



A BOOK OF  
**ESSAYS AND STORIES.**

*for*  
**Pre-University**

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## THE REAL PRINCESS

*Hans Christian Anderson*

There was once a Prince who was bent upon marrying a Princess, but it was to be a real Princess. So he roamed the whole world over to find such a one, but there was always something wrong. He met many princesses, but he could not make up his mind as to whether they were real Princesses. There was always something that was not quite as he felt it ought to be. So he came home again, and was much distressed for he absolutely yearned after a real Princess.

One evening there was a terrible storm. It thundered and the rain poured in torrents. It was dreadful. Then there came a knocking at the city gate, and the old King went and opened it.

A Princess stood outside, but she looked strange and ugly in the rain. The water dripped down her hair and clothes, and ran into the tips of her shoes and out again at the heels. Yet she said she was a real Princess.

"Indeed! We'll see about that presently," thought the old Queen. She said nothing, but went into her bedroom, took off all the bed-clothes, and laid a pea at the bottom of the bed. Then she took twenty mattresses, laid them above the pea, and finally on top of the mattresses she put twenty soft quilts.

There the Princess was to rest that night.

In the morning the Queen asked her how she had slept.

"Oh, horribly!" said the Princess, "I have scarcely had a wink of sleep all night. Heaven knows what there was in the bed! I have been lying on something hard, for my whole body is black and blue! It was frightful!"

So they could see at once that this was a real Princess, for she had felt the pea through twenty mattresses and twenty soft

quilt. No one but a real Princess could have had such delicate feeling as that.

Then the Prince married her for now he was quite sure she was a real Princess and the pea was preserved in the museum of curiosities, where it may still be seen if no one has taken it away.



## GULLIVER IN LILLIPUT

(The following extract is taken from *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift. Gulliver, a doctor of an English ship, gets ship-wrecked in the Atlantic and is thrown up on the island of Lilliput, inhabited by a race of little people. He goes to sleep. When he wakes up he finds himself a prisoner.)

I attempted to rise but was not able to move. I found that my arms and legs were strongly fastened to the ground. My hair, which was long and thick, was tied down in the same manner. Besides, I felt several strings all over my body. I could only look upwards. I heard a strange noise around me, but as I lay on my back I could see nothing.

In a little time I felt something alive moving on my left leg. Advancing quietly forward over my body it came almost up to my chin. Bending my eyes downward as much as I could, I saw that it was a little man hardly six inches high, with a bow and arrow in his hands. I felt at least forty more men of the same kind following the first. I was greatly astonished and cried out so loud that they all ran back in fear. Some of them, as I was afterwards told, were hurt in leaping from my sides to the ground.

However, they soon returned. One of them who ventured so far as to get a full view of my face, lifted up his hands and eyes in admiration, crying out in a loud and clear voice, *Hekinah degul*. The others repeated the same words several times, but I did not know what they meant.

I lay all this while, as the reader may believe, in great uneasiness. At last, struggling to get loose, I was fortunate enough to break the strings and pull out the pegs that fastened my left arm to the ground. With a strong pull, which gave me great pain, I loosened a little the strings that tied down my hair on the left side so that I was just able to turn my head about two inches. But the little men ran off a second time before I could catch them.

There was a great cry when that happened, and after it had finished I heard one of them cry aloud, *Talgo phonac*. In an

instant, I felt a hundred arrows hit my left hand, which pricked me like so many needles. Besides, other arrows went into the air falling on my body and some on my face which I immediately covered with my left hand. I was in great pain and I tried to get loose. They attacked me again with arrows and spears. Luckily, I had on me a teather coat which protected me.

I thought it best to be still until I could free myself. As for the attackers I believed that I could face the greatest armies they could bring against me if they were of the same size as the one I saw. But when they people observed that I was quiet, they stopped their attack.

By the noise I heard, I knew their number had increased. About four yards from me, against my right ear, I heard a noise like that of people at work. Turning my head that way, as much as the strings would permit me, I saw that a stage had been erected, about a foot and a half from the ground. It held four of the men, who used a ladder to climb up to it. One of the men, who seemed to be an officer, made me a long speech from this stage, but I understood nothing.

Before he spoke, he ordered about fifty of the men to cut the ropes that tied the side of my head, so that I was able to see what kind of person he was and what he did. He was taller than any of the other three and he seemed to be a little longer than my middle finger. He spoke like an orator and I noticed that at times he spoke angrily and at times with kindness. I answered in a few words, promising to do whatever he ordered me. By that time being extremely hungry, I showed that I wanted food, by putting my finger frequently to my mouth.

The chief understood me very well. He descended from stage, and commanded that several ladders be put against my side. A hundred of the people climbed up the ladders and walked towards my mouth with baskets full of meat sent by the Emperor. There were the shoulders and legs of several animals but they were smaller than the wings of a small bird. I ate them two or three at a mouthful, and took three loaves of bread at a time. They supplied me as quickly as they could, showing a thousand marks of wonder and astonishment at my size and appetite. I then made another sign that I wanted drink. They had found by my



eating that a small quantity would not be enough for me. So, they drew up one of their largest cask, rolled it towards my hand. I opened the top and drank off the small quantity of wine it contained. It was delicious. They brought me a second cask, which I drank in the same manner, and made signs for more but they had none to give me. When I had performed these wonders, they shouted for joy, and danced upon my body, repeating several times as they did at first, *Hekinah degul*.

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## TOM WHITEWASHES A FENCE

(This incident is taken from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain. After playing and fighting with other boys, Tom had come late at night. His aunt saw the state of his clothes and decided to turn his Saturday holiday into a day of hard labour.)

Saturday morning came. The summer world was full of life, there was a song in every heart and cheerfulness on every face. The trees were in bloom and the fragrance of the blossoms filled the air. The hill beyond the village was covered with green vegetation, and it lay just far enough away to seem a wonderland of joy.

Tom appeared on the pavement with a bucket of whitewash and a brush. He looked at the fence, and at the uninspiring sight all gladness left him. He had to whitewash thirty yards of broad fence nine feet high. Life to him seemed meaningless. He began to think of the fun he had planned for this day and his sorrows multiplied. Soon the free boys would come and ridicule him for having to work. He thought of an excellent idea.

He took up his brush and went calmly to work. Ben Rogers came into view presently. He was the very boy of all boys whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben was eating an apple, and he seemed to be in high spirits. Tom went on whitewashing, and paid no attention to him. Ben stared at him for a moment and then said, "You are in trouble, aren't you?"

There was no answer. Tom surveyed his last touch with the eye of an artist, gave his brush another gentle sweep, and inspected the result as before. Ben went up and stood by the side of Tom, Tom's mouth watered for the apple but he stuck to his work.

Ben said, "Hello, you've got to work, hey?"

Tom turned round suddenly and said, "Oh, it's you, Ben? I did not notice."

"I'am going swimming, Tom," said Ben. "Don't you wish you could come? But of course you prefer to work, don't you?"

Tom looked at him for a while and said, "What do you call work?"

"Why, isn't that work?"

Tom resumed his whitewashing and answered carelessly, "Well, perhaps it is, and perhaps it isn't; but it suits Tom Sawyer."

"Do you mean to say, Tom, that you like it?"

The brush continued to move. "Like it?" said Tom. "Well I don't see why I should not like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?"

That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped eating his apple. Tom swept his brush back and forth softly like an artist. Then he stepped back to note the effect. He added a touch here and there, and criticized the effect again. Ben watched every movement and got more and more interested. Presently he said, "Tom, let me whitewash a little."

Tom considered, and was about to consent but he changed his mind. "No! No! You see, Aunt Polly is very particular about this fence. It must be done very carefully. I don't suppose there is one boy in a thousand, who can do it the right way."

"Is that so? Let me just try, only just a little. I would let you if you were me, Tom."

"Ben I would like to, honestly; but Aunt Polly would not like it. Jim wanted to do it, but she wouldn't let him. Sid wanted to do it, and she wouldn't let Sid. You see this is the front fence and Aunt Polly is very particular about it. Now don't

you see how I am caught? If you were to try whitewashing this fence and anything went wrong....."

"Oh, Tom; I'll be very careful. Now let me try. I'll give you half my apple.

"Well—no, Ben, I can't let you. I am afraid....."

"I'll give all of it."

Tom gave up the brush, pretending to do so half heartedly. And while Ben worked and sweated in the sun, the retired artist sat on a barrel swinging his legs, eating his apple, and laying plots to take in other boys.

Boys came along every little while. They came to laugh, but remained to whitewash. By the time Ben was tired out, Tom had promised the next chance to Billy Fisher for a kite. And when Billy retired, Johnny Miller brought the next chance for a dead rat and a string to swing it with. Thus, the work went on, hour after hour. By the middle of the afternoon, Tom was rolling in wealth. He had, in addition to the things mentioned above, twelve marbles, a piece of blue bottle-glass to look through, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a piece of chalk, a tin soldier, six fire-crackers, a little cat with only one eye, a dog-collar, the handle of a knife, and a number of other things of the kind. While others bore his burdens for him, he had a nice, idle time all the while and plenty of a company, and the fence had three coats of white-wash on it. It was just magnificent! If he had not run out of white-wash he would have robbed every boy in the village of his proudest possessions.

Tom said to himself that life was beautiful after all. He had discovered a great law of human action without knowing it—namely that in order to make a man or boy desire a thing it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to obtain. Tom was happy with the possessions that had come into his hands, and then got up and walked home to report to Aunt Polly.

"It's all done, Aunt, the whole fence," he said to his aunt.

"Tom, I hate your lies," said Aunt Polly and marched out to see for herself.

"Oh Tom," she said in surprise, when she saw the fence, "You can work when you want to, only you hardly ever want to." She took him home and gave him the best apple she had, and allowed him to go and play.

—*Mark Twain*

### A STREET SCENE

(The following piece is abridged and simplified from Chapter 5 of *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. The scene describes the poverty of people on the street of St. Antoine in Paris just before the French Revolution.)

A large cask of wine had been dropped and broken in the street. The accident had happened when it was being taken out of a cart. The hoops of the cask had burst and red wine began to run over rough stones. Little pools of it formed in the hollows and cracks among the stones.

Immediately, all the people near by left whatever they were doing and ran to the spot to drink the wine. The place of accident was surrounded by a crowd of people. Some knelt down and tried to gather it in their hands and sip before it ran out between their fingers. Some brought mugs and tried to fill them. Others dipped their handkerchiefs and squeezed them in the mouths of their children. Some made small mud-embankments to stop the wine as it ran. Others directed to cut off little streams of wine that started away in new directions. Still others devoted themselves to licking with eager relish the moist pieces of the cask. There was no drainage to carry off the wine, so not only did it all get taken up, but quite a bit of mud was also taken up along with it.

For a time, in that street of poverty and misery, there was a joyful sound of laughter. People who were drinking wine were friendly and playful. They embraced each others, drank to each other's health. Some dozen men and women joined hands and started dancing. But when all the wine was gone, these

demonstrations ceased as suddenly as they had broken out. The miserable people returned to what they had been doing before.

It was red wine, and had stained the ground of the narrow street where it was spilled. It had stained many hands too, many faces, many naked feet, and many shoes. The hands of the man who sawed the wood left red marks on it; and the forehead of the woman who nursed her baby was stained with the stain of her handkerchief she wound about her head again. Those who had been greedy with the pieces of the cask, had acquired a tigerish smear about the mouth.

A tall man dipped his finger in some mud made red with wine and wrote on the wall five big letters—BLOOD. The time would come when blood would flow in the streets of Paris and would stain its stones red.

Now that the momentary gleam had passed from the street, sadness appeared there once again. Gloom seemed more natural to it than sunshine. This was one of the poorest parts of Paris. Hunger seemed to be written on the faces of every man, woman and child. The shops contained only bad meat and coarse loaves of bread. There was nothing bright in the street except the shops that sold tools and weapons. Those contained the sharpest of knives and the most murderous of guns. The bright weapons seemed to be waiting for the time when they would be brought out to do dreadful work.

The cask of wine was being taken to the wine-shop at the corner. The owner of the wine-shop, Defarge, stood outside it. He was a strongly-built man of about thirty. Although it was a cold day, he wore no coat, but carried one slung over his shoulder. His shirt sleeves were rolled up, too, and his brown arms were bare to the elbows. Neither did he wear anything more on his head than his own short dark hair. He was a dark man with bright eyes. His face was good natured on the whole but it showed signs of strong determination and a complete absence of any kind of weakness.

Defarge stood looking at the struggle for the wine for some time. "It's not my affair," said he, with a final shrug of the shoulders. "The people from the market did it. Let them bring another."

Then he saw the tall man who had written the terrible word on the wall. He called to him: "Say, Gaspard, are you mad? Why do you write in the public street? Are there no better places to write such words in?" He picked up a handful of mud and smeared it over the word.

—*Charles Dickens*



## BUILD YOURSELF FOR LEADERSHIP

There are only two kinds of people in the world—those who lead and those who follow. Therefore each one of us has to decide in which category he or she would like to be. However, it is not a question merely of our likes but also of our aptitude, potential and determination. After all everybody cannot be an Alexander the Great or a Julius Caesar or a Napoleon Bonaparte or a Mahatma Gandhi merely by wishing he were so. Much depends on our capacity and the field for which it is best qualified. Leadership is a relative term and is not limited only to those who rise to world dominance or even to national greatness in the political sphere. Doesn't football or a hockey team have a leader ?

There is hardly any sphere of life in which leader is not required. And whereas very few of us dream of being a Jawaharlal Nehru or a Mahatma Gandhi, most of us do have sound and legitimate hopes of success in our professions or in whatever career we choose.

But the trouble is that very few of us are daring enough to risk unpopularity by departing from the herd. By far the safest and commonest course appears to be : "Follow the leader." Among a group of friends, if the most popular member says that A is the best film showing in the town that week, all will readily concur even if another member is convinced that that is not so. But he sinks his individuality and thinks it would be safer to go alongwith the crowd rather than be ridiculed.

This is precisely where our powers of leadership come in. Do we have the courage to say "no" when all around us are united in a loud chorus of "Yes" ? Ibsen says : "The strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone."

Timidity leads us into committing the most appalling blunders. When somebody in a group is discussing a book and one of the members has not read it, he does not have the courage to confess his ignorance. On the contrary, in the effort to be "in" he makes such statements as betray his stupidity and loses all respect. An attractive young woman once found herself seated next to Winston Churchill at a party. Thinking she would impress the famous statesman not only with her looks but with her intelligence as well, she began a discussion on books. Churchill eyed her suspiciously and asked if she had read Scott's *The Talisman*.

"Of course, it's wonderful," came the gushing reply.

"Have you read Scott's *Ivanhoe*?"

"Yes," came the ecstatic reply. "It's superb."

"And what about Scott's *Emulston*?" Churchill asked mischievously.

"I think that's his best work by far," sighed the poor innocent.

This tendency, unfortunately, is all too common in the world in general and in this country in particular. In consequence, there is the distressing spectacle of a lamentable lack of leadership of any consequence and almost a total absence of even executive ability. As is well known, what India needs most today is managerial and executive talent—in other words, group leaders.

India's present devastating famine in the realm of executive ability stems simply from the fear of taking decisions. And get the ability to make a spot decision is what differentiates the executive, or leader, from the clerk.

In an article in "Weekly Scotsman," Sheila Could says: "Working for a vast industrial concern, as I do, one gets a chance to observe tycoons at close quarters and they probably all have one thing in common—the ability to make the decision, stand by it, and not blame anyone else but themselves if anything goes

wrong. What makes a tycoon tick? The three important things which stood out in my mind are amazing energy, the kind that can go 24 hours without sleep, the ability to make a decision instantly and, above all else, the attention to detail."

Remember that when your advice is asked, you must not say what you know to be popular but wrong. You must say what you think is right—provided of course you are dead sure—even though you may court momentary unpleasantness. That momentary unpleasantness will assuredly be transformed into deep and lasting respect for you once you have been proved right.

There is no point in going along with the herd in the belief that that policy ensures happiness and contentment. If you are happy and contented so easily, you cannot expect much success in life.

