was called 'low Latin,' which we understood was beneath the notice of decent people. The kind of change involved was precisely a change in grammar.

Thus in the classical days at Rome, somebody—I forget who—said of his own achievements, '*monumentum exegi aere perennius*,' i.e. 'I have erected a monument more lasting than bronze.' But a 'low Latin' got down low enough to say, '*habeo monumentum erectum*,' 'I have a monument erected'—and the thing proved such a hit that a flood of auxiliary verbs was let loose on Latin and broke it up as rain breaks ice.

In the same way in English, 'I speak,' widened into 'I do speak' and 'I am speaking,' and, quite in our own day, 'I am praised' could be expanded into 'I am being praised,' and we can even say, without taking a fit, 'I will be being praised'—a usage which would have made Addison or Gibbon feel faint.

The point then is, are there any more such changes to come? We leave out of count the mere changes of words and phrases that make vocabulary. These, of course, in their own place are of extraordinary interest and often of marvellous curiosity, and at times contain within themselves a whole irony of history. It is strange to think that a word that once meant 'to go on a sacred pilgrimage to the Holy Land' (*sainte terre*) now means 'to loaf' (*saunter*): or that the '*hocus pocus*' of a modern conjurer is the '*hoc est corpus*' of a mediaeval bishop.

Yet these developments of language are aside from the present discussion, and indeed, in many cases, are but shifting metaphors that come and go, lose their initial force and pass out or sink into a common-place. The eighteenth century called a bad young man a 'rake' or a 'blood'; we call him a 'lounge lizard' or a 'lobster.' But it's all the same thing: he's no worse or better. The Stuart generation called a young woman a 'jade' or a 'wench.' Nowadays we—or, at least, people younger than myself—call her a 'skirt,' or a 'doll,' or a 'flapper.'

Indeed, the power of making new words has been accelerated by the continuous need for them. Who ever dreamed, a generation ago, of the 'social hostess of a passenger plane'? What landscape painter ever thought of a life insurance 'prospect' (meaning a human being)? I defy the Duke of Wellington to guess what a 'gas-mask' is, or a 'dug-out,' and Lord Nelson wouldn't know what a 'depth bomb' was till you dropped one on him.

These new words are a fascinating study. They seem to indicate a vitality in our spoken language never equalled before. They not only embody a wealth of metaphors but they seem at times to dive down into the fundamental undertones that preceded definite language, and bring up treasures as from an ancient cave. Consider such words as 'stooge' and 'boob' applied to a 'dumb' young man, or words such as 'zoom' to indicate descent through the air accompanied by noise. It is a pity that most of our discussion of such new forms has not reached beyond the stage of making a catalogue, without further interpretation. Such a catalogue is just on the surface as botany was when still confined to the classification of flowers by a ladies' school.

But what about changes in grammar itself? Was the ripe scholar correct about them? I am willing to suggest for the consideration of other scholars—and the school returns of the United States show a total of two million coloured scholars alone—that the ripe English authority was all wrong: he was, to use a new term for it, 'all wet.'

Proof can only be by examples. Let me proceed to gather and present a few. I will begin with a very simple one, that of beginning a sentence with a verb first and its subject after it without using an introductory word such as 'there,' or 'now.' For example, instead of saying, 'There followed a moment of intense anxiety,' ever so many writers of to-day put, 'Followed a moment of intense anxiety.' Compare: 'Came October'... 'Broke disaster'... 'Ensued a pause.' They do this not once in a while but they do it all the time, they do it on purpose, for effect, with the idea that it is stronger than what we used to write.

Personally I hate this innovation with all the unreasoning conservatism of old age. I quite admit—to halt an idiotic objection at its first step—that of course fifty years ago, when I was young, and even the ripe scholar not too old, many writers used such a form sometimes, and it was frequently used in poetry by what was called 'poetic licence,' an indulgence as wide as a 'liquor licence' in Chicago. But it was no part of regular writing. It is now rapidly becoming so and is helping to add in the new casting of sentences from the continuous flow that was the ideal of Cicero or Milton to the step-by-step prose of to-day. Thus one of the old-fashioned three-decker love stories which flourished three generations ago, would contain a sentence:

The sudden entry of Elizabeth afforded to John an opportunity for a bold invitation that was no sooner extended than embraced....

The author's ghost might read it now, or soon, in such a rewritten form as this:

Came in John. Appeared Elizabeth. Spoke John, 'What about it, Lizzie?' Pondered not Elizabeth. 'I'm on,' she said.

Call it grammar, or call it what you like, the change in speech is here about as complete as the difference between the famous Strasbourg Oaths of early French (A.D. 842) and an election speech of M. Daladier in 1938.

That, then, is that, a phrase in itself suggestive of a new era. I pass to another case of usage, very wide and working great change in our colloquial speech. If I wanted to indicate it in a pedantic way so as to give it all the peculiar force of obscurity, I should say that we are reintroducing forms similar to the old Greek reduplicated aorist—a vanishing form belonging in the dawn of written speech whose original force had apparently disappeared. I should then apologize for the lack of Greek type in this book and slip out of proof like Houdini out of handcuffs. But let me say it instead in simple, vulgar language. We have got into the way, colloquially, of putting in front of our verbs such peculiar modifications as 'sort-of (pronounced 'sorta') and 'kind-of' (pronounced 'kinda'). Such usages as 'I sort-of thought he would come,' 'I kind-of-suspected he was here,' are ghastly as logic, impossible to parse—in fact, utterly unfit for use in the House of Lords. On the other hand they are replete with meaning and they fulfil the entrance test needed for admission into language that they express something that needs expressing and that nothing else will express so well.

