

國家圖書館



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英美社交風土談

英國之部

LIFE AMONG
ENGLISHMEN

AND

AMERICANS

VOLUME I

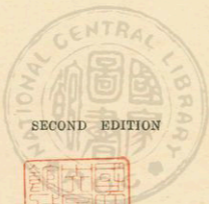
JOHN BULL AND HIS WAYS

THE WORLD
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SHANGHAI

LIFE AMONG
ENGLISHMEN AND AMERICANS

VOLUME I

JOHN BULL AND HIS WAYS



SECOND EDITION



THE WORLD BOOK CO., LTD.
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本書特點

- 一、本書分甲乙兩編，甲編為英國之部，乙編為美國之部，均採用外國著作者原本，加以選擇修改，並附漢譯，藉便學者。
- 二、目前各學校對於英文教學，均注重課外閱讀，顧普通所採取課外閱讀之書，多偏於神話故事之類，不甚切於實用，是書內容則可令學者多獲實益，且亦饒有趣味，足為課外閱讀之善本。
- 三、近今所定新學制實施教學法，於外國語一科，「以引起對於外國日常生活狀況的研究興趣」為一種重要之目的，此書甲乙兩編，於英美兩國風土人情，多所紀述，足合研究日常生活狀況之需要。
- 四、本書甲編為日記式兼對談式，乙編純取對談式，學者細加探討，不獨於文字上得有進步，且可藉以練習會話。
- 五、本書於社交方面，論列甚詳，讀者可因以習知兩國社交狀況及禮俗，凡欲遊歷英美者，更足資借鏡。

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PREFACE

The present work lays no claim to originality inasmuch as it is the abridged reproduction of a work entitled "My English Diary" or, as more fully described in the sub-title, "A Peep into Every Day Life in England" by Professor A. W. Medley. Several chapters which are not deemed to be of particular interest to the average Chinese reader have been omitted. In the original preface Professor Medley observes: "Englishmen, as a rule, do not talk like a book, but use the language adapted to express their meaning in the fewest possible words, and this ordinary colloquial language I have used . . . I do claim that the book is written in the every day speech of my fellow countrymen in their social intercourse and in their business relations, and I trust it may be of some service to students in their practice of conversation . . ."

The work though written for the benefit of Japanese students of English will not fail to commend itself to the favourable attention of Chinese students of English, for the plain reason that it possesses several very interesting features which are not often met with in books of this nature. In the first place, the book takes the form of a diary which gives the writer full liberty to describe freely conditions of social life and other subjects, and to record his impressions and observations. Secondly, every chapter contains an abundance of dialogue material covering a wide range of subjects. Then the material itself is well chosen so that what is presented to the reader will not fail to be of practical use to him. Finally, the experiences which the Oriental tourist has gone through are such as to make the trip full of pleasant memories which could not but convey the happy

impression that, in spite of all the talk of racial prejudice, the Easterner will not fail to command the respect and goodwill of his Occidental friends, provided he would only take the necessary pains of equipping himself with a knowledge of the Western people and learn their customs and manners before making the trip. Such knowledge is essential to mutual understanding, and mutual understanding is essential to solid friendship.

Whether the present manual will be introduced into the classroom as a text-book or whether it will be used by the students themselves as a form of supplementary reading, one thing is certain. The subject-matter in either case will be found very interesting and exceptionally instructive. In case we should at some future date get out a new revised edition, we trust that we shall be able to enrich the contents of the work by adding a number of appropriate references to Chinese customs and manners, a knowledge of which it should be the duty and privilege of the Chinese tourist abroad to impart to the foreign friends, with whom he should come into contact. Criticisms with which the kind reader may be pleased to favour us are welcome.

THE EDITORS.

Shanghai, November 1924.

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LIFE AMONG ENGLISHMEN AND AMERICANS

VOLUME I.—JOHN BULL AND HIS WAYS

CHAPTER I.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

When I reached England, I disembarked at Liverpool. My first care was to present a letter of introduction with which I had been furnished by a Chinese friend in Peking. The envelope, in accordance with the usual custom, was left open, and I was able to read the letter, which was as follows:

Peking, May 8th, 1907.

Dear Brown:

This letter will serve to introduce to you Mr. Tan Yin of this city, whom I have known for many years. During his stay in England he is naturally anxious to see as much as he can, and any assistance you can render him in Liverpool will be much appreciated by me.

Yours faithfully,

B. Knox.

Armed with this letter, I sallied out from the hotel at 4 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon and made my way to

Mr. Brown's address. On reaching the house, I rang the bell marked "Visitors," there being another bell marked "Servants," for the use of tradespeople delivering food or taking orders from the cook. The door was opened by a smart parlour maid in black dress, and white linen cap, apron and cuffs. On the appearance of this domestic, I opened the ball by asking.

Self. Is Mr. Brown at home?

Maid. Yes, Sir.

Self. Will you kindly hand him this letter?

Maid. Please step this way.

With these words the maid ushered me into a room, somewhat plainly furnished, but fitted up with two comfortable arm chairs, and pervaded with the scent of tobacco. This I took to be Mr. Brown's own "sanctum," and learned afterwards that I had been shown in there as I had enquired for Mr. Brown personally. In a very few minutes I heard steps, and nerved myself for my first real plunge into English conversation on its native soil. Immediately on his entrance Mr. Brown came forward and shook hands with me.

Brown. Good afternoon, you are Mr. Tan Yin I presume, how is my old friend Mr. Knox getting on?

Self. He is getting on very well, and has asked me to be sure to remember him to you.

Mr. B. He has been a lifelong friend of mine, and a very good fellow he is. Do you propose to stay very long in Liverpool?

Self. I intend to follow your advice on this point; I

could stay for three or four days in Liverpool if you think it is worth while to do so.

Mr. B. Well, I was born and bred in Liverpool, and I think there are few places like the old city on the Mersey, but prejudices apart, there is a lot worth seeing here. The town is one of the doors into the country; her line of docks is a wonderful sight, and certainly no one should leave without seeing the arrival or departure of a big ocean liner from the floating stage, which is, I believe, the longest in the world. Then we have a most excellent art gallery containing one of the best collections in the country out of London. But don't let us stay in this room; will you come into the drawing room and let me introduce you to my wife and family? Leave your hat and stick in the hall.

Self. It is very good of you to show so much kindness to a total stranger.

Mr. B. (to Mrs. Brown) My dear, let me introduce to you Mr. Tan Yin from Peking who has brought me a letter from Knox.

Mrs. Brown greeted me with a smile, saying: "How do you do, Mr. Tan Yin?" We shook hands.

Mr. Brown then drew my attention to three children, whom he introduced as "my two little girls, Winnie and Marion, and my son Tom." Winnie and Marion wore short frocks down to the knee, covered with a white pinafore, and had black stockings on their legs, with shiny slippers. Their

hair hung down behind to their waists. Tom wore jacket and knickerbockers and Eton collar, with a red neck tie.

Mrs. B. I am really afraid to offer you English tea, Mr. Tan Yin. I have read that tea making is almost one of the esoteric arts with you.

Self. I often take tea made in foreign style which, I am glad to say, agrees with my taste. Might I have cream without sugar?

Mrs. B. Winnie, take this cup to Mr. Tan Yin, will you? And Marion, bring some cakes for Mr. Tan Yin.

Marion. Will you have brown bread or white, Mr. Tan Yin? It is thin bread and butter, but up in the nursery we have thick.

Self. Brown, please; may I place my cup on that little table?

Mrs. B. Yes, do, I always think a man looks so unhappy when he is balancing a cup and saucer on his knee.

Self. Your husband has been singing the praises of Liverpool to me, Mrs. Brown, and I feel as if I wanted to set out at once and see the sights.

Mrs. B. Then you could not find a better guide than Tom over there. I believe he knows every inch of the city, especially the docks, don't you, Master Tom?

Tom. I should be awfully proud to show Mr. Tan Yin round. Do you think I could get a whole holiday for it, father?

Mr. B. We'll see, but I don't know what the doctor would say!

Mrs. B. Winnie, Mr. Tan Yin has not yet tasted our hot buns.

Self. You have no idea, Mrs. Brown, as to how fond are all the Chinese of cakes.

Winnie. I should like to go to China, Mr. Tan Yin. Will you have another cup of tea?

Mr. B. You have not told us what sort of a voyage you had, Mr. Tan Yin.

Self. The ship was very comfortable, and my cabin mate turned out to be a man of high culture, who had read wisely and thought deeply. We used to lie awake till the most unearthly hours talking "on Man, on Nature and on Human Life" or rather, he did the talking, and I listened.

Mr. B. You quote Wordsworth, I observe; is he a favourite of yours?

Self. Yes, there is something in his musing genius and philosophy of landscape that appeals to me very much.

Mr. B. Well then, while you are so far North, you had better run up to the lakes and see Wordsworth's country. It is not a long journey from here, and you could be back in two days.

Self. It is a very tempting prospect, but I rather hope to go to Scotland later on, and then I could pass by that place on my way.

Mrs. B. Are you sure you won't have another cup of tea, Mr. Tan Yin? If you don't care for any more tea, I should like to show you my flowers.

Considering they are grown in the heart of a large city, they are not bad.

Mrs. Brown then showed me into a conservatory leading out of the drawing room. It was full of pretty flowering plants and delicate ferns.

Mrs. B. You see, I can always get flowers for the table, and drawing room, and am quite independent of the florist. I spend a great deal of my spare time here, though I know our old gardener does not think much of my efforts.

Winnie. Mother, may I pick Mr. Tan Yin a buttonhole? Mr. Tan Yin, what coloured flower would you like?

Self. That depends on the colour of my tie, does it not? If I have a green tie, I can't wear a red flower, can I? I think that purple orchid would just match my scarf.

Winnie. You are particular, Mr. Tan Yin. O I can't reach it. No, Tom, I want to get it myself. Would you mind lifting me up, Mr. Tan Yin?

Mr. B. When you have quite finished adorning Mr. Tan Yin, Winnie, perhaps he would like a smoke. Do you prefer a cigar or cigarettes?

Self. Well, if you have a medium strength cigar, I should like one very much.

Mr. B. I have just got the very thing. Marion, run into my study and bring the matches. Let me cut the end for you. I really don't know how man could exist in these days of bustle without the

solace of tobacco. There is something about an Habana cigar that soothes the most troubled breast. "Blessed be Sir Walter Raleigh" say I, though I very much doubt whether he ever anticipated the extraordinary way in which his weed has insinuated itself into the hearts of his fellow countrymen, and that future Chancellors of the Exchequer would call down blessings on his name. Chinese also smoke cigars, don't they?

Self. The Chinese have certainly taken to the habit. This is a very good cigar; it makes me happy that my smoking helps to fumigate your conservatory.

Mrs. B. I am sure it is very thoughtful of you, Mr. Tan Yin. My husband is always trying to claim merit for the same thing.

Self. I fear I ought to be going now; your kindness has led me into paying an unconscionably long visit.

Mrs. B. We hope to see more of you before you leave for Liverpool. Good bye (*shaking hands*). Children, come and say good bye to Mr. Tan Yin.

As we passed through the drawing room I noticed Mrs. Brown touched the bell, and by the time I reached the hall door, the servant was ready to open it for me and let me out.

CHAPTER II.

TRAVELLING TO TOWN

After a few more days of hard work I exhausted the sights of Liverpool, and sighing for new worlds to conquer, determined to set out for town—as the English always call London. Accordingly I discharged my bill at the hotel, and, leaving one or two tips behind, had myself and my baggage driven to Lime Street station, from which it was my purpose to travel to Euston on the luncheon car express, which makes the run of 200 miles in 3 hours and 45 minutes. In England third class is good enough for any one and all ranks travel by it, so I determined to do in Rome as Rome does, and took a third class ticket. Booking is a very simple matter. Stepping up to the window labelled third class, I ejaculated only one word, "Euston," at the same time laying down a golden sovereign, which I must confess I was somewhat loath to part with on account of its plump beauty and pleasant ring. The ticket and change were passed out to me with great promptness, and I calculated from the price that third class travel in England costs a penny per mile. I also gathered that unless the traveller actually asks for a return ticket, the booking clerk will always issue a single, and I was confirmed in this by the next man to me saying "Euston return." Stowing my ticket away in my ticket pocket, I next strolled over to the book stall, a large booth stocked with all kinds of newspapers, magazines and light literature. Thinking "The

"Times" would consort properly with my dignity, I asked for it and was a trifle staggered at the price, viz. 3d. When, however, I came to unfold the majestic and crackling sheet finely printed on thick paper, I began to think it was worth the money. Opening "The Times," one feels that no mushroom country could support such an institution—for an institution it is, and has behind it a career of over 100 years. A newspaper that had a correspondent at Waterloo, and wrote a leading article on the death of Nelson is one that should at least inspire respect. The train by which I was to travel was of the corridor type with the seats arranged across the carriage, and a narrow corridor running the whole length of one side of the coach. As, however, I intended to lunch on board, I took my seat in the dining car, down each side of which are tables to seat two, sitting opposite to each other. After passing the outskirts of Liverpool, and a deep and long cutting in the solid rock, the train quickly attained a high rate of speed, but, as it ran with perfect smoothness, we could eat and drink in comfort. As soon as I entered the car, the attendant asked me my name and showed me to my place, which I found reserved for me as I had booked my seat beforehand.

My fellow diner, or rather "luncher," was already in his place and engaged with a large and serious looking newspaper, which I afterwards discovered to be the "Manchester Guardian," generally considered the best paper in the provinces. After luncheon was over and we had both lit cigars to smoke over our coffee, I opened my "Times" and began to dip into it, while my companion

looked steadily and musingly at the flying landscape with its glimpses of contented cattle, browsing sheep, and a distant church tower, or comfortable farm house cosily surrounded by hay stacks and corn ricks. I shortly began to feel somewhat somnolent, when my companion suddenly addressed me.

I am obliged to call him Mr. X as he did not favour me with his name. Indeed, I found that Englishmen as a rule feel that their names concern nobody but themselves, and would never dream of imparting them to a mere travelling companion. I have been told that the same men travel up to London from a suburb every day for years, and yet never know one another's names. Interchange of cards, except among business men, is almost unheard of. However, let me return to the subject of the conversation I had with this interesting gentleman.

Mr. X. Anything in "The Times" this morning, Sir?

Self. My difficulty, Sir, is that there is too much. In telling about the news, I don't know where to begin. There are so many trees that I find a difficulty in seeing the wood.

Mr. X. I should advise you to consult the index, and select what seems to you the most interesting item. I admit "The Times" is as full of news as an egg is full of meat, and I admire it for that, but its policy is one I distrust and dislike exceedingly.

Self. Why, what is there in it that evokes your disapproval?

Mr. X. Its Jingo tone. I belong to what used to be called "the Manchester School" of politicians, who, while recognizing the enormous responsibilities of Empire, consider that the heart of the Empire beats in England, and the social welfare of her citizens should be the first duty of her statesmen. Now, "The Times" is always waving the flag.

Self. I see there's a lot of correspondence. Is that a marked feature of the paper?

Mr. X. So much so, "to write to the Times" has become a stock phrase. I will say "The Times" is very wise in throwing open its columns to opinions of every sort. The most trenchant criticism of its own policy may often be found set up by its own compositors, and printed on its own presses.

Self. What do the letters L. and N. W. R. mean? I see them embroidered on the cushions, and worked into the carpet.

Mr. X. London and North Western Railway, the line on which we are now travelling. It is our largest railway company, and its gross earnings last year were, I believe, something like £8,000,000. Many of our most prominent men are interested in the management of railways. At one time the late Lord Salisbury was chairman of the Great Eastern Railway and did much to raise it to its present flourishing condition. There are few things that sound so solid and respectable in the ears of the British public as "Railway

Director." It certainly ranks next to "Banker" in their estimation.

Self. What a tremendously long station this is we are passing through! Oh, it is Rugby.

Mr. X. The platform is the longest in England, but, of course, the place is famous for its school. My youngster is there now, and little knows that his father has just whizzed through the station.

Self. I should guess we are about half way to London now.

Mr. X. Yes, Rugby is considered the half way house on this journey. Most trains stop here for five minutes, and one can get hot tea, and what is generically known as the railway bun, which always seems to be a week old, and in which the currants are as far apart as Dan and Beersheba.

After this savage onslaught on the British railway bun, my companion lapsed into silence, doubtless meditating over his grievances, while I divided my attention between my paper and the country side, which soon began to show signs of being more thickly inhabited, and we passed more than one colony of pretty villas, doubtless the homes of Londoners. Shortly afterwards we steamed into Euston station, and, the tickets having been already collected on the train, we were at liberty to depart at once. Mr. X. left me with a curt good afternoon, and I beckoned a porter, told him where my baggage was, and asked him to get me a four wheeler. The porter was the first from whom I heard true cockney speech. When he had collected my

luggage, meaning to guide me to the cab, he plucked me by the arm and said in the same breath "Ere yor Gavner!" The gesture I understood and followed him to the cab, on which he proceeded to pile my luggage with the help of the cabman. I then dismissed him with a tip of 6d, 2d for each portmanteau—directed "cabby" where to drive, and passed out under the enormous Doric portico, still meditating on the porter's mysterious speech. Suddenly it flashed across me—"Here you are, Governor"—"Governor" being a term applied by the lower classes to their betters, albeit a trifle disrespectful. Much relieved by this solution, I cast my eyes out of the windows, and was rewarded for my pains by a sight of the most depressing looking road I have ever seen, apparently full of shops for the sale of gravestones. I afterwards discovered the dreary look of the Euston Road is a by-word among the worthy Londoners, who, however, take no steps to improve it—"What is every body's business is nobody's business."

We shortly turned into a broad road lined with enormous shops, which seemed to display mostly furniture, then, swerving off to the right, we swung easily along a fine looking street paved with wooden blocks, took a turn to the left, crossed Piccadilly, and drew up before the door of a hotel overlooking the Green Park, to which I had been recommended.

CHAPTER III.

SHOPPING

Intending to make a brief stay in London, I unpacked all my portmanteaux and arranged their contents in the chest of drawers and wardrobe in my bedroom. During this operation I was struck by the deficiency of my stock in several lines and decided to take an immediate opportunity of replenishing it. Next morning, therefore, I put on a black tail or morning coat, sober coloured trousers, black boots and a silk hat, and marched out to see what I could find. I had already discovered that it is an unpardonable solecism for an Englishman to wear anything but a silk hat with a frock or tail coat. The hard felt hat or "bowler" may only be worn with a short jacket, or shooting coat of easy cut, made from fancy cloth. The deepest reprobation, however, is reserved for the unhappy wight, who is so lacking in his sense of propriety as to appear in public with black frock or morning coat, and "tan" boots. The offender is at once set down as an "outsider." On my way down in the lift I drew on a pair of dog skin gloves, and being already equipped with a tightly rolled silk umbrella, I made for the swinging doors, which shut off the hall of the hotel from the street. They were flung open for me by a be-medalled commissionaire and out I stepped, feeling indeed "the glass of fashion and the mould of form."

Turning to the right out of my hotel, I strolled gayly along the sunny street, keeping to the right hand side of

the pavement, and greatly interested in the incessant stream of traffic, cabs, carts, buses, both horse drawn and motors, glittering private carriages drawn by splendid high stepping horses, of 16 and 17 hands, and finally motor cars of all sorts, from a large and luxurious white steam car driven by a lady dressed in white to match her car, to the little electric coupe darting about in an uncanny silence. At the same time I kept a sharp look-out for the shop I was wanting, viz. a hosier and outfitter, and my patience was rewarded by the sight of a large plate-glass window, behind which were arranged a few neckties and one or two rolls of flannel. It is not the fashion among the better class outfitters of the west end to make a display of under-clothing in the window, and they only show enough to intimate that more may be found within.

Pushing open the door of the shop, I approached the counter.

Shopman. Yes, Sir, what can I do for you?

Self. I want to see some ties please, and prefer self-coloured ones.

Shopman. (laying half a dozen boxes of ties on the counter and opening them one by one). Any of these suits you, Sir?

Self. (picking out a dark blue one made of knitted silk)

This is rather nice; how much is it?

Shopman. 4/6, Sir.

Self. Oh, that is very dear; can't you reduce the price a little?

As soon as I had uttered this unfortunate remark, I saw that I got myself in hot water. The shopman

stared at me as if I had been some strange animal, and then replied in a pitying tone.

Shopman. We never do business in that way, Sir; but if you were to take a dozen of the ties, we might make a small reduction, or I could show you a less expensive quality.

Self. Don't bother now. Give me three like this one.

Shopman. Thank you, Sir. Is there anything else I can do for you?

Self. I want you to measure me for some dress shirts.

Shopman. Yes, Sir; they cost two guineas for half a dozen.

Would you like one stud in the front, or two?

Self. One only, I want some dress ties too.

Shopman. To tie yourself, of course, Sir.

Self. Yes, let me have a dozen.

I had already learned that the English have an unreasoning prejudice against a ready-made tie; and were a young man to be discovered wearing such a tie in the evening, he would be quite humiliated. Naturally the hosiers encourage this habit, knowing that on account of the difficulty of tying a dress tie in the form of the rigidly straight bow, a man who is particular will often spoil two or three before he gets one tied to his satisfaction.

Self. How much will that be altogether? I will pay for the shirts now; and you can send them round to my hotel as soon as they are finished.

Shopman. Three pounds, five shillings, and six pence.

I laid down a crisp new £5 note bearing the signature of the chief accountant of the Bank of England, and known

through the length and breadth of the country colloquially as "a fiver." I received as change a sovereign, a half-sovereign, a half-crown and a florin (2/); altogether £1.14.6. The sovereign I put into my sovereign purse, a circular silver or gold receptacle opening with a spring, and generally made to hold £5 in gold and carried at the end of a chain like a watch. The silver I dropped loose into my pocket in English fashion. Every man carries money loose in his pocket, and, as not all by any means use sovereign purses, one often sees a man bring up a fistful of gold, silver and copper all mixed together in a highly confusing manner.

Leaving the hosier behind, I continued my stroll, and turning up New Bond Street found myself in the paradise of the shopper—that is to say the one with well lined pockets. The jewelers' windows, jealously cased behind steel bars, are one of the sights of London, and without doubt the flash and sparkle of diamonds, the blood red hue of rubies, the deep blue of sapphires, and the milky sheen of pearls are very enticing to the eye, as the gems lie reposing in cases lined with blue velvet, their charms artfully enhanced by a skilful management of the electric light. The only shop I visited in this street, however, was a tobacconist's.

Self. Give me a box of cigars, please.

Shopman. With pleasure, Sir; but can't you be a little more definite as to what you want? We have twenty thousand cigars in the shop made up of one hundred and twenty different brands, and

sold at prices ranging from fourpence to 15/- each.

Self. I must confess I don't know much about Habana cigars; so perhaps you will recommend me a sound reliable brand of medium strength, one that I would not be ashamed to offer to a friend of mine.

Shopman. O yes. We sell a great many of this cigar (*showing me a box of rich brown cigars lying snugly in their box, each girdled with a red and gold paper band*). Sit down and try one.

Self. Thanks, I will. How much are they?

Shopman. 9d each or £3.5.0. a hundred. They are all in excellent condition and ready for smoking at once.

Self. Well, I will take them, and you might put them up with 100 Egyptian cigarettes—small size.

The purchase made a big hole in another £5 note, and I began to realise that unless I could get away from these seductive shops, I should shortly be rendered penniless. So, without looking to right or left, I strolled on till I reached Oxford Street, one of the main arteries of London traffic running East and West. Striking down this to the left, I soon reached the Marble Arch at the north-east corner of Hyde Park, incidentally stopping at a chemist's and laying in some tooth powder and shaving soap, together with a large sponge, without which no English bathroom is complete. A very large sponge may cost 15/- or a guinea, but I contented myself with one of more moderate size.

The equipment of an English bathroom consists of a porcelain lined bath long enough to recline in, sponge, soap, a flesh brush, and finally a number of gigantic towels large enough to envelope the whole body. Most Englishmen take their morning bath absolutely cold, but it is usual to ask a guest whether he wants his bath hot or cold. In houses where there are many guests and where a separate bathroom cannot be assigned to each one, a flat tin bath is brought into the bedroom, and filled by the servant from big cans.

I sauntered home through the park, meditating on various matters, and watching a very large number of children playing about in charge of nurses dressed in white, and wearing black bonnets trimmed with blue silk, and tied with white strings.

Reaching my hotel once more, I found that my purchases had preceded me home, my instructions to send them having been executed with great promptness.

CHAPTER IV.

A PUBLIC DINNER

By this morning's post I got a letter from a friend, enclosing a card for a public dinner to be held that very evening to welcome a distinguished Colonial Governor on his return home. The letter read as follows:

100 Park St. S. W.,

4. 7. '07

Dear Tan Yin:

I enclose a ticket for the dinner to-night at Lord Orville's as I think you might like to go. He is really one of the ablest of our pro-consuls, and it may interest you to see and hear him. The Colonial Secretary will be in the chair, and there is sure to be a large attendance of big-wigs.

You will see the dinner is to be held in the Savoy, and I will meet you in the hall at 8 o'clock, if you will wire me whether you are coming or not.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur Paget.

Tan Yin Esq.,
Ritz Hotel.

Immediately after breakfast I wired acceptance to Paget, and spent the day writing home, knowing full well it is better to catch your impressions all hot, before the novelty has begun to wear off.

At 7 o'clock I went up and dressed, donning my order to do honour to the occasion, and then drove to the Savoy. Piccadilly at 7.30 on a spring or summer night is a gay sight, and I was greatly entertained with the constant procession of cabs and carriages bearing smart well groomed men, and richly dressed women. Arrived at the Savoy, I handed my coat and hat to an attendant, receiving in return a numbered ticket, which I slipped into my waistcoat pocket;

and then accompanied by Paget, who had joined me, we walked off to the reception room now full of guests who were being presented to the lion of the evening. The latter stood in the centre of the room wearing the star and ribbon of the order of St. Michael and St. George, which is reserved for colonial services. Paget and I were pushing forward to be presented in our turn, when, to my great chagrin, the signal for dinner was given and the whole company moved off to the dining room, and we were obliged to follow. About two hundred and fifty guests sat down to dinner, the tables being arranged in the form of a large T.