In life we have to take bold decisions and take them quickly. The weak, the fearful and the undecided are swept aside by the tide of events. Once we choose a career or a profession, we have to equip ourselves for it, and once we are launched on our chosen course we have to see that we reach the top somehow. For those who try, this is not difficult. There have been cases in India—not many, alas—of postman who have retired as Postmasters General, of humble police constables who have ended their career as Inspectors General of Police; and there is the example of the late Mr. V.P. Menon, who began life as a Division III clerk in the Imperial Secretariat in New Delhi but rose dramatically to become Secretary of the Ministry of States when it was headed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. It was Mr. Menon who worked out all the details of the integration of the princely States in the Indian Union and eventually became Governor of Kerala.

With courage and determination, only the sky is the limit.

—Charles Newton

## CONTROLLING THE MIND

People say : "One can't help one's thoughts." But one can. The control of the thinking machine is perfectly possible. And since nothing hurts us or gives us pleasure except within the brain, the supreme importance of being able to control what goes on in that mysterious brain is evident. This idea is one of the oldest platitudes, but it is a platitude whose profound truth and urgency most people live and die without realizing. People complain of the lack of power to concentrate, not knowing that they may acquire the power, if they choose.

And without the power to concentrate—that is to say, without the power to dictate to the brain its task and to ensure obedience true life is impossible. Mind control is the first element of full existence.

Hence, it seems to me, the first business of the day should be to put the mind through its places. You look after your body, inside and out; you run grave danger in hacking hairs off your skin; you employ a whole army of individuals, from the milk-man to the meat-seller, to enable you to bribe your stomach into decent behaviour. Why not devote a little attention to far more delicate machinery of the mind, especially as you will require no extraneous aid? For this portion of the art and craft of living you may reserve the time from the moment of quitting your door to the moment of arriving at your college.

"What? I am to cultivate mind in the street, on the platform, in the train, and in the crowded street?" Precisely. Nothing similar! No tools required! Not even a book. Nevertheless, the affair is not easy.

When you leave your house, concentrate your mind on a subject (no matter what, to begin with). You will not have gone ten yards before your mind has skipped away under your very eyes and is larking round the corner with another subject. Bring it back by the scruff of the neck. Before you have reached the station you will have brought it back about forty times. Do not despair. Continue. Keep it up. You will succeed. You cannot by any chance fail if you persevere. It is idle to pretend that your mind is incapable of concentration. Do you not remember that morning when you were called upon to address your class? How you kept your mind steadily on the subject of your talk, without a second's intermission, until you reached your college and gave your speech. That was a case in which you were roused by circumstances to such a degree of vitality that you were able to dominate your mind like a tyrant. You would have no trifling. You insisted that its work should be done, and its work was done.

By the regular practice of concentration (as to which there is no secret except the secret of perseverance) you can tyrannize over your mind every hour of the day, and in no matter what place. The exercise is a very convenient one. If you got into your morning bus with tools for building your muscles or an encyclopaedia in ten volumes for improving your mind, you would probably excite remark. But as you walk in the street, or sit in the corner of the bus, who is to know that you are engaged in the most important of daily acts? Who can laugh at you?

I do not care what you concentrate on, so long as you concentrate. It is the mere disciplining of the thinking machine that counts. But still, you may as well kill two birds with one stone, and concentrate on something useful. I suggest that you concentrate on a lesson which you read yesterday in the classroom or at home.

I know, my friend, what you are thinking. It is useless for you to disguise the fact. I can hear your brain like a telephone at my ear. You are saying to yourself: "This fellow is talking nonsense. What he says about thinking in trains, and concen-

tration is not for me. It may be well enough for some extraordinary people but it isn't for a common person like me."

It is for you, I passionately repeat ; it is for you. Indeed, you are the very person I am aiming at.

If you throw away this suggestion you throw away the most precious suggestion that was ever offered to you. It is not my suggestion. It is the suggestion of the most sensible and practical men that have walked the earth. I only give it to you at second-hand. Try it. Get your mind in hand. And see how the process cures half the evil of life—especially worry, that miserable, avoidable, shameful disease, worry !

—*Arnold Bennett*

### THREE QUESTIONS

It once occurred to a certain king, that if he always knew the right time to begin everything; if he knew who were the right people to listen to and whom to avoid; and, above all, if he always knew what was the most important thing to do, he would never fail in anything he might undertake.

He had it proclaimed throughout the kingdom that he would give a great reward to anyone who would tell him what was the right time for every action, who were the people that mattered most, and how he might know what was the most important thing to do.

Learned men from far and near came to the king. They answered the questions in their own way. The answers were all different.

In reply to the first question, some said that to know the right time for every action one must draw up a table of days, months and years, and must live strictly according to it. Only thus, said they, could everything be done at its proper time. Others declared that it was impossible to decide beforehand the right time for every action; but that one should always attend to all that was going on and then do what was most needful. Others said that however attentive the king might be to whatever was going on, it was impossible for him to decide correctly the right time for every action. They further said that the king should have a council of wise men who would help him to fix the proper time for everything.

But then others said that there were some things which could

not wait to be laid before a council, but about which one had at once to decide whether to undertake them or not. But in order to decide that one must know beforehand what was going to happen. It is only magicians who know that. So in order to know the right time for every action one must consult magicians.

Equally different were the answers to the second question. Some said that the people the king most needed, were his advisers; others the priests; still others, the doctors; while some said the warriors were the most necessary.

To the third question some replied that the most important thing in the world was silence. Others said that it was skill in warfare. There were still others who said that it was religious worship.

All the answers were different and the king was not satisfied with anyone of them. So he gave the reward to none of the persons who gave these answers. But still wishing to find the right answers to his questions, he decided to consult a hermit who was very famous for his wisdom.

The hermit lived in a wood which he never left. He received none but common folk. So the king put on simple clothes and set out for the wood in which the hermit lived. Before reaching the hermit's hut the king got off his horse. Leaving his bodyguard behind, the king went on alone.

When the king approached the hermit's hut, the hermit was digging the ground in front of it. Seeing the king, he greeted him and went on digging. The hermit was lean, thin and weak. Each time he struck his spade into the ground and turned a little earth, he breathed heavily.

The king went up to him and said, "I have come to you to ask the answers to three questions : How can I learn to do the right thing at the right time ? Who are the people I need most and



to whom should I pay more attention than the rest? What affairs are the most important and need my first attention?"

The hermit listened to the king, but gave no answer. He just spat on his hand and began digging again.

"You are tired," said the king. "Let me take the spade and work for you."

"Thanks!" said the hermit. Giving the spade to the king, he sat down on the ground.

When the king had dug two beds, he stopped and repeated his questions. The hermit again gave no answer. But he rose, stretched out his hand for the spade and said, "Now rest for a while and let me work a bit."

But the king did not give him the spade and continued digging till the sun began to sink behind the trees. The king at last struck the spade into the ground and said, "I came to you for answers to my questions. If you can give me none, tell me so. I shall then return home."

"Here comes some one running," said the hermit, "Let us see who he is."

The king turned round and saw a bearded man come running out of the wood. The man held his hands pressed against his stomach, and blood was flowing from under them. When he came near the king, he fell fainting on the ground crying with pain. The king and the hermit unfastened the man's clothing. There was a large wound in his stomach. The king washed it as best he could. He then bandaged it with his handkerchief and with a towel the hermit had. But the blood would not stop flowing. The king again and again removed the bandage soaked with warm fresh blood, washed and bandaged the wound again. When at last the bleeding stopped, the man asked for something to drink. The king brought fresh water and gave it to him.

## THE CABULIWALLAH

My daughter Mini, when she was five-year old, could not live without chattering. Her mother was often annoyed at this and would like to stop her talking so much, but I would not. It was unnatural for Mini to be quiet, and I could not bear her quietness. So my own talk with her was always lively.

One morning, for example, when I was in the middle of writing the seventeenth chapter of my new novel, my little Mini stole into the room, and putting her hand into mine, said: "Bhola says there is an elephant in the clouds, blowing water out of his trunk, and that is why it rains! Is it true, father?"

And while I sat still, trying to think of some answer to this she quickly turned to another subject. "Father! What relation is Mother to you?"

I said seriously: "Go and play with Bhola, Mini! I am busy."

The window of my room overlooks the road. The child had seated herself at my feet near my table, and was playing softly, I was still working hard on my chapter, when suddenly Mini left her play and ran to the window crying: "A Cabuliwallah! A Cabuliwallah!" And indeed, in the street below, there was a Cabuliwallah walking slowly along. He wore the loose gown of his people, and a tall turban. He carried a bag on his back and boxes of grapes in his hand.

I cannot tell what my daughter's feelings were when she saw this man, but she began to call him loudly. The Cabuliwallah

turned, and looked up at the child. When she saw him, she was overcome by terror. Running to her mother's protection, she disappeared. She had a blind belief that inside the bag, which the big man carried, there were two or three children like herself. Meanwhile the fruit-seller entered my doorway and greeted me with a smile.

Mini had called the man to the house. I decided that I must buy something. I bought some small things and we talked together for a time. As he was about to leave, he asked : "And where is the little girl, Sir ?"

I called Mini, feeling that she must get rid of her false fear about the Cabuliwallah's bag. She stood by my chair and looked at the man fearfully. He offered her nuts and dried fruits, but she would not be tempted. All her doubts increased and she clung closer to me.

This was their first meeting.

A few morning later, however, as I was leaving the house, I was surprised to find Mini sitting near the door, laughing and talking, with the great Cabuliwallah at her feet. My small daughter had never, in all her life, found such a patient listener, except her father. The corner of her little sari was already filled with nuts and fruit which her visitor had given her. "Why did you give her those ?" I said and, taking out an eight-anna piece, I give it to the man. He accepted the money without argument, but later gave it to Mini.

After making inquiries, I found that it was not the first or the second time that the two had met. The Cabuliwallah had overcome the child's first fear by a gift of nuts and fruits and sweets and now they were great friends.

They used to meet and have many jokes together, which amused them greatly. The little girl would sit in front of the big man, and with her small bright face rippling with laughter would

begin asking : "O Cabuliwallah ! what have you got in your bag ?"

And he would reply seriously : "An elephant !" There may not seem to be much cause for merriment in this, but they both enjoyed the fun. And this child's talk with a grown-up man was always strangely interesting to me.

Then the Cabuliwallah would take his turn and say : "Well, little one, and when are you going to your father-in-law's house ?"

Now, nearly every small Bengali girl had heard long ago about her father-in-law's house; but we were a little modern in our ideas. We had not discussed the subject of marriage for our child, and Mini must have been rather puzzled by the questions, but she would not show it, and used quickly to ask in return : "Are you going there ?"

Among men of the Cabuliwallah's class, however the words father-in-law's house have two meanings. One is the usual meaning—the house of husband's or the wife's father. Father-in-law's house is also a polite expression for prison—the place where we are well cared for, at no expense to ourselves. The man from Cabul used playfully to take my daughter's question to mean this. "Oh," he would say, shaking his hand threateningly at an imaginary policeman, "I will thrash my father-in-law !" At the thought of poor, unfortunate father-in-law, Mini and the Cabuliwallah used to go off into peals of laughter.

Now, Mini's mother was unfortunately very timid. She was full of doubts about the Cabuliwallah, and used to beg me to keep a watchful eye on him. But her fear that the Cabuliwallah would kidnap Mini was rather unreal. It did not seem right to forbid the man to come to the house, so the friendship between Mini and the Cabuliwallah went on.

Once a year, the middle of January, Rahman, the Cabuliwallah, used to return to his own country; and, as the time drew

near, he would be very busy going from house to house to collect his debts. For the Cabuliwallah was not only a fruit-seller but a money-lender also. He used to lend money, charging high interest. He usually had very little time to spare at this time of the year. This year, however, he always found time to come and see Mini. If he could not come in the morning he would appear in the evening. Even I sometimes felt a shock of surprise when I found this tall, loose-clothed man, sitting in a corner of a dark room; but my anxiety left me when Mini ran in smiling, with her cry of "O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah!" and the two friends so far apart in age, joined together in their usual laughter and their old jokes.

One morning, a few days before the Cabuliwallah was due to return to his country, I was working in my study. Suddenly I heard shouting in the street, and I saw Rahman being led away between two policemen, followed by a crowd of curious boys. There were blood stains on his clothes, and one of the policemen carried a knife stained with blood. I hurried out and stopped them to inquire what it all meant. I learned that a certain neighbour had owed the Cabuliwallah some money, but had denied it. They had quarrelled, and Rahman had struck the man with his knife.

Suddenly my little Mini appeared, with her usual cry of "O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah!" and Rahman's face lighted up as he turned to her. He had no bag under his arm today, so she could not talk to him about the elephant. She therefore went on at once to the next question: "Are you going to your father-in-law's house?"

Rahman laughed and said: "That is just where I am going, little one."

This was not the usual answer.

Seeing that his reply had not amused the child, he held up his hands which were bound with chains. "Ah!" he said, "I would have thrashed my father-in-law, but my hands are bound."

Rahman was sent to prison for several years.

Time passed, and Mini forgot her old friend. New companions filled her life. As she grew older, she spent more of her time with her girl friends. Indeed, she spent so much time with them that she came no more to her father's room, and I rarely had an opportunity of speaking to her.

Years had passed. Mini was now young. We made arrangements for her marriage. It was to take place during the Puja holidays. With Durgā returning to Kailas, the light of our home also would depart to her husband's house, leaving her father's house in shadow. My heart was filled with pain at the thought of separation from my Mini.

The day of marriage came. The house had been filled with noise and excitement since early morning, and the whole household was busy with preparations. I was sitting in my study, looking through the accounts, when someone entered saluting respectfully, and stood before me. It was Rahman, the Cabuliwallah. At first I did not recognize him. He carried no bag, his long hair was cut short and his old liveliness seemed to have gone. But he smiled and I knew him again.

"When did you come, Rahman?" I asked him.

"I was set free from prison last night," he said.

The words sounded harshly in my ears. I had never before talked to a man who had struck and wounded a fellow-man and I was filled with unhappiness when I felt that Rahman's coming on this special day might bring us bad luck.

"There are ceremonies going on," I said. "And I am busy. Perhaps you could come another day?"

He immediately turned to go; but as he reached the door he hesitated, and said: "May I not see the little one, sir, for a moment!" He believed that Mini had not changed. He had

pictured her running to him as she used to do, calling, "O Cabuliwallah ! Cabuliwallah !" He had imagined, too, that they would laugh and talk together, just as they used to do. Indeed, in memory of former days, he had brought, carefully wrapped up in a paper, a few nuts and grapes, which he had somehow managed to get from a countryman. His own little store of money had all gone while he was in prison.

I repeated : "There is a ceremony in the house, and you will not be able to see anyone today."

The man's face fell. He looked sadly at me for a moment, then said, "Good morning," and went out.

I felt a little sorry, and would have called him back, but he returned of his own will. He came close up to me and held out his gifts with the words : "I have brought these few things, sir, for the little one. Will you give them to her ?"

I took them, and was going to pay him, but he caught my hand and said : "You are very kind. Sir ! Keep me in your memory. Do not offer me money ! You have a little girl ; I too have one like her in my home. I bring this fruit to your child because of my own daughter, and not to make a profit for myself."

Saying this, he put his hand inside his big loose coat and brought out a small and dirty piece of paper. Unfolding it with great care, he smoothed it out with both hands on my table. It bore the impression of a little hand. Not a drawing. Just the impression of an ink-smear laid flat on the paper. Year after year, when he came to Calcutta to sell his goods in the streets, he had carried, next to his heart, this touch of the hand of his own little daughter.

Tears came into my eyes. I forgot he was a poor Cabuli fruit-seller ; while I was, ... But no, what was I more than he ? He also was a father. That impression of the hand of his little Parvati,

"I should like to know how the manufacture of the cloth is getting on," thought the Emperor. He remembered that the stupid or the incapable would not be able to see the cloth. He fancied, indeed, that he had no need to be anxious on his own account, but he thought it would be safer to send someone else first to see how things went. Every person throughout the city had heard of the wonderful properties of the new cloth, and all were eager to see how foolish or stupid their neighbours were.