It is clear to anyone of unclouded vision that we are to have a new kind of mood, made after the fashion of the Greek 'reduplicated aorist' tense—a noble ancestor that will make it respectable. The grammar out of which the Chinese conquerors of Europe will learn their old twentieth-century English will have a section to read:

Any verb may be removed from the indicative to the dubitative mood by the addition of the prefix 'sorts' (derived according to Dr. Woo Hoo from 'soror' a sister, but perhaps an abbreviation of 'so-it-ought-er'). Thus the verb 'to think' has as its dubitative past:

*I sortathought
You sortathought
He sortathought, etc., etc.*

The negative form, which is difficult for foreigners and should be avoided except by writers of special taste and purity, runs:

*I sortadidn'tthink
You sortadidn'tthink, etc., etc.*

Only people who know nothing of language, its origin and its vagaries will find anything odd in this. Let me refer the doubting reader to any grammar of the Zulu language: he will there find verbs with an interpolated middle part of much this sort. But if he has no Zulu grammar, and won't go to Zululand, let me refer him to the more accessible example of Japanese language. He will find there that the Japanese verbs have a great variety of these internal modifications. Thus the Japanese for 'put' (OKU) has a tense called (for short) the indefinite probable past, which means 'I think-I-very-likely-put,' 'you think-you-very-likely-put,' etc., etc. But in Japanese it has to undergo a second cross variation to

distinguish whether I am talking about myself or about you. If I talk of myself it must be indicated in Japanese by some form of change or particle to mean 'humble worm,' 'low form of existence.' But if I talk of you, it must imply 'august-presence-gentleman-Mr.,' or have the initial 'GO' in front of it which implies 'Just listen to this.' So that the tense of which I speak, conjugated out for actual use, would run as far as it is possible to say it:

First person: '*Humble worm thinks humble worm likely put.*'

Second person: '*Listen to this! August gentleman mister thinks high presence likely put,*' etc., etc.

Can you wonder that the Japanese verbal form grows long! I have in front of me a Japanese textbook (Chamberlain, page 150) in which the author indignantly complains that foreigners mistake for verbal roots forms which are nothing but the 'indefinite potential of the causative conjugation.' Simple, isn't it, once you're on to it? And all this out of Chamberlain's *Colloquial Japanese*—before you get to the real language.

Let it be observed that the colloquial introduction, and future literary adoption of such a form as 'I sort-of-thought' is entirely different from such a form as 'I rather thought.' The latter is grammatical as it stands with the adverb 'rather' to modify the verb 'thought.' But 'I sort-of-thought' breaks the mould. It is grammar in the making.

Nor can we smugly brush aside these changes by dismissing them as 'colloquial.' All language was so, originally. And even now only a small part of our language comes in by the front door of literary creation—such as 'cinematograph' and 'automobile.' Even these get beaten out by 'cinema' and 'car.' In fact there is no front door. Open it as you will it keeps banging to, and cutting off the half of a word as it comes in—leaving us 'phone' and 'bike,' and such. Meantime the crowd of new words, the real ones, squeeze in as best they can at the back door and brush up into respectability.

Verbal changes are being greatly helped by that insidious thing called the 'split infinitive': 'insidious' because it has a way of enlarging its consequences like a split in a hemlock log. Personally I am all for it. I would as soon split an infinitive as split an egg. But grammarians used to shudder—shuddering is their business—at such forms as 'to fully understand,' 'to entirely agree,' and to collapse at such extensions as 'to more than half believe.' But the split infinitive has made its way into our language by sheer merit. It can say what nothing else can. Even so distinguished a grammarian as Otto Jespersen of Copenhagen, who knows more of our language than a Dane has any business to (see his *Essentials of English Grammar*), is willing to give it his parting blessing in his *Final Remarks on Infinitives*. But all grammarians warn us to be careful with split infinitives, as with petrol or live electric wires. The unthinking public—it is its business to unthink—never heeds the warning and into the gap of the split infinitive pour a host of new verbal forms, like soldiers into a breach. Hamlet could have solved his maddening doubts whether '*to be or not to be,*' if he had made up his mind '*to more or less be.*'

Dr. Hubert Jagger in his *Modern English* cites the case of the Staffordshire County Council being brought up all standing (1924) by a split infinitive that held up the question of slaughtering cattle. They seem to have been perplexed as whether to '*ask the ministry seriously to consider it*' or '*to ask the ministry to seriously consider it,*' or '*to seriously ask the ministry to consider it.*' Evidently the thing needed was a higher sense of fun in England.

Another wedge is being driven deep and always deeper into the grammatical structure of the English language by its prepositions. All foreigners realize that our prepositions are our chief glory. They can only admire without understanding them—like George III with the British Constitution. For example:—'to break out,' 'to break up,' 'to break off,' 'to break in.' Thus if a riot 'breaks out' in a meeting, the speaker 'breaks off,' the police 'break in' and—what does the meeting do?—it 'breaks up.' After which there are arrests and the prosecution 'breaks down.' And just as the foreigner thinks he understands it, he finds Tennyson writing, *Break, break, break*, without telling him whether it was 'up' or 'down,' or 'down and out.'

The prepositions once started loose on their evil course, instead of being tightly imprisoned as in Latin, have permeated into our verbal forms like a chemical solution.

'What say the waves?' is Latin. 'What are the wild waves saying?' is Victorian English. But, 'What are the wild waves being said to?' is something else. Or consider this:—'The patient was brought to, but did not know what he was brought to for, nor what he was brought to by.' The Japanese for this (much superior) is 'Honourable-sick-man-mister-as-for-much-better-cause-non-existent.' Dr. Jagger quotes a still better example in the form, 'Whatever did you choose that book to be read out of to for?' He says it is comic: I think so too.

In other words, stated simply and softly, our prepositional compounds have broken out of any grammatical frame that existed when grammar 'became fixed.' True their vagaries had begun: but they hadn't ended, and we don't know yet what they will 'pass on over into.' As yet no one has fitted a logical grammar around them.

The revolt of the prepositions has been accompanied by an insurrection among the pronouns. It is not yet fully recognized by the grammarians, but has at least acquired belligerent rights. Who is there who still says, 'It is I'? Or who would be ashamed of saying, 'It is me'? Consider such a dialogue as this:—'I think you said you lost your gloves. Are these they?' 'Oh, thanks awfully, that's them.' One would almost prefer the Japanese form, 'August-mister-gloves-as-for-humble-worm-offer-from-below.'