The chairman sat in the centre of the cross piece, and had on his right Lord Orville, while on his left was a distinguished soldier. I was surprised to note, however, that although there were many members of both branches of the services present, every one without exception was clothed in plain evening dress, and bore no marks of his profession except such as one could gather from the orders worn. I put this down to the intense dislike of any Englishman to appear different from his fellows. If he thinks he has made himself a mark of attention, he is generally highly annoyed; and, except perhaps on levee days, the sight of an officer in uniform in the street is unknown. Should such a one by any chance be obliged to appear in the street, out of mufti, he will in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred take refuge in a cab.

I sat between Paget and a well known King's Counsel (K. C.), whose firm cut mouth and square head marked his mental calibre.

Paget. (*leaning over me*). Egerton, let me introduce my friend Mr. Tan Yin who has just arrived from China, and is very eager to become acquainted with conditions in this country.

Egerton. How do you do, Sir? Do you think you can best study the ways of an Englishman when he is eating?

Self. Well, that is rather an unfair inference from my presence here.—The bait that drew me was the chance of seeing a lot of well known people, and I am almost shamed to tell you what was the first thing that struck me.

Paget. Take courage, Mr. Tan Yin, it shan't go any further.

Self. There are, I suppose, about two hundred and fifty men here, and yet looking round the tables I can count on my fingers those who are not clean shaven, as if they were under a vow.

Egerton. Nothing but fashion, my dear Sir; thirty years ago no man thought himself anything if he had not a luxuriant pair of whiskers; but now, all that is changed, and we laboriously shave twice a day.

Paget. I say, Mr. Tan Yin, do you see that little fellow over there who looks so infinitely bored and melancholy? He is one of our best novelists, and he is blessed with such contagious wit that it is not possible to read him without falling under his spell.

Self. I have long given up judging by appearances. They are a trap to catch the unwary.

You are quite right. My experience in court has shown me that the simplest and most innocent looking witness often proves a Tartar when I come to cross-examine him, and more than once I have been heavily "let down" by one of those gentry.

Self. As I was walking through the park yesterday, I could not help wondering who found the money to keep it up in such apple pie order.

Paget. The royal parks, that is Hyde Park with Kensington Gardens, St. James's Park and the Green Park are a charge on the National Exchequer, and under the management of a government department, the Board of Works; while the other parks such as Battersea and Finsbury Parks or Hampstead Heath are kept up out of the rates, and are under the control of the Parks Committee of the London County Council, who have done a vast deal to improve them since they came into power.

Egerton. Do you take any interest in the stage, Mr. Tan Yin?

Self. I most certainly do, and I would be sorry to leave London without seeing a Pinero play and a Shakespearian revival. By the way, what time do the theatres begin here?

Egerton. Half past eight or nine, and close at eleven or half past.

We had by this time arrived at a stage in the dinner when cigar cases were brought out, and coffee and liqueurs

put on the table. I was about to light a very tempting looking cigar, when the chairman rose, called for silence with a single knock on the table; and made the following short speech:—

“My lords and gentlemen, I have to propose a toast which needs no words of mine to commend it to you. I ask you to drink to His Majesty the King. The King! God bless him!”

The toast was drunk standing, every man raising his glass with the same words “The King! God bless him!” and then emptying the contents.

After a short interval devoted to conversation, the chairman rose again, to propose the toast of the guest of the evening. This speech occupied about fifteen minutes and I can not pretend to give all of it, but only an abstract.

“My Lord Orville, my lords and gentlemen:—

We have amongst us to-night men of both parties and of all shades of opinion; but here we meet on common ground, namely, our wish to do fitting honour to one who has helped to bear the burden of Empire on a distant shore (*hear, hear*). I have known Lord Orville, Gentlemen, for the better part of a lifetime, and I can truly say that his whole career has been one of single-eyed devotion to the State. Had he turned his abilities to his personal advantage, without doubt he would have taken a high position in the world of commerce, but, without a thought of self-aggrandizement, he has placed his administrative genius at the service of his country, and, Gentlemen, we are grateful (*hear, hear*). Lord Orville has held many res-

possible positions in the course of his career, and in all of them his judicious tact, his suavity of manner, and his firm determination to uphold justice have endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. I can scarcely imagine a more onerous, and at the same time, more intensely interesting post than that of a man who represents the King in one of the great self-governing colonies of the Empire. His duty is to foster the political instincts of a free people, and, whilst maintaining the impartiality of the Crown, to do his best to tighten the links that hold them to the mother country. In that task he has been eminently successful, and there never was a time when the bond between England and the colony which he had just left was closer or more affectionate (*loud cheers*). We are indeed glad to have Lord Orville once more among us, where we can make use of his acute judgment and ripe experience. We gladly part with our best men for India and the colonies, but nevertheless we are glad to see them back.

I need say no more, but ask to raise your glasses to the health of "Lord Orville."

Repeating the words "Lord Orville," the chairman drained his glass, and the guests followed his example, rising in their seats to do so.

Within a very few minutes Lord Orville rose to reply and was greeted with loud clapping. His speech was something like this:

"My Lord Fife, my lords and gentlemen:—

During my official career I have been given to understand that one of my chief claims to popularity was that I

never made a long after dinner speech, and I do not intend to belie my reputation to-night. I must confess that during Lord Fife's speech, I did not know where to look, and I shall now retort upon him by saying that in every word he spoke of me, he was drawing a portrait of himself. But apart, Gentlemen, from all personal matters, I bring to-night a message from the great self-governing community which I have quitted. It is a message of affection for the mother country, and loyalty to the Empire which allows such wise discretion to its component parts. Gentlemen, I thank you for the honour you have done me to-night, the memory of which I shall cherish all my lifetime."

I had been interested in Lord Orville's speech, but fascinated by the skilful way in which he kept his cigar alight the whole time, seizing the opportunity of cheers or laughter to take a furtive whiff. On my remarking on it to Paget, he told me of a well known statesman who has been known to keep a cigar alight during a speech which occupied fully an hour.

Three more toasts followed, the Navy, Army, and the learned professions, responded to by an Admiral, a General and a Judge, and then, with a vote of thanks to the chairman, the proceedings terminated at about 11.15 p.m.

Paget. Sleepy, Tan Yin?

Self. Not a bit.

Paget. Then come along to my club for an hour or so.

There is no need to go to bed yet. I always begin to feel bright about this time of night.

CHAPTER V.

THE THEATRE

Just about luncheon time Paget rang me up on the telephone, and the conversation went much like this.

Voice. Hallo, Are you there? Is that Mr. Tan?

Self. Yes, who are you?

Voice. Paget. I have got.....

Silence

Paget. Is that you, Mr. Tan? They cut us off at the Exchange. Look here, I have got two tickets for "His Majesty's" to-night. Could you come with me?

Self. By Jove! I should be delighted. It is altogether too kind of you.

Paget. Not at all, not at all; am only too glad to do any thing for you. The play is "Julius Cæsar," and really not a bad production. We must be at the theatre by 8.30, which is rather a nuisance, as it cuts into one's dinner hour. We must dine earlier than usual to avoid rushing out from the very table.

Self. Won't you come and dine with me at my hotel, say 7 o'clock? Then we need have no hurry.

Paget. Thanks very much. I accept your invitation with pleasure. By the way, my seats are in the dress circle. So you must put on evening dress;

but a dinner jacket and black-tie will be enough.

Self. All right, much obliged for the tip.

Paget. Well, till to-night; good bye.

Self. Good bye.

Rings off

At twenty past eight precisely we finished our dinner and jumped into a hansom to drive to the theatre. I have already found that it is difficult to walk in London, chiefly on account of the many temptations to ride, either on the tube, the ubiquitous bus, or seductive hansom with its noiseless rubber-tyred wheels, and the cunning horse which dodges in and out of the traffic as if it enjoyed it. His Majesty's Theatre is a handsome white stone structure adjoining a fashionable restaurant. The cab drew up smartly in front of the Corinthian portico, and we stepped out, handed up the fare, and entered the theatre. Leaving our coats and hats in the cloak room, we ascended a wide and shallow staircase, which led us to a softly carpeted corridor of half moon shape, from which various curtained doors opened into a sloping gallery, fitted with comfortable arm chairs, each provided with an opera glass. We were shown to our seats by a female attendant dressed like a parlour maid.

Paget. (to attendant). Give me two programmes, please.

Attendant. Yes, Sir, 4d please.

Paget. It always goes against the grain with me to pay for one's programme in the theatre. A restaurant keeper might just as well demand 2d before he allowed you to look at his bill of fare.

Self. Does not the public protest?

Paget. O yes, people growl, but the managers are too strongly entrenched.

Self. Which are considered the best parts of the house?

Paget. The most expensive seats are those down in the auditorium near to the stage. They are known as stalls—a word strangely suggestive of the stable—and cost 10/6 each. Next comes the dress circle, where we are, which is, as you will see, the first balcony, price 7/6; then there is a balcony above us, where the price is 4/-; it is known as the upper circle. Above that again is the gallery, price 1/-. This last is the cheapest part of the house, and on account of its lofty position those who go there are called “the gods.” They are severe critics, I can tell you, and often make or mar a piece. One more division I have not mentioned is the pit, just behind the stalls, price 2/6. The pit has a clientèle all its own, mostly tradesmen and clerks. Many a young clerk prides himself on being a “pittite.”

Self. By the bye, you paid for the cab; I must share that with you.

Paget. Never mind, you can pay next time. It was only eighteenpence. You know you can't move a cab here under a shilling, but for that you can legally go two miles, and then you pay 6d for every additional mile. Nearly every one overpays the cabman a little, as the legal fare is

admitted to be too small. Hallo, there's the curtain going up.

The lights had been previously extinguished in the house, so the stage stood out in brilliantly lighted contrast. I was much struck with the beauty of the scenery, the back drop being a view of Rome, which brought the appearance of the old city before you very realistically. The stage was filled with "supers" representing the Roman crowd, and the confused murmurs and occasional snatches of conversation were well done. The audience was perfectly quiet so that it was easy to hear. The first entry of Cæsar in his festal robes was cleverly portrayed. The music stopped, and all were silent whenever he opened his mouth, and received his few words as oracles. The impression the great man made upon his contemporaries, and his easy confidence in himself, came home to me more than ever before. At the end of the act there was an interval of ten minutes, and we adjourned to the smoking room, where we sat down and lighted cigarettes.

Paget. What is it to be, Mr. Tan?

Self. "Withered murder with his stealthy pace—"

Paget. Why, whatever is the matter? Are you stage struck?

Self. Were not you talking about the play?

Paget. No, no, I was asking you what you would have to drink.

Self. "O what a fall was there!" My thoughts were in the theatre there with Cæsar. Drink? whisky and soda, please.

Paget. In my opinion the best scene in this play, as presented here, is that in the forum, after the murder of Cæsar. I shall be curious to have your criticism.

Self. How many first class theatres have you?

Paget. About twenty-five, I think, actually in town, not counting music halls, which, I confess, bore me to death. In the suburbs too theatres are springing up, and some have a very good reputation. It is not theatres we want, but actors.

Just as I was going to get some information out of Paget, an electric bell began to ring, and we hurried back to our seats for the second Act, in which we saw the winning over of Brutus and gradual unfolding of the plot. With the third Act the climax was reached, and Cæsar met his doom. I was interested to see that on the English stage the murder was performed without any visible signs of blood. On my remarking about this to Paget, he said.

Paget. Any horror of that sort on the stage is intensely distasteful to the British public who are willing to use their imagination to dispense with actual blood shed. Now then, attend carefully to this next scene and tell me if you don't think it is mightily well done.

I can honestly say that I sat spellbound during the forum scene, watching Brutus bring the crowd over to his side, and then Antony with his silver tongue gradually melting a hostile audience. The swaying jostling citizens were so lifelike that I felt very much like shouting with

them. When all was over the whole theatre burst into applause, and the curtain had to rise twice.

Self. I have seen Brutus and Antony and a Roman mob.

Paget. Say no more. That is sufficient criticism. It is simply delightful to take a man to the theatre, who is fresh and does not pour cold water on your enthusiasm with, "That fellow does act, my dear Sir! He is a mere piece of wood; now, if you could have seen old "so and so" thirty years ago, you might begin to talk about acting."

Self. I don't think I should want to see any more. It might dull the impression of that last scene.

Paget. All right, old chap, we will leave then, and go to the club for an hour or so.

Self. Remember, it is my turn to pay for the hansom.

Paget. Hansom! You extravagant beggar, do you live in hansoms? Let us walk to the club and have a chat there. It will take us only ten minutes.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

My good friend Paget has always been telling me that I ought to visit the British Museum, and I have been putting it off from day to day, with the aphorism "The proper study of mankind is man." Fortified with that, I have walked the parks and streets, engaged in the study, but, one wet day, the neglected museum came into my mind. "Better

late than never," thought I. "I will go to-day if I can find anybody to go with me." Canvassing my list of acquaintances I remembered a young fellow called Ward, who was in London doing some special research work. To him I dispatched a note.

Dear Ward:—

Can't you drop your work for a few hours, and give me your company to the British Museum? Do this, good fellow. I am sorry I can't offer you any more exciting treat; but anyway it will be a change from those musty folios, into which you are always digging.

Yours sincerely,

Tan Yin.

Within an hour Ward arrived.

Ward. Ah, you tempter! I was just sitting down to a good day's grind when your message came.

Self. You will be back in a few hours, all the fresher.

Ward. I very much doubt it. If there is one place in London more physically tiring than the Academy, that place is the British Museum. Still, I am in for it now. Let us proceed!

Self. I suppose that big classic building is the Museum.

Ward. Quite right. I always like its solid appearance: it is suggestive of British credit.

Self. What, with Consols at 87?

Ward. You have got me there all right. I withdraw what I have just said.

Self. Now, where shall we go?

Ward. Well, if I am to be showman, I may as well tell you that it is quite impossible to see the whole Museum at once. If you try to do that, you just wander through an endless succession of rooms, until you are ready to drop with fatigue, and at the end of it all you can't remember what you have seen.

Self. That is a pleasant prospect.

Ward. The best thing to do is to go to one department and see it properly. What is your pet fancy?

Self. Something old, hoary with age.

Ward. Come along to Egypt then. I don't know anything about it, but will try to hide my ignorance, which is a thing most of us spend our whole lives in doing.

Self. You are pretty successful.

Ward. Compliments, Mr. Tan Yin, are wasted on me. I have forgotten how to blush. I am digressing. Observe on the left a doorway labelled "Egypt."

Self. Is that one of the exhibits?

Ward. No, that is merely the portal, or entrance, to the department of Egyptology.

Self. I suppose you are quoting from the official guide?

Ward. O no, I don't have to depend on that.

Self. What is that enormous painted wooden box?

Ward. Is there no one I can ask? No help? Well, I must risk it. That, my dear pupil, is a sarcophagus, which contained the mummy of one of

the old Egyptian kings. There is His Majesty next door to the box. What would he have said when he sat upon his throne, had some prophet foretold that, in say 5,000 years, his body would become a public show for the benefit of a Chinese tourist and an irreverent historical student?

Self. I expect the prophet would have been sorry to prophesy in this way.

Ward. Very likely he would have been run in for *lèse majesté*.

Self. Just look at that tiny hand in this glass case.

Ward. That is about the most human thing in this whole vast museum. Just the little hand of a woman, who lived and loved 6,000 years ago. Look at the gold ring on her finger, perhaps given her by her old time lover. Try to imagine what that hand may have done, all 6,000 years ago. What letters it may have written, what delicate woman's work it may have done! All now crumbled to dust and ashes, but yet the hand remains—in a glass case in a London Museum—and the whirligig of time has brought her country under the dominion of the British.

Self. One might weave wonderful romances about it. Who knows but that it had held a dagger, and used it too?

Ward. We shall soon have a three volume novel, if we go on. We will kiss her hand in spirit and leave her.

Self. Have you ever studied hieroglyphics?

Ward. Not I. Life is too short, and I have taken on my shoulders as much as I can do, already. We have about half a dozen experts in London, who spend all their time deciphering inscriptions, but it is a branch of study that never appealed to me. Now here is a thing that does appeal to me, this little case full of wooden toys—jointed dolls, cats, a box of draughts, and a tiny go-cart. The Egyptians have always seemed such a mysterious people that it is refreshing to think that their children were much the same as any others, and wanted toys to play with.

Self. Yes, and probably broke them and cried until their parents bought them more, just as children do to-day.

Ward. I must say I do like these toys very much. The colossal Egyptian statues almost frighten me, and then on some of the tiny statuettes there is sometimes such a dreadful expression that one cannot bear to look at them. I remember one we used to have at home, when I was a youngster. It was only two inches and a half high the head no bigger than my little finger nail, and yet, there was an evil look indelibly stamped into the face, which I shall never forget. Now, these toys are a proof that even the Egyptians had the ordinary human feelings, and probably laughed sometimes.

Self. Surely this is not the only room devoted to Egypt?

Ward. No, there must be eight or ten. We will move on.

Can you ever work up any interest in the old pots and pans this room is filled with? I confess I can't unless like some of the Greek vases, they add beauty to age. These misshapen crocks have no charm for me, and I can't see in them the romance I do in the toys.

Self. They lack the personal note, of course, but can you see no romance in the dinners that may have been cooked in this pot?

Ward. Romance of below stairs, if you like. No, no, I am not to be seduced. But come along to the next room. There is something I want to show you there; some old household accounts kept on an earthenware tablet, the work, I presume, of some careful housewife, who kept house, perhaps in Thebes, thousands of years ago.

Self. Half a minute; are those ornaments there in that wall case?

Ward. Yes, ear-rings and necklaces. I can't say I admire them.

Self. I do like a museum to myself, don't you? If there is one thing I hate, it is a group of chattering visitors, with perhaps some would-be wiseacre offering explanations. Now here there is nobody.

Ward. That remark cuts both ways, does not it? I suppose you mean a sly dig at the British public for its neglect of opportunity, but you must remember

Egyptology is "caviare to the general." In the Greek and Roman rooms we should no doubt find plenty of people.

Self. I should have thought the English occupation of Egypt would have induced them to study it.

Ward. My dear boy, the English people are the most illogical in the world. The Constitution is a mass of illogicalities. Knowledge of hieroglyphics is no aid to administering Egypt according to British ideas.

Self. I notice sometimes you say "British" and sometimes "English." Why don't you stick to one of the two?

Ward. Well, I am an Englishman, and I am naturally inclined to talk about England and the English people, when I mean Great Britain and British. I am trying to break myself of it, as some, the Scotch for instance, strongly object to the use of the word England in that particular sense, and I want to live in peace with all men. Officially we never talk of anything but Great Britain and Ireland and "His Britannic Majesty," but, as you have observed, force of habit sometimes makes me use the other word.

Self. I see your point; and if I were a Scot, I think I should object too, considering the part they have had in building up the Empire.

Ward. Yes, and still have. Of the last four prime ministers, three have been Scots, and of the last three

Viceroy, two have come from the land of cakes. The Scotch cakes are only oat cakes; still they are very good, eaten hot, with butter.

Self. From mummies to oat cakes by way of hieroglyphics and the British Constitution is a pretty good turn to the conversation.

Ward. You remind me of my duty. I am not half instructing you. You see that gigantic head over there, carved from black basalt.

Self. Certainly, I can hardly help seeing it.

Ward. Know, then, that it represents Amenhotep II.

Self. Oh, indeed, and who may he have been?

Ward. I don't know who Amenhotep II. was? He was a great fighting king who reigned about 1500 B. C. Now who was Amenhotep II?

Self. Please, Sir, a warrior king who flourished about 1500 years before the Christian era.

Ward. Good boy, I will mark you A for that, and congratulate you on your pretty variation, but instead of "king" you might have said "monarch."

Self. Yes, quite so; I forgot that. Come and lunch with me, and you can talk about Egyptology, or politics, or your own "shop" just as you like.

Ward. Let us be off at once then.

CHAPTER VII.

A BALL

Mr. Tan Yin:

Mrs. Walter Paget

at Home

Monday July 10th, 9.30-2.30

R.S.V.P.

Dancing.

I found this card on my breakfast table this morning and sent an acceptance, writing my letter in the third person. At ten o'clock p.m. on the day mentioned, I arrived at the house in evening dress with white waistcoat, black silk socks, dancing pumps made of patent leather, and a pair of white kid gloves in my pocket. Taking off my hat and coat, I made my way up a staircase banked on each side with flowers, and at the top found my friend Paget and his wife receiving their guests. They both shook hands with me, and, after chatting a minute, I passed on into the drawing rooms turned into a ball room for the occasion by taking up the carpets and waxing the floor. A London drawing room is nearly always on the first floor, as, owing to the high price of land, the houses are narrow.

Getting into a recess, I watched the shifting scene, but was soon detected by Mrs. Paget, who had now entered the room.

Mrs. P. O this will never do, Mr. Tan Yin. Have not you got a programme?

Self. Yes, here it is; a footman gave it to me downstairs.

Mrs. P. Well, the first thing to do is to get it filled. If you don't be quick, none of the girls will have any dances left.

Self. But I don't know anyone here.

Mrs. P. That is soon remedied. One of my chief duties to-night is to introduce people to one another, so come along, and I will make you known to half a dozen charming girls.

I was as clay in the hands of the energetic Mrs. Paget who presently said: "Miss Harcastle, I want to introduce Mr. Tan to you, Miss Harcastle—Mr. Tan," "Miss Neville—Mr. Tan," and so on. Each lady bowed to me and I bowed in return, but all the while wondering how on earth I was going to remember them, and making desperate mental notes of their gowns, with the hope that it might prove of assistance. Very soon Mrs. Paget left me to attend to her duties, and I was left to struggle with mine. Screwing up my courage, I advanced to the first lady to whom I had been introduced.

Self. Can you spare me a waltz, Miss Harcastle?

Hard. With pleasure, but I am afraid it will be rather low-down. What do you say to No. 8 just after supper?

Self. Of course I shall take anything you give me, Miss Harcastle.

Two more men strolling up at this moment, I turned to Miss Neville.

Self. Will you give me the pleasure of dancing the first "lancers" with you?

Neville. I am very sorry I am engaged for the first, but you can have the second if you like.

Self. O thanks very much; I shall be delighted.

Neville. Is not this a beautiful floor, Mr. Tan, just like glass?

Self. To speak frankly, Miss Neville, I am very much afraid of that floor. It is so slippery that it may put me on my back.

Neville. Well, I hope you won't choose our "lancers" for that acrobatic feat.

Self. I will take good care not to.

Encouraged by my success, I was just about to go into action again, when I heard behind me "Good evening, Mr. Tan." Turning round, whom did I perceive but Miss Shewell, my old Liverpool dinner partner?

Self. Hallo, Miss Shewell, this is a piece of good fortune.

Shewell. The world is a small place, is not it, Mr. Tan? I am staying in town with an aunt of mine, who is chaperoning me this evening. We have just come.

Self. Then you are not engaged for the first dance. What is it? O, a "two step." Can I have it?

Shewell. Yes, of course, and as the band has struck up we might as well begin. What have you been doing with yourself since you left Liverpool? What have you seen?

Self. Miss Shewell, I have seen a murder.

Shewell. Good gracious! Where? How horrible!

Self. At His Majesty's theatre. It was a most cruel

Shewell. How dreadful! and yet I did not see anything in the papers. I wonder why they were not ringing with it.

Self. Yes, it takes place every night about the same time. There is no excuse for not referring to it in the papers.

Shewell. O I see; I forgot you were such an admirer of Shakespeare. But have not you done anything instructive? Remember I am an interested party, for I was your instructor once.

Self. And the best I have had in more senses than one. Well, I have been to the British Museum.

Shewell. A very dull place to go to.

Self. I have spent two or three hours at a club, and listened to the gossip of the members.

Shewell. Have you been any wiser for having been there? I have always wanted to know what men find to do at that mysterious "club," besides billiards and cards.

Self. My mouth is sealed, Miss Shewell. Club gossip is sacred to men.

Shewell. I don't suppose it is worth hearing. Don't you think we might reverse now.

Self. You have a beautiful step, Miss Shewell, and I wish this dance could last for an hour.

Shewell. Don't you know that it is unlucky to say such things? The music will probably stop at once. There! it has.

Self. How stupid of me. May I take you to your aunt now?

Shewell. Please. There she is talking to that old white haired gentleman.

Self. Thank you so much for the dance. Can you not spare me another?

Shewell. No, but you may take me down to supper, and I will see whether you have profited by my instruction or not. Aunt Mary, let me introduce Mr. Tan. Mr. Tan—my aunt, Mrs. Brownsword.

Brownsword. Good evening, Mr. Tan, my niece has spoken of you already.

Shewell. There is Percy Talbot signalling to me for this next dance.

Mrs. B. Good bye, my dear. I shall be here when you want me.

Self. May I sit down here?

Mrs. B. Please do, but are not you going to dance?

Self. Not unless you will favour me with your hand.

Mrs. B. Thank you, my dancing days are over now, and I only come out as a chaperone, and to see the young folks enjoy themselves. I should not allow you to sit here, if it were not that there seem to be no wall flowers to-night.

Self. What kind of flowers are they?

Mrs. B. It is only a name we give to girls who have no partners for a dance, and have to sit round the walls and look on.

Self. Thinking, I fear, unkind thoughts of the opposite sex.

After this conversation I had a dance with Miss Neville who was of a reticent disposition. This was followed by a supper to which Miss Shewell invited me. Just as the supper was over the band began playing again, reminding both Miss Shewell and myself that we are engaged for this dance. I found Miss Hardcastle with a rather stormy look on her face, as, of course, I ought to have been there when the music began.

Self. I am awfully sorry, but I was down in the supper room, and the band took me by surprise.

Hardcastle. I know the supper room has attractions for men.

Self. Yes, we are a greedy lot, but I must beg you pardon.

Miss H. I was only joking, Mr. Tan. Is this your first dance in England?

Self. Yes, but I hope it won't be the last. I enjoy these dances immensely.

Miss H. I am afraid there won't be many more; it is getting too hot for dancing, and lying in a punt on the river is more delightful.

Self. Are you fond of the river?

Miss H. Yes, I love it, and go down twice every week with a ladies' rowing club to which I belong. We

have two eight oared boats with outriggers and sliding seats, and work hard, I can tell you. Our captain is a regular martinet.

Self. And yet you spoke of lying in a punt.

Miss H. That is for Sunday afternoon. We must rest sometimes.

Self. Perhaps you would like to rest now, as the music has stopped.