"I will send my worthy old minister to the weavers," thought the Emperor, "he can best see what the cloth looks like, for he is a man of intellect, and none is fitter for his office than he."

So the able old minister went into the room where the two impostors sat working at the empty looms. "Mercy on us!" thought he, and opened his eyes very wide. "I can't see anything." But he took very good care not to say so.

The two impostors begged him to draw nearer, and asked him if the pattern was not a pretty one, and the colours very beautiful. Then they pointed at the empty looms, and the poor old minister opened his eyes wider and wider, but he could see nothing for there was nothing to see. "Good gracious!" thought he, "I am not stupid surely? I never thought so before, and I'll take good care that no body shall know it now. What! I am not fit for my office, eh? Oh, no, it will never do for me to go and say that I can't see the cloth!"

"Well, have you nothing to say about it?" asked one of the weavers.

"Oh, it is beautiful! it is the loveliest cloth in the world!" said the old minister, and he took out his spectacles. "What a pattern! And those colours, too! Yes, I'll tell the Emperor that it pleases me immensely!"

"Well, we are pleased with it, too," said the two weavers. Now they named the colours in detail and described the pattern.



The old minister carefully listened to all they said, so as to be able to repeat the same things to the Emperor, which he accordingly did.

And now the impostors demanded more money, more silk, and more gold. They required the gold for the weaving, they said. They stuck everything into their own pockets. Not so much as a thread passed over the looms; but they continued as before to weave upon the empty looms.

In a short time the Emperor sent another very able official to see how the weaving was getting on, and if the cloth was nearly ready. It fared with him as with the minister. He gazed and gazed, but as there was nothing there but the empty looms, he could not see anything.

"A pretty piece of cloth, isn't it?" said the two impostors and pretended to point out the beautiful patterns, of which there was really no trace.

"Surely I am not stupid," thought the man. "Not fit for my post! A pretty joke, but I must not let it be noticed!" So he praised the cloth he did not see, and congratulated them on the beautiful colours and the lovely patterns. "Yes, it is perfectly enchanting!" said he to the Emperor.

Soon all the people in the town were talking of the splendid cloth.

And now the Emperor had a mind to see the cloth himself while it was still on the loom. With a host of the great folk of his realm, among whom were the two able officials who had been there before, he went to the crafty impostors. Who were now working with all their might, but without a stitch or thread.

"Now, is it not magnificent?" said the two officials. "Will your Majesty observe what patterns, what colours are here?" and they pointed at the empty looms, taking it for granted that the others could see the cloth.

"Why, what is this?" thought the Emperor, "I don't see anything! How horrible! Am I stupid then? Am I unfit to be Emperor? That would be the most frightful thing that could happen to me!" "Oh, it is very fine!" said he aloud. "It has my most gracious approbation!" and he nodded his head approvingly, and gazed at the empty loom. He would not say that he could not see anything. The royal officers stared and stared. They could make no more of it than the rest, but they repeated after the Emperor, "Oh, it is very fine!" and advised him to wear clothes made of this new and gorgeous cloth for the first time on the occasion of the grand procession which was about to take place.

"It is magnificent, elegant, excellent!" went from mouth to mouth. Everybody seemed so mightily pleased with the cloth that the Emperor gave each of the impostors a ribbon and a cross to wear, and conferred on them the title of "Weavers to the Imperial Court."

On the eve of the procession the impostors sat up all night, and had more than sixteen candles lit. The people could see that they were busy getting the Emperor's new clothes. They pretended to take the cloth from the loom, they clipped the air with large scissors, and sewed with needles without thread, and at last declared, "There, the clothes are now quite ready."

The Emperor, with his principal lords, then came himself, and the impostors raised their arms as if they were holding up something, and said, "Here is the coat, and there the mantle. They are as light as gossamer. You would fancy you had nothing on at all, but that is just the beauty of the cloth.

"Of course!" said all the gentlemen-in-waiting; but they could see nothing, for there was nothing to see.

"And now, if your Majesty would have your clothes taken off," said the impostors, "we will put on the new ones for your Majesty. Please come in front of the large mirror. Thank you!"

So the Emperor's clothes were removed, and the impostors pretended to give him the newly-made ones piece by piece, and they smoothed down his body, and tied something fast which was supposed to be the train, and the Emperor turned and twisted himself in front of the mirror.

"What a capital suit it is ! How nicely it fits!" the people cried with one voice. "What a pattern ! What colours ! It is a splendid dress !"

"The canopy which is to be borne over your Majesty in the procession is waiting outside," the master of the ceremonies announced.

"All right," said the Emperor; "I am quite ready. Do my clothes fit well ?" He turned himself once more before the mirror, to make believe that he was now taking a general survey of his splendour. The gentlemen-in-waiting, who had to bear his train, fumbled with their hands along the floor as if they were taking the train up, and as they went along they held their hands in the air for they dared not let it be supposed that they saw nothing.

And thus the Emperor marched in the procession beneath the beautiful canopy, and every one in the streets and in the windows said, "Gracious ! how perfect the Emperor's new clothes are ! What a beautiful train ! How splendidly everything fits !" No one would have said that he saw nothing, for then he would certainly have been unfit for his post, or very stupid. None of the Emperor's clothes had been so successful as these.

"Look, he has got nothing on !" cried a little child, "Listen to the voice of innocence !" said the father. Every one was whispering to his neighbour what the child had said, "He has nothing on ! There is a child here who says he has nothing on !"

"He really has nothing on !" at length cried the whole crowd.

The Emperor shrank within himself as he heard, for it seemed to him that they were right, but he thought at the same time, "At any rate I must go through with this procession to the end." So he put on a still haughtier air and the gentlemen-in-waiting marched behind, carefully holding up the train that wasn't there.

—*Hans Christian Anderson*

## GANDHI'S APPEAL

Padma's husband said : "I shall be back at six. If you are ready by then, we will go to the beach."

"I am going to the Royal Theatre. Gandhi is addressing a meeting there."

"Very well," said her husband, "but be sure to remove your jewels and put them in the trunk before you go to the meeting."

"If you go to the meeting, be sure to lock your purse in the safe," retorted Padma.

"I don't think I shall attend the meeting," said the husband, and left for his office.

At three o'clock Padma stood before her mirror and took off her jewels one by one. In about half-an-hour she was perfectly bare. She surveyed herself in the mirror and felt slightly disappointed. The wife of the advocate next door was sure to be at the meeting, and what a chance lost of showing off the new gold necklace !

She was satisfied, now that she had nothing on she could possibly lose at the meeting. She had removed even her bangles. She suddenly remembered that it would be inauspicious for a married woman to go about with bare wrists on a Friday. She put on two of her slenderest bangles and resolved to keep them covered with the end of her sari.

The meeting was to begin at five, but Padma was in the Royal Theatre at four, and managed to secure a chair in the front row. In the next seat sat a friend of hers, and Padma noticed

that she, too was curiously bare. "What is the matter ? Where are your jewels ?" asked Padma. The other replied : "I have purposely removed them and kept them at home. When Mahatma Gandhi came here four years ago, I attended a meeting in this very hall. He made a speech and then appealed for funds, and before I knew what I was doing I removed and placed at his feet eight bangles, and a necklace worth sixty sovereigns. The Mahatma collected three thousand rupees in half-an-hour in the shape of jewels alone : somehow, when he asks nobody can resist giving him things. I went home bare, and for three months my husband did not speak to me. Today he would not allow me to start without stripping me of all my jewels."

Volunteers clad in white homespun clothes and caps bustled about pushing chairs, arranging flower pots on the dais, and maintaining order in the crowd. It was only fifteen minutes past four and the hall was already full. People sat on windows and ventilators and stood choking up the passages and doorways.

At exactly five Mahatma Gandhi arrived. Everybody stood up. Shouts of "Gandhi-ki-jai," "Bharat Mata-ki-jai," rang through the hall. Gandhi stood on the dais smiling and dowing to the gathering. Padma stood with clasped hands. So this was Gandhi, she thought. She saluted him a number of times and then sat down. Garlands were flung towards the Mahatma from various parts of the hall. Several women rushed forward to touch his feet. It took nearly half-an-hour for the bustle to subside. Gandhi squatted down on the dais. An elderly gentleman with a drooping mustache, who had been hovering about Gandhi, came forward with a scroll in his hand and read an address, welcoming the great man and setting forth the work done by the local branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society.

After the address, Gandhi spoke. There was a quiet cajoling note in his voice which lulled his hearers and made them sway to his words.

"You know I have come on a mission of reform. It is the

cause of truth as I see it, and I appeal to you to help in it," he said. In the eyes of God all men were equal. Could any man say that his eye or ear was superior to his hand or feet or any other part of his body? All were equally important. Similarly, every section of society was as important as any other section. The caste system was just a division of labour. The Brahmin at the top did the religious and spiritual work and the Harijan did the necessary menial and scavenging work; but just for that the latter must not be treated as a leper. All were equal in the eyes of God.

He may have spoken for forty minutes. The audience listened to him hypnotized. Padma distinctly saw a light round the speaker's head. She agreed with every word he said. She felt an intense pity for the scavenger who came to her house, whom she often cursed and bullied for no reason whatever.

After the speech Gandhi proceeded to business. He said his audience must have guessed that he was there for their money. He needed it for providing the poor people of the depressed class with the elementary needs of life. He looked at the women and said: "Your jewels must go for this work."

There was a stir among the women in the assembly. Gandhi said jokingly: "I am a money-lender by caste and I won't go before I have in my pocket all your coins and anything that could be converted into coin. Please hurry up, I have another meeting this evening."

Somebody pushed his way through the crowd and placed a silver tray in Gandhi's hands. A woman bounded on the platform, unclasped her necklace, and gave it to him. Gandhi thanked her for the necklace but wanted to know if she meant to keep the ring he saw on her finger. The woman removed her ring and gave it to him amid applause.

There was a rush on to the platform. Articles and money was brought to Gandhi at great speed. He attracted them like a central force. Men, women, and children, scrambled in confusion

to approach Gandhi and offer him something. Men on Padma's right, women sitting on her left, children squatting on the carpet—everybody rushed forward with some offering or other. Padma covered her bangles with the end of her sari and sat fighting the madness which was rising in her.

When the rush ended a variety of things were heaped around Gandhi—silver plates, trays, vases, fountain pens, watches, trinkets, jewels, coins and garlands.

Gandhi thanked the audience for the gifts, and said he would presently auction all the valuable articles and convert them into cash. But first he would like to assure himself that there was nothing more to come. He asked : "Brothers, and sisters, have you given me your all ?" He looked around.

Padma's hands trembled as she kept her bangled wrists concealed under her sari. When Gandhi looked at her, she felt she had been found out. She climbed the platform, removed her two bangles, and placed them before Gandhi. He smiled and said "Thank you, Sister." It was a great moment for Padma.

Her husband came home rather late, ate his food in a business like way, and went to bed. He did not notice Padma's bare wrists.

She imagined wild things as to what he would do when he discovered the loss of her bangles. He might ask her to go back to her parents. He might not speak to her for three or four months. Shiva alone knew what was in store for her. She wished she had not gone to see Gandhi.

She decided to say nothing about it till the morning. However, at about eleven she could not contain herself any longer. The suspense was harrowing. She touched, her husband, woke him up, and told him about the bangles. He was too sleepy at first to understand what she was saying. She shook him well, and repeated it. He was silent for a few minutes—a thousand years they seemed to Padma.



He said at last, very mildly : "I warned you not to go there with your jewels on." She did not say anything to this. They were silent for some time, and then he said, "Now listen to what I have done. I did not intend going to the meeting at first, but stumbled in there with a friend. I had on me fifty rupees, drawn from the bank for paying the rent tomorrow, and dropped them into the box when a volunteer came round collecting money."

"You are absolutely thoughtless ! What are we going to do about the rent tomorrow ?" asked Padma indignantly.

—R. K. Narayan

## THE JUDGEMENT-SEAT OF VIKRAMADITYA

Vikramaditya became the king of Malwa in the year 57 before Christ. He was so strong, true and gentle that the men of his own age almost worshipped him. It is said of him that he was the greatest judge in Indian history.

Never was he deceived. Never did he punish the wrong man. The guilty trembled when they came before him, for they knew that his eyes would look straight into their guilt. And those who had difficult questions to ask, and wanted to know the truth were thankful to be allowed to come, for they knew that their king would never rest till he understood the matter and that then he could give an answer that would convince all.

And so, later time in India, when any judge pronounced sentence with great skill, it would be said of him, "Ah, he must have sat in the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya !" And this was the habit of speech of the whole country. Yet in Ujjain itself, the common people forgot that the heaped-up ruins a few miles away had been his palace, and only the wise men who lived in the King's court remembered.

The story I am about to tell you happened long, long ago. There had been time for the old palace and fortress of Ujjain to fall into ruins, and for the sand to be heaped up over them, covering the blocks of stone, and bits of old wall, often with grass and dust, and even trees. There had been time, too, for the people to forget.

In those days, the people of the villages, as they do still, used to send their cows to the wild land to graze. Early in the morning

they would go, in the care of shepherds, and not return till evening, close on dusk.

In the long days on the pastures the shepherd boys had plenty of time for fun. One day they found a playground. Oh, how delight it was! The ground under the trees was rough and uneven. Here and there the end of a great stone peeped out, and many of these stones were beautifully carved. In the middle was a green mound, looking just like a Judge's seat.

One of the boys thought so at least, and he ran forward with a whoop and seated himself on it. "I say, boys," he cried, "I'll judge and you can all bring cases before me, and we'll have trials!"

Then he straightened his face, and became very grave, to act the part of judge.

The others saw the fun at once, and, whispering amongst themselves, quickly, made up some quarrel, and appeared before him, saying very humbly, "May your worship be pleased to settle between my neighbour and me which is in the right?" Then they stated the case, one saying that a certain field was his, another that it was not, and so on.

But now a strange thing made itself felt. When, the judge had sat down on the mound, he was just a common boy. But when he had heard the question, even to the eyes of the frolicsome boys, he seemed quite different. He was now full of gravity, and instead of answering in fun, he took the case seriously, and gave an answer which in that particular case was perhaps the wisest that man had ever heard.

The boys were a little frightened. For though they could not appreciate the judgement, yet his tone and manner were strange and impressive. Still they thought it was fun, and went away again, and, with a good deal more whispering, connected another case. Once more they put it to their judge, and once more he gave a reply, as it were out of the depth of long experience, with

incontrovertible wisdom. And this went on for hours and hours, he sitting on the judge's seat, listening to the questions propounded by the others, and always pronouncing sentence with the same wonderful gravity and power, and then he jumped down from his place, and was just like any other cowherd.

The boys could never forget that day, and whenever they heard of any perplexing dispute they would set this boy on the mound, and put it to him. And always the same thing happened. The spirit of Knowledge and Justice would come to him, and he would show them the truth. But when he came down from his seat, he would be no different from other boys.

Gradually the news of this spread through the country-side, and grown-up men and women from all the villages about that part would bring their lawsuits to be decided in the court of the herd-boys on the grass under the green trees. And always they received a judgement that both sides understood, and went away satisfied. So all the disputes in that neighbourhood were settled.

Ujjain had long ceased to be a capital, and the king now lived very far away. Hence it was some time before he heard the story. At last, however it came to his ears. "Why", he said, "that boy must have sat on the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya !" He spoke without thinking, but all around him were learned men, who knew the chronicles. They looked at one another. "The king must be right," they said, "the ruins in those meadows were once Vikramaditya's palace !"

Now this sovereign had long desired to be possessed with the spirit of law and justice. Every day brought its problems and difficulties to him, and he often felt weak and ignorant in deciding matters that needed wisdom and strength. "If sitting on the mound brings it to the shepherd boy," he thought, "let us dig deep and find the Judgement-Seat. I shall put it in my hall of justice, and on it I shall sit to hear all cases. Then the spirit of Vikramaditya will descend on me also and I shall always be a just judge" !

So men with spades and tools came to disturb the ancient peace of the pastures, and the grassy mound where the boys had played was overturned. All about the spot were now heaps of earth and broken wood and upturned sod. And the cows had to be driven further afield. But the heart of the boy who had been judge was sorrowful, as if the very home of his soul were being taken away from him.