In short the time has come to bring all these revolted pronouns back under the aegis of grammar by giving them a name, as the French do, and calling them disjunctive forms and forgiving them. The French have used them for so long that in French the other forms, the ones we try to use, sound silly. Compare in the well-known play *Ici On Parle Français* the immortal dialogue, '*Qui est la personne ici qui parle français?*'—'*Je!*'

Oddly enough some few grammatical changes are reversions to old, old types, so old as to be long forgotten and hence not conscious reconstructions. Thus, professors (who know everything) know that 'if' meant 'give.' 'If he comes here,' was equal to saying—'Give this (let it be granted), he comes here.' Compare 'Gin a body meet a body coming through the rye'—where 'gin' means 'given'—and 'rye' means only what it says.

Now our language, our colloquial language, in its effort to shake loose from the shackles of long sentences and subordinate clauses can reach back to the dim ages and revive the remote form. In the most colloquial of English, the English that is almost back-alley and gangsters' English—instead of saying 'If you stay here, the police will get you,' the thought is expressed, 'Look—you stay here, the cops get you—see?'

The underlying reason is, of course, the impulse we have to-day to break up speech so as to make it intelligible step by step as it goes along. This is intensified by the fact that our language is more than ever under the stress of the demand for brevity. We live in an era of traffic-signs, street directions, police radio calls, telegrams, and air mail. We have no time even for the old-fashioned politeness that would say, 'Gentlemen are requested not to sit down on the wet paint.' We just put a sign, 'wet paint,' and they can sit on it if they like. This pressure extends from the language of written signs to the language of written literature. Our writers begin to find that they need little but a noun and a verb. In fact, even the verb can be dropped. Thus Longfellow wrote, *The shades of night were falling fast*. A free verse poet of to-day would just say, 'Night.'

And in the same poem, where Longfellow writes, '*Oh stay!*' *the maiden said, 'and rest,*' the same idea can be admirably expressed now with the sign, 'Tourists' or 'Fresh eggs.' Incidentally, Longfellow's young man in the poem was away ahead of his time, for instead of saying, 'I'm so sorry but I really must be moving on,' he says, '*Excelsior.*' This was bad Latin, as it ought to be neuter, but was wonderful condensation. This single-word brevity, or rather our consciousness of it, can easily be reduced to parody, as in the familiar verse:

*A little boy,
A pair of skates,
A hole in the ice,
The golden gates.*

Nor is it only in this way that the isolated use of nouns, substituting images for abstractions, grows upon our language. Two nouns in juxtaposition can, by acting as adjective and noun, replace two nouns connected with verbs and prepositions. A 'steam-boat' means a 'boat moved by steam.' A 'steamboat company' means a 'company operating boats

moved by steam.' This mode is as old as Anglo-Saxon, but has grown now to dimensions unrecognizable fifty years ago. We can say, and we do say—'Steamboat Company Dock Agents Life Insurance Department...' and so on endlessly. If we ran out of new ideas to tack on to the end, we could begin again at the beginning and say, 'Lake Shore Steamship Company...' and so on. No Anglo-Saxon could have said that: he couldn't *hold* it: a Roman would have taken a page to say it, and a Greek would be talking yet. Our minds have been trained to a new habit of suspended animation, so to speak, waiting for the end before we make an image. We do with these compounds what the Romans used to do, when they read a long sentence of Cicero's intricate prose. They waited till they got it all. We find Cicero hard to follow because we have long since broken up our prose to make it intelligible as it goes along. The Romans would find our 'Steamboat Agency Head Office' stuff quite impossible.

But then what's left of our ripe scholar? Nothing. What with new model verbs, and pronouns, split infinitives, interpolated prepositions, traffic-sign nouns, and buried verbs, our grammar seems to have about as much stability about it as a French franc, or a Japanese treaty, or an over-the-counter share in a gold mine, or any other up-to-date phenomenon. No, our ripe scholar has fallen off his stem.

XVI

HOW FAR CAN WE PLAN?

AN EXCURSION INTO ECONOMICS

I remember many years ago on a Sunday morning, meeting an old-time Presbyterian friend of mine, just emerging from his church and drawing on his gloves with an air of great satisfaction. 'Our minister,' he said, 'preached a great sermon this morning.' 'What was it about?' I asked. 'About the poor.' 'And what did he say about them?' 'He gave them hell.'

That, I repeat, was many years ago. We can't solve our social problems quite so simply now. The time has gone by when we can believe that the poor are poor because they deserve to be poor, and the rich enjoy their wealth because they created it themselves, or inherited it from those who did.

Yet this was, in the main, the simple creed that was good enough for George Washington and George III, for John Adams and Adam Smith. Leaving out a few uncomfortable people like Thomas Paine—and crazy people like the French—it was, a hundred years or more ago, the general theory of society entertained by a gentleman. It could be reduced to a few simple ideas. Here first was property—especially property in land—a thing so obviously admirable that no property-owner ever questioned it. With this was free contract in buying and selling, with a guardian government and law to keep it all straight and prevent fraud and violence. Labour, both in England and America, was equally free, that is, leaving out plantation slavery, a domestic institution, existing under both flags and concerning negroes not men. Labour had been emancipated from the old restrictions about moving from place to place. It had full liberty to go where it would, like the liberty granted to Mr. Pickwick by the Pickwick Club on the proviso that he paid his own expenses. This system was undoubtedly capitalism though they didn't know it as such at the time, and called it common sense, natural law, or the workings of providence. In England there was supposed to be something not only moral about it, but peculiarly hearty and British. In America, with land free and opportunity wide open, it fitted like a glove. Who cared if George Washington owned 150,000 acres? There were lots more. In the old world the fit was better at the top: at the bottom the poor got badly squeezed. But they could be explained away, first on the ground that they were always with us, and secondly that theirs was the Kingdom of Heaven. With all that in sight they had no right to kick.

A few had qualms. Adam Smith, who owned no land, was not quite sure about landlords, and Bentham, who had no children, felt uncertain about inheritance; and John Stuart Mill was poor for so long that he grew doubtful about the rich. But mainly the social system of the earlier nineteenth century appeared to those who prospered under it as the natural and

only order of society.

More than that, it had in it, in the form of its new and wonderful machinery, the prospect of continual betterment, increasing happiness. Hence even the misery of the slums seemed only a dark corner waiting for the light. People lived in the sunrise. It was always morning.

A hundred years has clouded it all over. The sky is darkening into night, and livid with hidden lightings. The air has fallen hot, stifling. Something is coming—we cannot tell what—and far off perhaps in the darkness our ears seem to catch the roaring of a great sea.