Miss H. Yes, I should like to sit down; you might take me to my mother over there.

Self. Good night, Miss Hardeastle, and thank you very much.

Miss H. Good night, don't be late next time!

This was my last dance, and thanking Mrs. Paget warmly for her hospitality, I drove home. Three days later I left two cards at the house, and the account could be considered closed.

CHAPTER VIII.

PARLIAMENT

"How does one get admittance to hear a debate in the House of Commons?" I asked a friend the other day. He replied that an order from a member was necessary, and this would admit one to the "strangers' gallery." "I will get you one if you like," he added. I eagerly accepted his courtesy, and, armed with the card, presented myself in the lobby of the House of Commons, after first spending a few minutes in inspecting Westminster Hall, the scene of so many famous state trials in the days gone by.

The lobby, which is really the antechamber to the house, is a lofty octagonal room with a black and white marble floor, and was full of visitors, some of whom had come on business, and others merely out of curiosity, and in the hope of seeing some of the men with whose names the papers are most busy.

I showed my card to a friendly policeman, and he piloted me through a narrow wicket, and thence up a stone staircase into the gallery, which faces the Speaker's chair, and has a full view of both the Government and Opposition front benches.

The Speaker—an imposing figure in knee breeches, black silk stockings, silver buckled shoes, black gown and full bottomed wig—was already established in his lofty seat surmounted by a canopy bearing the royal arms. Turning to a man sitting near to me, I said in my ordinary tone.

Self. Why, where are all the members?

X. Hush, you must only speak in subdued tones. You see it is early yet, and only those members who have questions to ask of ministers are in their places.

Self. Please show me the ministers.

X. There are only two of them in the house yet, the Secretary of State for War, and the Home Secretary. The one now on his feet, reading from a paper, is the Home Secretary, and he is giving a reply to a question for which he has had previous notice, and got his answer prepared.

Self. I notice the ministers sit on the right of the Speaker.

X. Yes, the Government and their supporters to the right, and the Opposition to the left. Ministers always occupy the front bench on the right, and the leaders of the Opposition the front bench on the left.

Self. What is the object of these questions?

X. Experience has shown that it is a very practical method of extracting information and opinions from the Government, but, of course, when public interest forbids, no answers are given. This most frequently happens in the case of questions addressed to the minister for foreign affairs.

Self. Does any one minister get more questioned than his colleagues?

X. It naturally depends on what is the burning question of the day.

Self. I don't suppose that position is a bed of roses. Why has the Speaker risen to his feet?

X. Because questions are now over, and he is giving notice that the House will proceed to the orders of the day, that is the business before them, which is, in this case, to continue the debate on the second reading of the English Small Holdings Bill.

Immediately the Speaker resumed his seat three or four members sprang up and looked towards him. With a nod of his head he chose one, who began to speak, while the others sat down again.

X. That is the process known as "catching the Speaker's eye."

Self. It would not do to have a shortsighted man in the chair, would it? Who is that speaking?

X. Only a private member. Big-wigs like ministers and ex-ministers don't usually rise till after dinner, when the House is much fuller. As they don't adjourn till twelve midnight, that gives them plenty of time.

I was not much interested in the speech, but noticed the speaker never mentioned any fellow member by name, but as "the honourable member for so and so," "the Right Honourable Gentleman, the President of the Board of Education," and so on.

Self. What does "Right Honourable" mean?

X. It is the style of a member of the Privy Council, to which eminent men are appointed from time to time, and ministers as a matter of course. If you listen to the speech, you will also probably notice that lawyers are addressed as "honourable and learned," and members of the fighting services as "honourable and gallant."

Self. All in the pink of courtesy, is not it?

X. Rather; there are very rigid rules as to what is, or is not parliamentary language, and the Speaker upholds the decorum of debate with the utmost strictness.

Self. What is that curious line drawn on the floor, about two feet in front of the benches which are level with it?

X. That question is very pat, considering what we were talking of. It is a reminiscence of the earlier days, when tempers were hot, duels frequent, and every gentleman wore a sword, even in the House of Commons. No member, when speaking, was permitted to step over that line, and thereby bring himself within sword thrust of his opponent on the opposite bench. Of course, the line is only an interesting survival now, which I for one should be sorry to see done away with, if only for the sake of historical continuity.

Self. I should have that feeling very strongly were I a member. The idea of belonging to a deliberative assembly with a history of something like 1400 years would fill me with pride.

X. At the bottom of his heart every member to-day has that feeling. We may sometimes laugh at our Parliament, and call it a talking shop, but we are really immensely proud of it and its history, and its membership is one of the highest honours which we can attain.

Self. Are all members rich men?

X. Well, undoubtedly the greater number of them come from the well-to-do classes. On the other hand, wealth is no key to membership, and there is a large minority of poor men in the house.

Self. How are they received by their fellow members?

X. My dear Sir, the House of Commons is totally indifferent to outside reputations or great fortunes. Local magnates, manufacturers whose chimneys blacken a whole countryside, merchants whose ships plough all seas, speculators in cotton and sugar, mayors whose portraits adorn town halls, and whose names are household words in their own district, lawyers so eminent that they will not open their mouths in court for less than a hundred guineas, need not hope to be received by the House of Commons otherwise than with languid indifference. If they prove to be bores, so much the worse; if they do not prove to be bores, so much the better.

Self. What do members do when a man bores them?

X. Just get up and leave the House, no matter who he is. I don't think there ever was an assembly so free from all taint of mercenariness as the House of Commons. It does not care a snap of the finger whether the income of a new member is £100,000 a year, or £3 a week—whether his father was a duke, or a blacksmith. Its only concern with him is that if he has anything to say he may say it, and that if he has nothing to say, he will say nothing.

Self. An admirable sermon. But what was that bell for, and why are all the members streaming back into the house?

X. That was the bell for a division. Three minutes after the bell has gone the doors of the House are shut, and no one who is not inside can register his vote.

Self. How do they vote?

X. By passing in single file through the "Aye" or "No" lobby as the case may be, where their names are pricked off on a list. As they pass through the lobby they return to the House, and when all have returned, the result is announced by the tellers.

Self. How long does it take?

X. About 8 minutes. See, everybody is back now and the result will be announced at once.

* * *

After announcement of the figures, which were received with cheers and counter cheers, an insignificant looking figure rose to address the house, and I was astonished to find that every one settled down to listen, and the chamber rapidly filled up. The speech quickly aroused the excitement of both parties. The orator's supporters encouraged him with frequent cries of "hear, hear," which always evoked counter demonstrations from the other side. During these scenes the speaker paused, with his hands on his hips, and a quizzical smile on his face, and then by a happy piece of wit dissolved the whole house in laughter.

Self. A clever speaker that.

X. Rather. No one knows better what he is about.

As a rule, he keeps his audience alert by the barbed

arrows of his wit, but I have seen the entire assembly rise to their feet and remove their hats when he has touched a chord that stirred them deeply.

Self. Yes, I noticed every one wore a hat, except of course the Speaker. Why is that?

X. It is not compulsory, but, I presume, merely a survival of the time when men always wore their hats, indoors as much as out. Sam Pepys in his diary ascribes a cold, from which he was suffering, to his having very rashly dined without a hat.

At this moment we were interrupted by loud cries of "order, order" from the floor of the House.

Self. What is the matter now?

X. I presume the orator has said something which his opponents consider outside the limits of parliamentary speech.

Self. What will happen then?

X. He will probably withdraw, but if not, some one will appeal to the Speaker for a decision as to whether the language be parliamentary or not. If the Speaker considers the limits exceeded, he will call upon the member to withdraw. Should any member refuse to obey the Speaker's ruling, he has to leave the House.

Self. What is that gallery high up and opposite to us, with the gilded lattice work before it? I have been puzzling over it for some time.

X. That is the ladies' gallery. The grille, I suppose, saves the members from being diverted from the business in hand by the charms of the opposite sex.

Self. Do many ladies go?

X. O yes, the gallery is generally full. Mrs. Gladstone used to attend regularly whenever her husband was to make an important speech.

Self. I presume the Speaker is an important person.

X. I should think so. He is the first Commoner in the realm, has a fine official house containing 60 rooms in the Palace of Westminster, a good salary, and on retirement is always pensioned and raised to the peerage as a Viscount. There are two ex-speakers now living. The life is such an exhausting one that no one can stand it for very long.

Self. Where is the press gallery?

X. Opposite you, underneath the ladies' gallery. The front half of our gallery is reserved for peers, and you may often see the Prince of Wales there occupying the centre seat. He has no standing in the House of Commons, but is a member of the House of Lords by virtue of being Duke of Cornwall. Of course he never votes on any party question.

Self. Your second chamber is a hereditary one, is not it?

X. Yes, all English peers are members, and a certain number of Scotch and Irish peers elected for the purpose by their fellows.

Self. What about the sons of peers?

X. O they are only commoners, and have this advantage over their fathers, that they may enter the lower house if they can find a constituency to return them. You ought to visit the House of Lords some time. It is a very gorgeous place, and consequently known as "the gilded chamber."

Self. Do you often come to this gallery?

X. I do whenever I can get time. It may seem a strange form of amusement, but, however dull the debate, I can generally get myself interested in it.

Self. I hope then it won't shock you if I confess I have had about enough.

X. Not a bit. What is one man's meat is another man's poison. I shall hang on, as the prime minister is expected to wind up the debate, and he is always worth listening to.

Self. Is he a great orator then?

X. Not in the sense that Gladstone and Pitt were. But he is rich in a quality which, of all others, Englishmen like most.

Self. And that is?

X. Common sense. Then too he has a saving sense of humour.

Self. And yet I am told a witty man in the House of Commons is often distrusted.

X. For the simple reason that men sometimes become slaves to their wit, and can never resist scoring with it even if it be bad tactics; but that is where the premier's common sense helps him.

Self. It is a fearful thing, too, to have the reputation of a wit, because everybody expects you to say something witty every time you open your mouth, and if you don't, sets you down as much overrated.

X. I have nothing to fear in that respect: my sense of humour is merely appreciative.

Self. That endears you to the wits, does it not? Where would a wit be without his audience, and what would be the good of an audience, if it were wooden-headed and unable to see a joke?

X. There is a niche for everybody somewhere, and those who cannot appreciate humour serve to remind the wits that even they have fields yet to conquer.

Self. Meantime I shall go home and turn in, and leave the wits and the dullards to their own devices. Good night; thanks for all you have told me.

X. O, that is all right. I have the bad habit of seeking to air my knowledge now and then. Good night.

CHAPTER IX.

TOWN AND GOWN

I have just returned from a long day in Oxford, and in spite of being almost tired out, am determined to record my impressions whilst they are fresh. I was lucky enough to persuade Ward to go with me. I say "lucky" because Ward is only just "down" and has many friends still in

residence. On the journey down I pumped my companion and acquired a good deal of information. My recollections of the conversation are something like this.

Self. How many students are there in the University?

Ward. Of undergraduates there are about 3,600, divided among some 24 colleges. Christ Church has the largest number, 300 or so; then come New College and Balliol College.

Self. Do all the men live in the Colleges?

Ward. As many as can, but there is not room for all, and the overplus has to live in licensed lodgings in the town.

Self. What hold does the College have over them then?

Ward. Well, their tutor is a member of the College, and they have to dine in the hall so many days in the term, and the esprit de corps feeling in every College is very strong.

Self. As regards the rooms in College, is it a case of first come, first served?

Ward. Not altogether. No one can "keep" in college more than two years, unless he is a scholar, but has to make room for new comers.

Self. I see. I wonder which is the cheapest, living in or living out?

Ward. O, living out undoubtedly.

Self. Now between you and me, what does it cost a young fellow to live at Oxford and do as others do?

Ward. With care he could manage on £150 per annum, and naturally many live on less. With £200 he should be quite comfortable.

Self. What do the expenditures consist of?

Ward. College fees, "battels" or board and lodging charge, books, subscriptions to this, that and the other society, and in a thousand unconsidered trifles.

Self. How did you spend the day, when you were still an undergraduate?

Ward. Breakfasted between 8 and 9 a.m., spent the morning attending lectures and the afternoon on the river, or playing cricket or football according to the season, dined at 7.30, and thereafter worked in my room until one or two a.m.

Self. How many hours of lectures do you attend in a week?

Ward. Ten to fifteen, but during the last year I attended no lectures at all, for I was doing independent research work.

Self. Where shall we go when we first arrive?

Ward. We had better walk down the High Street as far as Magdalen College, where a friend of mine is expecting us to luncheon. Oxonians are of the opinion that there is no street in the world which can compare with "the High," and as a matter of fact they are not far wrong. The street is broad, curves a little, and is lined on each side with venerable college buildings. I

know of no spot so rich in historical associations, so perfect architecturally, so ancient, and yet so perennially young.

Self. Bravo, Ward! I suppose I dare not even whisper the word Cambridge.

Ward. Certainly, if you wish. Cambridge is all right as far as it goes, but it cannot hold a candle to Oxford, for sheer beauty.

Self. O, the pride of these Oxonians!

Ward. Just pride, my boy, just pride. If you don't see very good reason for it by to-night, I shall be much surprised. But here we are, so jump out.

Self. The first view is not inspiring.

Ward. No, the station approach is very bad; you must contain your soul in patience a little longer.

Self. I will follow the advice of Brutus and "be patient till the last."

Ward. You are so fond of quoting Shakespeare. Now then, what do you think of that?

Self. O, it is fine. Is it the High Street?

Ward. No, the Broad. There on your left is Balliol College, founded in 1262, and the oldest but one in the University. Next door to it is Trinity. On the right hand side you can see Exeter, and the Sheldonian. We will just cut through here in order to pass the University

library, "the Bodleian," so called because founded by Sir Thomas Bodley in 1597.

Self. I suppose it is a pretty big collection.

Ward. Not far off 1,500,000 MSS and printed books, and then, of course, it is constantly growing, as the Bodleian has a right to a copy of every book published in the United Kingdom.

Self. What a dreadful lot of rubbish they must get. How do they deal with it?

Ward. Don't ask me. That is one of the secrets of the librarian. Here is the High Street at last. Let us stop here by the porch of St. Mary's for a moment.

Self. And a beautiful porch it is. Those twisted pillars are very effective. Is this the University Church?

Ward. Yes, where Newman used to be rector. On the other side of the street are "the Schools," the dreadful torture house where all students must attend, at least twice during their college careers, for examination. I have no doubt you know what it is to be stretched on the rack of an examination, both written and viva voce.

Self. Do I not! But I always had the happy knack of showing up well in examinations.

Ward. Yes, it is a very curious thing how some men, who are really very good students, never put their best foot foremost in "the Schools," and others, not nearly so well read, make a better show.

Self. And yet it does not seem possible to devise any more satisfactory system. What is this place next door to the Church?

Ward. Queen's College; it has a fine open court, has not it? Do you see that great tower over there? It is a part of Christ Church, known as Tom Tower, and contains a famous bell.

Self. Did not you say Christ Church was the biggest college?

Ward. Yes, and it has the reputation of attracting what are known in Oxford slang as "bloods," that is, young fellows with plenty of money, who spend it freely. A great many of the youthful scions of the aristocracy go up to Christ Church. The college was founded by Cardinal Wolsey, Henry the Eighth's minister, and its badge is a Cardinal's hat in remembrance of "the pious founder." Let us move on.

Self. It appears to be the fashion among the students to go hatless, except for such as are in cap and gown, who, I presume, are fresh from the lecture rooms. Why do they wear gowns of different lengths?

Ward. The longer gown denotes that its wearer is a scholar of his college, in other words, the holder of an open scholarship. That tower in the distance at the end of the street is Magdalen tower, the bell tower of the college where we are going to lunch, which reminds me that we shall have to hurry up.

We accordingly hastened down the street, turned into Magdalen College, crossed a lawn like green velvet, passed through several ancient gateways, and finally knocked at an old oak door, studded with nails, and black with age. It was open by a fresh looking young fellow of about twenty, wearing a Norfolk jacket, and smoking a briar pipe. Immediately we had entered he closed the door, which he informed me was known as sporting one's oak, and led us through an inner door into his rooms, which consisted of sitting room and bedroom opening one out of the other. The sitting room was about 16 feet square, panelled up to the ceiling with oak, and furnished with two wicker arm chairs, four or five plain chairs, a table, bookcase, lamp and a large number of pipes. The bedroom was considerably smaller, and seemed to contain nothing but a bed, a chest of drawers, a wash hand stand and a tin bath. The two windows in the sitting room opened on pretty park with deer grazing in it, and charged with an atmosphere of scholastic quiet.

Self. You are pretty snug here, Mr. Gill.

Gill. Yes, I am lucky to have these rooms. They are the best situated set in the College, and the quietest.

Self. This is where you work then?

Gill. Yes, Mr. Tan, this is the scene of my labours; but sit down and have some luncheon. It is only a cold one, but, if you are ready, I will ring for my scout and tell him to get the beer.

Self. Please do, but what is your scout?

Gill. My servant; that is to say the man who attends to the occupants of about six sets of rooms. Here he is. Tom, get three pints of "bitter" from the buttery.

Ward. What have you been going in for this term, Gill?

Gill. I rowed in the boat for a bit, but lately I have been putting in a lot of time at the nets, varied with an occasional afternoon's punting on the Cher. I am afraid this lunch is rather a poor spread, Mr. Tan, but if you could stay overnight and come to me at 8.30 to-morrow morning, I could show you what a real Oxford breakfast is like. That is the meal on which we fellows pride ourselves.

Self. I only wish I could, but I am bound to go back to town tonight, so can only offer the will for the deed. What beautiful silver mugs these are. Are they your own property?

Gill. I only wish they were, but I can't lay claim to them. They are part of the College plate, of which Magdalen has a pretty good collection. Let me give you some more tongue.

Self. Thanks, I should like just one more slice. What are you going to show me this afternoon, Ward?

Ward. I thought of following the Cher until it joins the Isis, spending half an hour or so by the river, and then finishing up with St. John's Gardens. What do you say, Gill?

Gill. It seems all right. After you have finished with St. John's you might go to the five o'clock service in our chapel. We have a very famous choir, Mr. Tan, for which we maintain a special school, and their singing is well worth hearing.

Self. Do s every college have its chapel?

Ward. Yes, and every undergraduate has to make a certain number of attendances in a term, unless he pleads conscientious objection. There are two services a day in each chapel.

Self. I should like to go while I am here, though I am really no judge of music.

Ward. All right, we will fix that, and now, if you have quite finished, we had better start.

Self. I am ready. I hope you are coming with us, Mr. Gill.

Gill. I intend to give myself that pleasure.

Self. By the way, Ward, what were those societies, to which you told me an undergraduate was expected to subscribe?

Ward. The head and forefront of them is the Union, a debating society with library and reading room attached. The debates are carried on under strict parliamentary rules, and the standard of speaking is very high. Politics form the chief subject of debate, and the Union is looked upon as a great training ground for budding statesmen. Not a few of our leading political men have been presidents of the Union either at

Oxford or Cambridge, practically the most honourable post a student can fill. The other things that claim subscriptions are cricket, football, tennis and boating clubs and so forth.

Whilst I was acquiring this information we were passing through the street now filled with flanneled men, some carrying tennis rackets, some bound for the river, some on bicycles, some on foot, but one and all bent on some form of exercise.

The Cherwell, which is a narrow tributary of the Isis, was full of punts, a species of flat bottomed square ended boat propelled by a pole. In most of the punts there were two men, one doing the work, and the other reclining on cushions. Occasionally a canoe came paddling by, seeking for a shady nook, but the Cherwell is the punter's paradise.

Passing by the back of Merton College, which nestles behind great ivy covered walls, we reached the bank of Isis, which presented a very striking sight. Drawn up in a long line by the bank were the house boats belonging to the various colleges, each decorated in appropriate colours. On race days the boats are used to entertain guests, and at other times as places to change and bathe in.

The river was alive with craft of every description. Here a single oared skiff shooting ahead at a wonderful speed, there a pair of freshmen being "tubbed," that is coached in a pair oared boat by an experienced hand. Here a double sculling boat, and there a college eight resting

on their oars and listening to a very frank lecture on their shortcomings from a "coach" on the bank, who followed their boat on a horse. I was much amused by the openness of his criticisms, of which he made personal application with a "Now you, Number so and so," and questioned whether I personally could have listened unmoved to his biting tongue. We followed the river bank as far as the University Boat House, passing on our way a great many cricket fields and tennis courts belonging to various colleges, and then turned back and found our way to St. John's gardens, which were indeed very lovely places to visit.

Self. How do you manage to get your grass in such perfect condition?

Ward. That is just the question put to one of the gardeners here by an inquisitive visitor. The old gardener replied that it was easy enough "We cuts it and we rolls it, we rolls it and we cuts it—for five hundred years."

Self. I see, it is just a question of time.

Ward. Quite so, but to be honest, of climate also. The most beautiful grass in the world is in Ireland, where there is an immense quantity of rain. That is why Ireland is called the Emerald Isle.

Self. I seem to have heard some time, that every year they act a play out of doors in this garden. Is it true?

Ward. Yes, they often perform one of Shakespeare's pastoral plays, such as "As you like it," and a very pretty sight it is.

Self. For the audience doubtless, but I wonder what the actors think; speaking in the open air is not the acme of pleasure.

Ward. No, I dare say they prefer a stuffy theatre. I am afraid we shall have to tear ourselves away if we are to get to Magdalen Chapel in time for the service.

We arrived just in time to see the choir file in. It was mostly composed of boys of from 9 to 15, habited in snow white surplices, worn over an under garment of black. When they began to sing, I was raised into the seventh heaven. The voices of the boys seemed pure as crystal and true as silver bells. The climax was put on my enjoyment in the anthem, where there was a solo part taken by a boy of about 12. His voice went soaring up and up as if it would never stop, and seemed to fill the vaulted roof of the chapel with the exquisite melody.

After the service, which lasted about half an hour, we made our way to the station and took our seats in the train.

Self. That has been a splendid day, but now I want to know something about the finances of the University. Does it get any Government grant?

Ward. Not a half-penny. Apart from students' fees, all its income comes from endowments, and some colleges are much richer than others.

Self. Have they got enough money?

Ward. Did you ever hear of a University that could not spend more than it has? Still, I am sorry to say Oxford is really hard up, and the Chancellor is making a public appeal for funds.

Self. How do the students hit it off with the town's folk?

Ward. Much better than they used to. At one time what was known as a "Town and Gown Row" was very frequent, but now it is practically unknown.

Self. Besides the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge, what others have you?

Ward. In England: London, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool? Birmingham, Durham, Leeds and Nottingham; in Scotland: Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen; in Wales: Bangor, Cardiff, and Aberystwyth; and in Ireland: Dublin.

Self. Are they less expensive than Oxford and Cambridge?

Ward. Yes, considerably, and very good work they do. They specialise to a certain extent. Thus Durham attracts mining students, Manchester cotton spinners, and Edinburgh is famous the world over for its medical school.

Self. And yet I suppose none of them cast the spell that Oxford and Cambridge do?

Ward. It is hardly possible. The students do not live in College, but scattered about a large town, and as far as the English universities go, there is no feeling of historical continuity. When you go to Cambridge, you feel that here Sir Isaac New-

ton studied, and here came the precocious youth Francis Bacon. If you go to Oxford, you feel the spirit of Addison or Newman floating over the place; but in the newer universities there can be none of these things.

Self. Time will change all that.

Ward. Yes, and meantime time has brought us to Paddington again, where I must say good bye as I have a dinner engagement at 8 o'clock.

Self. Just one thing more. At what age do you go to the universities?

Ward. Usually when one is 18 or so, and the course lasts 3 or 4 years.

Self. Thanks very much. That is all I wanted to know. Good bye.

CHAPTER X.

HOME LIFE

7 Belgrave Gardens,

Hampstead, London, N. W.,

July 26, 1907.

My dear Father:

I have been spending a couple of days in what I think is a typical middle class English home. The father of the

family, Renshaw by name, is a City man of about forty years of age. His wife, whom he always addresses by her Christian name of Mary, is five years younger, but looks considerably more his junior. The children are five in number, three boys and two girls. Their ages range from fifteen to six, and their names are Charlie, Jack and Arthur, Betty and Isopel (known for short as Bell). The house contains in the basement kitchens and a large school play room for the youngsters; on the ground floor are found the hall, dining room and drawing room, and a small room where Mrs. Renshaw has her writing table, and Mr. Renshaw smokes in the evening. The latter contains also the family collection of books, though, as a matter of fact, books are scattered over the whole house in a most delightful manner, and, in addition, each of the children has a little book case.

On the first floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom. One of the bedrooms is occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw, one is the spare room for guests, and the third is filled by the girls and their nurse. On the second floor are two bedrooms used by the boys, also a range of linen closets warmed with steam pipes, and higher than that, on the third floor are the servants' bedrooms, and the box room.

The household staff consists of three servants, cook, house-parlour maid and nurse, all women, and every morning before breakfast a boy comes to clean the boots and knives, carry up hot water and so on. He is known as the boot boy, and leaves as soon as breakfast is over. You may be interested in the servants' wages. The cook

gets £20 a year, the house maid and nurse each £18, and in addition they live at the expense of their employers, which may be reckoned at another £20 a year for each one. The boot boy gets 2/- a week, and his breakfast. The garden is only a small narrow piece, not of much use for children to play in, but Renshaw, to his own inordinate pride, raises pretty good roses there, and as the house is situated near Hampstead Heath, the children can go there as much as they like.

Finally the house is semi-detached, built of red brick, and the rent, Renshaw tells me, is £105 per annum, payable in quarterly instalments. Rates come to about £40 a year more, and in addition the tenant is responsible for internal repairs, the landlord looking after the fabric only.

It is almost impossible to get a house in London on a yearly agreement, unless you take it furnished, and Renshaw holds his on a five years lease.

There, now you know as much as I do, and, at any rate, I hope you have some idea of the place I am in. I write this in my bedroom, which contains a writing table supplied with paper, pens and ink, and, by a refinement of courtesy, stamps.

I arrived late the night before last, and so the children were all in bed, whither I myself shortly retired, requesting to be called at seven o'clock, breakfast being at eight.