At last the labourers came on something. They uncovered it—a slab of black marble, supported on the hands and outspread wings of twenty-five stone angels, with their faces turned outwards as if for flight—surely the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya.

With great rejoicing it was brought to the city and the king himself stood by while it was put in the hall of justice. Then the nation was ordered to observe three days of prayer and fasting, for on the fourth day the king would ascend the new throne publicly, and judge justly amongst the people.

At last the great morning arrived and crowds assembled to see the Taking of the Seat. Pacing through the long hall came the judges and priests of the kingdom, followed by the Sovereign. Then, as they reached the Throne of Judgement, they parted into two lines, and he walked up the middle, prostrated himself before it and went up close to the marble slab.

When he had done this, however, and was just about to sit down, one of the twenty-five stone angels began to speak. "Stop" it said: "do you think that you are worthy to sit on the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya? Have you never desired to rule over kingdoms which were not your own?" And the countenance of the stone angel was full of sorrow.

At these words the king felt as if a light had blazed up within him, and shown him a long array of tyrannical wishes. He knew that his own life was unjust. After a long pause he spoke. "No," he said, "I am not worthy."

"Fast and pray yet three day," said the angel, "that you may purify your will, and make good your right to seat yourself thereon." And with these words it spread its wings and flew away. And when the king lifted up his face, the place of the speaker was empty, and only twenty-four figures supported the marble slab.

And so for three days more he prepared himself with prayer and with fasting to come again and attempt to sit on the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya.

But this time it was even as before. Another stone angel addressed him, and asked him a question which was yet more searching. "Have you never," it said, "coveted the riches of another?"

And when at last he spoke and said, "Yes, I have; I am not worthy to sit on the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya!" The angel commanded him to fast and pray yet another three days, and spread its wings and flew away into the blue.

At last four times twenty-four days had gone, and still three more days of fasting, and it was now the hundredth day. Only one angel was left supporting the marble slab, and the king drew near with great confidence, for today he felt sure of being allowed to take his place.

But as he drew near, the last angel spoke. "Are you, then, perfectly pure in heart, O King?" it said, "Is your will like that of a little child? If so, you are indeed worthy to sit on this seat?"

"No", said the king, speaking very slowly, and once more searching his own conscience, as the judge examines the prisoner at the bar, but with great sadness; "no, I am not worthy."

And at these words the angel flew up in to air, bearing the slab upon his head, so that never since that day has it been seen upon the earth.

But when the king came to himself and was alone, pondering over the matter, he saw that the last angel had explained the mystery. Only he who was pure in heart, like a little child, could be perfectly just. That was why the shepherd boy in the forest could sit where no king in the world might come, on the Judgement-Seat of Vikramaditya.

—*Sister Nivedita*

## THE BLACK CAT

Tomorrow I die. Tomorrow I die, and today I want to tell the world what happened and thus perhaps free my soul from the horrible weight which lies upon it.

But listen ! Listen, and you shall hear how I have been destroyed.

When I was a child I had a natural goodness of soul which led me to love animals—all kind of animals, but especially those animals we call pets, animals which have learned to live with men and share their homes with them. There is something in the love of these animals which speaks directly to the heart of the man who has learned from experience how uncertain and changeable is the love of other men.

I was quite young when I married. You will understand the joy I felt to find that my wife shared with me my love for animals. Quickly she got for us several pets of the most likeable kind. We had birds, some goldfish, a fine dog, and a cat.

The cat was a beautiful animal, of unusually large size, and entirely black. I named the cat Pluto, and it was the pet I liked best. I alone fed it, and it followed me all around the house. It was even with difficulty that I stopped it from following me through the streets.

Our friendship lasted, in this manner, for several years, during which, however, my own character became greatly changed. I began to drink too much wine and other strong drinks. As the days passed I became less loving in my manner ; I became quick to anger ; I forgot how to smile and laugh. My wife—yes, and my



pets, too, all except the cat—were made to feel the change in my character.

One night I came home quite late from the inn, where I now spent more and more time drinking. Walking with uncertain step, I made my way with effort into the house. As I entered I saw—or thought I saw—that Pluto, the cat, was trying to stay out of my way, to avoid me. This action, by an animal which I had thought still loved me, made me angry beyond reason. My soul seemed to fly from my body, I took a small knife out of my coat and opened it. Then I took the poor animal by the neck and with one quick movement I cut out one of its fear-filled eyes!

Slowly the cat got well. The hole where its eye had been was not a pretty thing to look at, it is true; but the cat no longer appeared to suffer any pain. As might be expected, however, it ran from me in fear whenever I came near. Why should it not run? Yet this did not fail to anger me. I felt growing inside myself a new feeling. Who has not, a hundred times, found himself doing wrong, doing some evil thing for no other reason than because he knows he should not? Are not we humans at all times pushed, ever driven in some unknown way to break the law just because we understand it to be the law?

One day, in cold blood, I tied a strong rope around the cat's neck, and taking it down into the cellar under the house I hung it from one of the wood beams above my head. I hung it there until it was dead. I hung it there with tears in my eyes, I hung it because I knew it had loved me, because I felt it had given me, no reason to hurt it, because I knew that my doing so was a wrong so great, a sin so deadly that it would place my soul forever outside the reach of the love God!

That same night, as I lay sleeping, I heard through my open window the cries of our neighbours. I jumped from my bed and found that the entire house was filled with fire. It was only with great difficulty that my wife and I escaped. And when we were out of the house, all we could do was stand and watch it burn to the

ground. I thought of the cat as I watched it burn, the cat whose dead body I had left hanging in the cellar. It seemed almost that the cat had in some mysterious way caused the house to burn so that it could make me pay for my evil act, so that, it could take revenge upon me.

Months went by, and I could not drive the thought of the cat out of mind. One night I sat in the inn, drinking, as usual. In the corner I saw a dark object that I had not seen before. I went over to see what it could be. It was a cat, a cat almost exactly like Pluto. I touched it with my hand and patted it, passing my hand softly along its back. The cat rose and pushed its back against my hand.

Suddenly I realized that I wanted the cat. I offered to buy it from the innkeeper, but he claimed he had never seen the animal before. As I left the inn, it followed me, and I allowed it to do so. It soon became a pet of both my wife and myself.

The morning after I brought it home, however, I discovered that this cat, like Pluto, had only one eye. How was it possible that I had not noticed this the night before? This fact only made my wife love the cat more. But I, myself, found a feeling of dislike growing in me. My growing dislike of the animal only seemed to increase its love for me. It followed me, followed me everywhere, always. When I sat, it lay down under my chair. When I stood up it got between my feet and nearly made me fall. Wherever I went, it was always there. At night I dreamed of it. And I began to hate that cat!

One day my wife called to me from the cellar of the old building where we were now forced to live. As I went down the stairs, the cat, following me as always, ran under my feet and nearly threw me down.

In sudden anger, I took a knife and struck wildly at the cat. Quickly my wife put out her hand and stopped my arm. This only increased my anger and, without thinking, I turned and put the

knife's point deep into her heart ! she fell to the floor and died without a sound.

I spent a few moments looking for the cat. But it was gone. And I had other things to do for I knew I must do something with the body, and quickly. Suddenly I noticed a place in the wall of the cellar where stones had been added to the wall to cover an old fireplace which was no longer wanted. The walls were very strongly built, and I found I could easily take down those stones. Behind them there was, as I knew there must be a hole just big enough to hold the body. With much effort I put the body in and carefully put the stones back in their place. I was pleased to see that it was quite impossible for anyone to know that a single stone had been moved.

Days passed. Still there was no cat. A few people came and asked about my wife ; but I answer them easily. Then one day several officers of the police came. Certain that they could find nothing, I asked them in and went with them as they searched.

Finally they searched the cellar from end to end. I watched them quietly, and, as I expected, they noticed nothing. But as they started up the stairs again, I felt myself driven by some unknown inner force to let them know to make them know, that I had won the battle.

"The walls of this building," I said, "are very strongly built ; it is a fine old house." And as I spoke I struck with my stick that very place in the wall behind which was the body of my wife. Immediately I felt a cold feeling up and down my back as we heard coming out of the wall itself a horrible cry.

For one short moment the officers stood looking at each other. Then quickly they began to pick at the stones, and in a short time they saw before them the body of my wife, black with dried blood and smelling of decay. On the body's head, its one eye filled with fire, its wide open mouth the colour of blood, sat the cat, crying out its revenge.

—Edgar Allan Poe

## THE HAPPY PRINCE

High above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold. For eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt. He was very much admired indeed.

One night there flew over the city a little Swallow. His friends had gone away to Egypt six weeks before, but he had stayed behind, for he was in love with the most beautiful Reed. He had met her early in the spring as he was flying down the river after a big yellow moth and had been so attracted by her slender waist that he had stopped to talk to her. He flew round and round her, touching the water with his wings, and making silver ripples. This was his courtship, and it lasted all through the summer.

"It is a ridiculous attachment," twittered the other Swallows; "she had no money, and far too many relations." Indeed the river was quite full of Reeds. Then, when the autumn came they all flew away.

After they had gone he felt lonely, and began to get tired of his lady-love. "She has no conversation" he said, "and she is domestic." "But I love travelling," he continued, "and my wife, consequently, should also love travelling."

"Will you come away with me?" he said finally to her, but the Reed shook her head; she was so attached to her home.

"You have been trifling with me," he cried. "I am going off to Egypt. Good-bye!" and he flew away.

All day long he flew, and at night-time he arrived at the city. "Where shall I put up?" he said. Then he saw the statue on the tall column.

"I will put up there," he cried ; "it is a fine position, with plenty of fresh air." So he alighted just between the feet of the Happy Prince, and prepared to go to sleep. But just as he was putting his head under his wing a large drop of water fell on him. "What a curious thing !" he cried ; "there is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful."

Then another drop fell.

"What is the use of the statue if it cannot keep the rain off ?" he said : "I must look for a good chimney-pot," and he determined to fly away.

But before he had opened his wings, a third drop fell, and he looked up, and saw—Ah ! what did he see ?

The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity.

"Who are you ?" he said.

"I am the Happy Prince."

"Why are you weeping then ?" asked the Swallow - "you have quite drenched me."

"When I was alive and had a human heart," answered the statue, "I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the Palace of Happiness, where sorrow was not allowed to enter. In the day time I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it. Everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep."

"Far away," continued the statue in a low musical voice, "far away in a little street there is a poor house. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn, and she has coarse, red hands, all pricked by the needle, for she is a seamstress. She is embroidering flower on a satin gown for the princess."

"In a bed in the corner of room her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but river water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little swallow, will you not bring her the ruby out of my swordhilt ! My feet are fastened to this pedestal and I cannot move."

"I am waited for in Egypt," said the swallow. "My friends are flying up and down the Nile, and talking to the large lotus-flowers. Soon they will go to sleep in the tomb of the great King. The King is there himself in his painted coffin."

"Swallow, Sawllow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me for one night, and be my messenger ? The boy is so thirsty, and the mother so sad "

The Happy Prince looked so sad that the little Swallow was sorry "It is very cold here," he said, "but I will stay with you for one night, and be your messenger."

"Thank you, little Swallow," said the Prince.

So the swallow picked out the great ruby from the Prince's sword, and flew away with it in his beak over the roofs of the town.

He passed by the cathedral tower, where the white marble angels were standing. He passed by the palace and heard the sound of dancing. The beautiful princess came out on the balcony with her lover. "I hope my dress will be ready in time for my birthday," she remarked ; "I have ordered flowers to be embroidered on it ; but the seamstresses are so lazy."

He passed over the river, and saw the lanterns hanging to the masts of the ships. He passed over the poor-houses, and saw old

men bargaining with each other. At last he came to the house of the seamstress and looked in. The boy was tossing feverishly on his bed, and the mother had fallen asleep, she was so tired. In he hopped and laid the great ruby by her head. Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with his wings. "How cool I feel!" said the boy. "I must be getting better; and he sank into a delicious slumber.

Then the swallow flew back to the happy Prince, and told him what he had done. "It is curious," he remarked, "but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold."

"That is because you have done a good action," said the Prince. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep.

When day broke he flew down to the river and had a bath. "what a remarkable phenomenon!" said the Professor of Biology as he was passing over bridge. "A swallow in winter!" And he wrote a long letter about it to the local newspaper. Every one quoted it. It was full of so many words that they could not understand.

"To-night I go to Egypt," said the Swallow, and he was in high spirits at the prospect. He visited all the public monuments, and sat a long time on top of the church steeple. Where he went the Sparrows chirped, and said to each other, "What a distinguished stranger." So he enjoyed himself very much.

When the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince to say him good bye.

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "will you not stay with me one night longer!"

"I am waited for in Egypt," answered the Swallow. "To-morrow my friends will fly up to the great waterfall."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "far away across the city I see a young man in a room. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers, and in a bottle by his side there is a

bunch of withered violets. His hair is brown, his lips are red, and he has large and dreamy eyes. He is trying to finish a play, but he is too tired to write any more !”

“I will wait with you one night longer,” said the Swallow, who really had a good heart. “Shall I take him another ruby ?”

“Alas ! I have no ruby now,” said the Prince ; “My eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him. He will sell it to the jeweller, and buy firewood, and finish his play.

“Dear Prince,” said the Swallow, “I cannot do that.” And he began to weep. “Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,” said the Prince, “do as I command you.”

So the Swallow plucked out the Prince’s eye, and flew away to the young man’s room. It was easy enough to get in as there was a hole in the roof. Through this he darted, and came into the room. The young man had his head buried in his hands, so he did not hear the flutter of the bird’s wings. When he looked up he found the beautiful sapphire lying on the withered violets.

“I am beginning to be appreciated,” he cried ; “this is from some great admirer. Now I can finish my play.” And he looked quite happy.

The next day the Swallow thought about Egypt and when the moon rose he flew back to the Happy Prince. “I have come to bid good-bye,” he cried.

“Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,” said the Prince, “will you not stay with me one night longer ?”

“It is winter,” answered the Swallow, and the snow will soon be here. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees. My companions are building a nest in a temple. Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you, and next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels in place of those you have given



away. The ruby shall be redder than a red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea."

"In the square below," said the Happy Prince, "there stands a little match girl. She has let her matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her if she does not bring home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. If you pluck out my mother eye, and give it to her, her father will not beat her."

"I will stay with you one night longer," said the Swallow, "but I cannot pluck out your eye. You would be quite blind then."

"Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow," said the Prince, "do as I command you."

So he plucked out the Prince's other eye, and darted down with it. He swooped past the match-girl and slipped the jewel into the palm of her hand. "What a lovely bit of glass!" cried the little girl, and she ran home, laughing.

Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. "You are blind now," he said, "so I will stay with you always."

"No, little Swallow," said the poor Prince, "you must go away to Egypt."

"I will stay with you always," said the Swallow, and he slept at the Prince's feet.

All the next day he sat on the Prince's shoulder and told him stories of what he had seen in strange lands.

"Dear little Swallow," said the Prince, "you tell me of marvellous things, but more marvellous than anything is the suffering of men and of women. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there."

So the Swallow flew over the great city, and saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were

sitting at the gates. He flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out listlessly at the black streets. Under the archway of a bridge two little boys were lying in one another's arms to keep themselves warm. "How hungry we are!" they said. "You must not lie here," shouted the watchman, and they wandered out into the rain.

Then he flew back and told the Prince what he had seen.

"I am covered with fine gold," said the Prince, "you must take it off, leaf by leaf, and give it to the poor."

Leaf after leaf of the fine gold the Swallow picked off, till the Happy Prince looked quite dull and grey. Leaf after leaf of the fine gold he brought to the poor, and the children's faces grew rosier, and they laughed and played games in the street. "We have bread now!" they cried.

Then the snow came, and after the snow came the frost. The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening. Everybody went about in woollen clothes.

The poor Swallow grew colder and colder, but he would not leave the Prince whom he loved too well. He picked up crumbs outside the baker's door when the baker was not looking, and tried to keep himself warm by flapping his wings.

But at last he knew that he was going to die. He had just enough strength to fly up to the Prince's shoulder once more. "Good-bye, dear Prince!" he murmured, "will you let me kiss your hand?"