What is coming? Where can we stand! Is the old basis gone on which we build our foundation, and must we look for higher ground or perish in the gathering flood?...

Let us pace over again, in broad strides down a hundred years of history, the ground that has been traversed. This age of Hope, what happened to it?

Well, in the first place poverty, that should have disappeared, showed no signs of doing so. It seemed that the poor couldn't, or wouldn't, get rich, and they wouldn't go to Heaven, all lit up and waiting for them. It isn't true that the poor got poorer. It is only that the aspect of poverty grew worse. A slum is more appalling than a desert. The Hottentots were poor and never knew it. A Hottentot thought he was rich because he had two wives. We know better than that.

Of course, as long as there was America to go to, it wasn't so bad. If the poor wouldn't go to Heaven they could go to Pittsburgh. Then America filled up and the 'free world' was all finished.

At the same time 'free competitions' began to be all grown over with a web of monopoly. Machinery and company organization seemed to create monopolies, and monopoly prices were not the same as 'free' prices. It is not true that a monopolist can 'ask what he likes'—or rather he can ask it, but he can't get it—but a monopoly price differs from a 'free' price in that it is based on the interest of the seller—'what the traffic will bear.' 'Leave the consumer to us,' said a great monopoly-sugar magnate forty years ago. But the consumer said, 'Please don't.'

With monopoly prices came all kinds of queer prices of which Adam Smith, who slept well, never dreamed, and John Stuart Mill, a light sleeper, only caught a vision in a nightmare. These were prices specially made for competition's sake, temporary prices of business strategy to kill the 'little man' (meaning perhaps a huge local butcher or a heavy drayman); prices as by-products, or prices under a cost so multiple and divided, that no one could measure it.

All of this simply overwhelmed John Stuart Mill's world. All that he said about it was true, but there ceased to be any such place.

On the other hand, the only effective thing to raise wages and shorten hours turned out to be the thing that the economists of a hundred years ago called futile. Ricardo said that wage laws couldn't possibly lift wages, neither could strikes. The economists approved of labour unions only in the form of burial societies, those for mutual improvement or recreation. 'Oh, what a world of profit and delight is open to the studious artisan!' So sang some dead jackass of the period. The workers could improve themselves (with such things as algebra), have a good time and then bury themselves.

But it turned out that Labour organization could and did raise wages: not by making the social cake bigger but by making other people's slices smaller.

But there was worse than that. As the machine production system widened over national industry, it developed a habit of going alternately fast and slow, and every now and then coming nearly to a full stop. This was the familiar 'cycle' which the world tried to ignore and which is now the world's bogey, the world's ghost, the assassin behind the arras. The economists tried to pooh-pooh it. They said it always righted itself; so does human life—at the end. The

famous economist Jevons said it came from periodical over-brightening of the spots on the sun, which affected the Indian rice crop, which affected English investment in India, which affected the London market, and so on. It was like the house that Jack built, whose causation got longer and longer. Perhaps it's not the spots, exactly, but Jevons was right about the causation idea, and of the notion of one thing knocking down another and so on. We *do* live in a house that Jack built; it's like a card house that's fine as long as it stands up. When it falls then Brazil coffee knocks down cotton and cotton knocks down wheat and away it all goes.

What a place! What a world! After all the bright hopes that gave it birth.

So can we wonder that very early in the day a lot of people began to think that the only thing to do was to sweep it all away and build up another kind of society. They forgot that there's only one kind of society that we can build, a society made up of men and women—as *they are*. Give me saints and angels—and I'll build a fine one.... But even at that it would be dull. Women, as they are, are better for the purpose than angels; saints and women could be a fine combination but you couldn't keep it. The women would corrupt the saints. What I mean is that we have got to deal with people as they are, not with people as they might be—the dream-people of the academic socialist.

Modern socialism came in with the middle of the nineteenth century. It had nothing to do with the earlier mediaeval socialisms of the inner light—the socialism of friars and monks, or of Rappites and Oneida Shakers. These, as economics, succeeded—because they aimed at renouncing the world. A man in a hair-shirt is easy to please. But new socialism aimed at achieving the world. That's different.

It spoke through such epoch books as Louis Blanc's *Organisation of Labour* and Karl Marx's *Capital* and Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. It has spoken through a thousand tongues since, but the voice, though in a thousand tones, is still the same. Academic people with long ears and loose ties now pooh-pooh all connection with the older socialism. They said it is replaced by guild socialism, or gradualism, or syndicalist-socialism, or by the peculiar Tom Tiddler's ground beginning to be called totalitarianism. Not so: as they say in French, 'the more it changes the more it's the same thing.' The central idea is wonderful, simple—and utterly hopeless.

A British Prime Minister once said that he could write out 'free trade' on half a sheet of notepaper. I am sure I could write out socialism on the space left at the bottom of the page.

Socialism merely means everybody working along with everybody else for everybody's good, in cheerful co-operation and equality, instead of each selfishly working for himself in a world of inequality and injustice. The idea is grand. I'm all for it. But I'm not fit for it. At least I might be, but I doubt you other people. I'd hate to give up my house and my shares in my latest get-rich-quick gold mine (over the counter, tenpence a share)—till I am a little more sure of the rest of you.

Consider how socialism is supposed to work, by a real socialist or communist. Never mind the difference between the two: it's only that a socialist shares the workroom and a communist shares the bathroom. For the present purpose they are all the same. There isn't, of course, any such thing as real socialism in existence, and never has been and never will be. But you will find it existing as a vision in the mind of any enthusiastic second-year student, bright with light and iridescent as a soap-bubble. It is part of his native endowment of generous imagination which the college will presently remove in fitting him for life.

This is what he sees.

In his happy world a group of awfully decent old men (many of them as old as forty) sit together as a sort of board of directors and arrange how much of everything ought to be produced so that everybody will have conveniently enough of it. How do the old fellows know it? Oh, they think it out—or no, perhaps they calculate it from graphs and curves that indicate what is called 'saturation.' The old men are supposed to know when they are saturated. Not all old men do, but that doesn't matter. These are supposed to, and anyway these old men are so decent and so public-minded that they don't mind how long they sit there and saturate. Real old men (I am one) might want to have a whiskey and soda brought in,

and a box of cigars—or perhaps want to know what there was in it for themselves; and crooked old men (I'm not one, but a lot of my friends are) would start to fix up the plan of production all crooked.