I found a jug of hot water in the bedroom, wherewith to perform my nightly ablutions, and after that ceremony, I slipped in between the sheets, and slept the sleep of the

just until 7 o'clock next morning, when I was awakened by the maid pulling up the blinds, and letting in a flood of sunshine. She brought a can of hot water for shaving purposes, and drawing a large enameled tin bath from under the bed, asked me whether I liked my bath hot or cold. I compromised on a lukewarm one, as I have not yet accustomed myself to the ice cold baths the English take in the mornings. The maid filled the bath in accordance with my wishes, laid out the big towel, and retired, leaving me to my own devices. I jumped up, bathed, shaved, dressed, and put on my boots, which I found beautifully polished outside the bedroom door, and then descended to the dining room, where I found the family assembled. I shook hands first with Mrs. Renshaw, who enquired how I had slept, and then with Renshaw, who called up the children and introduced them one by one. I shook hands with them all, except the youngest, Bell, who held up her cheek to be kissed.

At breakfast, Renshaw sat at one end of a long table covered with a white cloth, behind a large dish of fried bacon and eggs, from which he proceeded to fill a pile of hot plates, giving one to each child. Mrs. Renshaw at the other end of the table had charge of the coffee pot from which she poured the hot beverage into large cups of white china. Which were then passed down the table. In order to make myself useful I cut the bread, which Charlie informed me was usually his job.

A sample of the breakfast table conversation may amuse you.

Mrs. R. (addressing *Renshaw*). Tom, you have given Bell too much bacon; please take some of it back.

Bell. O mother, I can eat it.

Mrs. R. I daresay you can, my dear, but it would not be good for you.

Charlie. May I go to school in my tennis shoes to-day, mother?

Mrs. R. No, Charlie, you must put on your boots. Jack, what a dreadfully dirty collar you have got on! Where did you get it?

Jack. I could not find any clean ones, mother. I think somebody must have hidden them.

Mrs. R. I think you did not look very hard. Run upstairs after breakfast, and put on a clean one, there is a good boy.

Mr. R. Are you ready for another cup of coffee, Mr. Tan? Betty, jump down and put Mr. Tan's plate on the sideboard. Arthur, pass the butter and the marmalade.

Arthur. May I have some more bacon, mother? I only had a very little piece.

Mrs. R. If you have got any to spare, Tom, give him a little more. Pass up your plate, Arthur.

Mr. R. Charlie is the cricketer of the family. How many runs did you get yesterday, sonny?

Charlie. Only twenty, but I will have that half crown yet.

Mr. R. I promised him 2/6 the first time he made 50 runs, and he lives in perpetual hopes of obtaining it.

Mrs. R. Now then children, be quick. It is time you started for school. Have you got all your books?

Where are your gloves, Betty? In your pocket?

Put them on then.

Arthur. O mother, I can't find my cap, and I know I left it here last night. What shall I do?

Mrs. R. Look behind the hat stand; it has probably fallen down. Now, chicks, you really must be off, or you will be late. Run along and don't stop to look in the shop windows.

As soon as the children were fairly off the premises, Renshaw himself left to catch his train for the City, whence he does not return until seven o'clock in the evening. Before going he advised me to sit in the morning room, where I should find tobacco and books to while away the time until luncheon at one o'clock, after which hour Mrs. Renshaw would be free from the household duties, on which she generally spent the morning.

I adopted his suggestion and passed the time there very pleasantly over some bound volumes of *Punch*, Mrs. Renshaw occasionally looking in to see how I was getting on.

At about a quarter to one a clatter of boots on the tiled hall, and a throwing down of books announced the return of the children. They ran upstairs to wash their hands, and then the sound of the gong summoned us to the dining room. This meal, which was the children's dinner, consisted of a hot roast leg of mutton with potatoes and cauliflower, and for the second course a raspberry tart. The children drank nothing but cold water, but there was claret for Mrs. Renshaw and me. Mrs. Renshaw carved

the mutton, and I helped the tart, while the maid passed the vegetables round for each person to help themselves. The conversation at table was mainly concerned with the children's doings at school, and I am afraid I can't remember any details. The boys have to go to school again in the afternoon from half past two to half past four, but the girls do not, and Mrs. Renshaw suggested they should show me something of Hampstead as she herself was obliged to pay some calls that afternoon. I accepted the offer gladly and we sallied gayly out, the girls dressed in shady white hats, loose white cotton frocks, fawn coloured stockings and tan shoes, while I, to do proper honour to the occasion, had donned a light grey suit, new straw hat, and lavender coloured necktie.

At the first confectioner's shop I called a halt to buy some chocolates, with which we afterwards filled in the gaps in the conversation.

I learned a good deal about their schools, and was told that the boys go to an establishment with about 150 scholars. It is a private school, and offers preparatory courses for the large public schools, such as Eton, Harrow, Winchester and Rugby. The hours are from 9.30 to 12.30, and from 2.30 to 4.30; and, in addition, the boys have home work to do in the evening, which takes them about two hours. Twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, they get half holidays, that is to say there is no school in the afternoon, but all the boys are expected on those days to join in the school sports, cricket, football or hockey according to the season. The highest form is the sixth,

and the lowest the first, and removes are made at the beginning of every term. Charlie is in the fifth form and is going away to school next year.

Bell said the masters are very severe, always address the boys by their surnames, and wear cap and gown, and Betty added that they sometimes caned the boys, though I gathered that the usual form of punishment is the writing out of poetry, known as "lines," or detention after school hours. I enquired how the masters distinguished between boys of the same name, and was told they were denominated major, minor, tertius and so on, according to their ages. Thus, Charlie is Renshaw major, and Arthur, Renshaw tertius. It appears that the British school boy has an invincible repugnance to allowing his fellows to know his Christian name and does his best to keep it secret.

In the girls' school the forms are divided in the same way, and there is a kindergarten attached. The teachers are all women, and of course there is no corporal punishment. Although I told you the girls do not go in the afternoon, they have home lessons to do, which take about an hour and a half. There is a tennis and hockey club and also a gymnasium, where twice a week the girls are drilled. You will be surprised to hear that the school is run by a limited company—the Girls Public Day School Co.—which pays a dividend of about 4%, and has schools in all the large London suburbs and some provincial towns also. On our return home at 5 o'clock we found the boys just come in, and, as Mrs. Renshaw had not yet returned, the children

invited me to join their tea, which consisted of tea and milk, plenty of thick bread and butter, jam and plum cake. The nurse poured out, and a very jolly meal it was. Immediately it was over, the table was cleared, and the children sat down to their home work, Charlie to a piece of Latin prose. Jack and Arthur to Cæsar, and Betty to a French exercise. Bell being in the kindergarten, had no lessons to do, and was disposed to be noisy. She was however soon repressed by her elders and sat down to a book. I slipped quietly out of the room and found Mrs. Renshaw sitting in the drawing room.

Mrs. R. I hope the children did not bore you, Mr. Tan.

Self. Quite the contrary. I have never acquired so much information in so short a time, but there is one thing more I want to know. When do they go to bed?

Mrs. R. Well, Bell goes to bed at seven but the others get their supper at eight, and go off at times varying from 8.30 to 9.30. It depends rather on how they get on with their home work.

Self. The boys seem to have to work very hard.

Mrs. R. Perhaps so, but I don't think they are overworked; anyway they are always cheerful enough.

Self. You must not let me interrupt you, Mrs. Renshaw, if you want to go on with your letters. I can amuse myself well enough.

Mrs. R. That is very kind of you Mr. Tan; I did rather want to get these letters off by to-night's post. The first gong will go at seven and dinner is at 7.30.

When the gong went, I made my way upstairs to my bedroom, washed in the hot water provided for me, put on a dinner jacket and a black tie, and then descended to the drawing room, where I found Renshaw returned and changed into the same dress as myself. Mrs. Renshaw shortly afterwards appeared in a high-necked black lace gown, and we moved to the dining room and sat down to dinner. The meal was a simple one of four courses consisting of soup, fish, meat and sweets, and we finished it with a glass of good port, and then a cup of coffee and a cigar. The rest of the evening passed pleasantly enough, Mrs. Renshaw engaged with some fancy work, and Renshaw and I in an amicable dispute over an item of foreign news which he had read in the evening paper. At 11 o'clock we all retired to bed, Renshaw and I taking a "night cap" of whisky and soda.

I am afraid I have written you a most extravagantly long letter, and hope you won't be dreadfully bored.

Love to all at home from

Yours

T. Y.

CHAPTER XI.

A WEDDING

The other day I was very much surprised to receive from Ward a letter couched in the following terms:—

My Dear Mr. Tan:

I want you to do me a very great service. A fortnight from to-day I am to be married, and if you would act as my best man on that occasion, I should be deeply obliged. There is nothing very formidable in it. You will only have to put on a frock coat, and support me at the ceremony in the church, producing the ring at the right moment in the service. Say "Yes." there is a good fellow, and you will earn the gratitude of

Yours very truly,

J. B. Ward.

I was considerably taken aback by this communication, but, after some thought, decided to agree to the request, and despatched the following letter to Ward.

All right, I will stand by you, but I shall want a lot of coaching, so you had better come and dine with me to-morrow night at 8 o'clock, and give me all particulars.

Yours sincerely,

Tan Yin.

Within a very few days I received from the parents of the bride a formal invitation to the wedding, printed in silver on stout white paper.

*Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Morley
request the pleasure of Mr. Tan Yin's company
at the wedding of their daughter*

Edith Mary

to

*Mr. James Brabazon Ward
at 2 o'clock on Aug. 18th at St. John's Church
Kensington, and afterwards*

at 18 Cranley Gardens.

R. S. V. P.

Ward filled me up with information, and on the morning of the wedding I sent a bouquet of white flowers to the bride, to carry during the ceremony, and at 12.30 Ward and I sat down to luncheon together. We both wore frock coats with button-holes of white roses, and had in reserve silk hats and lavender coloured kid gloves. Poor Ward was rather nervous but managed to eat a hearty luncheon, nevertheless, and at 1.30 we entered a pair-horse closed carriage and drove off to the Church. There was a red carpet covering the Church steps, but we avoided the front door, and entered through the back way into the vestry where we found the clergy waiting. After greeting them, we emerged into the Church and took up a position in front of the bridegroom. The Church was full of people, beautifully decorated with white flowers and branches of evergreen, and up the centre aisle was laid a strip of crimson carpet. It is the immemorial privilege of the bride to be ten minutes late on these occasions, but, after keeping ourselves patient for a little while, she entered the Church by the main gate and proceeded up the aisle on the arm of her father. Her mother and brothers were already in the Church, occupying the left hand seats while the bridegroom's relations occupied those on the right. She was dressed all in white with a long train born by two little boys, and wore over her head a lace veil surmounted by a wreath of orange blossoms. Her only ornament was a diamond pendant which Ward had given her. In addition I was pleased to notice that she carried my bouquet. Following her were six bridesmaids, young unmarried women, friends,

or relations of the bride, who wore blue gowns and hats but no veils. They all carried bouquets presented by Ward. As soon as the bride reached the chancel steps, she took up a position on the left hand of the bridegroom, both parties facing the clergyman, and having their backs to the congregation. I stood on Ward's right, a little behind him, and Mr. Morley was placed on his daughter's left while the bridesmaids stood two by two behind the bride.

The service then began. I had been a little nervous about the ring, constantly feeling in my waistcoat pocket to make sure that it was there, but at the right moment I was able to produce it and hand it to Ward, who placed it on the third finger of the bride's left hand. The actual ceremony lasted about 20 minutes, and was closed by an exhortation and benediction from the clergyman. We then proceeded to the vestry to sign the register, and were there joined by the relations of both families, who offered their congratulations to the couple, the bride's veil being thrown back for the first time. While this was going on, the congregation were singing a wedding hymn, and at the close of this, a procession was formed to walk down the aisle to the door. Mr. and Mrs. Ward went first, arm in arm, the bride with veil still thrown back. I followed with the chief bridesmaid, then came the other bridesmaids escorted by sundry men of the family, and finally the parents of the bride and bridegroom, the organ in the meantime playing a wedding march. At the door we found a line of pair-horse carriages in waiting. The horses were grey, and decorated with white rosettes, while the coachmen and foot-

men all wore white flowers in their coats, and had their whips decorated with white ribbons.

The bride and bridegroom entered the first carriage, I with three bridesmaids the second, and we all drove off to the residence of the bride's parents, where a reception was to be held.

The guests began to pour in behind us, and the bride and bridegroom took up a position side by side to receive their congratulations. Some of the greetings were as follows:—

X. Hearty congratulations, Mrs. Ward. I hope you will live a very happy life.

Mrs. R. Thank you, Mr. James. You must come and see us when we are settled in our new house.

Y. My very best wishes, Mrs. Ward. Mind you keep that clever husband of yours in order.

Mrs. W. I will try, Mrs. Thompson, but he has behaved pretty well so far.

Z. A long and prosperous life, Mrs. Ward.

Mrs. W. Thank you, Mr. Robinson. I am so glad you were able to come.

The congratulations addressed by the men to Ward were somewhat more informal in character. "Good luck, old chap." "I congratulate you, my dear boy, you are a lucky man to get such a charming wife," and so on.

All this while the servants had been handing round champagne, and when every one was served, the oldest friend of the bride's family proposed the health of the newly married couple and wished them long life and prosperity.

This was responded to by Ward on behalf of himself and his wife, and then another friend proposed the bridesmaids, and to my consternation I was called upon to reply for them. I felt dreadfully embarrassed, but there was no getting out of it. And so I made best of a bad job.

The next ceremony was the cutting of the wedding cake by the bride. The cake itself was an immense structure made in three tiers, in all some three feet high, and ornamented on the top with a sugar vase of flowers. It was covered all over with white sugar baked hard and about a quarter of an inch thick. Underneath the sugar was a layer of almond paste one and a half inches in depth, and then the cake itself, which was almost black and very rich. Of course the cutting through such a thickness of hard sugar is a difficult task, which is really left to the confectioner's man, who uses a saw, and the bride only inserts the knife in a place already prepared and takes out the first slice. The man then does the rest, and pieces are handed to all the guests.

Wedding cake will keep for an enormous time, and Mrs. Morley told me she still had in a tin a piece of her own cake, over twenty-five years old, and quite good.

When every one had a piece, most of the guests passed into another room where the wedding presents were set out. Each gift had the card of the giver attached, and they included an immense number of things from a diamond bracelet down to a fountain pen. Some things, such as the piano and furniture, are too bulky to show, and the cards of the donors are simply represented instead.

I made the round with an old gentleman whose name I did not catch, and from him I extracted a certain amount of information.

Self. A fine show here, isn't it?

X. Yes, but between you and me, wedding presents are becoming rather a tax. Young people seem to expect their friends almost to furnish their house for them.

Self. Does not the bride bring anything with her?

X. It is the custom for her to bring the household linen, and, of course, her own trousseau, that is, clothing sufficient to last about two years.

Self. I wonder how many clocks there are among these presents. I can count six from here.

X. I daresay there are many more. There are always duplicates, as a lot of people think of the same thing. By the way, where are Mr. and Mrs. Ward going for their honeymoon?

Self. To Paris; which reminds me I ought to be off down to the station to get their luggage registered, buy their tickets, and see if I can get a reserved carriage.

X. You will miss the going away.

Self. Is that anything interesting?

X. Well, the bride retires and changes her wedding gown for what is known as the going away dress, and of course it is of a plainer description, says good-bye to her parents, and enters the carriage with her husband to drive to the station. It

used to be the custom to fling large quantities of uncooked rice at the couple during their passage from house to carriage, which was supposed to bring good luck. As you may imagine, this custom entailed considerable physical discomfort on the recipients, and it is now generally given up. I notice that, to day, Mr. and Mrs. Morley have provided us with bags of tiny horse shoes made of silvered paper to take the place of rice.

Self. Why horse shoes?

X. They are a universal symbol of good luck.

Self. I remember having heard somewhere about the throwing of old shoes after the carriage.

X. Yes, that is right. One or two people are sure to throw white satin slippers, and, if possible, tie one to the carriage unknown to the occupants.

Self. I wish I could see the fun, but I must be off now.

CHAPTER XII.

BANK HOLIDAYS

The English have a number of national holidays known as Bank Holidays, because, on those days only, can the Banks legally close their doors. The bank days are Easter Monday, Whit Monday which generally falls in May, the first Monday in August, Christmas Day, and the day

following, known as Boxing Day. Bank holidays are a modern institution, and sometimes known as St. Lubbock's days after Sir John Lubbock, now Lord Avebury, who passed the bill legalising them through Parliament.

These bank holidays are particularly the days when the lower classes go out as one man to enjoy themselves. The more well-to-do people as a rule go away into the country, and there are literally hundreds of excursion trains run on that day to all parts; but the multitude takes advantage of pleasures which are nearer to hand, and crowds to the various parks, the Crystal Palace, Epping Forest, the Alexandra Palace and so forth. At Renshaw's invitation I passed the August bank holiday in Hampstead, staying with him over night in order to avoid the congestion on the trains, for on bank holidays all distinctions of class are overridden and every man gets in where he can.

On Monday morning then at 10 o'clock Renshaw and I sallied out. It was a blazing hot day, and I was mightily glad of my cool suit and straw hat. The road leading up to the heath, which is on the top of a hill and commands a superb view both of London and the country, was crowded with family parties all dressed out in their best, and many carrying bags of provisions.

Self. How many people, do you suppose, come to the heath on bank holidays?

Mr. R. Anything up to 50,000 I daresay, but then you know the area of the heath is about 300 acres.

Self. About 320 now as we should say. Yes, that

would hold a good many people without crowding. How do they amuse themselves?

Mr. R. Some just wander about and enjoy the rest and beauty of the scene, but the more energetic spirits get up games, such as cricket, rounders, blind man's buff, tick, and things like that.

Self. But did not you say there were a lot of shows?

Mr. R. I should think there are, Aunt Sallies, merry-go-rounds, shooting galleries, cocoa nut shies, swing boats, donkeys to ride, and no end of sport for those with a few coppers to spend. You will have to try your hand at them.

Self. I mean to. I have purposely filled my pockets with small change.

* * *

At this moment we reached the summit of the hill, and I stood amazed at the view. The road ran along the top of a ridge, and to our right lay London half hidden in a pearly mist, out of which the great dome of St. Paul's reared itself. Away to the south-east I observed a shimmering spot of light which proclaimed the sun on the Crystal Palace. To our left was an expanse of rolling richly wooded country, with Harrow Church standing up on its hill about twelve miles off, while in the dim distance we could faintly descry Windsor Castle.

Self. I say, what a magnificent view!

Mr. R. Yes, we think no end of it, and it has proved

a source of inspiration to some of our best painters.

Self. I am not surprised. He would be a poor sort of artist who remained cold before such a wonderful sight.

Mr. R. What I like about it is the spaciousness. As far as eye can see, nothing impedes the vision. But let us turn off the road on to the grass now, and see what we can find by way of amusement. Just a word of warning. Beware of innocent looking boys and girls carrying squirts; they are apt to let fly at your collar and reduce it to a limp mass.

Self. All right, thanks. I will look out.

* * *

Turning off the road we passed down a broad grass avenue lined on both sides with shooting galleries, etc. The first thing that attracted my attention was the stentorian shouts of a man in charge of a cocoa nut shy. "Here you are, all the fun of the fair, here's your milky cocoa nuts, three shies a penny." I succumbed to his eloquence and produced a penny, in return for which he handed me three large wooden balls, which I flung one after another at a number of cocoa nuts placed on the top of iron stands about twenty yards off. Had I knocked one down, I should have been entitled to a nut, but all my three shots proved failures, at which I was secretly pleased, as I really don't know what I should have done with a large cocoa nut.

Self. It is your turn now, Renshaw, to exhibit your prowess.

Mr. R. Not at that game, old fellow; I could not knock down a nut to save my life, but I will try something else. There's a "try your strength machine." I will invest a penny in that.

The "try your strength" machine consisted of a padded disc, surmounted by a dial with a single hand. Renshaw paid his penny, then drawing back, smote the padded disc with his doubled fist, and the dial immediately registered the weight of the blow in pounds. I was very much taken with this, but declined to try my hand at it, as my eye had been caught by a shooting gallery, where for a penny, one shot could be had at a ball dancing on the top of a jet of water. Taking careful aim for the honour of my country, I fired, and, to my huge delight, down came the ball. The proprietor stepped forward and handed me a very doubtful looking cigar as the reward of my skill. I put it in my pocket at the time, but afterwards gave it away to a young costermonger, as a close inspection confirmed me in my suspicions as to its quality.

Our next halt was at a merry-go-round, which consisted of a number of wooden horses careering round and round on a revolving platform to the music of a steam organ, which played or rather brayed, untiringly, as long as the platform revolved. The horses, which are placed three abreast, sweep round at a good pace, and by a mechanical device are made to rise up and down, so that riding on them sometimes has the unhappy effect of making people sea sick.

The swing boats are large swings made in the shape of square-ended boats. Each swing holds two people who sit opposite to each other, and in front of each one dangles a rope. By alternately pulling on these ropes the swings can be raised to a very great height. Renshaw and I paid a penny each, and hauled on the ropes with great energy, so much so, that the swing rose above the cross bar from which it was suspended.

All the swings were in use, and a number of people were waiting for their turn, so popular are they with the English lower classes.

Self. Do you notice that every swing contains boy and girl, or young man and young woman?

Mr. R. Yes, this is a great day for engaged couples, or for young men who hope to induce the lady of their fancy to say "Yes." You see the man gets so many opportunities of displaying his gallantry in treating the girl to all the amusements on the Heath. The process is known as "standing treat".

Mr. R. We are all leaving home to-morrow for our summer holiday, and the servants are busy packing.

Self. Where are you going?

Mr. R. To Scarborough for a month.

Self. Is it the custom for families to go away like that?

Mr. R. Yes. Practically the entire English middle class transports itself and family to the sea side, or to some country farm house, for a fortnight or

a month during the summer.

Self. Good for the children, I should think.

Mr. R. And for their elders. I wish you could join us for a week.

Self. Thanks, it is exceedingly kind of you, but my time is getting short now, and I have so much to do here.

Mr. R. Well, remember we shall be delighted to see you at any time if you send us a wire to tell us when to expect you.

Self. I say you really are too kind.



The End

英美社交風土談

英國之部

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談土風社交英美

英國之部

第一章 最初印象

我到了英國的時候，就在利物浦登岸。當時我第一關心的事，是要把我的英國朋友在北京交給我的那一封介紹信送去。此信因為依了通常慣例，沒有封固，所以我能把他啓視，其文如下：

親愛的 Brown：

這封信，是來介紹談瀛君給你，他是我相識有年的朋友。當他在英國勾留的時候，自然很想飽覽貴鄉的風景，倘蒙遇事照拂，那就不勝感激了。

B. Knox 啓 五月八號發自北京

一天禮拜六下午四時，我帶了這封信從旅館出發，逕向 Brown 先生的寓所去。走到了的時候，我就按那標明「客」字的電鈴。那裏還有一隻標明「僕」字的是專供買人送貨，或向廚子問事所用的。隨後有一黑色服裝戴白麻紗帽和帷裙，硬袖口的客廳女僕，把門開啓，我遇見了這位女僕，就啓口問道：

自己 Brown 先生在家麼？

女僕在內，先生。

自己，你可否把這封信交給他？

女僕請到這裏來。

那女僕講了這幾句話，就引我到一間裝設得很簡樸的房間裏去，裏邊設着兩張安樂椅，並覺得充滿烟草的氣味，我曉得這間必是 Brown 自己個人的私室，後來我知道是因為我要面見 Brown 纔指引我到那裏的，歇了片刻，就聽得足步聲，我抖擻精神，預備實行我初次在英語的發源地，用英語會話，Brown 一走進來就和我握手道：

Brown 晚安，我想你就是談瀛先生了，你動身時
B, Knox 先生可好啊？

自己多謝很好，他請我代為道候。

Mr. B. 他可算是我的終身好友，也真是一個很好的人，你要在利物浦住得常久麼？

自己這一層，我本是要請教你的，我想在這裏勾留三四天，祇消你以為值得勾留。

Mr. B. 我是生長在這利物浦的，所以我總以為世界上像此地這 Mersey 河上的古城是不可多得，但是我們把自己的成見丟開了說，利物浦卻真有可供游覽的價值，此城是通鄉野的一所門戶，船塢櫛比，很似偉觀，來遊的人對於那大洋輪船駛抵浮塢，或從浮塢開駛，更不可不看這一個浮塢，我想可算是世界上最長的了，在倫敦郊野，我們還有一所極優美的美術陳列館，專陳設一種最好的收藏品，現在我們可不必再留在這房間裏了，可要走到客堂

裏去，待我把我的妻子和你介紹一回麼？

請人——你的帽和棒就放在這裏好了。

自己 承你優待，不勝感幸。

Mr. B. (和 Mrs. Brown) 夫人，我要領新由北京來的
以很景願 談瀛先生和你介紹一下，他帶給我 Knox
的一封信。

Mrs. Brown 對我微笑說：『談先生好啊？』彼此復
行握手的禮。

隨後 Brown 先生就引着三個小孩子見我，他
說『這是我的兩個小女，Winnie 和 Marion 這是我
的兒子 Tom。』Winnie 和 Marion 穿的齊膝外衣，各
適以白色氈布，足穿黑色長襪和光亮的拖鞋，他們
的頭髮都拖垂在胸衣的後面，Tom 穿的是短衫短
袴，學生領和紅色領結。

Mrs. B. 談先生，我有些不敢來請你飲英國茶，因
我曉得你對製茶差不多是你的一種秘
術。

自己 考實說，我常飲外國製法的茶，倒很合我
的口味，我可以祇用乳酪不用糖麼？

Mrs. B. Winnie 啊，把這杯拿給談先生，Marion，你
去拿些糕點來給他。

Marion 談先生，你喜歡褐色的麵包呢，還是白色
的？這是薄麵包和奶油，但是我們孀婦
房裏還有厚的呢？

自己 就請給我褐色的罷，我可以把我的茶杯放

在那張小桌上麼？

Mrs. B. 是的請放在小桌上罷。我時常想一個人把茶杯和碟子，並置在膝上，他好似覺得很不舒服的。你的丈夫曾向我誇讚利物浦的風景，所以我覺得立刻就要出去一飽眼福。