"I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, little Swallow," said the Prince. "You have stayed too long here but you must kiss me on the lips, for I love you!"

"It is not to Egypt that I am going," said the Swallow. "I am going to the House of Death." And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips, and fell down dead at his feet.

At that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue,

as if something had broken. The fact is that the leaden heart had snapped right in two.

Early the next morning the Mayor was walking in the square below in the company with the Town Councillors. As they passed the column he looked up at the statue : "O Good ; how shabby the Happy Prince looks," he said.

"How shabby, indeed !" cried the Town Councillors, who always agreed with the Mayor ; and they went up to look at it.

"The ruby has fallen out of his sword, his eyes are gone, and he is golden no longer," said the Mayor. "In fact, he is little better than a beggar !"

"Little better than a beggar", said the Town Councillors.

"And here is actually a dead bird at his feet !" continued the Mayor. "We must really issue a proclamation that birds are not to be allowed to die here." And the Town Clerk made a note of the suggestion.

So they pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince. They melted the statue in a furnace, and the Mayor held a meeting of the Corporation to decide what was to be done with metal. "We must have another statue, of course," he said, "and it shall be a statue of myself."

"Of myself," said each of the Town Councillors, and they quarrelled. When I last heard of them they were quarrelling still.

"What a strange thing !" said the overseer of the workmen at the foundry. "This broken lead heart will not melt in the furnace. We must throw it away." So they threw it on a dust-heap where the dead Swallow was also lying.

"Bring me the two most precious things in the city," said God to one of His Angels : and the Angel brought him the leaden heart and the dead bird.

"You have rightly chosen," said God, "for in my garden of Paradise this little bird shall sing, and in my city of gold the Happy Prince shall praise me."

—Oscar Wilde

## THE BET

It was a dark autumn night. The old banker was pacing from corner to corner of his study, recalling to his mind the party he had in autumn fifteen years before. There were many clever people at the party and much interesting conversation. They talked among other things of capital punishment. The guests, among them not a few scholars and journalists, for the most part disapproved of capital punishment. They found it obsolete as a means of punishment, unfitted to a Christian State, and immoral. Some of them thought that capital punishment should be replaced universally by life-imprisonment.

"I don't agree with you," said the host. "I myself have experienced neither capital punishment nor life-imprisonment, but if one may judge on the basis of logic then in my opinion capital punishment is more moral and more humane than imprisonment. Execution kills instantly, life-imprisonment kills by degrees. Who is the more humane executioner, one who kills you in a few seconds or one who draws the life out of you incessantly, for years?"

"They're both equally immoral," remarked one of the guests, because their purpose is the same, to take away life. The State is not God. It has no right to take away that which it cannot give back, if it should so desire."

Among the company was a lawyer, a young man of about twenty five. On being asked his opinion, he said :

"Capital punishment and life-imprisonment are equally immoral; but if I were offered the choice between them. I would certainly choose the second. It's better to live somehow than not to live at all."

There followed a lively discussion. The banker who was then younger and more nervous suddenly lost his temper, banged his fist on the table, and turning to the young lawyer, cried out :

"It's a lie. I bet you two millions, you would't stick in a cell even for five years."

"If you mean it seriously," replied the lawyer, "then I bet I'll stay not five but fifteen."

"Fifteen ! Done !" cried the banker. "Gentlemen, I stake two millions."

"Agreed You stake two millions, I my freedom," said the lawyer.

So this wild, ridiculous bet came to pass. It was decided that the lawyer must undergo his imprisonment under the strictest observation, in a garden wing of the banker's house. It was agreed that during the period he would be deprived of the right to cross the threshold, to see living people, to hear human voices, and to receive letters and newspapers. He was permitted to have a musical instrument, to read books, to write letters, to drink wine and smoke tobacco. The least attempt on his parts to violate the conditions, to escape if only for two minutes before the time freed the banker from the obligation to pay him the two millions.

During the first year of imprisonment, the lawyer suffered terribly from loneliness and boredom. From his wing, day and night came the sound of the piano. He was sent books of a light character : novels with a complicated love interest, stories of crime and fantasy, comedies and so on.

In the second year the piano was heard no longer and the lawyer asked only for classics. In the fifth year, music was heard again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him said that during the whole of that year he was only eating, drinking and lying on his bed. He yawned often and talked angrily to

himself. Books he did not read. Sometimes at nights he would sit down to write. He would write for a long time and tear it all up in the morning. More than once he was heard to weep.

In the second half of the sixth year, the prisoner began zealously to study languages, philosophy, and history. He fell on these subjects so hungrily that the banker hardly had time to get books enough for him. In the space of four years about six hundred volumes were bought at his request. It was while that passion lasted that the banker received the following letter from the prisoner : "My dear jailer, I am writing these lines in six languages. Show them to experts for examination. If they do not find one single mistake, I beg you to give orders to have a gun fired off in the garden. By the noise I shall know that my efforts have not been in vain. The geniuses of all ages and countries speak in different languages; but in them all burns the same flame. Oh, if you knew my heavenly happiness now that I can understand them !" The prisoner's desire was fulfilled. Two shots were fired in the garden by the banker's order.

Later on, after the tenth year, the lawyer sat immovable before his table and read only the New Testament. The banker found it strange that a man who in four years had mastered six hundred erudite volumes, should have spent nearly a year in reading one book, easy to understand and by no means thick. The New Testament was then replaced by the history of religions and theology.

During the last two years of his confinement the prisoner read an extraordinary amount quite haphazardly. Now he would apply himself to the natural science, then he would read Byron or Shakespeare. Notes used to come from him in which he asked to be sent at the same time a book on chemistry, a text-book of medicine, a novel, and some books on philosophy or theology.

The banker recalled all this, and thought :

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock he receives his freedom. Under

the agreement, I shall have to pay him two millions. If I pay, it's all over with me. I am ruined forever....."

"That cursed bet," murmured the old man clutching his head in despair .... "Why didn't the man die? He's only forty years old. He will take away my last penny, marry, enjoy life, and gamble and I will look on like an envious beggar. No, is it's too Much! The only escape from bankruptcy and disgrace that the man should die."

The clock had just struck three. The banker was listening. In the house every one was asleep. Trying to make no sound, he took out of his safe the key of door which had not been opened for fifteen years, put on his overcoat, and went out of the house. The garden was dark and cold. It was raining heavily. Though he strained his eyes, the banker could see neither the ground, nor the garden-wings, nor the trees. Approaching the garden-wing, he called the watchman twice. There was no answer. Evidently the watchman had taken shelter from the bad weather and was now asleep somewhere in the kitchen or the greenhouse.

"If I have the courage to fulfil my intention," thought the old man, "the suspicion will fall on the watchman first of all."

In the darkness he groped for the steps and the door and entered the hall of the garden-wing, then poked his way into a narrow passage and struck a match. Not a soul was there. Some one's bed with no bed clothes on it, stood there and an iron stove loomed dark in the corner. The seals on the door that led into the prisoner's room were unbroken.

When the match went out, the old man, trembling from agitation, peeped into the little window.

In the prisoner's room a candle was burning dimly. The prisoner himself sat by the table. Only his back, the hair on his head and his hands were visible. Open books were strewn about on the table, the two chairs, and on the carpet near the table.

Five minutes passed and the prisoner never once stirred. Fifteen years' confinement had taught him to sit motionless. The banker tapped on the window with his finger, but the prisoner made no movement in reply. Then the banker cautiously tore the seals from the door and put the key into the lock. The rusty lock gave a hoarse groan and the door creaked. The banker expected instantly to hear a cry of surprise and the sound of steps. Three minutes passed and it was as quiet inside as it had been before. He made up his mind to enter.

Before the table sat a man, unlike an ordinary human being. It was a skeleton, with long curly hair like a woman's, and a shaggy beard. The colour of his face was yellow; the cheeks were sunken, the back long and narrow, and the hand upon which he leaned his hairy head was so lean and skinny that it was painful to look upon. His hair was already silvering with gray, and no one who glanced at the senile emaciation of the face would have believed that. He was only forty years old. On the table, before his bended head, lay a sheet of paper on which something was written in a tiny hand.

"Poor devil", thought the banker, "he's asleep and probably seeing millions in his dreams. I have only to take and throw this half-dead thing on the bed, smother him a moment with the pillow, and the most careful examination will find no trace of unnatural death. But, first, let us read what he has written here."

The banker took the sheet from the table and read :

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock midnight, I shall obtain my freedom and the right to mix with the people. But before I leave this room and see the sun I think it necessary to say a few words to you. On my own clear conscience and before God who sees me I declare to you that I despise freedom, life, health, and all that you call the blessings of the world.

"Your books gave me wisdom. All that unwearing human



thought created in centuries is compressed to a little lump in my skull. I know that I am cleverer than you all.

"You are mad, and gone the wrong way. You take falsehood for truth and ugliness for beauty. I marvel at you, who have bartered heaven for earth. I do not want to understand you."

"That I may show you in deed my contempt for that by which you live, I waive the two millions of which I once dreamed as a paradise, and which I now despise. That I may deprive myself of my right to them, I shall come out from here five minutes before the stipulated term, and thus shall violate the agreement."

When he had read, the banker put the sheet on the table, kissed the head of the strange man, and began to weep. He went out of the wing. Never at any other time, not even after terrible losses, had he felt such contempt for himself as now. Coming home, he lay down on his bed, but agitation and tears kept him a long time from sleeping.

The next morning the poor watchman came running to him and told him that he had seen the man who lived in the wing climb through the window into the garden. He had gone to the gate and disappeared. The banker instantly went with his servants to the wing and established the escape of his prisoner. To avoid unnecessary rumours he took the paper with the renunciation from the table and, on his return, locked it in his safe.

—Anton Chekhov

## THE LAST LEAF

Sue and Mary were two young painters who ran a joint studio in the quaint old Greenwich village in New York. They set up their studio in May, and in November there was the pneumonia epidemic. Mary contracted the disease, and lay, scarcely moving, on her painted iron bedstead, looking through the window panes at the next brick house.

One morning the busy doctor took Sue into the adjacent room. "She has some chance of survival," he said, as he shook down the mercury in his thermometer, "and that is possible only if she strengthens her mind against despair. Your little lady has made up her mind that she's not going to get well. Has she anything on her mind?"

"She—she wanted to paint New York at Night," said Sue.

"Paint?—nonsense! Has she anything worthwhile on her mind—a man, for instance?"

"A man?" said Sue sharply. "Is a man worth—but, no doctor; there is nothing of the kind."

"Well, it is the weakness, then," said the doctor. "I shall do all that I can do as a physician. But whenever my patient begins to believe that he is going to die, I know that my medicine loses half of its effectiveness."

After the doctor had gone Sue went into Mary's room with her drawing board, whistling. Mary lay, scarcely stirring under the bed-clothes, with her face towards the window. Sue stopped whistling, thinking she was asleep.

Sue arranged her board and began a pen-and-ink drawing to illustrate a magazine story. As she was sketching the figure of the hero, she heard a low sound, several times repeated. She went quickly to the bedside.

Mary's eyes were wide open. She was looking out of the window and counting backward.

"Twelve," she said, and a little later "eleven," and then "ten," and "nine," and then "eight" and "seven," almost together.

Sue looked anxiously out of the window. What was there to count? There was only a bare, dreary yard to be seen, and the blank side of the brick house twenty feet away. An old ivy vine, twisted and decayed at the roots, climbed half way up the brick wall. Because of autumn its leaves had fallen until its skeleton branches clung, almost bare, to the crumbling bricks.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six" said Mary in almost a whisper. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head ache to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your friend."

"Leaves. On the ivy vine. When the last one falls I must die, too I've known that for three days. Didn't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such nonsense," said Sue angrily. "What had old ivy leaves to do with your life? And you used to love that vine so much, you naughty girl. Don't be silly. In fact, the doctor told me that you would recover soon. Try to get something, and let me go back to my drawing, so that I can sell it to the editor, and buy some fruit for you."

"You needn't get any more fruit," said Mary keeping her eyes

fixed on the ivy vine. "There goes another. No, I don't want to eat. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I'll go too."

"Mary, dear," said Sue, bending over her, "will you promise me to keep your eyes closed and not look out of the window until I have finished my work? These drawings must be ready by tomorrow. I need the light otherwise I would draw the shade down."

"Couldn't you draw in the other room?" asked Mary coldly.

"I'd rather be here by you," said Sue, "beside I don't want you to keep looking at those silly ivy leaves."

"Tell me as soon as you have finished," said Mary, closing her eyes, and lying white and still as a fallen statue, "because I want to see the last one fall, I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on everything, and go sailing down, down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves."

"Try to sleep," said Sue. "I must call John up to be my model for the old hermit. I'll not be gone a minute. Don't try to move till I come back."

Old John was a painter who lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was past sixty and had a beard curling down from the head. John was failure in art. Forty years he had wielded the brush without much success. He had always dreamt of painting a masterpiece, but had never yet begun it. He earned a little by serving as a model to those young artists in the colony who could not pay the price of a professional. He drank to excess, and still talked of his coming masterpiece. For the rest he was a fierce little old man.

Sue found John in his dimly lighted den below. She told him of Mary's fancy, and how she feared she would indeed, light and fragile as a leaf herself, float away when her slight hold upon

the world grew weaker. Mary was sleeping when they went upstairs. Sue pulled the shade down to the window-sill and took John to the other room. They peered out of the window fearfully at the ivy vine. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A persistent cold rain was falling, mingled with snow.

When Sue awoke from an hour's sleep next morning, she found Mary with dull, wide-open eyes staring at the drawn green shade.

"Pull it up ; I want to see," she ordered in a whisper.

Wearily Sue obeyed.

But, lo ! after the beating rain and fierce gusts of wind that had endured through the night, there yet stood out against the brick wall one ivy leaf. It was the last on the vine. Still dark green near its stem, but with its edges tinted with the yellow of decay, it hung bravely from a branch some twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Mary. "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall to day, and I shall die the same time."

"Dear, dear !" said Sue, Leaning her worn face down to the pillow, "think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do ?"

But Mary did not answer. The loneliest thing in all the world is a soul when it is making ready to go on its mysterious, far-off journey. The fancy seemed to possess her more strongly as one by one the ties that bound her to friendship and to earth were loosed.

The day wore away, and even through the twilight they could see the lone ivy leaf clinging to its stem against the wall.

And then, with the coming of the night the north wind again started blowing while the rain still beat against the windows and pattered down the low leaves.

When it was light enough, Mary commanded that shade be raised.

The ivy leaf was still there.

Mary lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was stirring her chicken soup over the gas stove.

"I've been a bad girl, Sue," said Mary. Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how wicked I was. It is a sin to want to die. You may bring me a little soup now,—no ; bring me a hand-mirror first, and then place some pillows about me, and I shall sit up and watch you cook."

An hour later she said :

"Sue, some day I hope to paint New York at night."

The doctor came in the afternoon.

"Even chances," said the doctor, taking Sue's thin shaking hand in his. "With good nursing you'll win. And now I must see another case I have downstairs. John, his name is—some kind of an artist I believe. Pneumonia, too: He is an old, weak man and the attack is acute. There is no hope for him ; but he goes to the hospital to-day to be made more comfortable."

The next day the doctor said to Sue : "She's out of danger. You've won. Nutrition and care now—that's all."

And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Mary lay, contentedly knitting a woollen shoulder scarf.

"I have something to tell you, white mouse" she said. "John died of pneumonia to-day in the hospital. He was ill only for two days. The servant found him on the morning of the first day in

his room downstairs helpless with pain. His shoes and clothing were wet through and icy cold. They couldn't imagine where he had been on such a dreadful night and then they found a lantern, still lighted, and a ladder that had been dragged from its place, and some scattered brushes, and a plate with green and yellow colours mixed on it, and—look out of the window, dear at the last ivy leaf on the wall. Didn't you wonder why it never fluttered or moved when the wind blew? Ah, darling it's John's masterpiece—he painted it there the night the last leaf fell."

—O. Henry

## NOTES AND EXERCISES

### THE REAL PRINCESS

#### NOTES

##### Glossary !

*to be bent upon (something)* : to have the mind set on ; to have as a fixed purpose.