But anyway pass on from the old men. The idea then is that all the 'comrades' are allotted to various tasks. One says, 'Please may I be a policeman?' and the board says, 'Certainly!' And another says, 'Can't I have a hat like his?' and the board says, 'Why, of course.' Because, you see, they're all so kind and so considerate. They're just *dream people*, not real at all. And so the dream-people drift off into all their jobs—and some are butchers, or bakers, or tinkers, or tailors—my, it's fun!—they all love it!—and some are engineers on trains and go 'Toot! toot!' Don't you remember when you were a child and had no economic ideas and thought that a policeman was a policeman because he liked being a policeman, and an engineer was on a train because he liked to make the whistle toot? Well, that dream world that you lived in was the socialist's world: and if you grow old enough and silly enough you can get back into it, and think of it over a bowl of gruel.

It just can't be. The *motive* is wrong. We are not like that. We don't, we *can't* care enough for one another's welfare. I'll look after my grandmother, but I won't look after yours. She's not worth it. I'll pay for the education of my own children because they are bright little fellows and it's well worth while, but you've only to look at yours to see the difference.

As to dividing up work, by cheerful goodwill and free discussion, you can't do it. I'll take an example from the simplest thing that I understand—farming.

On a socialist farm, run by free discussion comrades, you'd get scenes like this—held in fence corners under an elm tree on a June morning. The hour is early, but not too early as some of the comrades like to take an extra snooze, when it's fine, and the other comrades hate to start without them.

One speaks, 'I move, gentlemen, that it would be a good thing to-day if we were to pick Colorado 'Beetles.'

'You've heard the motion, gentlemen, that we spend to-day in picking Colorado Beetles. Any seconder?'

'I second it.'

'Any discussion?'

'I'd like to offer an amendment to the effect that we don't pick them off by hand but use a spray of Paris green dissolved in water'—

'I object—it's no good—it don't kill 'em. I propose arsenate of lead'—

'It's no use—Paris green!' (shouts of 'arsenate of lead!' 'Paris green!').

Chairman: 'Order, order, gentlemen!'

Senior member, rising—that is, half sitting up in the grass: 'Mr. Chairman, in view of the heat I suggest that we adjourn the discussion and have a drink of lemonade under this elm tree.'

'I suggest an amendment to make the motion read, "beer and pretzels."'

Amendment carried.

But suppose you say that in a co-operative commonwealth of course everybody would *have* to work; wouldn't be allowed extra sleep just because he felt drowsy; wouldn't pick his own trade—if it was full—or set his own hours, or wages, or conditions. All this would be done by authority, by those over him. The officials of the state would decide how and when and where the work was done. And if a man wouldn't work? What then? 'Those who will not work shall

not eat,' wrote up Captain John Smith in Virginia. But the Virginian had at least the wilderness. The modern communist worker has the loom on the left and the jail on the right. Work or get punished. And those who direct it are the bosses—elected, selected, or forcing their way to the top. The strongest rules.

What a picture, this world of iron rule with the worker called, and if need be driven, to his task. This is no pleasant hay field in the morning sun. But if you know of any state where this cap fits, put it on. There is no escape from the dilemma. Freedom in a socialist state means idleness and confusion: order and authority means economic slavery.

Nor is there any solution to be found in the half-way house called a totalitarian state: in this the workers are ordered and grouped in huge economic divisions with wages and profits unified in the groups. But the totalitarian state faces exactly the same dilemma as described: the moment it passes a certain line it turns to economic slavery. In it, or in any other state, political and national enthusiasm can render tolerable for a time an economic system impossible in the long run. But this is just the hair shirt of the mediaeval socialist. A similar devotion for a time can carry a nation, or at least many of its people, into the sacrifice of individuality, the consciousness of mass welfare, that goes with war. But this is the agony of mankind, its martyrdom, not its life.

What is left? We must go on as we are, with our every-man-for-himself individualist state, patching it, fixing it, somehow making it go. Call it capitalism if you like and kick it, but it is all we've got.

But observe that after all we are at least getting on a little. We won't let one another starve: doles, and pensions, and relief, and all that goes with it take the place, for the poor, of the Kingdom of Heaven. We try to regulate our industrial system by wage laws, welfare laws, school laws, and all that goes with parks, playgrounds and libraries and community life. We give more and more collectively from the rich towards the collective enjoyment of the poor. We seem slowly to be devising not a new society but a better regulation of the old, not a new game, but a new set of rules.

Such a conclusion seems perhaps dispirited and discouraging. As I see it, it's the only one. What we have is all we are fit for. Change *us* and you change it. The two go together, spirit first, body after.

XVII

COLLEGE AS COMIC STUFF

Every age and every generation has its own particular line of humour, its own ideas of what things are supposed to be funny and form the subject of its jokes. A generation ago all Irishmen were funny; in fact, the whole of Ireland was supposed to be a sort of fun shop—with horse-fairs and wakes, and fist fights—something doing all the time. On the comic stage the Irishman in green twirled a shillelagh tied up with ribbons and joined in alternate laughter and tears with a 'colleen' whose short skirt came up so high that it met her pigtails coming down. The Irishman—older people please recall it—would hold up a sod of earth, so green you could see it from the gallery, announce it as from his mother's grave, break down and cry, and then forget it all in a dance with the colleen. In short, the place was full of fun. Nothing is left of it now except the thin conventional jokes beginning 'Did you hear what Pat said?' Ireland as the home of merriment has gone to the bad; there's no fun left in it—just a people who talk Gaelic, sit in the League of Nations, discuss their tariff policy, and buy their laughter over the radio.

Ireland has gone, and along with it a lot of other old landmarks:—the comic Jew now turned into one of the world's tragedies, the comic Yankee of the days of Sam Slick and Major Downing, now turned into a New England trust company, fast asleep.