Mrs. B. 那末叫 Tom 來引導你，是再好沒有的了，我確曉得他對於城內各地，無一處不熟悉，尤其是船塢等處，Tom 啊，是不是呢？

Tom 我很願意領談先生環游一週，父親呀，你想我可伴他一全日麼？

Mrs. B. 我們斟酌着看罷，但不知你的精神和身體容許你否。

Mrs. B. Winnie 啊，談先生還沒有嘗過我們的熱餅呢。

自己 Brown 夫人，你真想不到中國人是怎麼樣的喜歡吃餅呢。

Winnie 喔，我很喜歡到中國去，談先生，你還要再飲一杯茶麼？

Mr. B. 談先生，你還沒有將你經過怎麼樣的一回路程講給我們聽呢。

自己 我趁的船，倒很安適，我的同艙是個受過高等教育好學深思的人，我們常常談論，「人類」「造化」和「人生」，並非雙方談論，其實竟是他講而我聽，往往等到極

晚的時光纔得睡着呢。

Mr. B. 我曾聞你引述 Wordsworth 他是你崇拜的詩人人物麼？

自己是的。有許多地方，像他的沉思精神，和風景哲理，都很能使我敬仰的。

Mr. B. 喔，此時你既已來到北邊，最好是到那沿湖的地方去逛 Wordsworth 的古鄉，從這

裏去，路程很不遠，兩天內就可以回來的。自己這樣的情形，却是很能引動人心的，但是我

想隨後到蘇格蘭去，那末路上經過那地方時，我就好飽覽那裏的全景了。

Mrs. B. 談先生，你是真不要再飲一杯茶了麼？

那末我想領你去看看我栽的花，至於這些花，在繁鬧城市的中心，能得生殖到這樣，也就算難得了。

Mrs. Brown 就請我走出客堂，到一間養花室裏去，這裏滿植華美花樹和秀麗的鳳尾草。

Mrs. B. 你看，我常常能不依賴花師，把些花採來供在桌上和客堂裏，我們的老園丁，雖不以我為能，然我却耗費了不少的時間在這裏了。

Winnie 母親呀，我採朵花給談先生插鈕孔內好麼？談先生，你喜歡什麼顏色的花啊？

自己那要和我的領結的顏色相配是不是？假使我戴的綠色結，就不能佩紅色的花，你

看行麼？我想那種紫色蘭花，却能和我的頸巾相配。

Winnie 談先生你真太講究啦。哦，我攀不着那枝花，不，Tom呀，我一定要自己把他採下來，談先生，你可以舉起我來麼？

Mr. B. Winnie，等你把談先生裝飾過後，他或者要吸些煙，你喜歡雪茄煙還是香煙呢？自己喔，假使你有平淡些的雪茄，我倒很想吸一枝。

Mr. B. 我却巧已經購得這一種，Marion，跑到我的書房裏去把洋火拿來，讓我來代你把這烟頭切去罷，我想人生處這忙碌的時代，沒有烟草解悶，怎麼能過得去的，Habana雪茄烟，有撫慰最懊惱心思的功效，我倒要說『Sir Walter Raleigh 萬福了』然而我恐怕他自己未必能預料到吸烟一事，竟會風靡全國到這樣，而後來的財政總長，都要對於他感謝祝福呢，中國人不亦是吸雪茄烟麼？

自己 中國人自然亦有吸烟的習慣，這枝雪茄很好，當我吸烟的時候，同時能替你薰蒸那養花室，我心中很快樂。

Mrs. B. 談先生，你想的很周到，我的丈夫也時常把這樁事，自誇有功呢。

自己 我恐怕現在我應當告辭了，承你盛情招待，

不覺竟坐久了。Mrs. B. 你沒有離去利物浦時，我們希望與你常常晤面呢。再會罷。（握手）孩兒們來和談別生祝別。當我們走出客廳的時候，我瞧見 Brown 夫人把電鈴一按，等我走到了大門，那侍僕已預備把門開啓，讓我外出。

第二章 游城記

後來我又極力的游歷了幾天，已把利物浦風景飽覽無遺，因此很想另往他處，一擴眼界，所以決定赴城內一遊。——這是英人常稱倫敦的名詞。我於是把棧房費付清，復留出些小賒，帶了行李，驅車至 Lime 街車站。我想從這裏趁那三小時三刻行二百哩速率附帶午餐車的快車到 Euston 去。英國各界人士都搭三等，因為這裏三等車似很舒暢；所以我就決定從衆，亦購了一張三等票。買票是一樁很簡單的事，我走到了三等售票處的窗邊，祇說了 Euston 一字時，放下金鎊一枚，我因那個錢幣外觀肥美，金聲悅耳，當時竟有些不願把他用去的意思。車票和找頭就立刻交付給我了。我從票價上核算，算出在英國趁三等車，每哩須費一辨士。我又聽見說假使旅客不說明要來回票，那售票員就祇發一種單行票。後來聽得旁邊一人說 Euston 來回票，更足以證明此事是實了。我將車票藏入票袋之後，就

走到一所陳列各種新聞紙雜誌和淺近文藝的大書攤，我想太晤士報頗合我的身分，就買了一份。然對於他的價格三辨士有些嫌他太貴，等我把這份莊嚴優美印在厚紙上的新聞紙展開一看，纔覺得這報倒很值那個代價。及翻開太晤士報時，閱者就覺得這樣一種機關，絕非新進之國所能支持得住的。——因為這個機關已經成立了百年以上，無論那一種新聞紙，凡於 Waterloo 地方曾派訪員，或於 Nelson 棄世時曾有論評的著述，是應當令人欽敬的。

我坐的是走廊式的火車，車中坐位多係橫設，靠車的一邊，是一條狹窄的走廊。我本想在車中進午餐，所以就走到大餐車內坐下。這車的兩邊，設有兩人對坐的檯桌。火車行過了利物浦郊外和一段深而且長的山道後，就開足速率，但是行得十分平穩，我們飲食仍能安適。當我走進餐車時，侍役問了我的名姓，即指引我到我的座位去。這個座位我曾預定，所以特地給我留出。

我的同餐者，或可稱為同午膳者，早已就座。他正在看一份闊大嚴重的新聞紙。我到後來才曉得是 Manchester Guardian，一種通常認為外省發行最好的日報。我們膳畢，就各對着咖啡燃吸雪茄。當我翻開太晤士報預備仔細閱看時，我的伴侶正凝神觀看那車外如飛的風景，怡然自得的牛類，食草的綿羊，遠處的教塔，或乾草米穀堆所環繞的幽靜田舍。

均一瞥即逝。我剛剛覺得疲倦欲睡，我的同伴忽然向我攀談。

我因為他預先沒有把他的名姓告我，所以祇好稱他爲 X 先生。我曉得英國人大半以爲他們的名姓於旁人無甚關係，所以對於旅行中一時相交的伴侶，更不足以名姓相示。聽說有許多人每天由郊外同赴倫敦，一連幾年，却依然不知彼此的名姓。除了商界人物外，互換名片一事，更是罕聞的了。今且讓我把我與這位先生的談話紀述出來。

Mr. X. 先生，今晨的“太晤士”上有些什麼新聞麼？

自己先生，報上的新聞實在是太多了，竟使我無從說起，真所謂多不勝收了。

Mr. X. 我勸你先看一看目錄，然後選擇一段于你覺得最有趣味的來讀讀好了。我承認太晤士報的新聞豐富，和雞子一樣的豐肥。這是我所讚賞他的一點，但是我最不相信及極端嫌惡的是他的政策。

自己喔，報裏面那幾點使你不贊許呢？

Mr. X. 就是牠主張侵略主義的論調。我屬於從前通稱爲 Manchester 派的政治家，此派雖知帝國所負的重大責任，然以爲帝國的中國心，應屬於英格蘭和國民的幸福爲執政者之首要責任。現在太晤士報却無時不鼓吹那種主義哩。

自己 我看見這報上有許多通訊，這可算是牠的特色麼？

Mr. X. 很是，“到太唔士報去投稿”已成為一句俗語了，我以為“太唔士報”把報紙公開，各種意見皆可在報上發表，這是很具有見識的，我們時常看見該報上排印着抨擊自己政策的文字。

自己 這 L. 和 N. W. R. 幾個字母作什麼解釋？我見這幾個字母繡在靠墊上並織在地毯上。

Mr. X. 是倫敦及西北鐵路，就是我們現在所經過的路線，該路是我們最大的鐵路公司，上年賺了有八百萬金鎊的樣子，我們有許多最顯要人物，於鐵路管理上，都很有關係，已故 Salisbury 曾任大東鐵道的董事長，他狠出力把該路振興到今日這樣發達的地步，鐵路總管在英國人耳中覺得狠有財力，狠可敬的，在他們心目中權衡起來，銀行家以次，當然就數着他了。

自己 我們現在經過的車站真長啊，喔，原來是 Rugby。

Mr. X. 這裏的月臺算是英國最長的了，但是這個地方係因學校才著名的，我的小孩子刻下也在那裏，他決不會曉得他的父親却剛由這個車站經過哩。

自己我猜度起來，我們到倫敦去的路，大約已有一半了。

Mr. X. 是的，Rugby 是這條路程上的中心點，大半火車在這裏停五分鐘，旅客可以買些熱茶喝，或買很著名的鐵路圓餅，這一種餅外觀陳舊，總像過了一個星期的樣子，而且餅裏面的小葡萄干亦極少。

我的同伴攻擊了英國鐵路圓餅之後，就不作聲了，他必定是在那裏默想他的冤屈事呢，我一面閱報，一面眺望鄉間，不久就現出人烟稠密的景象來了，我們又過了幾處很美麗的別墅，顯係倫敦人的住宅，此後我們坐的火車已經到了 Euston 車站，我們立刻可離去，因為車票早已在車上收過了，Mr. X. 向我匆匆告別後，我就招呼一個腳夫，把行李告訴了他，命他代雇一輛四輪車，這個腳夫是我第一次聽得講倫敦土語的人，他把我的行李檢齊，意思是要領我到馬車停的地方去，就牽我的臂並一口氣道 Ere you gavner，我很懂得他的姿勢，就跟他到了馬車所停的地方，那馬車夫幫着他將我的行李堆在車頂上，我於是給他小費六辨士，每件行李二辨士，打發他走了，指示車夫向那裏駛去，車子從很大的 Doric 式的門廊走出後，我仍在想那腳夫的神秘言詞，忽然想到 Here you are Governor 一句話，Governor 一字，雖稍微有點不尊敬的意思，却是一種下對上的稱呼，我得了這個解釋，很覺爽快。

就向窗外觀看，見着一條令人最不高興的街道，兩邊全是賣墓石的商店，我後來纔知道那 Euston 街的淒慘景象，倫敦人士都當作話柄，然他們並不設法改良，真所謂“人人當做，無人肯做了。”

不一時我們又轉入一條寬闊街道，兩邊均是大商店，好像所陳列的，大半都是傢具之類，向右轉入一條很美麗的街，街道是用木塊砌成的，再向左轉穿過了 Piccadilly，馬車就在一所旅館的門首停了，這旅館正對着 Green Park，是經人介紹給我的。

第三章 購物

我想在倫敦暫住幾天，所以把幾個皮包打開，將內中物件，一一安放在臥室內衣櫥中和抽屜櫃內，正在安排的時候，我覺得帶來的物件中有幾樣缺少，所以就決定立刻把他補齊，於是翌晨，我穿了早禮服，文靜顏色的褲，黑色的靴和絲帽，就出外購辦物件，我已曉得英國人除戴絲帽和穿外衣，或尾服之外，都認為一種不可恕的失當行為，硬氈帽，祇可穿了短衣，或華美布製的配身獵衣時戴的，有種不幸的人，不懂什麼禮儀，在廣衆中穿着黑色外衣，或早禮服和赤黃色皮靴，是要令人最厭棄的，立刻就被人看作外路人，我在電梯上下來的時候，套上了一付大鹿皮手套，帶着一柄摺緊的絲傘，逕向那隔斷旅館大廳和街道的搖門走去，一個掛有徽章的侍僕，把門推開，我就向外走出，覺得自己是最合

式樣的了。

我出離旅館，向右手轉灣，欣然沿着那日光照耀的街道右手一邊散步走去。這裏的行人車輛，來往不絕，有二輪車，貨車，用馬拖和用汽油機的公共街車，和輝煌耀眼的私人馬車，拖車的馬匹，壯麗敏捷，都有五六尺高，此外還有形形色色的汽油車，大如白色的美麗汽車，馭車的婦女亦穿白色衣服，以與車身的顏色相配，小至行動無聲的轎式電機車，同時我用心注視我所尋覓的機店和服裝店，尋來尋去這才看見一個大的玻璃窗，窗內擺着幾條領帶和一二捲法蘭絨，在倫敦西區的上等服裝店，沒有在窗內陳列裏衣的風氣，他們不過陳設一二樣，表示裏面還有貨物就是了，我於是把店門推開，走近櫃檯。

店夥 先生，你要買什麼？

自己 我要看看領帶，我喜歡單純顏色的。

店夥 這裏面有合意的麼，先生？

自己 這條倒雅緻，要多少錢？

店夥 四先令六辨士。

自己 喔，價錢很貴，你可以稍微減去些價錢麼？

我一經說出這句不幸的話，就知道自己弄錯，要為難了，這店夥瞪着兩眼望着我，好像我是個怪物似的，然後用憐憫的腔調回答我道：

店夥 我們的生意，向來不是那樣作法的，先生，倘若你買一打領帶，我們可以稍減一點，不

然我可以拿一種質料較爲便宜的，請你看。

自己 不要管他啦，就照這種的給我三條罷。

店夥 謝謝你，先生，另外還要甚麼東西麼？

自己 我想請你替我配幾件襯衣。

店夥 是，先生，半打襯衣，價錢是兩 Guineas，你

喜歡前面有一個飾鈕的呢，還是要有兩個的呢？

自己 祇要有一個的好了，我還要幾個禮服領結呢？

店夥 當然是要自己結起的罷，先生。

自己是，買一打罷。

我曉得英國人對於結現成的領結，有一種毫無理由的成見，倘若年輕的人於晚間戴了這一種的領結，被人看見，就要受人家的貶視，那棧商自然是要鼓勵這種習慣的了，因為他們知道用領帶打成一個整齊的花扣，是狠不容易的，講究一點的人，常常要弄壞二三條，纔能結成功一個滿意的領結呢，自己一共是多少錢？我現在把襯衣的錢亦付清，等裝好了，就送到我的旅館去。

店夥 三金鎊五先令六辨士。

我付了一張五金鎊的新紙幣，上有大英銀行會計長的簽字，這就是全國通稱的“五鎊票”，隨後我收回一個 sovereign 一個 half sovereign 一個 half crown 和一個 florin (2/-) 總共 £1.14.6 我把金鎊

放入金鎊袋內，此袋係圓形，用金或銀製成，開關俱有彈簧，大約可放金鎊五枚，掛在鍊端，像錶一樣。那些銀幣，我就照英人辦法，散置袋內，通常各人的錢，都散放在袋中，金鎊袋並非人人通用的物件，所以時常見人摸出一把錢來，金銀銅幣都亂烘烘的攪雜在一處。

走出了棧店後，我仍繼續散步，及轉到 New Bond 街，我覺得到了買辦東西的天堂了，這是指富有金錢的人說的。珠寶商店的窗，都有鋼棍嚴密攔起，可算是倫敦一種大觀，金鋼鑽的燦爛，紅寶石的血紅彩色，藍寶石的深藍色，及珍珠的乳色，各種光彩，很能勾心悅目，這些寶石，都裝置在藍絲絨的匣內，再加善用電燈的光，更覺得燦爛可愛了，然而在這條街上，我所進去的，祇是一間烟草店：

自己請給我一匣雪茄烟。

店夥好好，先生，但是可否請你說出要那一種？我們店裏大約有二萬枝雪茄烟，分成一百二十種，每枝售價自四辨士起至十五先令不等。

自己我對於 Habana 雪茄，却無甚經驗，所以就請你代我選一種靠得住的，性質平和，敬朋友可以拿得出手就是了。

店夥喔，是的，這種雪茄烟，我們出售得很多，（拿出一盒裝得狠整齊的棕色雪茄示我，每支烟上多繞着一條紅色的金紙籠）

請坐下吸一枝試試看。

自己多謝，我試試看，這種要多少價錢？
店夥九個辨士一枝，或每百枝合三鎊五先令，這
種烟保存得狠好，立刻就可吸的。
自己好，我就要這一種，請你一并再裝一百枝
小號埃及烟。

這一次又用去了一張五鎊紙幣的大半，我這才想到，假使我再不離開這種盪惑人心的店舖，恐不久就要不名一錢了，於是我不再東張西望，一直向前走去，走到 Oxford 街，這是倫敦東西相通的一條要道，我向左邊走去，一刻工夫，就到了 Hyde 公園東北角的雲石牌坊，後來無意中在一所藥房門首站住，遂買了些牙粉、修面香皂和英人浴室中必不可少的一塊大海綿，極大的海綿要值五先令，或一個 Guinea 一塊，但是我買了一塊大小適中的，英人浴室的設備，是一隻長可偃臥的磁盆，海綿、肥皂、一柄皮膚刷子和許多可以遮蓋全身的大毛巾，大半英國人早晨沐浴，完全是用冷水，但對賓客，總先要問他是要熱水還是要冷水，在賓客衆多的人家內，作與不能每人佔用一間浴室，那末就把一隻扁平鉛鐵浴盆，携入臥室，由僕人用盛水器把他裝滿浴水，我由公園穿過，慢慢向回去的路走着，一面心中默想各事，並觀看那孩童遊戲，監視着他們的嫗姆，都穿白色衣服，頭戴着飾以藍絲和束以白帶的黑帽。

等我到了旅館後，見我所購的物品已比我先到，可見他們一點也沒有耽擱，就照着我的吩咐，把東西送來了。

第四章 公宴

今早郵件來時，我接到朋友的一封信，裏面封着一張請帖，定於今晚歡迎聲譽卓絕的殖民地總督還鄉，舉行公宴，信上面寫的是：

親愛的談君：

特附上今晚公宴 Lord Orville 入座券一紙，我想你或者樂於加入，他是一位極有才幹的總督，你會見他，和聽了他的言談，一定能覺得很有興趣，屆時殖民地總長主席，一定還有大批重要人物在場，公宴在 Savoy 宮舉行，我於八時在大廳上與你見面，惟來否希先用電報告我。

Arthur Paget 啓 一九〇七年七月四日
Park Street 一百號

早餐後，我即拍電與 Paget，應允前往，並於日間寫了一封家信，因為我深知道我們心中的印象，須乘牠的新奇未經消滅之前，把牠完全記下纔是。

七時即登樓，換穿禮服，帶上我的寶星，我就乘車往 Savoy 宮而去，Piccadilly 地方，每在春夏晚間七點半時，頗有一種繁華景象，馬車裏的漂亮男子和華服婦女，來往不絕，使我心目為之一快，到了

Savoy 宮後，我就將禮帽和外衣交與侍僕，他給了我一張標明數目的票子，我就把牠放入背心的袋內，此時 Paget 已來，於是他陪著我走到一間高賓滿座的招待室內，這些賓客，已經在那裏參見今晚的主賓，他立在房屋的中央，帶着 St. Michael and St. George 星帶勳章，這是專賞在殖民地有功的寶星，Paget 和我正想挨次上前引見，不料宴會恰已開始，使我心中狠不高興，全體賓客都向膳堂走去，我們也祇好追隨前往，這一次在座的賓客，約有二百五十人，餐席的排列，像一個大 T 字形，主席坐在橫豎交點的中心，他的右邊是 Lord Orville，左邊是一位很有名的軍人。

我覺察得在座的人，雖然文武兩派都有，但都是穿着樸素的晚禮服，除了他們佩帶的勳章外，絕沒有個人職業的表記，我心中狠為詫異，我想這是英國人，極端不願和旁人不同的意思，假使他以為自己有令人注意的地方，他一定覺得非常的懊惱，除了朝會的日子，路上絕沒有穿制服的軍官，倘若這種人，有時不得不取道街中，那末不穿軍官的常服，則九成九是要跑到馬車內藏躲的了。

我坐在 Paget 和一個很有聲望的皇家律師的中間，他的嚴緊的嘴，四方的頭，足以表現出他的心思才力。

Paget (偏向我方) Egerton 讓我給你介紹一個朋友，談瀛先生他剛從中國到此，很想知道

道這園裏的一切情形。

Egerton 你好啊。先生，你以為當英國人進膳的時候，你可以觀察他們舉止麼？

自己 喔！這樣猜度我來此的原因，未免稍欠公允，所以引誘我來的鈎餌，就是趁此機會，得瞻仰許多有名的人物，而我所感觸的第一件事，說出來狠使我慚愧哩。

Paget 談先生，放胆說好了。

自己 我想這裏的人數，大約有二百五十位，環顧席上，那沒有薙鬚的人，屈指可計，他們好像都立過誓願的一般。

Egerton 先生，這不過是時髦罷了，三十年前，一個人若沒有一副豐盛的頰鬚，就自己以為不是重要人物，但是現在都已不然了，我們每天也要剃兩次面呢。

Paget 我說談先生，你看見那邊那個矮小的人麼，他面上帶着狠厭煩不高興的樣子，是我們的一位很出名小說家，富有才智，讀他作品的人，沒有不受他魔力所感的。

自己 我久已不觀相評人了，以外貌論人足令人誤識的。

Egerton 你說得很對，我在法庭上曾得着一種經驗，就是貌似最清白的證人，一經盤詰，竟是一個勁敵，我受這類人的磨難，已不祇一次。

自己昨天我在公園裏經過時，心中發生一種疑問，就是不知誰出資把他維持得那樣優美整潔。

Paget 皇家公園，如附設 Kensington 花園的 Hyde 公園，St. James's 公園和 Green 公園等的經費，都歸財政部擔負，由政府的機關管理，其餘的公園像 Battersea 及 Finsbury 公園，或 Hampstead Heath 等處，係從捐款內撥款維持，而歸倫敦市政廳的公園委員會經營，溯自他們任事以來，這幾個公園已改良多多了。

Egerton 談先生，你喜觀戲劇麼？

自己我當然是喜歡看戲的，我若不看着 Pinero 戲同莎氏比亞新表演的戲劇，就離開倫敦，我心裏一定要不爽快的，我倒要問這裏的戲園，大約在什麼時候開演？

Egerton 在八點半或九點半開幕，大約要到十一點或十一點半纔閉幕。

這時筵席已到了將完的時期，雪茄烟盒已經取出，咖啡及甜酒也都已放好在桌面上，我剛要想把一支很美觀的雪茄點着，那主席已經立起，在桌子一拍，請大家屏息靜坐，於是他就演講了一段簡短的說詞，其言如下：

大臣和諸君：我現在發起舉杯致祝，這本是無須我來向諸位提及的，請諸君

爲陛下祝飲一杯，陛下萬福！陛下萬福！

衆客起立致頌，各將酒杯舉起同聲說，陛下萬福！陛下萬福！然後卽把杯裏的酒，一飲而盡。

又互相談論了片刻，主席第二次起立，請大家向主賓致祝，這一次演講約有一刻鐘的光景，我不敢說能把他的演詞完全記出，祇不過述其大略而已。

Orville 總督大臣諸君：今晚我們這裏有兩黨政的人，並有種種意見各別的人物，但是我們在此聚會的原因，却是相同，就是立意要歡迎一位曾在遠方擔負帝國重任的人物。（聽聽）諸君呀，我與 Lord Orville 相識已歷有年數，我敢說他一生確是專心爲國服務，假使他把他的才幹，用在自己的事業上，他一定在商界上已佔高崇的地位了，但是他毫無自私自利的思想，却把他的政治雄才，聽憑國家驅使，諸君啊！國家也很感激他哩。（聽聽）Lord Orville 生平曾擔任過許多重要職位，他的賢明策略，和藹態度和主持公道的決心，使接近他的人都敬愛他，我想無論那個地位，絕沒有比在帝國的大自治殖民地，代表國王的職位，更重要更有趣味的，他的責任是培植自由公民的政治本能，並於維持統治權的公正外，竭力使殖民地和祖國聯絡，他對於這種任務，已得着極大的成效，從前英國同他剛離去的殖民地，從未有像現在這樣的親密呢。（高聲歡呼。）

我們很望 Lord Orville 和我們聚在一處。那麼我們可以領教他的銳利的判斷，和老練的閱歷。當我國最優秀的人物動身赴印度及殖民地時，我們固欣然使他們前往，但是他們重回故土，我們亦是很歡迎的。

我現在亦無多講了，就請諸君舉杯祝 Lord Orville 的身體康健罷。

於是主席口中呼着“Lord Orville”把酒飲乾，衆客亦各立起，照樣把酒喝完，沒有多時 Lord Orville 就起身致答，衆人皆拍手歡呼，他的答詞大旨如下：

Fife 大臣諸大臣和諸君：當我從事政治生涯的時間內，有人說我第一得人望的地方，就是席後從沒有過長的演說。我今晚並不想把這個名譽拋棄，認他們所說的爲非實。Lord Fife 演說的時候，我很覺得侷促不安，我現在對他可要反唇相稽了，就是他剛才說我的話，句句都是替他自己寫真呢。但是現在姑把個人方面的事不提，我今晚想對諸君報告一個消息，是從我離去的大自治社會帶來的，就是對於祖國表示親愛，對於帝國表示忠誠。諸君，今晚辱蒙款宴，我很感謝，且此次盛會，將使我永久不忘哩。

我聽了 Lord Orville 的演詞，覺得很有興味，我對於他演講時能把他的雪茄燃着不熄，並乘着喝采

歛笑時，就偷偷的一吸，使我看得很出神。我把這一層講給 Paget 聽時，他告訴我說有一個著名政治家演講了一小時，仍能把他的雪茄啣着不熄。

後來還有三次舉杯，對海陸軍及文學界致敬。由海軍大將，陸軍大臣，和審判官各致答詞，旋即公同向主席道謝，宴會即於十一點一刻完畢。

Paget 你覺着睏倦麼，談先生？
自己毫不睏倦。

Paget 那麼就同我到我的俱樂部去個把鐘頭罷。
現在尚無須就寢，我每晚到這個時候，纔剛覺着有精神呢。

第五章 劇場

剛剛在將近午餐的時候，Paget 打電話給我，所談的大致是這樣。

聲音 喂，你在這裏麼？你是談先生麼？
自己 是的。你是誰？

聲音 Paget，我已有……
聲音全無

Paget 你是談先生麼？他們公司裏把我們的交通一截，通隔斷了，你看啊，我已弄到了兩張“His Majesty's”劇場裏的夜戲券，你能來同我下不門去嗎？
自己 怎麼不可以啊！我心裏非常快活，你真是十足的好分的好人啊。