*to make up one's mind* : to decide.

*distressed* : unhappy ; sad.

*to yearn after* : to desire strongly ; to long for.

*to rain in torrents* : to rain heavily or violently.

*ugly* : unpleasant to look at.

*drip* : to fall in drops.

*presently* : soon ; at the time.

*mattress* : long, thick, flat pad of wool, hair, feather, foam rubber, etc. on which one sleeps.

*not a wink of sleep* : not a bit of sleep.

*black and blue* : covered with bruises or injuries.

*preserved* : retained ; kept safe from loss or harm.

*museum of curiosities* : museum is a building in which curios or unusual and valued objects illustrating art, history, or science are put on display.

#### EXERCISES

##### A. Answer the following questions :

1. Why did the Prince feel distressed ?
2. What did the King see on opening the gate



3. How did the Princess look and what did she say ?
  4. Where was the Princess to rest that night ?
  5. Why could the Princess not have a wink of sleep ?
  6. Where was the pea preserved ?
- B.** *Change the tense of the verbs from the past into the present in paragraph 3. "A princess stood outside,....."*
- C.** *Rewrite paragraph 5 deleting (removing) the inverted commas. "Oh, horribly !..."*

## GULLIVER IN LILLIPUT

### NOTES

*astonished* : surprised.

*venture* : to be brave enough to take the risk.

*Hekinah degul* ] : utterances in the native language of the island of Lilliput.  
*Toigo Paonac* ]

*struggle* : try hard ; make great efforts

*prick* : hurt sharply.

*erected* : built; set up.

*orator* : a good speaker.

*cask* : container for liquids; especially wine.

*delicious* : tasty ; giving delight to the sense of taste or smell.

### EXERCISES

A. Answer the following questions.

1. Why was Gulliver not able to move ?
2. Who fastened him to the ground ?
3. Why could he not see anything around him.
4. How many men were walking on his left leg ?
5. Describe his efforts to break the strings and to catch the little men.
6. What were his feelings when he was hit with arrows and spears and what protected him from being wounded ?
7. Why did they stop their attack ?
8. How did he show that he was hungry ?
9. How and by whom was he released ?
10. How did they quench his thirst and feed him ?

B. Change the tense of all the verbs from the past into the present in the first paragraph.

C. *Correct the following :—*

1. I thought it best to be still untill I could not free myself.
  2. I knew their number increased.
  3. I was in great pain, I tried to get lose.
  4. He spoke like a orator and he spoke angerly.
  5. They brought me a second cask which I drunk in the same manner.
-

## TOM WHITEWASHES A FENCE

### NOTES

#### Glossary :

- Saturday* : generally a holiday in Western countries.  
*fragrance* : sweet or pleasing smell (of flowers).  
*full of life* : lively ; gay.  
*Vegetation* : plants, etc.  
*pavement* : paved way at the side of a street for people on foot.  
*fence* : barrier made of wooden or metal pieces put around a field or garden to keep animals away.  
*uninspiring* : dull ; monotonous.  
*ridicule* : make a fun of ; cause to appear foolish.  
*dread* : great fear and anxiety.  
*survey* : take general view of ; examine the work.  
*resume* : to take up again work left unfinished.  
*consent* : agreement ; permission.  
*barrel* : a round container usually made of wooden pieces and hoops ; cask.  
*magnificent* : splendid ; remarkable.

#### I. Answer briefly the following questions :

- (i) What piece of work was assigned to Tom by his aunt and how did he do it ?
- (ii) How did Ben Rogers ridicule him ? Why did Tom's mouth water ?
- (iii) Reproduce briefly the conversation between Tom and Ben.
- (iv) How did Tom sweep his brush ?
- (v) Why didn't Tom allow Ben at first to whitewash the fence ?
- (vi) On what condition was Ben allowed ?
- (vii) How were other boys employed by Tom to do the work ?
- (viii) What great law of human action did Tom discover ?
- (ix) What were the remarks of his aunt on seeing the fence ?

- II. Write a character-sketch of Tom in about 150 words.  
 III. Narrate in not more than 150 words how Tom succeeded in enjoying a holiday while others worked for him.

## EXERCISES

- A. Give one word for the following. In each case an indication of the words is given by the first two letters and the last letter :—
- (i) that which causes air to draw in (su.....n)
  - (ii) showing signs of future success (au.....s)
  - (iii) a short story told to illustrate moral teaching (pa.....e)
  - (iv) a sacred place used as a place of safety (sa.....y)
  - (v) a state of inactivity or lack of progress (st.....n)
  - (vi) a person who does something first (pi.....r)
  - (vii) that which causes a person to act (mo.....d)
  - (viii) a body of persons elected to govern a town or city (co.....n)
  - (ix) happening or done at the same time (si.....y)
  - (x) Unchanging series of actions in daily work (ro.....e)
- B. Complete the following words by adding -ous, -ious or -ion :—
- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. auspic-    | 6. outrage- |
| 2. barbar-    | 7. ardu-    |
| 3. simultane- | 8. righte-  |
| 4. aux-       | 9. precis-  |
| 5. caut-      | 10. melod   |
- C. Add either -ous or -ure to complete the following words :—
- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. tort-   | 5. pleas- |
| 2. proc-   | 6. press- |
| 3. furnit- | 7. stat-  |
| 4. vap-    | 8. hum-   |
- D. Make the negatives by adding -an or -in as prefix :—  
 pleasant ; accurate ; apt ; inspiring ; auspicious ; known ; loose ;  
 manageable ; discipline ; dignity ; natural ; different.

## A STREET SCENE

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*Cask* : a round container usually made of wooden pieces and hoops; barrel for liquids ; large vessel.

*hoops* : bands of wood or metal put around a barrel.

*hollows and cracks* : pits and broken spaces in the road.

*squeezed* : pressed from all sides to draw out the liquid.

*mud-embankments* : walls of mud or earth to hold back the wine.

*dart* : move forward quickly or suddenly.

*spill* : to run over-the sides of container.

*sawed* : cut ; cut with saw.

*tigerish smear* : covered with blood like a tiger's mouth ; here it means wine-stained mouth.

*momentary* : that lasts only for a short time.

*gleam* : light ; also a ray of hope.

*shrug* : lift (the shoulder) slightly to show indifference ; doubt, etc.

*gloom* : feeling of sadness and hopelessness.

*coarse* : rough.

*determination* : resolution ; firmness of purpose.

#### I. Answer the following questions :—

- (i) Describe briefly how a cask of wine had been broken in the street
- (ii) How did people run to the spot to stop the wine from going waste ? What method did they adopt to sip the wine ?
- (iii) How did people express their joy over the scene ?
- (iv) What did the tall man write on the wall with red mud ? Do you see any significance in that ?

- (v) Who was the owner of the wine-shop? Can you describe him in a few sentences?
- (vi) What did the owner do with the writing on the wall?

II. Describe in your own words the street scene.

III. Write a paragraph of about 100 words on the poverty of the people in the street.

#### EXERCISES

A. Differentiate between the following pairs of words by using them in sentences.

ceased/seized ;	hollow/hallow ;	buy/bye ;	piece/peace ;
gleam/gloom ;	accept/except ;	bare/bear ;	week/weak ;
there/their.			

B. Correct the spellings of the following words :—

demonstration ; miserable ; acquire ; handkerchief ; momentary ;  
murderous ; excellent .

C. Many words have more than one meaning. Use the following words in sentences to make clear the difference in their meanings :—

- (i) *saw* : cut with a sharp edged weapon.  
*saw* : past tense of see.
- (ii) *direction* : instruction or guidance.  
*direction* : course taken by a moving body.
- (iii) *page* : boy servant employed as a messenger, footman or personal attendant.  
*page* : one side of a leaf of a book.
- (iv) *leaf* : part of a plant.  
*leaf* : page of a book.
- (v) *spade* : tool for digging the ground.  
*spade* : one of the four colours in pack of cards.
- (vi) *Suit* : law-suit.  
*Suit* : set of clothes especially man's coat and trousers.  
*Suit* : please ; satisfy the needs or wishes of ; be fit or appropriate.

## BUILD YOURSELF FOR LEADERSHIP

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*Aptitude* : fitness ; suitability ; natural capacity or talent for something.

*potential* : latent power or energy ; expressing possibility of development.

*dominance* : control ; authority ; prevailing influence.

*legitimate* : lawful ; reasonable ; justifiable.

*concur* : agree (especially in opinion)

*appalling* : shocking ; horrible.

*blunders* : mistakes ; errors.

*betray* : allow (a secret) to become known either by accident or on purpose.

*ecstatic* : showing great delight.

*distressing* : causing grief.

*spectacle* : impressive or unusual sight

*lamentable* : deplorable ; wretched ; regrettable.

*tycoon* : powerful business man.

*tick* : function or act or work.

#### References

*Alexander the Great* : He was Alexander III of Macedonia (356-323 B. C.) son of Philip II. Aristotle was his tutor. He was ambitious of conquering the world and invaded India (327—325 B.C.) he was opposed by King Porus.



- Julius Caesar* : Gaius Julius Caesar (102—44 B. C.), dictator and king of Rome. He was not only a great general and statesman but also an orator and historian. Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar* is well known which depicts the murder of Caesar by the conspirators.
- Sir Walter Scott* : (1771—1832). Famous English novelist, known for his historical novels. *Ivanhoe* (1819) and *The Talisman* (1825) are two of his novels.
- Emulsion* : There is on such novel by Scott.
- Ibsen* : (1826—1906). Norwegian dramatist whose satirical problem plays directed to social reform obtained wide fame and exerted great influence. His well-known plays are *Pillars of Society*, *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts* and *An Enemy of the People*.

I. Give short answer to the following :—

1. What are the two kinds of people in the world ?
2. What qualities are required for leadership ?
3. What is meant by the statement : "The strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone" ?
4. What makes us commit blunders ?
5. Narrate briefly the incident between the young woman and Winston Churchill.
6. What are the reasons for the lack of leadership in India ?
7. What makes a tycoon function successfully ?
8. What should you say when your advice is asked ?
9. Briefly narrate the success story of Mr. V. P. Menon.

II. Sum up, in your own words, the qualities that make a successful leader.

### EXERCISES

A Form Verbs :—

Leadership ; potential ; determination ; dominance ; success ; daring ;

courage ; ignorance ; attractive ; discussion ; absence.

B. Use the following as Verbs and Nouns :—

Respect ; look ; eye ; sigh ; lament.

C. Form adjectives from the following :—

Potential ; dominance ; respect ; ignorance ; devote ; vitality.

Similarly, find out five words from the lesson which have been used as adjectives.

D. Use the following phrases/ idioms in sentences of your own :—

To put one through one's paces ; To depart from the herd ; Odd man out ; sweep aside ; to equip oneself ; launch on ; sky is the limit.

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## CONTROLLING THE MIND

### NOTES

#### Glossary

- thinking machine* : The mind.
- supreme* : highest; greatest ; possible ; utmost.
- mysterious* : not easily understood or not easy to understand.
- platitude* : statement or idea that is obviously true and even common place or trite.
- profound* : deep ; having intensity and depth.
- concentrate* : bring all one's thoughts to bear on one point or centre ; focus one's attention on something.
- acquire* : gain by skill or ability, by one's own efforts or behaviour.
- to put the mind through its paces* : to test the skill or ability of the mind or its sharpness.
- extraneous* : external or outside ; not essential.
- cultivate* : improve ; develop.
- Nevertheless* : in spite of.
- larking round* : playing pranks ; indulging in fun and frolic.
- by the scruff (of the neck)* : to catch from the back of the neck.
- despair* : to lose hope ; to feel disappointed.
- persevere* : to make constant efforts to achieve something.
- intermission* : pause ; interval.
- trifling* : non-seriousness in attitude.
- encyclopaedia* : book of classified information on all branches of knowledge.
- disguise* : hide ; conceal.

NOTES AND EXERCISES

1. Answer briefly the following questions :-
  - (i) Can one help one's thought?
  - (ii) What is meant by the "power of concentration"?
  - (iii) When can we cultivate our mind?
  - (iv) What happened when you were called upon to address a class?
  - (v) Why can't anyone laugh at you while you are doing mental exercises in a bus?
  - (vi) In what way can you kill two birds with one stone?
  - (vii) What is the suggestion of most sensible men?
  - (viii) What kind of evil can be cured by controlling the mind?
- II. How can we learn to control our mind? Write a well-developed paragraph of about 100 words.

EXERCISES

A. Use the words in the following pairs in sentences of your own :-  
 People/pupil ; except/accept ; wait/bait ; worry/wority ;  
 acquire/acquire.

B. Form nouns from the following :-  
 Practical, concentrate, miserable, avoidable, shameful.

C. Notice the prefixes which form antonyms (i. e. opposites) :-

im-	possible	impossible
in-	capable	incapable
ir-	responsible	irresponsible
un-	certainly	uncertainly
dis-	satisfaction	dissatisfaction

Now give the antonyms of following words and use them in sentences :-  
 decent ; easy ; continue ; successful ; convenient ; excited ; important ;  
 sensible ; practical.

### THREE QUESTIONS

#### NOTES

##### Glossary

*Proclaim* : publicly announce by beating a drum.

*table* : list of facts, numbers etc. systematically arranged in columns.

*hermit* : holy man living alone.

*spade* : tool for digging the ground with sharp-edged blade and wooden handle.

*executed* : gave capital punishment (i.e. death).

*seized* : took possession of forcibly ; snatched.

*porch* : covered approach to entrance of the building.

##### I. Give short answers to the following :—

- (i) What were the three questions that struck the King's mind ?
- (ii) What did the learned men say in reply to the first question ?
- (iii) What answers did they give to the second question ?
- (iv) What different answers did the king receive to the third question ?
- (v) Was the king satisfied with the answers given by the learned men ?  
What did he decide to do thereafter ?
- (vi) What did the king do before going to the hermit ?
- (vii) When the king approached him what was the hermit doing ? Did he stop doing his work ?
- (viii) What did the king do on seeing that the hermit was tired ?
- (ix) How did the king help the wounded man ?
- (x) Why did the bearded man apologise to the king ?

- (xi) How did the king treat his enemy after he had apologised ?  
 (xii) How did the hermit finally answer the three questions by the king ?

II. *Narrate in your own words the central episode contained in the story "Three Questions".*

III. *Sum up briefly in your own words the central ideas of story.*

### EXERCISES

A. *Use the following phrases in sentences of your own :—*

- (i) To set out (to start, go forth).  
 (ii) To get off (to escape).  
 (iii) To lay down arms (to surrender).  
 (iv) To attend on (to take care).  
       To attend to (to listen).  
 (v) To take leave of (to get permission).  
 (vi) To look round (to inspect).  
 (vii) Far and near (every where).

B. *Correct the spellings of the following words :—*

impossible ; counsil ; aproached ; stratched ; stoped ; threshold ;  
 hidling place ; faithfull physicians ; weekness ; necessary ;  
 perpose.

C. *Some words in English can be used both as nouns and verbs. Here is an example :—*

1. (i) We should fight for our *rights*. (noun)  
       (ii) We should *right* the wrong. (verb)  
 2. (i) They *answered* the question in their own ways. (verb)  
       (ii) The *answers* were all different. (noun)

*Now use the following words as verb and noun :—*

reward ; draw ; help ; need ; reply ; reach ; ground ; round ;  
 down ; last ; stay ; time.

D. *Match the sentences in column 'A' with their counter parts in column 'B'*

**A**

**B**

- (i) The hermit listened to the                      the hermit was digging the

A

- king.
- (ii) Giving the spade to the king
- (iii) He not only forgave him
- (iv) So in order to know the right time for every action
- (v) Before reaching the hermit's hut
- (vi) To the third question some replied
- (vii) When the king approached the hermit's hut
- (viii) Others said that however attentive the king might be to whatever was going on

B

ground in front of it.  
 the king got off his horse,  
 but gave no answer.  
 he sat down on the ground.  
 one must consult magicians,  
 but also promised to send his  
 servants and his own physi-  
 cians to attend on him.  
 it was impossible for him to  
 decide correctly the right time  
 for every action.  
 that the most important thing  
 in the world was silence.