But in place of these, since the world never stops spinning, arises new scenery for our humour, and above all, as the latest, the best and the most delightful, the Comic College. You can see it, if you don't know it already, in a hundred moving pictures, in a hundred magazines. Look! There it is! See the 'Co-eds' skipping around in shorts! You didn't think

college girls were like that, did you? And 'Prexy,' the president, isn't he just done to the life, eh? That is to say, you've perhaps never really seen a college president, but isn't he just like what they all are—I mean all the other 'Prexies' in all the other college movies? And the 'Profs'—aren't they simply killing? And the rah! rah! students playing on ukeleles.

The Comic College! I'm all for it as the most delightful, most enchanting Garden of Fun that ever opened upon our vision.

I have spent my life, except my school days, in college—was myself a 'Prof' for thirty-five and a half years. And when I see the Comic College, I half recognize it and half not. It seems half true and half nonsense—or at least truth reflected through apparent falsehood as it always is in art.

Where did they come from—the 'Co-eds,' the 'Prexies,' and the 'Profs'? How did the Comic College appear, and why wasn't it here before? Well, you see, a generation or two ago, a college, whatever else it was, wasn't comic. There was no fun in it. Then all sorts of changes came over the old college and turned it into the new college. This opened the eye of the artist to things that no one ever saw before.

For the wonderful thing about the Comic College is that it contains just that exact relation of fact and fancy, reality and romance, truth and exaggeration which makes for artistic creation. Take some of its chief items, for example, 'Prexy,' the comic president of the Comic College, with his mortar-board, and mock dignity, ridiculous in his overdone decorum, his offended majesty, his fuss and anger. Is a college president really like that? Not in the slightest. A college president of to-day is approximately more and more, as is everyone else, in the type of a 'business man.' If the twelve apostles came alive to-day they'd look like 'business men.' It's what the biologists call the 'survival type.' Anything else like the old-fashioned college president that used to be, the biologists call a 'sport.' You see the world at large only caught on to the fun that was in the old-fashioned college president after he was gone. It is always like that. We can only see literary colour in retrospect; for colour in the life around us we are as blind as a horse in blinkers. We only discover when its light is fading. Chivalry only began in literature when it was dead in fact; a war only gathers its romance when the soldiers who fought in it are dead. And so the world never discovered the college 'Prexy' till in reality he was gone. The president of to-day, dictating in his office, filling appointments, granting interviews, is quite different.

Witness this little experience.

A classmate of mine of long ago came back after many years to see our college. He said he'd like to go in and see the president, see him just a minute. 'I don't want to let the old geyser pin me down there and shoot Latin at me for half an hour; do you remember the way old "Prexy" used to get people in his office and they couldn't get out?' 'So he did,' I admitted. 'Well, look,' said my friend, 'if this old buster starts saying anything about showing me round the college and inviting me to lunch, then I'll say that I have to catch the 11.30 for New York, see? We just go in and shake hands and then beat it.'

We waited our turn, were announced, and went in. The president rose from his chair, with my friend's card in his hand. There was no 'Prexy' stuff about him—neat and smooth, a man of the world, his manner polished, his voice composed, nothing comic in him. 'Ah, yes,' he said, as he shook hands, still with his eye on the card, 'Mr.—er—Mr. Maclennan of—er—Arizona—class of—er—ninety-four... I'm extremely glad!'

My friend gurgled. He didn't find words because he was knocked sideways to realize that the president was twenty years younger than he was.

'Having a look round the old college?' continued 'Prexy,' and my friend made another noise in his throat to mean retrospect. 'I'm sure you will be most interested. You must see our new dormitories—I'm so sorry—he took out a gold watch and snapped it—that I can't offer to go around with you—but the fact is that I have to get the 11.30 for New York.'

Two minutes later we were out of the room again, my friend pledged to go and look at the dormitories and not to miss the hydraulic apparatus.

That seemed very different from the comic 'Prexy' who does the dance with the 'Co-eds' in shorts. In reality it was the change from one to the other that enables us to hatch out the old college president, and to turn him into art.

It was the same law of evolution that also hatched out the 'college man' from the 'student' of fifty years ago. The old-fashioned student lived on midnight oil, worked sixteen hours a day, and only took a 'night off' once in ten months; even when he did, all he thought of doing was to go and drink enough beer to excite him to upset a horse car. The 'college man' of the comic college plays the ukelele, burns gasoline, roots at football, 'flunks' his exam., 'bones' his father, 'cuts' his classes, and above all gives the girls a good time. Study! Bless my soul, how can the man get time to study? What for, anyway? You don't *have* to. All you do is to 'elect' a 'snap,' 'flunk' an oral, 'fake' an 'aegrotat' and 'get by.' You observe that it takes a whole new dialect to express the college man. But anyone in college knows what this jargon means. People outside may interpret it as meaning that students don't study. If they work, it's in the summer in a logging camp in Wisconsin, or preaching to an Eskimo mission. But at college they don't work; they *live*.

With the students are the 'Profs' of the comic college, as seen by the new imagination. And these, too, are not the actual professors of to-day but just the ghosts of the professors that were, in their own day, not appreciated as fun, but now 'cashed in' as literature, like an investment made in the past. Look at them! See them at their professors' committee meeting in the movies, all in mortar boards! Real professors haven't worn them for thirty years. So absent-minded that they chase a fountain pen through fourteen pockets and find it behind their ear. But try and rob a real professor of a nickel and see him react. The real professor of the newer type, sits like the president in an office and dictates, plays golf in plus fours and makes money out of the stock exchange and his knowledge of geology. A few of the older type, one admits, still survive; too preoccupied to have their hair cut, calling the same student by six different names in one morning—college 'characters' that justify to that extent the creation of the comic college.

But first, last, and always, the very soul of the comic college is found in the 'Co-eds.' They are the force that made it—the Delilahs that cut Samson's hair so short that he couldn't upset a street car—that hurried students into 'college men' and first made professors conscious of odd socks.

College girls in the comic college have a greater aversion to study than even the college men. In fact, they *don't* study. They 'elect' a course in 'religion,' or a half course in 'maternity,' or an 'option' on 'marriage.' They live in motor cars, drive in shorts, eat only after midnight, and dance on any and every occasion.

Are they truth or falsehood? I haven't an idea. Are college girls really like that or getting to be like that? I guess they are partly. The early college girls wore spectacles, learned Greek, and married the professors. The newer college girls are descended from them, but how much they retain of their heritage, or how much they correspond to the reflection in the new mirror, goodness only knows!