Paget 不算得什麼，不算得什麼，我歡喜與你周旋。今夜戲是 Julius Caesar 的確排演的，不壞呢，八點半鐘，我們必須要到戲場的，這倒是很討厭，因為這個鐘點，正夾在人家吃晚飯的時間之內，我們吃飯須要比尋常早些，免得匆匆離席奔出。

自己 你何不到我旅館裏來用晚膳呢，大約在七點鐘？那麼我們就可以從容不迫了。

Paget 多謝你，我來吃就是了，尚有一事，我的位子，是廂座，所以你必須穿禮服，不過一件晚餐衣，和一條黑領結就行了。

自己 不錯，多謝你的關照。

Paget 晚間見罷，再會。

自己 再會。

電鈴搖斷了。

我們吃完晚飯，正是八點二十分，於是跳上了一輛亨斯美車，到劇場而去。我曉得在倫敦是難得走路的，大都因為引人乘坐的車輛太多，如地下電車，或隨地皆有的公共街車，或誘惑人的亨斯美車，牠的橡皮車輪，行動無聲，那靈敏的馬匹，在街道中閃躲出入，好像很快樂似的。“His Majesty's”劇場，是一所美麗的白石建築物，和一所時式的飯店相毗連。我們車到了那 Corinthian 式的廳前停住，我們下了車，付過車錢，就走進劇場。

我們先把大衣帽子，都寄在衣帽間裏，然後走上

了一個闊而且坦的扶梯，到了一間半月形的迴廊，地上鋪着軟地毯，有許多掛着門帘的門，從這裏可通到一間斜坡式的廂，滿擺着適意的圈椅，每把椅子上備有雙眼望遠鏡一副，我們由一個女茶房引領來到我們的座位，她的打扮好像一個待客室的女僕。

Paget (對女茶房說) 請你給我們二張戲單子，女茶房是：先生，請付四辨士。

Paget 我對於在戲園裏出錢買戲單，是極反對的，八十分，那麼餐館裏的侍者，亦可以先向你討兩個辨士，然後才許你看菜單了，自己衆人都不反對麼？

Paget 是的，他們已嘖有煩言了，然而戲園經理自己的態度是很強硬呢。

自己那裏算是這戲園中最好的地方？

Paget 最貴的座位，是在樓下，靠近舞臺，那邊的座位，叫 Stall —— 這 Stall 一字，用的很奇怪，合，對一頗含着馬房的意思，—— 價自是每人十先令六辨士，其次就要算我們坐的包廂了，你曉得我們坐的是第一層看臺，每入要七先令六辨士，再次是我們上面的看臺，那裏的價目是每位四先令，那層通稱爲上層圓樓，再上一層，是邊廂，價每位僅一先令，這末後說的地方，算是這場中最便宜的了，因爲地位太高到上面去的人

都被呼爲“下等看客。”我對你說，他們倒是苛刻的評劇家，他們倒常操着一齣戲劇的成敗之權呢。還有一處，我沒有對你說的，就是後廳，剛剛在 Stall 的後面，價目每位是二先令半，這後廳單有一類看客，大半是商人和店夥，許多年輕的店夥，以爲是後廳觀客，就自豪哩。自己却說，車錢是你付的，我一定要同你平均攤算哩。

Paget 不要緊，下次你付就是了，車錢僅化了十八辨士，你曉得，這裏一個先令以下，是不能坐馬車的，照章一個先令，可以走二里路，以後每加一里，要給他六個辨士，差不多每人都多給車夫幾個錢，因爲車費價目，都認爲定得太低，舞台開演了。

場中的燈，都已預先息滅，所以舞臺上，更顯得晶亮光彩，這樣的美景，很令我驚奇，舞臺上的背景，是羅馬的風景，那古城形狀，使你看了同真的一樣，台上有許多人，扮飾羅馬的百姓，嘈雜之聲，與忽停忽續的談話，都演得很有可觀，觀客個個寂靜無聲，所以很容易聽，先上場的，是 Caesar 身穿宴會的袍，裝扮得維妙維肖，此時音樂停止，他每次開口的時候，觀客都沉寂無聲，好像是聽神言似的，這偉人使他的同時人物所得的印象，以及他過於自信的性情，在我心中較以前更爲深刻。

這幕演完，有十分鐘的休息，於是我們到吸烟室裏坐下，將紙煙燃着。

Paget 談先生是要什麼呢？

自己 “摧殘的謀殺與他的輕輕的腳步。”

Paget 你究竟是怎麼回事啊？你得了戲迷了麼？

自己 你不是講戲麼？

Paget 不是的，我是問你要喝些什麼東西。

自己 啊，真是糊塗得可以了！我的心正在舞台上，和 Caesar 在一處呢，喝什麼？威士忌和蘇打。

Paget 我以為這齣戲最精彩的一段，是 Caesar 被刺後會場裏的一幕，我很想聽你的批評。

自己 你們這裏有多少頭等戲園？

Paget 我想城內大約有二十五家，音樂廳不在內。我老實講，那些音樂廳，實在是討厭的要命，城外頭，也漸漸設立戲館，有些名譽很好，我們所需要的並不是戲館，實在是藝員。

我正要向 Paget 探聽探聽，忽然電鈴响了，我們急忙歸座，去看第二齣戲，這一齣，我們看見 Brutus 得勝，又漸漸地發表他的密謀，第三齣中結果到了 Caesar 遇害，我見了覺得很有趣，原來英國劇場裏的殺人，是沒有血跡的，當我對 Paget 提到這層時，他說。

Paget 台上那種恐怖的情形，很不合英國人民的

心理，他們願意用理想來推測那真實的流血情形。現在姑且細心看這第二齣戲。如果你以為有不盡力做的地方，不妨對我說。

自己 我可老實說，當演會場的一幕，我像被迷一樣的靜坐着，看 Brutus 將一班人說得歸向他的。一方面了，然後 Antony 用他清晰的聲音，將反對派聽者的意見，漸漸溶洽，我覺得人民擁擠擁擠，好像真事一樣，我亦要同他們在一處嚷叫呢。

這幕演完，全場觀眾喝起彩來，台幕曾升起來兩次答謝呢。

自己 我已經看見過 Brutus, Antony 和一羣羅馬的暴民了。

Paget 不要多說啦，這樣的批評，已足夠了，同一個人到戲園子去，他是陌生人，不把冷水澆在你的熱情上，這是很可喜的，那路人的言語是，“親愛的先生，那個人是在作戲！他不過是塊木頭罷了，如果你在三十年前，看見過某某老戲員，然後纔可以講作戲哩。”

自己 我不要再往下看了，再看恐怕把上一幕的印象冷淡了。

Paget 老友，不錯的，那麼我們走罷，我們到俱樂部去玩一兩個鐘頭。

自己 記好啊，這次的亨斯美車資，輪着我會了。

Paget 亨斯美！你這浪費鬼，你住在亨斯美中麼？
我們步行到俱樂部，在那裏談談，祇要十分鐘，我們就到了。

第六章 英國博物院

我的好友 Paget，常勸我到英國博物院去參觀，我因為墨守了格言所說“研究人類，為人類的真學問”的一句話，所以一天一天的延擱下去，我心中記了這句格言，時常到公園和街道上，專事觀察，但是有一次落雨的天，那向置腦後的博物院，忽然被我想起，我想“雖遲尤善於不往。”倘能找着人陪我同行，我想今天就去，當我檢查朋友名簿的時候，却想起來一個少年名叫 Ward，現在倫敦作些專門研究的工夫，我即給他一個便條說：

親愛的 Ward：

你可否暫停數小時的工作，陪我到英國博物院去麼？好朋友，同我去罷，沒有旁的法子款待你，使你高興，心中很是抱歉，但是無論如何，總比你終日埋在幾冊陳腐書籍裏頭有些趣味呢。談瀛啓。

不到一點鐘的工夫，Ward 已來到了。

Ward 啊，你這勾使鬼！我剛剛坐下，要想好好的作一天功夫，你的信就來了。

自己不過幾個鐘頭，你就可以回去，並可覺得格外有精神呢。

Ward 對於這層我倒很懷疑，假使倫敦有一處地方，比專門學校還要令人身體勞頓，那個地方恐怕就要算英國博物院了，然而現在我既答應了，我們就去罷。

自己 我想那所偉大而且古雅的房屋，就是博物院罷。

Ward 正是，我很喜歡牠那堅固的外觀，似乎表示英國的聲價信用。

自己 因此公債價格跌到八十七磅麼？

Ward 你可把我捉住了，我把方才說的話取銷罷，自己 我們現在到那裏去？

Ward 假使我是指導員，我當然要對你說，你一時要想把這博物院游遍，是萬難作到的，如果那樣辦，你不過是從這接連不斷的房間信步走去，等到筋疲力盡之後而所看見的東西，一點亦不能記得。

自己 那個光景真是可喜。

Ward 最好的辦法，是先到一部，看個周全，你特別所喜歡的是甚麼？

自己 我喜歡那種年代久遠的古物。

Ward 那末就到埃及部去看罷，這一道我是一點兒不懂，然而我倒很想藏拙，這就是我們人一生所從事的呢。

自己 你已很著成效了。

Ward 談先生，我的面皮已經很厚，你的獎語都

虛費了，我祇願在此打岔，你看左邊一間標明“埃及”的門口。

自己 那也是展覽品之一麼？

Ward 不是的，不過是進埃及古物部的門戶罷了。

自己 我想這句話，你是引用指南書上的罷？

Ward 不是，我是不必仰仗着那指南書的。

自己 那隻彩繪的大木箱，是什麼東西？

Ward 我竟沒有人可問呀？沒人幫忙呀？那末我一定要冒險了，親愛的學生呀，那是一個石棺，曾裝過一個埃及古王的乾屍，他的遺體就在這箱的隔壁，假使他在當國的時候，預言家對他說，五千年後，他的身體，要作公共展覽品，給一個中國游行家，和一個不敬的歷史學生飽眼福，不知他要講些什麼呢。

自己 我想那個時候，預言家必定後悔有那樣的預言呢。

Ward 或者他因悔上之罪，已經被人捕獲哩。

自己 看這玻璃櫃裏的織手啊。

Ward 這算全院中最近於人類的物品了，不過是一個婦人的一隻織手，六千年前她生在世上，而行戀愛，再看她指上的金戒，或者就是從前她的情人送給她的禮物，試想那隻手在六千年前所做的些事情，所寫

的文字，所做的精緻女紅這些東西，現在都已化爲塵埃了，然而這隻手向依然是存在——藏在倫敦博物院的一架玻璃櫃內，——而時勢變遷，他的國家宗廟已歸英人管束了。

自己 這種事情，倒可以編成奇異的小說呢，她這隻手，當初亦許拿過鋒利的短劍，而且還許用過，這又誰能知道呢？

Ward 我們再講下去，不久便成一部三卷厚的小說了，我們精神上可與她的纖手接吻，然後便和她告別了罷。

自己 你會學過埃及的象形文字麼？

Ward 我沒有學過，人生幾何，我的肩上，已盡力的擔負了不少，倫敦約有半打的專門家，費了一生光陰，在那裏注釋象形文字，但是這一種學問，始終與我不相投，現在這裏有一樁事，確與我的性情相合，就是這隻小箱裏面滿裝着木製的玩具，四肢活動的洋囡囡，貓，一匣棋子，和一部小車，埃及人民，向來好像一種神秘的民族，今想到他們的小孩子，亦像別種人的小孩一樣，亦是喜歡要玩具來玩的，這倒很有意味呢。

自己 是的，他們大概亦像今日的小孩子們一樣，把玩具弄壞，就哭起來了，必須父母再

買些給他們，纔肯罷休呢？

Ward 老實說，我實在很喜歡這些玩具，那種碩大的埃及偶像，幾乎使我見了害怕，還有些小偶像，猙獰怪貌，也是令人怕得不敢正視，我記得年幼時，我們家裏有一尊偶像不過二寸半高，頭還沒有我的小姆指甲大，然而牠的面貌，露着一副惡相，却使我永遠不會忘記的，現在從這玩具上，可以證明埃及人，也有普通人的感想，或者亦有時候會笑哩。

自己 埃及的陳列室當然不止這一間罷？

Ward 不止，總有十間八間，我們可向前走去，你對於這房間裏擺滿的古盤古鉢，能夠發生些樂趣麼？我簡直自認不能，除非像那些希臘花瓶愈古愈美，我毫沒喜歡這些破相陶器的意思，並且亦不能像我對於玩具，可以看出他們的故事來。

自己 當然他們缺少人的關係，難道你也不能從這煮飯鍋中看出一兩樣故事來麼？

Ward 無非是樓下僕役們的故事，不，我不能叫你哄騙的，我們到間壁房間來罷，那裏倒有幾樣物品，我要領你看看，就是印在泥製版上的幾篇家庭帳目，我以為這種帳目，或者是數千年前 Thebes 地方細心管家婦的手續呢。

自己等一等，那些裝飾品是在那壁櫥裏麼？

Ward 是的，就是耳環、頸鍊等類的東西，我沒有
羨美牠們的心思。

自己我實在喜歡一個博物院，爲我所獨有，你也
這樣想麼？我所恨的就是一班好議論的
游客，還有些人自作聰明，在那裏替人解
釋呢，現在沒有人在這裏。

Ward 這句話是雙關的，是不是？我想你的意思
是諷刺英國人民，忽視機會罷了，但是
你要曉得，埃及古學，却是一種曲高和寡的
學問，我們在希臘和羅馬的部分裏，當然
可以看見有許多人在那裏呢。

自己我想英國人既將埃及佔領，當然可以使他
們研究埃及古學了。

Ward 我的親愛的朋友呀，英國人要算世界上最
不遵理論的人了，就是憲法，也是不遵理
論的，照不列顛人的心理，以爲埃及象形
文字的智識，於治理埃及，是毫無裨益的。

己自我聽你有時說“不列顛，”有時說“英吉
利，”爲何你不專用一個字呢？

Ward 不錯，我是英吉利人，所以當我的意思是
指大不列顛時，我自然而然的就說出英
格蘭和英吉利人來了，我總想把這個習
慣打破，有些人，比方蘇格蘭人罷，極力反
對用“英格蘭”一字來代替，而且我很

願立於與人無爭的地位。正式講起來，我們祇說大不列顛和愛爾蘭，和“不列顛皇帝陛下。”但是像你所見，有時習慣力竟使我另用那一個字啊。

自己 我明白你的意思了。假使我是蘇格蘭人，我想我亦是要反對的，因為造成帝國他們也是有分呢。

Ward 是的，並且他們仍舊有分。以前的四個首相中，有三個是蘇格蘭人。從前三個總督中，也有兩個是從糕餅地方來的。蘇格蘭的糕餅是純用燕麥製成的，倒很可口，常和牛油熟食。

自己 由乾屍而象形文字，經過英國憲法，和燕麥糕餅，可算是談話的好倫次了。

Ward 你倒提醒我的責任了。我還沒有引導你一半呢。你看見那邊用玄武石彫出來的大人頭了麼？

自己 那當然不會不看見了。

Ward 那麼你要曉得這個頭就是代表Amenhotep第二的。

自己 哦，真的麼，他究竟是誰呢？

Ward 我不曉得Amenhotep第二是誰？他是救世主降生前一千五百年的馬上皇帝。Amenhotep第二究竟是誰呢？

自己 喔，先生，是耶穌紀元前一千五年時候

的一位戰王。

Ward 智哉，我可給你一個 A 的分數，並且賀你能將答詞變換得很好，但是你當用“君主”二字，以代替“王”字。

自己不錯，是的，我忘記這層了，請你同我去用午膳，那時你再隨便把埃及古學，或政治，或你的本行，對我談罷。

Ward 那麼讓我們立刻就去看罷。

第七章 跳舞會

談瀛先生鑒：

Mrs. Walter Paget 定於七月十日星期

一下午九點三十分至二點三十分，在家開跳舞會，屆時務請蒞臨是幸。候覆

我今晨在早膳桌上見了這張柬帖，就叫人寄了一封允到的信去，這日下午十點鐘的時候，我已到了他的家裏，我身上穿着晚禮服，白色背心，黑絲襪，漆皮製成的跳舞鞋，衣袋裏還藏着一副白色的羊皮手套，我卸去了大衣和帽子，舉步上樓，樓梯兩邊，都紮滿鮮花，我走到樓梯盡處，就見我友 Paget 和他的夫人，在那裏迎接賓客，他們倆和我握手行禮，又略談了片刻，我即走進客廳，這客廳裏的地毯，業已撤去，地板上已經塗蠟，今朝改作跳舞室之用，倫敦人家的客廳，差不多都在樓下，因為地價昂貴，房屋狹窄的緣故，我走到一個隱僻的地方，從旁觀看那

變換無定的景象，然不久 Mrs. Paget 走進室中，就將我尋着了。

Mrs. P 喔，談瀛先生，這樣是決計不行的呀，你自己拿到一張秩序單沒有呢？

自己拿到了，這不是麼，這是一個僕人在樓下給我的。

Mrs. P 那就好了，第一件當辦的事，就是要把跳舞的伴侶約定，填寫在單上，你若不快快的，那些姑娘小姐們，就都有人約定，沒空和你跳舞了。

自己但是這裏我一個人亦不認識，又怎麼樣呢？
Mrs. P 那是立刻好想法子的，今夜我主要的責任，是介紹賓客們彼此相識，所以你來罷，我要讓你認識半打美麗的女郎哩。

我在這奮勇的 Mrs. Paget 手裏，好似塑像的黏土一般，不一會兒她就說道，“Miss Hardcastle，我要介紹談先生給你，這是 Miss Hardcastle——這是談先生。”

“這是 Miss Neville——這是談先生。”個個姑娘都向我鞠躬行禮，我亦鞠躬還禮，但是我心中不斷的揣度怎樣我纔能把她們記得清楚，我又拼命的把她們所穿的衣服記牢，希望這樣或者可以有點幫助，Mrs. Paget 不久就離開我，去做她的事情去了，撇下我一人自己掙扎，我鼓起膽量，走到首先給我介紹的姑娘面前。

自己 Miss Hadcastle，你有工夫和我跳舞一回

Hard. 很樂意呀。但是我恐怕那樣跳舞未免太俗了。你看單上晚膳後第八號那次跳舞如何？

自己 Miss Hardcastle, 你賜給我什麼, 我當然就領受什麼。

這時候又有兩人走攏來, 我就轉身到 Miss Neville 那裏。

自己 你可否准我同你跳第一次的 Lancers?

Neville 第一次的已有人約定了, 抱歉的很, 假使你歡喜, 你可以和我跳第二次的。

自己 哦, 多謝多謝, 我很樂意。

Neville 談先生, 這地板不是很美麗的麼, 真像玻璃一樣?

自己 Miss Neville, 我老實說罷, 我見了這地板很害怕, 這地板如此光滑, 恐怕要跌得我仰面朝天哩。

Neville 那麼, 我希望你不要揀我們這次 Lancers 跳舞來施展你那栽筋斗的工夫呢。

自己 我要好好留神, 不跌筋斗。

我因一往順利, 胆爲之壯, 正想要再去活動的時候, 聽見我的背後有人說, “談先生, 晚安。” 我轉過身去看是何人, 原來就是 Miss Shewell, 從前與我在利物浦一同晚餐的夥伴。

自己 喂, Miss Shewell, 這真是幸遇得很呀。

Shewell 談先生，世界真是一個很小的地方，你看是不是呀。我同我的姑母，住在倫敦，今天晚上，是她陪伴着我，我們剛剛來到哩。自己那麼第一次跳舞，你還未有人約定，第一次是什麼跳舞呢？哦，是“雙步舞”你可以允許我這次跳舞麼？

Shewell 是，當然可以。音樂隊業已奏樂，我們很可以就此起舞罷。你自從離了利物浦之後，做些甚麼事呢？你看見過些什麼呢？

自己 Miss Shewell，我看見過一次謀殺人的事。

Shewell 唉呀！什麼地方？可怕得很呀！自己在 His Majesty's 劇場裏，這是最殘忍最卑鄙的事了。

Shewell 真可怕呀！然而我在各報上沒有看見過這種事情，我又不知何以各報並未大登而特登呢。

自己是，這事是在每天晚上一定的時間內發生，各報上並不提起，確是毫無理由。

Shewell 哦，是了。我忘記你是極崇拜莎士比亞的了，然則你沒有做過些增益識見的事麼？你不要忘記，我曾做過你的教師，我是有關係的人。

自己我狠做了些於我最有益處的事，我曾到英國博物院去過。

Shewell 那是很無興味的地方。

自己 我在一處俱樂部裏消磨了兩三點鐘的光陰，聽會員們閒談。

Shewell 你到那個地方去，可增長了些見識麼？我總不明白男子們到那個令人難解的俱樂部裏，除了檯球紙牌以外，還有何事可做。

自己 Miss Shewell，我不使洩漏俱樂部裏的言談，男子們當嚴守秘密，是不可輕易告人的。

Shewell 我想亦不值得一聽，我們現在是否要反身退回呢？

自己 Miss Shewell，你的步法很美觀，我希望這次跳舞，可以延長到一點鐘哩。

Shewell 你不知道說這種話是不吉祥的麼？那音樂亦許立刻就要停止哩，你瞧，果然停了。

自己 我真是笨極了，現在我可以送你到你的姑母那裏去麼？

Shewell 費心，她在那邊同一位白髮老先生講話呢。

自己 多謝你同我跳舞，你可否再同我跳舞一次呢？

Shewell 不，但是你可以陪我到下面去用晚膳，那麼我可以看你究竟得到我指教的益處沒有，Mary 姑母呀，讓我介紹談先生給你，這是談先生——這是我的姑母 Mrs.

Brownsword,

Mrs. B 談先生晚安,我的姪女已經向我提起過你了。

Shewell Percy Talbot 爲這第二次的跳舞,在那裏向我打招呼呢。

Mrs. B 我愛。再會。你要找我的時候,我就在這裏呢。

自己 我可以在這裏坐一坐麼?

Mrs. B. 請坐。你不去跳舞麼?

自己 除非你看得起同我跳舞,我才去哩。

Mrs. B. 謝謝你。我跳舞的日子,現在已經過去了。我出來不過做一個陪伴的人,看看年輕的人們尋樂而已。假使今夜不是沒有壁上花,我就不該容你坐在這裏了。

自己 她們是甚麼花呢?