## THE CABULIWALLAH

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*Cabuliwallah* : a man from Cabul or Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan ; a Pathan.

*Chattering* : talking too much ; talking quickly or foolishly.

*lively* : full of life and spirit ; gay and cheerful.

*stole into* : came softly like a thief.

*overcome by terror* : made weak by fear.

*tempted* : attracted to have something.

*clung* : held tightly.

*rippling with laughter* : rising and falling gently ; small movements on the face made by rise and fall of laughter.

*merriment* : fun ; joy.

*puzzled* : confused ; found hard to understand.

*thrash* : beat.

*peals of laughter* : loud bell-like noise of laughter ; loud bursts of laughter.

*timid* : easily frightened ; shy.

*kidnap* : steal a child ; carry away by force in order to obtain money for his return.

*curious* : eager to learn or know ; showing too much interest in the affairs of others.

*With Durga returning to Kailash* : Durga (or Parvati) is the daughter of Himalayas and the wife of Shiva. During the Durga festival in Bengal, Durga visits her father. When the festival is over she is supposed to return to her husband's home on Mount Kailas.

*harsh* : rough ; disagreeable to senses.

*ink-smear'd* : covered with ink.



*impression* : imprint; mark made by pressing.

*mild* : gentle ; not too strong.

*barren* : dry ; unproductive.

*festivities* : joyful events ; wedding festivities, etc.

*despondent* : sad ; disappointed.

*I. Answer the following questions in a sentence or two :*

- (i) What was the outstanding quality of the five-year old Mini ?
- (ii) What did the Cabuliwallah carry in his large bag ?
- (iii) How did the Cabuliwallah win Mini's friendship ?
- (iv) What were the fears of Mini's mother ?
- (v) What are the two meanings of the words "father-in-law's house" ?
- (vi) Why was the Cabuliwallah sent to prison ?
- (vii) What did he do after being released from the prison ?
- (viii) Why didn't Mini's father allow Cabuliwallah to meet Mini ?
- (ix) Why did the Cabuliwallah become sad after seeing Mini ?
- (x) What did Mini's father do when he heard about little Parbatl ?

*II Give short character sketches of the following :—*

1. Cabuliwallah
2. Mini
3. Mini's father

*III. Write a paragraph on the friendship of Mini and Cabuliwallah.*

### EXERCISES

- A. Use the following words and phrases in sentences of your own :—  
steal into ; overcome by terror ; care for ; go off ; light up ;  
rippling with laughter.
- B. Give the antonyms (opposites) of the following :—  
quiet ; fortune ; visible ; fit ; pure ; polite ; natural ; smile ;  
despondent.
- C. Some nouns end in *-ness* example *-happiness*. The adjectives formed from these nouns do not end in *-ful* ; but the adverb may end in *-ly*.  
Example : happiness—happy—happily.

Now fill up the blank boxes with the missing words :—

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
	harsh	
		sadly
quietness		
	bright	
		kindly
	sudden	
wickedness		

D. Rewrite the following sentences using the correct words out of the pairs given in brackets :

- (i) He wore the (*loose, lose*) gown of his people.
- (ii) My small daughter had never found such a patient listener (*except, accept*) her father.
- (iii) He (*accepted, expected*), the money without argument.
- (iv) And (*beside, besides*), what might not have happened to her in these eight years?
- (v) The house had been filled with noise and (*incitement, excitement*) since early morning.

## THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*finery* : showy clothes

*imposter* : person pretending to be what he is not. The impostors in the story pretended to be weavers.

*loom* : machine for weaving cloth.

*fancied* : thought ; imagined.

*properties* : qualities.

*official* : officer.

*enchanting* : charming ; delightful.

*splendid* : brilliant ; glorious ; magnificent.

*host* : great number.

*crafty* : cunning ; clever.

*approbation* : approval ; sanction.

*gorgeous* : richly coloured.

*elegant* : graceful ; refined.

*procession* : people marching in orderly manner especially on important occasions.

*clip* : cut.

*mantle* : loose cloak ; overall cover.

*gossamer* : (thread of) fine silky substance of webs made by spiders : soft, light, delicate material.

*canopy* : an overhanging covering (over a bed or throne, etc.)

*make believe* : cause people to believe ; pretend.

*fumble* : feel about uncertainly with the hands.

*haughtier* : prouder ; more arrogant.

I. Answer the following questions :—

- (i) What was the Emperor most fond of ?
- (ii) What did the two weavers pretend to know ?
- (iii) What did the Emperor think he could do by putting on those invisible clothes ?
- (iv) Whom did the Emperor send first ?
- (v) What did the old minister see ?
- (vi) Whom did the Emperor send next ?
- (vii) When did the Emperor first put on those clothes ?
- (viii) Why didn't anybody say that the king was without clothes ?
- (ix) Who cried ultimately that the king had nothing on ?

II. Narrate in your own words how the two impostors succeeded in befooling the Emperor and his people.

EXERCISES

A. Change the following words into nouns :—

new ; beautiful ; pure ; capable ; stupid ; excellent ; foolish ; wonderful ; enchanting ; magnificent ; elegant ; innocent ; announce ; observe ; pretend.

B. Give at least two more words with the same meaning for each of the following words (synonyms) :—

For example : pretend—*affect, sham, stimulate.*

*impostor ; property ; wonderful ; empty ; anxious ; lovely ; might ; gorgeous.*

C. Use the following phrases in sentences of your own :—

- (i) Not to care a straw for (not to care even a bit).
- (ii) Give out (announce ; declare).
- (iii) Out of common (unique ; uncommon).
- (iv) Fare with (happen ; take place).
- (v) On the eve of (on the occasion of).
- (vi) Make-believe (cause people to believe ; pretend to oneself).
- (vii) At any rate (at any cost).

## GANDHI'S APPEAL

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*Beach* : sea-shore.

*retort* : to make a quick reply, to answer angrily or sharply.

*inauspicious* : unlucky ; ill omened ; unfavourable.

*slenderest* ; thinnest ; light in weight.

*curiously* : surprisingly, strangely.

*sovereign* : British gold coin worth one pound.

*strip* : remove (clothes or jewels, etc.).

*homespun* : (cloth made of yarn) spun at home ; plain, homely, woven cloth.

*bustled* : hurried about ; made hurry or worked hard.

*dais* : raised platform.

*flung* : threw.

*squatted* : sat on the ground with knees drawn up and heels touching

*drooping* : hanging downwards.

*hovering* : lingering, waiting upon.

*scroll* : roll of parchment or paper.

*cajoling* : persuasion by flattery ; make (someone) do with flattery one wants.

*menial* : suited to a servant.

*scavenging* : gathering refuse or waste material from the streets.

*leper* : one suffering from leprosy—a disease forming white scales on the skin and eating away the flesh.

*hypnotize* : produce or induce a state like deep sleep in which a person's acts may be controlled by another person.

*bullied* : scolded, treated cruelly.

*unclasped* : unfastened ; unlocked.

*applause* : approval loudly expressed by clapping the hands.

*scramble* : rough struggle.

*trinkets* : small fancy articles ; small ornaments or pieces of jewellery of little value.

*harrowing* : distressing, painful.

*stumble* : fall unexpectedly or by accident.

*indignantly* : angrily.

I. Answer in a few sentences each one of the following questions :—

- (i) What advice did Padma's husband give her before leaving for his office ?
- (ii) When and where was the meeting going to be addressed by Gandhi ?
- (iii) What did Padma do before going to the Royal Theatre ?
- (iv) Why did she put on two of her slenderest bangles ?
- (v) Reproduce briefly in your own words the experience of Padma's friend when she attended Gandhi's meeting four years ago ?
- (vi) Describe in a few words the scene before Gandhi's arrival.
- (vii) What happened when Gandhi arrived ?
- (viii) What did the elderly gentleman with a drooping moustache do ?
- (ix) What did Gandhi say about his mission ?
- (x) What was the effect of Gandhi's speech on the audience in general and Padma in particular ?
- (xi) What kind of gifts were collected and what did Gandhi do with them ?
- (xii) How did Padma lose her bangles ?
- (xiii) How did Padma break the news of her loss to her husband ?
- (xiv) What did Padma's husband do with Rs. 50/- ?
- (xv) What did Padma say to her husband indignantly at the end ?

II. Describe in your own words the influence of Gandhi on the minds of people.

III. Give the sum and substance of this story in not more than 200 words.

#### EXERCISES

- A. Note how certain words can be changed into adverbs by adding the suffix *-ly* : For example : slight becomes slightly.

Now form adverbs from the following words and use them in sentences :—

collective ; bare ; near ; true ; light ; distinct ; intense ; mild ; silent ; sudden ; perfect.

**B.** Complete the following words by supplying the missing letters :—

For example : rem—ber—remember.

lna—pici—s ; sl—der—t ; je—ls ; disa—oint ; sover—ns ; ma—ta—ing ; mus—che ; nece—ary ; sea—ger ; app—sc ; spu—ting.

**C.** Give the name of the person who does the following. For example : one who does the menial jobs is called a scavenger. Now answer the following :—

1. One who lives in a city.
2. is a good runner, jumper, swimmer.
3. studies the science of the sun, moons, stars and planets.
4. practises one of fine arts, especially painting.
5. treats diseases of the teeth ?
6. lives apart from all people in order to lead a holy life.
7. does clever tricks with hands for amusement.
8. one who takes the examination.

**D.** Add -ant or -ent as required, to complete the following words :—

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. appar-   | 6. ten-       |
| 2. oppon-   | 7. transpar-  |
| 3. evid-    | 8. peas-      |
| 4. reluct-  | 9. appar-     |
| 5. perslst- | 10. particip- |

## THE JUDGEMENT SEAT OF VIKRAMADITYA

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*dusk* : evening time just before it gets quite dark.

*pasture* : meadow ; grassland for the cattle to graze.

*carven* : cut into particular form or design.

*whoop* : loud noise ; cry ; yell.

*grave* : serious.

*frolicsome* : gay ; merry ; lively ; playful.

*concoct* : invent ; make up.

*incontrovertible* : which cannot be questioned or disapproved.

*perplexing* : puzzling ; complicated.

*chronicles* : historical record of events in order of time.

*mound* : small hill.

*Sod* : soil with roots of grass on it.

*rejoicing* : joyfulness ; festivities ; celebrations.

*countenance* : expression of face.

*array* : display (of) ; dressed and presented in a line.

*tyrannical* : cruel.

*covet* : desire eagerly to possess (especially the property of another person)

*ponder* : think deeply.

1. Answer the following questions in complete sentences :—

- (i) What kind of a king Vikramaditya was ?
- (ii) Why did his people love Vikramaditya ?
- (iii) What game did the shepherd boys play when they found the Judge's seat ?
- (iv) What change came over the boy when he sat on the seat ?
- (v) Why did the people bring their cases to the shepherd boy ?
- (vi) What did the king do when he heard the news ?
- (vii) What was done with the Judgement-Seat when it was found ?



- (viii) What reasons did the first three angels give for not allowing the king to sit on the Judgement-Seat ?
- (ix) Why was the shepherd boy able to sit on the Judgement-Seat ?
11. *Narrate in your own words the episode of the Judgement-Seat.*

## EXERCISES

## A. Word formation

*Let us review what you have learnt about word formation. Notice that many words are formed by adding a suffix :—*

-ment :	judge-	judgement
-ness :	slow	slowness
-ce :	important	importance
-sion :	expand	expansion
-ion :	instruct	instruction
-ation :	relax	relaxation
-th :	strong	strength
-al :	purpose	proposal
-ity :	regular	regularity
-ty :	loyal	loyalty
-hood :	false	falsehood
-fy :	pure	purify

*A long list is given below. Form nouns from the following words applying the method given above :—*

true ; gentle ; punish ; pronounce ; speak ; poor ; wisdom ; long ; appear ; act ; quarrel ; appreciate ; deep ; different ; decide ; satisfy ; neighbour ; think ; sovereign ; possess ; ignorant ; disturb ; observe ; assemble ; prostrate.

B. *Correct the spellings of the words given in Italics in the sentences below.*

1. But when he had heard the question, even to the eyes of the *frilich-some* boys, he seemed *quiet diffrent*.
2. For though they could not *apreciate* the Judgement, yet his tone and manner were strange and *impressive*.
3. Still they thought it was fun, and went away again, and, with a good deal more whispering, *conculated* another case.
4. He spoke without thinking, but all *around* him were *learned men*, who knew the *chronice*.

## THE BLACK CAT

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*Pluto* : here it is the name of black cat. Actually Pluto, in Greek mythology, is the name of the king of the under-world or Hell. Surely the black cat has some resemblance with the Devil as suggested by its name.

*made to* : forced to ; caused to.

*Got* : became.

*in cold blood* : without any feeling or emotion.

*got between my feet* : went between my feet.

*spent* : passed,

*asked them in* : asked them to come in.

I. Answer the following questions :—

- (i) What kind of animals did the narrator love best when he was a child ?
- (ii) In what way his did character change ?
- (iii) What did he do one night when he came home quite late from the inn ?
- (iv) What did this cat do when he came near ?
- (v) Why did he hang the cat ?
- (vi) What did he think of as he watched the house burn ?
- (vii) What did he see one night in the corner of the inn ?
- (viii) How was the cat like Pluto ?
- (ix) How did the narrator kill his wife ?
- (x) What did he do with her body ?
- (xi) How did the police find out the dead body.
- (xii) What did they see in the hole in the wall ?

II. Draw in your own words a character sketch of the narrator of the story, "The Black Cat."

### EXERCISES

- A. In this exercise you have three choices : a, b, and c. Choose the one which most nearly means the same as the words *italicized*.
- (i) I loved those animals which have learned to live with men and share their home.  
(a) petting (b) pests (c) pets.

- (ii) One night I sat in the *hotel*, drinking as usual  
(a) inner (b) in (c) inn.
- (iii) The cat tried to *pay back a wrong done it* on me.  
(a) take revenge (b) reverse (c) reveal.
- (iv) I offered to buy the cat from the *man who owned the small hotel*  
(a) innkeeper (b) policeman (c) servant.
- (v) I have been *de-stroyed gradually*.  
(a) little by little (b) little or nothing (c) not a little.
- (vi) The cat tried to *avoid me*.  
(a) annoy me (b) stay out of my way (c) awake me.
- (vii) *At once* I felt a cold feeling up and down my neck.  
(a) immediate (b) immediately (c) only one time.
- (viii) I thought the cat *still* loved me.  
(a) yet (b) quietly (c) always.
- (ix) I spent *few moments* looking for the cat but it was gone.  
(a) a couple of hours (b) a little while (c) almost an hour.
- (x) My natural goodness of soul *led* me to love animals.  
(a) forced (b) caused (c) allowed.
- (xi) There is something in the love of pets that speaks *directly* to a person's heart.  
(a) immediately (b) strongly (c) straight.
- (xii) The cat followed me home, and I *allowed it* to do so.  
(a) wanted (b) let it (c) led it.

B. From what adjectives are the following nouns derived?

horror ; goodness ; friendship ; love ; mystery ; tyrant ; capacity.

C. Here are some words arranged in two columns. Each of the words in the left hand column has a word of opposite meaning (an antonym) in the right hand column. Pair these antonyms correctly—

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. free       | lead       |
| 2. likeable   | ease       |
| 3. beautiful  | bountiful  |
| 4. follow     | real       |
| 5. difficulty | decrease   |
| 6. scarce     | ugly       |
| 7. apparent   | loathsome  |
| 8. increase   | slowly     |
| 9. quickly    | imprison   |
| 10. carefully | carelessly |

## THE HAPPY PRINCE

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*Column* : long-vertical pillar needed for support.

*glided* : covered with thin layer of gold.

*sapphire* : a blue precious stone.

*ruby* : a rare precious stone of crimson or rose colour.

*glowed* : shone ; sparkled ; glittered.

*sword-hilt* : handle of the sword.

*swallow* : a small bird long-winged and swift-flying which migrates to warmer countries during winter.

*moth* : an insect-like butterfly.

*slender* : thin.

*ripples* : small waves ; ruffling of water's surface.

*ridiculous* : deserving to be laughed at ; absurd.

*twittered* : chirped ; uttered series of sounds.