The fact is that we are seeing it so close at hand that it is almost impossible to judge it.

This new imaginative creation of a 'comic' college is the reflection of a profound transformation in our social life, in the part of it we call education. I don't want to get prosy about it, but the meaning of this would be lost if we didn't look for the social interpretation of it. Education, past and present, has pursued various goals. It has never quite known what it was after. In early times it fitted people to die; but this made them want to live. Later it fitted them to learn Latin and Greek; this had the effect of making them love English. Later still, education taught people to be citizens. This made them crooks. Later still, it taught them to be practical, to learn how to make money; this landed them in gaol.

With all these changes college has pretty well ceased to mean, for the average individual student, the pursuit of learning, the search after absolute truth. A few, of course, in the realistic studies of physical and natural science, turn to real study for study's sake. On the backs of these is carried the future of scientific knowledge. And another few, in what is called 'liberal arts,' turn into writers and playwrights and creative artists—but they would have, anyway. The real 'student' where he exists to-day is a 'sport' in the above biological sense; and the other students are 'sports' in the real sense.

At present, as I see it, college education is coming to be looked upon as a sort of prelude to life, a little intermission before work and sorrow begin. Broad-minded parents send the boys and girls to college, because—what else can they do with them? Let them be happy while they can. Let them dance a little in the sunshine. The shadows will fall on them soon enough. So it comes that people say with a sort of pride, 'Yes, my son and my two girls are at college,' meaning they

are happy in the land of the blest, the land of chocolate creams, hot dogs after midnight, of cut classes and flunked courses. So when such parents go to see a college movie, with 'Prexy,' with 'Profs,' and the 'Rah rah!' they don't realize what a queer amalgamation the picture is, made up of the old dead college of hard study, turned into romance and combining its shadows with the shifting colours of the new. Seen through the two must lie, somewhere out beyond, the vision of the future college. But we cannot see it: the light is too bright.

XVIII

ALL IS NOT LOST!

A RECOLLECTION

I was just starting out trout fishing one day last week when I saw from a headline in an afternoon paper that war in Europe was just about a dead certainty—anything within twenty-four to twenty-six hours. The Lats (I think it was) had sent what was practically an ultimatum—the nearest they could write to one—to the Slat, and there was no likelihood that a high-chested people like the Slat would swallow it. As I say, I think it was the Lats and the Slat, or it may have been the Checks and the Shorts; at any rate, some of those high-chested people that fill the centre of Europe, who used to be content before the Great War to play the hand-organ and make toy clocks, and who now fill our whole foreground.

Of course, on top of news like that I couldn't fish. A lump rose in my throat at the idea that unless the Slat (a high-minded people) would back down, that meant war, and everybody knows that war means 'world chaos' and that 'world chaos' means the end of trout fishing. What chance would a trout have in that?

So I came home feeling pretty sick; and then, after all, it turned out the Slat hadn't 'picked up' the affront—by lucky chance—and, of course, if you don't pick up a European affront right away, it goes bad.

It was too late to go trout fishing when I got the news in the evening paper that the Lat-Slat 'crisis' was over. But I got all set again for the next day to go with a friend of mine, all set with everything in the motor car—rods, tackle box, bait, fish baskets, lunch, flask. You know, perhaps, what fun it is getting it all packed, and the good old jokes about what gets forgotten and what never does? Then, just as we were starting, bang came the news that Mussolini had called Neville Chamberlain a 'stiff,' and that a first-class 'crisis' was imminent, and that England had recalled all the household troops from the saloons!

Well! Our hearts sank. Who could fish after that? It's all right to try to disregard the smaller powers like Latvia and Czechoslovakia and Lithuania and Seltzer, but when it comes to the great civilized nations like Italy and England, that's different. So we didn't start. And then it turned out in a few hours that the 'crisis' had blown over. It appeared, after an exchange of diplomatic notes, that Mussolini had not called Chamberlain a 'stiff' in the English sense, but had said he was a 'stiffo': that, in Italian, means something fine, and so the crisis passed, but it left everyone, even 4,000 miles away, pretty well prostrated. Even the British Cabinet itself lost half a day's grouse shooting.

It seemed all the more pity to lose our trout fishing, because it was just an ideal day: bright summer weather, but a wisp of cloud in it; dry, but with a touch of wetness; what you'd call warm, but with just a little chill—if you are a trout fisherman you will know just the day I mean! And the place I go to—a stream just not big enough to be a river, or rather a river just too wide to be a stream, with open patches of sun and shadow (you must come with me some time). Wander along at that stream on an afternoon in early summer and you won't care whether the Sudeten Germans go Nazi or go crazy.

But, on the contrary, once get your mind mixed up with the Sudeten Germans and you're not fit to go fishing. You're disqualified from the start. It's the same with golf. You can't go round the links with a man who says on the first green, 'What about Albania?' and stands with his club in the air, waiting to putt, while he tells you that if Daladier can form a

bloc he may make a front, and on the ninth green is still murmuring, 'If Hitler...' No, the only way to deal with such a man is, when he says, 'What about Albania?' to say, 'To hell with it.'

My friend and I, as I say, lost about a week of our trout fishing over Europe. The war crisis was no sooner gone than there was a sudden crash of the French franc, then a terrific naval scandal at the British Admiralty—not a damn gun would shoot—the whole Ministry were called back from Norway over the week-end! Well! You know what the European news is: once get sunk in it and your home life, your peace of mind, is all over.

Europe certainly can destroy your peace of mind; but, set all by itself, that's not quite a fair statement. You can destroy it right at home if you try. Lots of people can collect just as much distress at home over the market news as people fetch back from Europe. Take, let us say, 'base metals.' What they are, I don't know, but every now and then it seems base metals which have been buoyant and lively get dull, then stagnant, then collapse.

You've perhaps often gone through that yourself; but base metals seem to get it specially. I was out at a bridge party the other night, just after the last crash in 'base metals.' Half of the people, in spite of every effort, looked wretched; a lot of them had been hard hit with copper and others had had a terrible knock of manganese. They could hardly hold their cards. Yet here they were in a lovely house in the leafiest part of the city, in a huge room, something between a library and a living-room, the evening warm enough for early summer, but cool enough for a fire—how delightful it might have been—but 'base metals' had crashed that afternoon, and it was only by a brave hysterical sort of struggle that things could be kept going at all.