Mrs. B. 這不過是我們給那些沒有跳舞伴侶的姑娘們起的名字,她們沒有伴侶,只得沿牆坐着旁觀而已。

自己 我恐怕她們心中在那裏怨恨男子哩。

我在這次談話之後,又同 Miss Neville 跳舞一回,她的性情是沉靜寡言,跳舞後緊跟着就是晚餐, Miss Shewell 邀我和她同桌用膳,餐畢,音樂隊又從新奏起音樂來了, Miss Shewell 和我自己都被這音樂提醒,我們倆人,在此次的跳舞,都已約定伴侶,我見

Miss Hardcastle 面上帶着怒容，照例音樂開始的時候，我就應當在那裏的。

自己我抱歉的很，我正在樓下晚餐室內，不料音樂就奏起來了。

Hard. 我知道晚餐室有吸引男子們的能力，自己是，我們這一班人，全是嘴饞好吃的，我求你原諒。

Hard. 談先生，我不過是說說笑話，這是在英國第一次跳舞麼？

自己是，不過我希望這次不要變作末次，我覺得跳舞很是快樂。

Hard. 我恐怕此後沒有很多的跳舞會了，天氣漸漸炎熱，假臥在河中的平底船上，更有樂趣呢。

自己你歡喜河麼？

Hard. 是，我歡喜河，我每禮拜要隨婦女划船會去兩次，我是那會中的會員，我們有兩條八枝槳的船，船旁裝有槳叉架，並有滑動的座位，我老實說罷，我們划的很起勁呢，我們的船主，是個很有規則的教練員。

自己然而你說在平底船上假臥呢。

Hard. 那是每星期六下午的事，我們有時候必須要歇息的。

自己現在音樂業已停止，或者你現在亦要想休息哩。

Hard. “是的，我要坐一會兒，你或者可以送我到
Miss Hardcastle 我母親那邊去。”

自己 Miss Hardcastle, 再會。多謝多謝。

Hard 再會。下次不可遲誤了！

這是我最後的一次跳舞，我很懇切的謝過了 Mrs. Paget 慇懃招待的厚情，就乘車回去了，隔了三天，我到他家裏去留下兩張名片，這一段事乃告結束。

第八章 國會

日前我向一個朋友說，“怎樣可以涉足下議院，得聽下議院的討論案”。他對我說，一定要有一個議員給你准許憑證，纔准你到旁聽席上去，他又說“如果你要，我可以弄一張給你。”我急忙拜領了他的盛情，懷了券，徑住下議院應接室，我先費了幾分鐘，參觀這惠斯敏士廳，這廳是歷來審問國事犯的場所。

那應接室實在就是這屋子的前廳，一間高大八角式的廳房，地上鋪着黑色和白色的大理石，廳裏面已擠滿了來賓，有些是為事情來的，有些不過是來聽熱鬧的，指望看看報紙上常常說起的幾個人物而已。

我把我的券給一個和氣的警察看，他領我穿過了一扇狹門，從那裏上了石梯，走進旁聽席，這旁聽席正對着主席的座位，政府黨和反對黨的前排座位，都可以一目了然。

那主席態度很爲嚴肅，穿着短袴，黑絲襪，銀扣鐘的鞋，黑色長服，帶着長假髮，早已巍巍的坐在上座了，座位上面，裝着華蓋，上懸皇家的勳章，我用我不常講話的聲音，向坐在我旁邊的人說，

自己 怎麼，議員在那裏呢？

某君 放輕些，你只能輕輕的講，你看現在還早哩，現在已到的，不過是那些向各部長官問事的議員哩。

自己 請你把那些各部長官指給我看看。

某君 現在祇有兩位在這裏，一位是陸軍總長，一位是內務總長，那站立着宣讀文件的，便是內務總長，他正在答覆一種問題，他以前已接到通知書，故將他的答案備好。

自己 我見那各部長官，都坐在主席的右手，

某君 是的，政府黨的人員，坐在右邊，反對黨坐在左邊，各部總長都坐在右面前排長凳上，反對黨的領袖們，都坐在左面前排長凳上。

自己 這些質問是甚麼目的呢？

某君 據經驗所得，這是向政府刺探消息和意見最切實用的方法，假如一種問題，於國家利害有關，當然就不答覆了，關於外交事務，向總長詢問時，這種情形，是時常有的。

自己 各部長官中，比較上被人質問最多的是誰呢？

某君這當然要看那目前爲衆人所注意的，是何問題而定哩。

自己我想處於那等地位，並不快樂，那主席爲甚麼站起來了呢？

某君因爲質問完畢，他宣佈議院要按照議事日程進行他們應辦的事件，照現在的事說，就是將英國劃分田產二讀案，繼續討論。那主席立刻復歸原位，就有三四人立起，面對着他，他用頭點點，指定一人發言，其餘的又都重新坐下。

某君這種辦法稱作“勾引主席之眼”。

自己若主席的是近視眼，這方法就無用了，是不是啊？那講話的是誰？

某君不過一位議員罷了，重要大員，如各部長官和前任部長等，照例非到晚餐後，是不會立起講話的，那時院內的人已較多，他們不到半夜十二點鐘，不能散會，所以時間是很有餘的。

我對於這種演講，覺得無甚興趣，但是我看主席，永不稱呼同僚的名字，僅說“某某地方貴代表”“貴教育總長”云云。

自己“Right Honourable”究竟是甚麼意思呢？

某君這是內閣閣員，和各部長官的稱呼，大名望的人，時常被任爲閣員，假使你靜聽演詞，你還可以聽得律師被稱爲“顯博”，武

人被稱為“顯勇”哩。

自己 這都是禮節上使然，是不是呢？

某君 實在，議院中當用的言語，皆有極嚴厲的規則，而主席對於議事的儀節，護持得極嚴。

自己 那坐位前面約離二尺光景的地板上，畫着很奇怪的平行線，是什麼呢？

某君 想到我們先前所講的話，你這一問，却很恰當，這線是從前遺留下來的紀念，那時人的性情粗暴，洶洶決鬪的事，時有所聞，凡是體面人，都腰佩利劍，縱然在下議院裏，也是這樣，演講的時候，無論那一個議員，都不准越過那線，致被對面反對黨的利劍刺着，現在自然不過是一個很有趣味的遺蹟罷了，以我個人而論，祇就這條線的歷史關係，我亦不願見人家把牠毀掉，自己假使我是議員，我亦當有那樣很強烈的感想，這議會有一千四百餘年的歷史，我若是局內人，想起來當然要自豪哩。

某君 今日各議員的心中，都有這樣的感想，我們有時候取笑這議會，稱牠為談話店，但是我們對於牠及牠的歷史，確是很自豪的，而這議員的位置，實是我們所能達到的最高之榮譽地位。

自己 議員們都是富人麼？

某君 哦，議員中大都是出身富庶，可無疑義，換

一方面說金錢並非進身議院之鎖鑰，這下議院中寒苦的人亦很多呢。

自己 他們的同僚對待他們如何？

某君 我的親愛的先生啊，這下議院對於外面的名譽、財產，是完全不管的。地方上的紳富、製造家，他們的烟囱林立，遮遍郊野；大商家，他們的船隻，航行全世界；棉紗和糖的投機者，府尹，各地市政廳皆懸着他的照像，他的名字，在本地已成為家家戶戶的口頭禪。還有著名的律師，他不拿一百個吉尼，不肯到堂開口。這些人們，都休想下議院不以冷淡的態度接待他們，假使他們討厭，那就更壞了，假使他們不令人厭煩，那麼還好。

自己 比方有人討他們的厭，那議員們怎麼辦呢？

某君 不論那人是誰，立刻就得起身出院。我想沒有一處議會，能像下議院這樣廉隅自愛的了。新議員的進款，或是十萬鎊一年，或是三鎊一禮拜，他的父親或是公爵，或是鐵匠。這下議院絲毫不問，真正與他相關的，就是有話便說，無話便不開口。

自己 好一編偉論啊！然而這鈴聲是因何而發，議員們都魚貫的走入會場，又是何故？

某君 這是宣告分班的鈴，鈴聲止後三分鐘，議院的門就關上了，凡不在院裏的人，都不准

投票。

自己他們怎樣投票呢？

某君議員們由一個“贊成”或“反對”的穿堂魚貫走過，那是要看情形而定的，他們走過時，就在他們名單上的名字傍，鑿孔爲記，他們走過了穿堂，依舊回到議場，等大家到齊，所得的結果，由報告人宣佈。

自己這樣一來，要多少時候？

某君大約八分鐘，你看現在各人都已歸座，結果立刻就要發表。

宣佈票數時，議員們都歡呼喝彩，宣佈畢，有一個好像不甚重要的人，忽然立起來演說，我見人人都悉心靜聽，屋子裏一剎時擠滿了人，我倒很爲詫異，這篇演說，立刻激動了兩方的政黨，贊成演說人的那班人，時時喊道“聽啊，聽啊，”因而激起對方的反對表示，在這當兒，那演說的人停止，兩手叉着腰，面上露出滑稽的笑容，隨後又說了一段諧語，引得全院闐堂大笑。

自己那人倒是個演講能手呢。

某君是啊，他很算是內行了，他照例用滑稽的諷刺，教聽的人振起精神，當聽衆被他感動最深的時候，我曾見全體立起來，並脫帽致敬呢。

自己是的，我看除了主席之外，各人都戴着帽

子，這是何故？

某君 這並不是強迫的，但是據我推測起來，這不過是沿襲着向來的習慣，那時男子，在家在外，都一樣的戴着帽子。Sam Pepys 的日記中，說他曾經受了一次寒，因為他自己粗心，吃晚膳時未曾戴帽所致。

這個當兒，我們的談話，被下面喊“秩序，秩序”的呼聲截斷。

自己 現在是為甚麼事情呢？

某君 我想是這演講的人，說了甚麼話，反對他的入們，以為出了議院語言範圍之外了。

自己 那麼怎樣呢？

某君 或者他就要退席了，若是不退席，就有人要去問主席，這種話是否為議院中當用之言語，若主席以為出了範圍，就當場令那議員退席，假使有不聽主席命令的，他就得出離議院。

自己 我們對面，上邊有鍍金格子的樓廂，是甚麼地方？我已思索多時了。

某君 那是女廂，我想這欄杆，是為的議員們在辦公的時候，免被異性的美色引誘分心而設。

自己 婦女們到那裏去的多麼？

某君 哦，是的，這樓廂是常常人滿，從前格蘭斯頓夫人，當他丈夫有重要演講的時候，

她是必定到的。

自己 我想這議長必是一個重要人物了。
某君 是的，他是全國議員中的第一人，他在惠斯敏斯特宮內，有一所精緻的官舍，其中有房屋六十餘間，享着厚俸，退職後，還有國家的津貼，和子爵的封典哩，從前的兩個議長，現尙在世，這種生活，很令人勞頓，沒有人能長久受得住的。

自己 新聞記者席在那裏？

某君 在你對面女廂的下面，我們這廂的前半間，是給貴族們預備的，你時常可以看見 Wales 皇太子坐在那當中的座位上，他在下議院裏，是沒有品級職位的，因為他是康華爾公爵，所以他是上議院的一位議員，他對於黨派問題，當然是不投票的。

自己 你們的第二院是世襲的麼？

某君 是的，所有英國的貴族，都是上院的議員，有些愛爾蘭和蘇格蘭的貴族們，是經他們自己公舉到上院為議員的。

自己 貴族的子弟怎樣呢？

某君 啊，他們不過是平民而已，他們有一種權利，為他們的父親所無的，如果他們得着地方上公民的推選，便可入下議院，你幾時總要到上議院去參觀一次，那是一個極壯麗的所在，所以有“金屋”的名稱。

自己 你常到這旁聽席裏來麼？

某君 我得閒的時候，就到這裏來，這好像是一種奇怪的娛樂，無論他們辯論如何乏趣，我總可以尋出快樂來。

自己 比方我說我已領略夠了，我望你不要見怪。
某君 毫不相干，這就是此人所喜，却為彼人所惡，我還要耽擱一刻呢，因為國務總理，還要演講，作為辯論的收場，他講的很為動聽呢。

自己 那麼他是一位演說大家麼？

某君 他與格蘭斯頓和畢脫演講家的情形不同，但是他富於一種才幹，為英國人民所深喜的。

自己 那是……？

某君 常識了他另外還富於滑稽思想哩。

自己 然而有人對我說，善於談諧的人，在下議院裏，往往被人疑忌呢。

某君 祇因人們做了他們自己的聰明的奴隸，即使用談諧的方法譏刺他人，於事無益而有損，彼等亦不能制止不用，然這國務總理，於此等地方，頗得他的常識的助力。

自己 一個人有了滑稽的名氣，亦是一樁可怕的事，因為你每次開口的時候，人人都指望你說些笑話給他們聽，假使你不如此，他們就要說你名不符實了。

某君這一層我並不懼怕，我的滑稽思想，是鄭重的。

自己這就是使你歡喜談諧的緣故，是不是？若是空有談諧，而沒有聽的人，談諧有何用處，倘聽的人都形同木偶，看不透諧謔的命意，那麼有聽的人，又有何益呢？

某君各人有各人的地位，而那些不懂談諧的人，可以提醒那好說談諧的人，雖滑稽一門亦還有爭勝的餘地哩。

自己這個時候，我要回家睡覺去了，讓他們有智慧的與愚笨的自便罷，再會罷，多謝你的指教。

某君喔，不必客氣，我有這個壞毛病，時常喜歡賣弄我的見識，再會罷。

第九章 大學生活

我在牛津勾留了一整天方才回來，雖然覺得十分疲倦，我却決定要乘我所得的印象還新鮮的時候，把牠記出來，我這次好運氣，勸得Ward與我同行，我說運氣好者，是因為Ward剛剛出城，他還有許多朋友仍舊耽擱在那裏，我在路上的時候，盤問我的同伴，得着許多的知識，我記得我們的談話是這樣的。

自己這大學裏有多少學生？

Ward 大學修業生分居二十四校，總數約三萬六

千人基督大學中的學生最多，約在三百左右，其次要算大學和班利奧兒大學，自己這些人都住在校裏麼？

Ward 校裏以人滿爲止，但是沒有地方可以一齊容納，那些多出來的人，只好在城中賃屋寄宿。

自己那麼學堂裏怎樣維持學生們的情感呢？

Ward 他們的教員，乃學校職員，一學期中有很多日子在餐堂會餐，所以各校的團體精神，是極堅固的。

自己至於校裏的房間，可是先到先住麼？

Ward 不盡然的，無論甚麼人，不准在校內居留至二年以上，除非他是一個大學學生，但是也要騰出地位，給那新來的呢。

自己是這樣啊，不知還是住在校內最便宜呢，還是住在校外最便宜呢？

Ward 哦，當然是住在校外的了。

自己你我間談的話，普通一個青年人住在牛津，要用多少錢？

Ward 謹慎一點，每年有一百五十鎊可以夠了，天然有許多還不到這個數目，二百鎊是很舒宜的了。

自己都是甚麼開銷呢？

Ward 學費，學校廚房供給飲食之代價，或膳宿費，書籍費，這個那個會社的捐費，以及一切

隨時發生的小費。

自己 當你作大學修業生的時候，日子是怎樣過的呢？

Ward 早晨八點至九點早餐，上午聽講，下午在河裏划船，或打球，或踢足球，這是隨時令而異，七點半晚膳，以後就在自己房裏用功，至次晨一二點鐘為止。

自己 你們一星期中聽講幾小時？

Ward 自十小時至十五小時不等，但是我末了一年，一課也沒有上過，因為我自己在作研究的功課。

自己 我們到了，先往那裏去？

Ward 我們還是步行至大街一直到麥格達林大學為止，我有一個朋友，正等着咱們去用午餐呢。牛津學生，都以為世上沒有別的道路，可以比得上這條大街，實際上，他們也不能算錯，這街道很寬，略有一些灣曲，兩邊排列着著名大學的房屋，我知道沒有別的地方這樣富於歷史的，建築這樣整齊，地方這樣古舊，而每年的氣象皆這樣的清新。

自己 Ward 好啊，我幾乎連劍橋這字都不敢低聲說了。

Ward 倘然你要說，是一定可說的，劍橋也還不錯，不過論風景之秀美，劍橋終難與牛津抗

自己哦。這是牛津學生的自豪啊！

Ward 我的朋友，這是很在情理的自豪，若你今晚不能看出有極好的理由來，我可真要狠詫異了，我們到了，跑出來罷。

自己起首的光景，並不覺得怎樣新奇。

Ward 不，到車站的這條路很壞，你且少安毋躁，自己我當遵着 Brutus 的忠告，“忍耐到底。”

Ward 你這樣愛引用莎士比亞的句子，那麼你對於那邊的意思是怎樣？

自己哦，好，這就是那大街麼？

Ward 不，這是闊街，你左邊是板里奧兒大學，建於西歷一千二百六十二年，是牛津的第二個最老的大學，隔壁是三靈大學，在你右手那邊，你可以見愛格斯德和雪爾道富大學，我們從這裏穿過去，就可以經過那大學圖書館，名字叫 Bodleian，因為是西歷一千五百九十七年 Sir Thomas Bodley 創辦的，所以叫這個名字。

自己我想這圖書館的收集的書籍一定是很豐富了。

Ward 抄本及印版的書籍，不下一百五十萬本，且時有增加，因 Bodleian 圖書館對於英國出版之書，皆有取得一本之權利，

自己無價值的書，他們一定亦收集的很多呀，他們怎樣對付呢？

Ward 請你休問罷，這是管理圖書館的密秘，這可到了大街啦，讓我們在聖瑪利書院的洋台邊歇一歇罷。

自己這洋台倒美麗的，那些螺紋形的柱子亦很堅固，這是大學的禮拜堂麼？

Ward 是的，從前 Newman，就在這裏當牧師，對面就是校舍，亦就是個個學生受磨難的地方，學生在大學的時候，每人至少要在這裏經兩次考試，我想你一定曉得那像酷刑一樣的口試筆試，是怎樣一個情形。

自己我還不知道麼！不過我有得力的巧妙法子，總可以考得好就是了。

Ward 是的，有些確是很好的學生，考試的成績，總不好，那些不用功的學生們，反而考得很好，這是很奇怪的。

自己然而要籌畫一個較為滿意的制度，似乎還不能辦到，禮拜堂隔壁是甚麼地方？

Ward 是皇后大學，裏面不是有一個精緻的天井麼？你看見那裏的高塔麼？那是基督大學中的一部分，名字叫 Tom 塔，中間有一架著名的鐘。

自己你不是說過基督大學是最大的大學麼？

Ward 是，這大學有吸引“華族”的聲譽，這是

牛津的土語，指揮霍青年們說的，貴族的青年子弟進這校來的很多，基督大學是英皇 Henry 第八的大臣 Wolsey 教長所創立的，這校的徽章是一頂教長帽，作為這熱心宗教的創辦人的紀念，我們向前走罷。

自己這裏學生們來往不戴帽子，好像似很通行，除非穿制服的才戴帽子，我估量他們是剛從講堂上出來的，為甚麼他們的衣服長短不齊呢？

Ward 長衣服是大學修業生穿的，換言之，就是他們已經得着獎學基金了，那遠處路盡頭的塔，叫馬格達林塔，是學校的鐘樓，就是我們正要去吃飯的地方，我們趕快些罷。

我們因此速速沿着大道走去，轉入馬格達林，經過一片如茵的綠草地，又穿過了幾條古道，最後我們去敲一扇橡木做的舊大門，上面釘滿了釘子，那門因為年代久遠，已變成黑色了，一個年約二十左右的俊秀少年，身穿腦福克短衣，口啣黃楊旱煙管走來開門，我們走進後，他又立刻把門關上，他對我說，這叫做閉門謝客，他又領我們走進裏面一道門，到了他住的房屋，這屋是一間起坐的房間，和一間臥室相通，那起坐的房間，約有十六呎見方，用橡木板鑲至天花板處，屋中擺着兩把藤靠椅，四五個凳子，一張桌子，一架書櫃，一盞燈，還有很多的旱煙管。

那臥室更小了，裏面祇有一張床鋪，一架櫃，一個面湯台，一個洋磁浴盆，起坐房間裏的兩扇窗子，對着一個美麗的園圃，裏面有鹿兒在那裏吃草，點綴得全是學者清靜修養的氣象。

自己 Mr. Gill 你在這裏很舒服啊。

Gill 是啊，我真是僥倖得着這所房間，在學校房屋中這要算地點最適中而且最清靜的了。

自己 那麼，這裏就是你用功的所在麼？

Gill 是的，談先生，這就是我用功的地方，請坐，用些午膳罷，這午膳不過是冷的，如果你們已經齊備，我可以叫我的軍事偵探拿皮酒來。

自己 請你就這樣辦罷，你的軍事偵探是甚麼呢？

Gill 是我的用人，這人要服侍六間房間的學生，他來了，Tom 你到酒窖裏去拿三瓶苦皮酒來。

Ward Mr. Gill 你這學期中作何消遣？

Gill 我稍作划船戲，不過近來用在網球上的工夫很多，有時午後在 Cher 河撐撐船，談先生，我恐怕這午膳是很潦草的，若是你能今夜不走，明天早上八點半到這裏來，我可以給你看看真正的牛津早餐是什麼樣子，那早餐是我們自己很得意的。

自己 我很願意打攪，但是我今晚必須要回城去。

所以我只好心領了。這些銀杯子很美觀。

是你自己的私產麼？

Gill 我很願意牠們是我的。可惜我不能作為己有。牠們是校產。馬格達林對於這類的東西收集得不少。讓我再敬你些牛舌罷。

自己 謝謝你。我祇再要一塊好了。Ward 你今天下午打算領我看些甚麼呢？

Ward 我想沿着河岸散步。至 Isis 河為止。在河邊消磨半個鐘頭。然後以 St. John's 花園收場。Mr. Gill 你看怎樣？

Gill 這個法子很好啊。你們在 St. John's 花園玩畢請到我們禮拜堂裏來做五時的晚禱。談先生。我們可以聽那著名的唱詩班。為唱詩學堂還設立了一個特別班呢。他們的唱詩。是值得聽的。

自己 各大學都有禮拜堂麼？

Ward 是的。大學修業生。除非是良心上反對的。一學期中必須要到幾次。學校的禮拜堂。每天要祈禱兩次呢。

自己 我雖然不會批評音樂。我在這裏的時候。我總是要去的。

Ward 不錯。我們準這樣罷。你若是諸事停當。我們好就此動身了。

自己 我都預備好了。Mr. Gill 我希望你能同我們一塊兒去。

Gill 我亦很願意跟隨兩位同去。
自己 Ward,還有一事,你說大學修業生都要加入
的是那幾個會呢?

Ward 最要緊的是聯合社,裏頭附有演講會,圖書館及閱書室等,演講是全照着國會的定章,演講的標準很高,題目以政治為主,這聯合社簡直可算是造成將來政治家的養成所,已有不少的政治人物,做牛津或劍橋的會長,這實在是學生最尊崇的位子,此外學生們要加入的,是棒球,足球,網球,及賽船會等。

* * * *

我們正在問答之間,不覺已到了街上,這街擠滿了穿法蘭絨衣裳的人,有些肩上背着網球拍,有些向河上邊去的,有的乘着自由車,有的是步行,沒有一個人不是去運動的。

Cherwell 是 Isis 河的一條窄狹的支流,裏頭滿是方頭平低用篙撐的遊艇,每隻船上坐着兩個人,一個人撐船,一個人靠着墊子坐着,有時看見一種獨木舟,出沒其中,找那幽隱的去處, Cherwell 真是撐船的天堂。

我們路過 Merton 大學的後面,見這校隱藏在常春藤攀滿的高大圍牆中,到了 Isis 河畔,見那裏的景緻極其出色,沿河邊一帶停着的,全是各學校的船舶,各懸旗幟,賽船的日期,船上招待賓客,平時作

爲學生沐浴和更衣的地方。

這河面來往的船隻很多，形式不一，這邊橫刺裏過來一隻單槳快船，速率非常之大，那邊出現一隻兩個學生坐的小船，一個善划者，駕着一隻雙槳快艇，教練他們，這裏來了一隻雙槳船，那裏有八個學生歇了槳，聽那岸上的教練員，指點他們的缺點，這人在馬上跟他們的船走，我對於他的直率批評，覺得很有意思，他指摘的時候，並指出名姓，說“你違犯某某幾條了。”並有人問我，聽了他的尖利口吻，個人心中能否不受激刺，我們沿岸走去，直到大學船房那裏，路上經過了許多學校的棒球場，及網球場，我們又從那裏走回來，向 St. John's 花園而去，那花園真是一個很美麗可遊的地方。

自己這草怎麼會弄的這樣好？

Ward 有一個好問閒事的遊客，亦曾向這裏的園丁問過這一句話，老園丁回說，這事很容易，“我們剪剪札札札札剪剪，已經五百年了。”

自己我知道了，這不過是時間的問題啊。

Ward 不錯，但是也須氣候得宜，世界上最美麗的草，生在愛爾蘭，那裏雨水很多，所以愛爾蘭又叫翡翠島。

自己我好像有時聽見說過，他們每年在花園裏演一次露天戲，這是真的麼？

Ward 是的，他們常演莎氏樂府中的田舍風景

的戲劇，像“*As you like it*”這戲很好看哩。自己在聽的一方面，自然是很好了，但不知演員心中，作何感想，在露天裏演述，並不是甚麼極快意的事體。

Ward 不，或者他們喜歡在空氣沉悶的劇場裏，假如我們要在 Magdalen 禮拜堂行祈禱的時候，趕到那邊，我想我們應當離開這裏了。

我們到了那裏，恰見一班唱歌隊，魚貫走進教堂，其間大半是九歲至十五歲以內的童子，黑衫外面罩着雪白的法衣，他們歌聲一發，令我聽了，宛如登仙，童子們的聲音，好似銀鐘和水晶一般的清亮，後來有一個十二歲的童子，獨唱贊美歌，那時我快樂已達極點，他的聲調，愈唱愈高，繞梁不絕，教堂中幾盡為悠揚婉轉之音所充滿。

歷時約卅分鐘，晚禱做畢，我們就取道至車站登車。

自己今日真快樂極了，然而我要請問那大學的經濟狀況如何，政府裏有津貼給那大學麼？

Ward 一個小錢也沒有，除了學生們的學費一宗進款之外，所有一切收入，都是旁人捐助的，有幾處學堂的經濟，比較其餘的尚稱寬裕。

自己 那些學堂的錢夠開銷麼？

Ward 你可曾聽見過大學的經費有足夠開銷的麼？牛津大學的經濟實在很窘，大學校長現正向大眾募捐哩。

自己 學生們同本地人的感情怎樣？

Ward 比從前好得多了，往日市民與學生爭吵時常發生，但是現在總沒有聽見提起此事了。

自己 你們除了牛津和劍橋兩處老大學外，還有旁的甚麼大學呢？

Ward 英格蘭有倫敦、孟却斯特、布里斯多、利物浦、博敏漢、德蘭姆、利司和腦丁漢等大學，蘇格蘭有愛丁堡、格拉斯哥、和阿柏定等大學，威爾士有班谷、喀笛夫、阿泊利司台滋等大學，愛爾蘭有都柏林大學。

自己 他們都比牛津和劍橋便宜麼？

Ward 是的，便宜得多了，而且他們的功課很好，他們都有點專科的性質，德蘭姆大學吸收學礦科的學生，孟却司特吸收學紡織的學生，而愛丁堡大學則因醫科著稱於世。

自己 然而我想這些大學吸引學生的能力，沒有一個能及得上牛津和劍橋哩？

Ward 這是不能及的，學生們不住在校裏，分散在城市間居住，所以英國各大學，毫無歷史上連續的感想，假使你到劍橋大學去，你

就聯想到 Sir Isaac Newton 曾在此求學，神童 Francis Bacon 幼年曾到此地，假如你到牛津大學去，就覺得到處全有發明家 Addison 和 Newman 的一種精神，至於那些新辦的大學，絕不能有這種情形。

自己時間將來可以使之變化的。

Ward 是的，此時我們又到了 Paddington 啦，因為八點鐘我有晚餐之約，我在此地就要告辭了。

自己還有一件事，你們入大學的年齡是多少？

Ward 普通年齡在十八歲上下，修業期間是三四年。

自己多謝多謝，我要曉得的一切都已知道了，再會。

第十章 家庭生活

親愛的父親——

我在一個可以算得能代表英國中等人家的家庭中，住了兩天，這家的主人，名 Renshaw，是一位年約四十歲的城市居民，他的夫人，他時常呼她的教名為 Mary，比他的年紀輕五歲，但是看起來，好像比他還要年輕得多，他們有五個小孩子，三男二女，他們的年齡，自十五歲起，到六歲止，名子叫 Charlie, Jack, Arthur, Betty 和 Isopel (簡譯作 Bell.) 這所房屋的底層是廚房，和一大間孩子們的遊戲室，樓

房的最下層，是正廳、餐室、客廳，還有一間小室，內設 Mrs. Renshaw 的寫字檯，而 Mr. Renshaw 晚上亦在內吸煙，他們的家藏書籍，亦在這房中，然而實際上，宅內各處，皆有書籍整齊陳列，此外小孩子們各有小書架一隻。

第一層樓上，有三間臥室，和一間浴室，其中有一間臥室，是 Mr. 和 Mrs. Renshaw 住的，一間是專為客人預備的，第三間是女孩子們和他們的媒姆住的，第二層樓上，是男孩子們住的兩間臥室，還有一排裝暖氣管的小房間，存放麻紗被單等項，第三層上，是僕人的臥室，和一間箱籠房。

他們家庭裏的用人，是三個侍僕，一個廚司，一個客堂侍婢，和一個媒姆，全是女人，每晨早餐前，必有一男僕來刷皮鞋，擦小刀，送熱水等物，通稱他為刷靴僕，一俟早餐用畢，他即離去，你聽我講了他們僕人的工資，一定覺得很有趣味，廚司每年工資二十鎊，婢僕和媒姆，每人每年十八鎊，至於他們的膳宿，都歸主人供給，這一層，每人一年倒要多費二十鎊，刷靴僕的工資，每禮拜是兩先令，並供給他的早餐，這裏的花園，祇佔一塊小而且窄的地位，小孩子們在內玩耍，不甚合用，但是 Renshaw 很得意的種了許多極好看的玫瑰花，因為他們的住宅，與 Hampstead Heath 相近，所以小孩子們，儘可隨時到那邊去玩耍。