*trifling* : non-serious ; frivolous.

*put-up* : get shelter.

*alighted* : dismounted ; came to earth from the air.

*curlous* : strange ; unusual.

*chimney pot* : outlet for smoke over a furnace.

*drenched* : completely wet.

*lofty* : high.

*worn* : tired.

*coarse* : rough ; not smooth.

*pricked* : stratched.

*seamstress* : sewing woman.

*pedestal* : base supporting column or pillar base of a statue.

*The Nile* : a river in Egypt.

5. Now this *sovereign* had long desired to be *possessed* with the spirit of law and Justice.
6. And the *countenance* of the stone angel was *ful* of sorrow.
7. Only one *angle* was left *supporting* the marble slab, and the king drew near with great *confidence*, for today he felt sure of being allowed to take his place.

C. Read each sentence supplying the correct form of verb in parentheses :--

1. He was so strong, true and gentle that the men of his own day almost (*worship*) him.
2. The guilty (*tremble*) when they came before him, for they knew that his eyes would (*look*) straight into their guilt.
3. He was now full of gravity, and instead of answering in fun, he (*take*) the case seriously, and (*give*) an answer which in that particular case was the wisest that the man (*has*) ever heard.
4. At these words the king felt as if a light (*were blazed*) up with in him.
5. But when the king came to himself and was alone, pondering over the matter, he (*see*) that the last angel had explained the mystery.



*Coffin* : a chest or box for a dead person to be buried in.

*cathedral* : church.

*tossing* : throwing from side to side.

*slumber* : light sleep.

*phenomenon* : remarkable thing ; occurrence.

*monument* : anything that serves to commemorate especially structure or building ; in memory of something (esp. a building)

*steeple* : lofty structure especially a tower.

*withered* : faded ; decayed.

*tumbler* : a vessel ; a container.

*gutter* : channel at the side of a road to carry away rain-water.

*stockings* : light fitting coverings for the feet and legs.

*darted* : moved swiftly.

*swooped* : came down with a rush.

*listlessly* : with no interest in what is going on around.

*archway* : curved structure ; anything shaped like an arch.

*picked off* : took off ; plucked off.

*glistening* : shining brightly ; sparkling.

*snapped* : broke with a sharp crack.

*shabby* : in bad condition.

*proclamation* : public announcement made by beating a drum.

*fire* : fire-place for heating.

Answer the following questions briefly :

1. Where did the statue of the Happy Prince stand and why was it admired ?
2. Why did the little Swallow stay back while all his friends left for Egypt ? Why did he leave his beloved, the Reed ?
3. Why was the Happy Prince in tears ?
4. What did the Prince ask the Swallow to do for the first time ?
5. Why did the Swallow feel warm inspite of so much cold ?
6. What remarkable thing did the Professor of Biology see while passing over the bridge ?
7. What did the Prince ask the swallow to do for him the second time ?

8. What did the Prince command the Swallow to do for the third time to help the match girl ?
  9. Why did the Swallow resolve to stay with the Prince ?
  10. What sufferings of men and women did the Swallow see while flying over the city ?
  11. What was the Swallow asked to give to the poor now ?
  12. How and why did the little Swallow die and why did the Prince's heart break ?
  13. Why did the Prince look shabby to the Mayor and his councillors ?
  14. What did they do with the statue ?
  15. Why did the Councillors quarrel ?
  16. What lesson do you learn from the story ?
- II. Give a short character-sketch of the Happy Prince.*
- III. Narrate in your own words how the Prince and the Swallow worked together to relieve the suffering of the people.*

### EXERCISES

#### Increase your word-building power

- (a) Use the following pairs of words in sentences of your own to make clear the difference in their meanings :  
 cloak, clock ; coat, quote ; lip, leap ; chest, chaste ; quite, quiet ;  
 waist, waste ; bow, bough ; hole, whole ; bare, bear ; sail, sale ;  
 course, coarse.
- (b) Use the following phrases in sentences of your own to make their meanings clear :—  
 to put up with ; to look for ; to pass by ; to take off.
- (c) Form verbs from the following :—  
 ridiculous ; spring ; light ; match ; desert.
- (d) Form nouns from the following :—  
 lazy ; admire ; weigh ; utter ; prepare ; appreciate.
- (e) Write the antonyms (opposites) of the following :  
 high ; tall ; slender ; full ; plenty ;  
 beautiful ; drench ; coarse ; bare.

## THE BET

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*pacing*  : walking (from one place to another) in regular steps

*capital punishment*  : death sentence.

*obsolete*  : no longer used ; out of date ; old-fashioned.

*instantly*  : immediately.

*incessantly*  : constantly ; non-stop.

*banged*  : thumped, struck noisily.

*million*  : a thousand thousands ; ten lakhs.

*cell*  : small room in a prison for a single occupant.

*ridiculous*  : deserving to be laughed at ; absurd.

*violate*  : break.

*zealously*  : earnestly ; enthusiastically.

*erudite*  : learned ; scholarly.

*haphazard*  : accidental, by chance, at random.

*shaggy*  : rough ; coarse hair.

*senile*  : weak in body and mind.

*emaciation*  : excessive thinness due to starvation.

*void*  : empty ; vacant ; painful awareness of loss.

*frail*  : weak ; easily breakable.

*bartered*  : exchange goods considered of equal values.

*waive*  : put aside the claim ; relinquish.

*stipulated*  : fixed as essential condition to an agreement.

*renunciation*  : act of renouncing or disclaiming ; self-denial.

*I. Give short answers to the following :*

- (i) Reproduce in your own words the controversy between capital punishment and life-imprisonment ?
- (ii) What was the bet between the banker and the lawyer ?
- (iii) What were the terms and conditions of the bet ?



- (iv) When would the bet become void and nullified ?
- (v) Where did the banker imprison the lawyer ?
- (vi) What did the lawyer do during the first year of his imprisonment ?
- (vii) What did the lawyer do in the fifth year of his imprisonment ?
- (viii) What did he do in the subsequent years ?
- (ix) Why did the banker get worried at the end of fifteen years ?
- (x) What did the banker decide to do ?
- (xi) How did the lawyer look after fifteen years ?
- (xii) What did the banker find written on the sheet ?
- (xiii) Why did he weep and kiss the lawyer's head ?
- (xiv) Why did the prisoner escape ?
- (xv) What did the banker do with that document of renunciation ?

II. *Narrate in your own words the story of the strange bet between the banker and the lawyer. What moral lesson does it convey ?*

#### EXERCISES

- (a) *Use the following idiomatic expressions in sentences of your own to make their meaning clear :*  
to stick in ; to stake ; to fall on ; to grope for ; to poke one's nose into ; not a soul ; to make up one's mind.
- (b) *Suggest at least two more words which have the same meanings as each word given below :*  
incessant ; loneliness ; boredom ; complicated ; zealous ; erudition ; necessary ; immortal.
- (c) *Form nouns from the following :*  
observe ; imprison ; suffer ; permit ; deprive ; receive ; happy ; hungry.
- (d) *Separate the nouns, verbs and adjectives from the following list of words :*  
immoral ; humane ; lively ; temper ; agree ; ridiculous ; violate ; obligation ; deprive ; attempt ; heavenly ; courage ; freedom ; agitation ; peep ; movement ; shaggy.

## THE LAST LEAF

### NOTES

#### Glossary

*quaint*  : old fashioned, odd ; fanciful.

*pneumonia*  : acute inflammation (causing redness and swelling) of one or both the lungs.

*epidemic*  : disease rapidly spreading in one area among many people.

*contracted*  : caught (disease).

*scarcely*  : hardly ; with difficulty.

*bedstead*  : frame of a bed.

*adjacent*  : nearby ; next-door (room).

*wielded*  : handled ; used ably.

*masterpiece*  : best piece of an artist.

*fragile*  : weak ; delicate ; easily breakable.

*window-sill*  : horizontal ledge under a window.

*peered out*  : looked out.

*fierce*  : savage ; cruel ; violent ; intense ; strong.

*gusts*  : sudden strong rush of wind.

*pattered*  : sound of many quick light taps.

*eaves*  : projecting edges of a roof.

*nutrition*  : good food

*white mouse*  : a term of love ; dear (address).

I. Give short answers to the following questions :

(i) What was the doctor's diagnosis of Mary's ailment ?

(ii) What did Mary count, while looking out of the window of her room ?  
What was her fancy about her death ?

(iii) What did Sue think of Mary's fancy about her death ?

(iv) How did John save the life of Mary ?

(v) "I have been a bad girl, Sue," said Mary. When and why did Mary say so ?

- (vi) What did the doctor say about Mary's recovery after the psychological change came in her ?
- (vii) What things were found which suggested that John had been outside on "such a dreadful night" ?
- (viii) What was old John's masterpiece and why ?
- II. *What role did Sue play in saving the life of her friend, Mary ?*
- III. *What is the theme or the central idea of the story ?*
- IV. *Give a character sketch of John.*

## EXERCISES

- I. *Rewrite the following sentences using one word in place of the italicized words.*
- (a) She looked out of the window *with anxiety*.
- (b) The loneliest thing in the world is a soul when it is *making ready* to go on its journey ; *covered in mystery*.
- (c) His shoes and clothing were wet through and cold *like ice*.
- (d) *Giving nourishment* and care now—that's all.
- (e) John contracted the *disease which causes inflammation of the lungs*.
- II. *Make sentences using the following idiomatic expressions so as to bring out their meaning clearly ;*
- to set up ; to make up one's mind ; to have something on mind ; to turn loose one's hold.
- III. *Find words from the story having the following meanings :*
- (i) a disease that spreads rapidly and among many people.
- (ii) projecting edges of a roof.
- (iii) something fanciful and old-fashioned.
- (iv) an instrument used for measuring temperature.
- IV. *Fill in each blank space in the passage given below, with one of the following words :*
- fallen ; dreary ; ivy ; anxiously ; count ; skeleton ; autumn ; crumbling ; brick ; decayed.

She looked—out of the window. What was there to—? There was only a bare, —Yard to be seen and the blank side of the—house twenty feet away. An old, old—vine, twisted and—at the roots, climbed half way up the brick wall. Because of—its leaves had—until its—branches clung, most bare, to the—bricks.

The king approached him and said, "For the last time I pray you to answer my questions."

"Your questions have already been answered," said the hermit.

"What do you mean?" said the king.

The hermit replied, if you had not pitied my weakness yesterday and had not dug these beds for me, but had gone your way, that man would have attacked you and you would have repented of not having stayed with me. So the most important time was when you were digging the beds. Besides, I was the most important man and to do me good was your most important business. Afterwards, when that man ran towards us, the most important time was when you were attending on him; for if you had not dressed his wounds he would have died without having made peace with you. So he was the most important man and what you did for him was your most important business. Remember then that there is only one time that is important—*NOW!* It is the most important time because it is the only time when we have any power. The most necessary man is he with whom you are; for no man knows whether he will ever have dealings with anyone else. The most important affair is to do him good because for that purpose alone was man sent into this world!"

—*Leo Tolstoy*

### THE CABULIWALLAH

My daughter Mini, when she was five-year old, could not live without chattering. Her mother was often annoyed at this and would like to stop her talking so much, but I would not. It was unnatural for Mini to be quiet, and I could not bear her quietness. So my own talk with her was always lively.

One morning, for example, when I was in the middle of writing the seventeenth chapter of my new novel, my little Mini stole into the room, and putting her hand into mine, said; "Bhola says there is an elephant in the clouds, blowing water out of his trunk, and that is why it rains ! Is it true, father ?"

And while I sat still, trying to think of some answer to this she quickly turned to another subject. "Father ! What relation is Mother to you ?"

I said seriously : "Go and play with Bhola, Mini ! I am busy."

The window of my room overlooks the road. The child had seated herself at my feet near my table, and was playing softly, I was still working hard on my chapter, when suddenly Mini left her play and ran to the window crying : "A Cabuliwallah ! A Cabuliwallah !" And indeed, in the street below, there was a Cabuliwallah walking slowly along. He wore the loose gown of his people, and a tall turban. He carried a bag on his back and boxes of grapes in his hand.

I cannot tell what my daughter's feelings were when she saw this man, but she began to call him loudly. The Cabuliwallah

pictured her running to him as she used to do, calling, "O Cabuliwallah! Cabuliwallah!" He had imagined, too, that they would laugh and talk together, just as they used to do. Indeed, in memory of former days, he had brought, carefully wrapped up in a paper, a few nuts and grapes, which he had somehow managed to get from a countryman. His own little store of money had all gone while he was in prison.

I repeated: "There is a ceremony in the house, and you will not be able to see anyone today."

The man's face fell. He looked sadly at me for a moment, then said, "Good morning," and went out.

I felt a little sorry, and would have called him back, but he returned of his own will. He came close up to me and held out his gifts with the words: "I have brought these few things, sir, for the little one. Will you give them to her?"

I took them, and was going to pay him, but he caught my hand and said: "You are very kind. Sir! Keep me in your memory. Do not offer me money! You have a little girl; I too have one like her in my home. I bring this fruit to your child because of my own daughter, and not to make a profit for myself."

Saying this, he put his hand inside his big loose coat and brought out a small and dirty piece of paper. Unfolding it with great care, he smoothed it out with both hands on my table. It bore the impression of a little hand. Not a drawing. Just the impression of an ink-smear laid flat on the paper. Year after year, when he came to Calcutta to sell his goods in the streets, he had carried, next to his heart, this touch of the hand of his own little daughter.

Tears came into my eyes. I forgot he was a poor Cabuli fruit-seller; while I was. ... But no, what was I more than he? He also was a father. That impression of the hand of his little Parvati,

in her distant mountain home reminded me of my own little Mini.

I sent for Mini immediately from the inner room. Many difficulties were raised, but I swept them aside. At last Mini came and stood quietly before me, dressed in her red silk marriage sari.

The Cabuliwallah seemed amazed at the sight. He could not renew their old friendship. At last he smiled and said : "Little one are you going to your father-in-law's house ?"

But Mini now understood the meaning of the word "father-in-law," and she could not answer him as she used to do. She stood silently before him with her lovely head bowed down.

I remembered the day when the Cabuliwallah and my Mini had first met, and I felt sad. When she had gone. Rahman shook his head sorrowfully and sat down on the floor. The idea had suddenly come to him that his daughter too must have grown up, while he had been away so long. He would have to make friends again with her also. He would certainly not find her as she was when he had last seen her. And besides, what might not have happened to her in these eight years ?

The marriage-pipes sounded, and the mild autumn sunlight streamed round us. But Rahman sat in the little Calcutta lane, and saw before him the barren mountains of Afghanistan.

I took out a hundred-rupee note, gave it to him, and said, "Go back to your daughter, Rahman, in your own country, and may the happiness of your meeting bring good fortune to my child !"

Having made this present. I had to cut down some of the festivities. I could not have the electric lights I had intended, nor the military band, and the ladies of the house were despondent about it. But the wedding feast was all the brighter to me because of the thought that, in a distant land, a long-lost father had met again his only child.

—*Rabindra Nath Tagore*

## THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

Many years ago there lived an Emperor who was so fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on dress and finery. He cared not a straw for his soldiers, nor for going to the theatre or driving in the park ; all the really cared about was showing his new clothes. He had a coat for every hour of the day, Just as in the other countries men speak of the "King in Council," so here men spoke of the "Emperor in Wardrobe."

The great city where he dwelt was a very pleasant place. Many strangers visited it every day. One day two impostors arrived who gave themselves out for weavers, and pretended they knew how to weave the most beautiful cloth imaginable. Not only were the colours and patterns altogether out of the common, but the clothes made from such cloth had the peculiar property of being invisible to every man who was either unfit for his office or stupid.

"They would indeed be valuable clothes," thought the Emperor. "By wearing them, I could find out which of my ministers are unfit for the posts they occupy, and I could tell the wise from the stupid. Yes; some of that cloth must be woven for me at once." And he gave the two impostors a lot of money in advance so that they might begin their work.

Accordingly they set up two looms and pretended they were working, but there was absolutely nothing upon the looms. Very soon they demanded the finest silk and the purest gold thread, which they put carefully away, and worked on with the empty looms till late into the night.