Even as it was, the men would drift into little clumps in the corners and gurggle about manganese.... And then, after all, two days later, 'base metals' got 'buoyant,' kicking up like a cow in the pasture—in fact, everything would have been great except at that very moment the sudden backfire of Congress against the T.V.A. decision of the Supreme Court—or, on, the other way—the backfire of the court—anyway, another explosion in Washington as sudden and arresting as the sound of a lamb chop blown up in a lunch wagon.

Remember, too, that during this same period of distress of which I speak wheat fell ten cents—a thing that simply spells disaster—and then rose eleven cents—meaning, of course, national ruin. Dust blew all over the Missouri Valley and the Canadian West, and then blew off again, leaving the farmers a perfect sight! And in with this background of imminent disaster there was an anvil chorus of sit-down strikers and stand-up agitators, money sterilized, credit paralysed, confidence pulverized, and ten million unemployed sitting in a row eating sandwiches with no proper psychological conception of the value of their leisure.

This, I say, is the *background*. But the funny thing is that the foreground isn't like this at all. The foreground has all the beauty of summer-time, with leaves on the trees and trout in the streams, with every golf course an artistic dream, a vast lawn of green, gay with bright costumes of red and white, with every shimmering summer lake dotted with its pagodas and its canoes, and splashed with bathers, with every street of every little town gay as a mediaeval fair with its multiform gas signs, with every corner packed with the glistening cars of the people crowding into the magic world of the films. Just gods! If the pioneers who fought for economic life upon this continent could see this picture of colour and luxury that was to cover its surface, what would they think of us, its discontented, timorous, trembling inhabitants, shuddering at the fleeting shadows that fly over a landscape bathed in bright sunshine! Surely, all is not lost.

Let us take an inventory of our distress.

The world has got into a kind of mass idea, a mass gloom, mass apprehensiveness. Psychologists of to-day tell us that we live on one idea at a time and all get it together. The idea just now is *distress* or worry over the imminence of something that is just going to happen—but perhaps won't. There is a Greek name for this, but I forget it. If translated it means 'fear of the front page of the newspaper.' Here, for example, are the things of which we are all scared to death just now: the French franc, the Sudeten Germans (section B, apartment 6, Czechoslovakia), the United States Supreme Court, base metals, drought, rain, over-population, under-population, over-production, death, life, dust.

Here, on the other hand, are the things of which we ought to be thinking—trout fishing, golf, chicken dinners, cool drinks, mixed bathing, summer hotels, wayside cabins—and if young enough, taking girls out so far in motor cars that they never come back.

Here is the European news that we read: war, more war, Mussolini, Hitler, crash of the franc, agony in Spain, bombs, cruelty, and the fall of freedom.

Nonsense—that's all illusion! Here are the real things, the French news, for instance:

Summer tourists in Paris break all records.... Folies Bergère with standing room only ... bathing costumes at Deauville simply scandalous... French ping-pong team beats all Germany... Daladier opens pup show... President of the Republic bets a dollar on horse race... champagne vintage reported best in twenty years.

All about us is a beckoning world—ample as never before in its abundance: a little out of gear, just for a spell, but only because, speaking collectively, we are like the sudden heirs of a rich estate quarrelling over their inheritance.

All of us, I think, in some half-conscious way, chafe at this false distress of our submerged world. We long to escape to another one. Mathematicians—to ease their particular troubles as mathematicians—take refuge in the world of a fourth dimension, where there is no friction. So we, at a word, at a happy fancy, seek escape into an imaginary world. Witness how we have all flocked to the country of the Seven Dwarfs, a better world than our own—a world of simple and sweet little animals, just our own style, and waving trees and dancing sunlight, and music of voices that drips with the waterfall, a world of kindness and co-operation each with all. We are drawn to this because we know it is ours, and yet we cannot reach it.

Or take, to parallel the example, that queer, bright, next-door world that we see pictured in our advertisements. Here, indeed, is the country of human fancy, marvellous with the green of its grass, the utter blueness of its water (see any travel booklet) and the shimmer of its sand; marvellous with its motor cars glistening in the sun, its people—youths as straight as arrows and as broad as gods, girls with hair as golden as gamboge, and frilled children, clean enough to eat.

If you want to get relief from the French franc and the Czechoslovak, turn to the advertising pages, and there, among green lawns and glistening cars, trim bungalows and furnished libraries and vellum volumes, you may see again humanity reaching into the world of imagination for what the actual world denies us.

But the truth is that this, our actual world, would be as good as the bright world of imagination if we would only let it be so. Everything is there, the smiling abundance of our unrealized paradise, the goodwill toward men that all men feel and none dares act upon. It is all there for the asking, if we can only cast aside from the gateway the evil spirits of fear and apprehension and distrust which keep us from our kingdom.

By the same Author

LITERARY LAPSES
NONSENSE NOVELS
SUNSHINE SKETCHES OF A LITTLE TOWN
BEHIND THE BEYOND
ARCADIAN ADVENTURES WITH THE IDLE RICH
MOONBEAMS FROM THE LARGER LUNACY

ESSAYS AND LITERARY STUDIES
FURTHER FOOLISHNESS
FRENZIED FICTION
THE UNSOLVED RIDDLE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
WINSOME WINNIE AND OTHER NEW NONSENSE NOVELS
MY DISCOVERY OF ENGLAND
OVER THE FOOTLIGHTS, AND OTHER FANCIES
COLLEGE DAYS
THE GARDEN OF FOLLY
WINNOWER WISDOM
SHORT CIRCUITS
THE IRON MAN AND THE TIN WOMAN
THE LEACOCK BOOK: Selected by Ben Travers
AFTERNOONS IN UTOPIA
THE DRY PICKWICK
HUMOUR: ITS THEORY AND TECHNIQUE
FUNNY PIECES
MY DISCOVERY OF THE WEST
HERE ARE MY LECTURES

THE BODLEY HEAD

[End of *Model Memoirs* by Stephen Leacock]