這所房屋，是半分離式的，用紅磚造成，Renshaw

對我說，這房租每年是一百五十鎊，按季繳付，各項捐稅，每年約有四十餘鎊，並且內部的修葺，尚須承租人自理，房東祇管房屋的大體而已。

在倫敦除已經設備傢具的房屋之外，要想租一所一年期限的房子，是很難的，故此 Renshaw 所租的，是一所五年租期的房屋。

我所知道的，現在你亦明白了，總之，我望你對於我所住的地方情形，曉得一點兒就是了，此信是我在臥室內寫的，室內放着一張寫字檯，並備有紙筆墨水，而且連郵票都給備好，真是格外的禮遇了。

我前晚到得遲，那時小孩子們都已睡了，我隨後也即就寢，請他們明晨七點鐘來喚我，因八時就要早餐的。

我見臥室內有一小壺熱水，於是就用此行我每晚所行的洗禮，禮畢，然後就寢，一直安睡到明晨七點，嗣後侍婢揭起簾子，放入日光，我纔驚醒，她拿來一罐修面用的熱水，又從床底下拉出一隻燒磁瑯磁的鉛鐵浴盆，問我歡喜熱水浴呢，還是冷水浴，我因為對於英人每天早晨的冷水浴，尚沒有用慣，所以通融辦理，擇用溫水，這個侍婢，照着我的意思，把浴盆灌滿，又放下一條大毛巾，然後退出，聽我自便，我即起身洗浴，剃面，穿衣，着靴，我從臥室門外，拿進這雙皮靴時，是已經代我擦得很光亮的了，我於是下樓走到餐堂，見他們一家人，已經都在那裏，我先和 Mrs. Renshaw 握手，她問我昨晚可曾安睡，我又

和 Mr. Renshaw 握手，他就將小孩子們叫來，一一和我介紹，我都同他們握手，惟有最年幼的 Bell 仰着頭等我與她接吻。

早餐時，Renshaw 坐在長桌的一頭，桌上鋪着白布，面前擺着一大盤子油煎鹹肉和雞蛋，他就從這盤分裝在一堆熱盤子裏，每個小孩子分給一盤。Mrs. Renshaw 坐在另一頭，照管咖啡壺，她把壺中的熱飲料，倒在白瓷大杯中，分送桌上各人，我想自己也須幫點忙，於是就把麵包切開，Charlie 告訴我說，這是他平時常做的事情呢。

我想把早餐席上的談話，略講一點，大概也許使你開心。

Mrs. R. 向 (Mr. R.) Tom 呀，你給 Bell 的鹹肉太多了，請你拿些回來。

Bell 喔，母親，我吃得完的。

Mrs. R. 我愛呀，你或者能吃得了，但是於你不甚相宜呢。

Charlie 母親，我今天可以穿着網球鞋去上學麼？

Mrs. R. 不行，Charlie，你必須穿上你的靴子，Jack，你戴的領子，有多醜醜啊？你在那裏拿來的？

Jack 母親，我找不着乾淨的，我想必定有人把牠們藏起來了。

Mrs. R. 我想你沒有細細的找罷，吃完了早餐，跑上樓去，戴上一條乾淨領子，纔是一個好孩

- 子呢。
- Mrs. R. 談先生，你還要再用一杯咖啡麼？Betty，下來把談先生的碟子放在食櫈上，Arthur 呀，把牛油和果醬送過去。
- Arthur 母親，可以讓我再吃點鹹肉麼？我祇吃了很小的一塊。
- Mrs. R. Tom，倘若你還有餘剩的，就再給他一點。
- Arthur，把你的碟子送過來。
- Mrs. R. Charlie 是我家的板球將兒呀，你昨天得了多少點數？
- Charlie 祇不過二十點，但是我還指望得那半個 crown 呢。
- Mr. R. 他得到五十點，我允許給他兩先令六辨士，所以他永遠希望着得這獎賞呢。
- * * * *
- Mrs. R. 孩子們趕快些，你們上學堂去的時候到了，你們的書都拿齊了麼？Betty，你的手套在那裏？在你的袋裏麼？戴在手上罷。
- Arthur 喔，母親，我找不着我的帽子了，我記得昨晚放在這裏的，這教我怎麼辦呢？
- Mrs. R. 到帽架後面尋尋看，或者掉下去了。孩子們，你們可真要去啦，不然你們就要遲到了，趕快去罷，可不要在店窗面前站住張望。
- 小孩子們剛剛走後，Renshaw 自己也就搭火車往城裏去了，要等到晚上七點鐘纔得回來，他動身

之前，囑咐我在室內閒坐，那裏有烟草、書籍，可以消遣時光。等到一點鐘午餐，一點鐘之後，Mrs. R. 也就將家裏的事辦完了，她每天早晨皆是如此的。

我就依了他的話，在室內翻閱幾卷釘成書本的 Punch，時光過得很愉快，Mrs. R. 時常來看看我可舒服麼。

大約在十二點三刻的時候，我聽得正廳的磁瓦地上皮靴攙攙聲和書籍投下聲，知道小孩子們已回來了，他們都跑上樓去洗手，隨後聽得鑼响，我們就都走到餐室，這一次是小孩子的餐膳，食品祇有一味燒羊腿熱菜，外加馬鈴薯和花椰菜，第二道是覆盆子餡的饅頭，小孩們祇喝些冷水，但是 Mrs. R. 和我是喝紅葡萄酒，Mrs. R. 切羊肉，我幫着切饅頭，侍婢則把菜蔬，挨次送到各人面前自取，席間的談話，大都涉及小孩子們在學校所作的事情，我恐怕也記不清楚了，男孩子們自午後二點半起，至四點半止，仍須上學，女孩子們就不再去了，因為 Mrs. R. 自己那天下午須出去拜訪朋友，所以叫女孩子們，領我到 Hampstead 去遊覽，我很歡喜的贊成這個提議，我們就欣然走出，女孩子們戴着白色的帽，穿着寬大的布外衣，淡黃褐色長襪和澄色的鞋，我因為要與時相合，所以穿了一套灰色的衣服，戴着新草帽，和一條灰藍色的領帶。

我們走到第一個糖菓店時，我叫大家止步，我走進去買了些諸古力糖，作為我們以後談話時消遣

的食品。

吾對於她們學校的情形，已曉得了許多。她們告訴我說，小孩們去的是一所容有一百五十學生的學校，這是一所私立學校，教授預備致進各公立學院的課程，像 Eton, Harrow, Winchester, 和 Rugby 等處。上課時間，為九點半至十二點半，再從二點半到四點半，此外學生們晚上可在家裏自修兩小時，每禮拜他們有兩次半日假，在禮拜三和禮拜六，這兩天下午，都沒有功課，但是在這兩天，所有的學生，均須加入學校的遊戲，像棍球，足球，或彎棍擊球等，均照時令舉行的，他們的第六級，要算是最高的一班，一年級是最低的，升降都在每學期開始的時候，Charlie 現在第五級讀書，明年可望升學了。

Bell 說先生們很嚴厲，對於男學生們，常常稱他們姓，並且須穿學校制服，Botty 亦說，教員有時用棍子打男學生，然而我曉得普通的責罰，是作詩就是通稱為詩節的，或是在放學時留校，不令回家，我問她們，你們同名姓的很多，先生們怎樣分別得出呢，她們說教員叫他們是按照年齡的長幼和最幼，所以 Charlie 是長的，Renshaw, Arthur, 是最幼的 Renshaw。但是英國學生，都狠不願意同學們曉得了他的教名，所以竭力的把教名隱秘着。

女校的班次，也分六級，還附設着一個幼稚園，教員皆是婦女，並沒有身體上的責罰，我雖講過女孩子們下午不上學校，但是她們在家中，却也有一點

半鐘的自修功課，她們有網球隊和彎棍擊球隊俱樂部，她們一禮拜須在練身房操練兩次，有椿事情，你聽了一定要驚異，就是這所學校，是一個有限公司設立的——女子公共日校公司，——所分派的股息，約合四厘，倫敦郊外的大城市，和幾處省城都設着這種學校，我們五點鐘回轉時，見男孩子們剛剛回家，當時 Mrs. Renshaw 還沒有轉來，所以小孩子們就邀我一同吃茶，他們有茶，牛乳，許多厚麵包和牛油，還有菓醬和梅餅，他們的嫗姆，把茶斟好，大家很快樂的吃了一頓茶點，吃畢立刻就把桌子收拾乾淨，小孩子們於是坐下自修功課，Charlie 讀一篇拉丁散文，Jack 和 Arthur 讀 Caesar，Betty 溫習法文練習題，Bell 這時候在幼稚園，故沒有什麼功課作，所以一味吵鬧，她後來被年長的壓制着，亦就坐下讀書，我靜靜的走出此室，見 Mrs. R. 已坐在客廳裏。

Mrs. R. 談先生，我希望小孩子們沒有令你厭煩，自己絕對不會的，我在這樣短促的時間內，總未曾得到過這樣多的指教，但是還有一件事我想請教，他們什麼時候睡覺呢？

Mrs. R. 喔，Bell 七點鐘就睡，其餘幾個小孩子，到八點晚餐，就寢時約在八點半九點半之間，總要看他們自修的功課如何而定。

自己這幾位男孩子，似很用功呢。

Mrs. R. 還好，但是我想他們還不至於用功過度，

無論怎樣，他們總是歡歡喜喜的，自己 Mrs. Renshaw，如果你要去寫信，我不要來攪擾你了，我很能自娛哩。

Mrs. R. 談先生，那真承你體量了，我本要把這幾封信，在今晚的郵班送出去，第一次鐘响是在七點，晚餐是七點半。

鐘响時，我就上樓到臥室，用預備好的熱水，洗了臉，又穿上了晚膳衣服，戴上黑色的領帶，下樓走到客室，見 Mr. R. 業已回來，也換了一套和我一樣的服裝，隨後 Mrs. R. 走出來，穿了一件黑色線織的高領長衣，我們就一同走入餐室，坐下用餐，這次簡單的晚餐，共有四樣食品，是湯、魚、肉和糖點，我們喝了一杯深紅色的美味烈酒，再換一杯咖啡，和一支雪茄烟，晚餐已畢，此後晚上的時間，亦過得很爽快，Mrs. R. 用針鈎織物品，Mr. R. 和我辯論他從晚報上看來的一段外國新聞，十一點鐘時，我們各自就寢，Mr. R. 和我又喝了一杯威士忌和蘇打的夜酒，我恐怕這封信，寫得過冗長了，深望你不要厭煩呢，並問家中各人安好。

男 瀛 稟 一九〇七年七月廿六日自倫敦 Belgrave 花園七號寄

第十一章 婚禮

有一天接得 Ward 寄來的一封信，我很覺詫異，信裏面的話是：——

親愛的談君：

茲有懇者，從今日起，兩禮拜後，我就要結婚，倘你屆時肯任我的債相，不勝感盼。此事實無令人生畏的地方，你祇要穿一件禮服，在教堂中舉行婚禮時，贊助我一切，並在相當的時節，把戒指取出，你應允我纔是好朋友，我對你將深為感激哩。

J. B. Ward 啓

這個信息，很使我驚愕失措，但是，想了想，就決定允彼所請，我於是覆了一封信給他，說

好，我願助你，但有許多事，我須先請教，所以最好請你明晚八時惠臨敝處晚餐，一切尙待指示。

談 瀛 啓

沒有幾天，我接到新娘父母寄來的一張用銀字印在堅硬白紙上的正式請帖。

Arthur Morley 君 夫人 敬請

談瀛先生駕臨，參觀小女 Edith Mary 和 James Brabazon Ward 君，於八月十八號下午二時在 Kensington 地方 St. John's 教堂中行結婚喜禮，筵設於 Cranley Gardens 十八號。

候 覆

Ward 將一切手續，明白示我，在結婚這一天的早晨，我送給新娘一束白色花球，行禮時繫着的，等到十二點半鐘，我就同 Ward 坐下午餐，我們兩人都穿

着禮服，鈕孔上帶着白玫瑰並另外預備着大禮帽，和淡紫色的羊皮手套，可憐的Ward，好像神經受了刺激的樣子，但仍勉力吃飽午膳，到了一點半的時候，我們上了一輛雙馬轎車，向教堂駛去，教堂的台階鋪着一條紅色地毯，然我們並不從前門進去，却由後面走進聖衣室，我們看見牧師，已早在這裏等着了，我們向他們致敬後，即走進教堂內，列席在新娘的前面，這時教堂已充滿賓客，用白花和冬青裝飾得甚是華麗，堂中央的甬道鋪着一條鮮紅的地毯，結婚時，新娘總要遲到十分鐘，這是自古傳留給新娘的權利，但是我們耐心靜等了片刻工夫，新娘由正門走入，她父親攙着她，一直走上教堂中央的甬道，她的母親和弟兄，早已來到教堂，佔着左邊的座位，新郎的親眷，都坐在右邊，她通身穿的是白色服裝，一條長裙，後面用兩個小孩子托着，頭上蓋着一副絲織的面紗，戴着一頂橘花冠，她的唯一妝飾品，是一件鑽石垂飾，那是Ward送給她的，此外我還看見她拿着我送給她的花球，我心中很是歡喜，隨伴新娘的，有六位女僕相，都是年輕處女，或者是新娘的朋友親戚，她們都穿藍外衣，戴着帽子，但是不罩面紗，這些女僕相，各拿着Ward送給她們的花球，新娘一走到聖壇踏步邊，她就立在新郎的左邊，雙方都面朝着牧師，背對着衆賓，立在Ward的右邊，比他略後一點，Morley先生，立在他的女兒左邊，女僕相則一對一對的立在新娘的後面。

婚儀於是開始舉行，我對於戒指一層，稍微覺得有點膽怯，不時的在背心袋中摸摸，好曉得牠是的確在裏面，但是到了相當的時候，我就把牠拿出，交給 Ward，亦並沒有爲難，他即把戒指戴在新娘的左手中指上，正式結婚的禮節，共費了二十分鐘的工夫，此後經牧師一番激獎和祝福，遂告禮成，我們又走到登錄處簽名，在那裏遇着了兩方的親屬，他們都向新夫婦道賀，這個時候，新娘的面紗，方始掀到背後，正在這個當口，衆賓齊唱結婚詩歌，唱畢，就魚貫的由甬道走至大門，Mr. Ward 及夫人，攜手先行，新娘的面紗，仍在背後，我跟在女傭相的領袖後面走，再後就是其餘的女傭相，由幾個家裏的男子護送着，末尾是新夫婦的父母，同時風琴奏結婚歌曲，我們到了門口，看見一排雙馬馬車，在那裏等着呢，馬匹都是灰色的，飾以白色玫瑰花，而車夫和僕從的衣上，亦都佩着白花，他們的馬鞭，亦用白絲條裝飾着。

新娘新郎登第一輛馬車，我和三位女傭相乘第二輛，我們同向新娘父母的住宅駛去，在那裏舉行歡迎會。

衆賓客隨後陸續來到，新娘和新郎並立受賀，有幾種祝詞，姑記如下。

X. Mrs. Ward, 敬祝新禧，願你諸事幸福。

Mrs. W. 謝謝你，Mr. James, 我們遷入新屋後，望你一準來看我們。

Y. 恭賀 Mrs. Ward, 願你留心, 把你那個伶俐的丈夫約束好了。

Mrs. W. 我試着辦罷, Mrs. Thompson, 但是他的行止倒還好呢。

Z. 祝你幸福無疆, Mrs. Ward.

Mrs. W. 謝謝你, Mr. Robinson, 你能惠臨, 我很欣喜。

男客們對於 Ward 的祝賀, 性質上好像還要不拘禮節, 猶如「老朋友, 好運氣呀」「我恭賀你, 我親愛的孩子, 你真是個走紅運的人, 娶着這樣一個可愛的妻子。」和諸如此類的話。

* * *

這個時候, 僕人已把香檳酒, 代各客斟滿, 就有新娘家中最老的朋友, 恭祝新婚夫婦的健康, 並祝他們福壽無量, 隨後 Ward 代自己和他的夫人致答詞, 此時另一個朋友, 向女僕相們致祝, 而請我代她們答覆, 我覺得困難之至, 然實在是無法脫卸此責, 所以也祇得勉強應允。

此後的禮節, 就是由新娘分割喜餅, 那餅是一塊三層的大作品, 總共有三尺多高, 頂上飾着一個糖製的花瓶, 餅的四週, 都有烘硬的白糖蓋着, 大約有一寸的四分之一厚, 在糖的下一層, 是一層杏仁糊, 有一寸半厚, 再內就是餅的本體, 都是黑色, 並很肥膩的, 要割開這樣厚的硬糖, 當然是件很難的事, 其實是留着給糖菓商用鋸來鋸的, 那新娘不過用一把小刀, 插入早已割開的一處, 取下第一片就是了。

其餘的即由糖菓商人割下，一塊一塊的分給各客。喜餅能保存極長久的時期，Mrs. Ward 對我說，她還有一片她自己的喜餅，放在鉛鐵罐內，已過二十五年了，倒還很好的呢。

每人得了一片後，賓客們大都走進另外一個房間，裏面陳設着各種禮物，每件禮物上，都附着贈送人的名片，禮物中包括的種類甚多，自鑽石手鐲起，至自來水筆止，樣樣都有，還有幾種，像百音琴，和家具等項，因物體太巨，不便陳設，所以祇將贈送人的名片排列，藉以代表而已。

我同一位年長者，在房間內參觀一週，他的名字，我沒有聽得清楚，但是我從他倒探出許多言語出來。

自己這裏的陳設，很為華麗，是不是？

X. 是的。然而你我背談的話，這結婚禮物一項，似已變成一種捐稅了，年輕的人，好像希望他們的朋友，連填宅的傢具，都當替他們備辦齊全呢。

自己新娘身邊也帶過來些什麼東西麼？

X. 照習尚她隨帶些家用麻紗，當然還要帶着她自己的妝奩，和足供兩年穿用的衣服等類。

自己我不曉得這些禮物中，究竟有多少鐘，現在這裏我數得六隻。

X. 或者還多着呢，這樣重複的物件，是常有的

因為有許多人，都想到同樣的物件，所以如此，我倒要問 Ward 君和他的夫人要到那裏去度他們的蜜月呢？

自己 到巴黎去，我想起來了，我應當就到車站上去，把他們的行李掛號，代他們買好車票，再看我可能代他們預留一個車位。

X. 那麼新夫婦動身，你可就看不見了。

自己 那是有趣味的事麼？

X. 是這樣的，新娘子進內，將結婚的衣飾卸去，換上所謂出門的衣服，這衣服當然是較為樸素一點兒的了，然後新娘告別父母，偕同她的丈夫登車，馳赴車站，當新夫婦從屋內走上馬車的時間內，照例人們拿着許多生米向他們二人拋擲，以為這樣，新夫婦就可以百事如意，這種習慣，於受的人一方面，極不適意，你當然可以體貼得到的了，這種習慣，現已不甚通行了，今天我看見 Morley 夫婦預備下很多小袋，裏面裝着許多銀紙製成的小馬蹄鐵，這是代替那生米用的。

自己 馬蹄鐵是何用意呢？

X. 因為普通都以牠是吉祥的符號。

自己 我好像記得有人說過，有在馬車後邊擲舊鞋的。

X. 是，不錯的，今天一定有一兩個人擲白

緞子拖鞋呢，假使能夠不令乘車的人曉得，或者還許拴一隻在車上呢。

自己我很想看一看這個玩意兒，但是我要去了。

第十二章 銀行休假日

英國人有許多的國慶日，亦稱銀行休息日，因為只能在這幾天裏銀行可以正式休業，這些休息日，就是復活日的星期一，聖靈降臨節的後一日，這天當在陽曆的五月裏和八月裏的第一個禮拜一，耶穌聖誕日，及聖誕後一日，銀行休息日。新近的制度，有時亦稱 St. Lubbock 日，因 Sir John Lubbock 得名的，現在 Lord Avebury 已將這議案由國會通過，作為正式的休息日。

銀行休息日，尤其是下流社會出外尋樂的日子，較有身家的人，照例都往鄉間去遊樂，那天有幾百次的旅行火車，開往各處，但是普通民衆，在臨近尋樂，擁擠在各大公園裏，水晶宮，愛翠森林，以及亞歷山大王宮等處，我因 Renshaw 的邀請，故在 Hampstead 地方過八月裏的銀行休息日，我因為要避免火車中的擠軋，所以就在他那裏過夜，因為在這些銀行休息日子裏，火車上的等次，完全紊亂，人人見車就上的。

禮拜一早晨十點鐘，Renshaw 同我忽忽的出門，這日天氣極熱，我幸喜穿了涼爽的衣服，戴着草帽，這道路直達一座山頂上的草地，在那裏可以俯視

倫敦及其郊外，路上擠滿了人家的眷屬，他們都穿上最好的衣服，還有許多人，背着食物囊，

自己 你猜今日銀行休息日，有多少人到這草地上來？

Mr. R. 大約總在五萬人以上，你要曉得，這塊草地的面積，約有三百英畝的大小呢。

自己 我們現在算牠有三百二十畝的樣子，是的，所以這地方，能容納許多人，還不覺得擁擠，他們這些人怎樣玩耍呢？

Mr. R. 有的不過信步閑遊，隨地領略些風景罷了，但是那些高興的人，做些遊戲，如打球，棒球，捉迷藏等類。

自己 你不是說還有許多的遊戲場子麼？

Mr. R. 我想這裏有傀儡戲，騎木馬，打彩，擲椰子，盪船，騎驢等種種遊戲，祇化幾個銅元就可以盡量的玩耍了，你去嘗試嘗試啊。

自己 我所以換了滿袋的銅元，就為這個緣故。

* * * *

這時候我們已到了山頂，我臨高遠眺，風景絕佳，沿山脊之上是道路，右邊白色烟霧中，隱約望見倫敦煙塵之外，遙見聖保爾教堂的屋頂矗立，我向東南瞻視，見光芒一道，知道是照在水晶宮上的日光，左邊是一片森林密佈地勢起伏的鄉野，又見距樹林約十二里地方的哈羅教堂，建築在一座小山頂上，我們在朦朧縹渺中，可以隱約望見文叔宮。

自己噲。景緻真好啊！

Mr. R. 是的，我們看來這景緻真所謂無窮盡了，有許多著名畫家，都曾受過這景緻的感動呢。

自己當然，若是一個畫家，對着這樣的奇景，而心中依然無所感動，他必是一個劣等的美術家了。

Mr. R. 我所愛的是牠空闊無邊，凡目力所及的地方，毫無防礙視線的東西，讓我們到草地上去看看，可有甚麼消遣的法子，我還有一句話對你說，你要當心那些無知的小孩子們，他們拿着射水管，噴射到你的衣領上，就要變成綿軟的了。

自己不錯，多謝你，我留心就是了。

* * * *

我們離了那路，望下走去，經過一條闊的草徑，兩旁列着打彩間，遊戲場之類，第一樁使我注意的，就是那做椰子生意人的喊聲“你要尋的東西在這裏啊，這種甜如奶汁的椰子，一辨士三擲哩。”我被他的話引動，遂摸出了一個辨士，他給我三個大木球，我逐一的向一個擺着許多椰子的鐵架上擲去，鐵架的距離，約有二十碼左右，如果擊下了一隻，我就可以得一個椰子，但是我這三個球，都是虛擲，我心中倒暗暗歡喜，因為假使把一個大椰子弄到手裏，我簡直的是無法擺佈了。

自己 Renshaw, 這次該輪着你顯你的本事了。
Mr. R. 老友, 不是這種遊戲, 我一輩子也不會擊
中一個椰子的, 我要找樣傍的東西試一
試, 那邊有架試力機, 我投一個辨士到那
裏去罷。

這試力機是一個圓皮墊子, 上面裝着一個圓盤
和一根針, Renshaw 化了一個辨士, 於是向後退了
退, 握緊了拳頭, 向那圓墊子打去, 頃刻那針轉動, 指
在這一拳有幾磅力量的數目上, 我的心, 果然被這
遊戲引住了, 然而我並未嘗試, 因為我看見一處打
彩間, 那裏出了一辨士, 可以向噴泉上跳躍的球兒
放一鎊, 我為祖國的名譽起見, 小心瞄準, 放了一鎊,
那球果然落下, 我歡喜非常, 店主人上前, 遞給我一
支令人可疑的雪茄, 獎勵我的能幹, 當時我放在衣
袋中, 但是後來我送給了一個年輕的小販, 因為我
曾仔細檢視, 證明我並未錯疑那雪茄的性質。

我們第二次, 在一木馬場裏歇腳, 中間有許多木
馬, 在活動的地板上旋轉, 當轉動的時候, 就有一種
用蒸汽鼓動的風琴相隨, 毫不停止, 這些馬是三隻
一排, 轉旋得穩快, 而且可以用機械的方法, 使他升
降, 有時坐在上面的人, 覺得不快, 恍若暈船似的。

那盞船是大的鞦韆和方頭樣式的船兒做成的,
每一個鞦韆上, 可對坐兩人, 鞦韆的前面, 有一根繩
子, 把這繩子更番的抽, 那鞦韆就能夠上升得很高,
Renshaw 和我各付了一辨士, 然後盡力的拉那繩

子，這樣一來，那鞦韆竟一直的升到橫木之上，這橫木是掛鞦韆用的。

所有的鞦韆，都已經被人佔着，還有許多人，站在旁邊等着輪班，這些鞦韆，實在是英國下流社會所極歡迎的。

自己 每個鞦韆上，皆有男孩女童，或青年的男女，
你看見麼？

Mr. R. 看見了，這是已訂婚的男女尋樂的日子，或是青年男子盼望所眷的少婦允婚的佳期，男子在草地上，使女子到處遊戲娛樂，所以表現他們禮待女子的機會很多哩，這種方法就叫“專門會鈔。”

Mr. R. 我們明天因暑假都要離家，僕役們正忙着打行李鋪蓋呢。

自己 你們要往那裏去呢？

Mr. R. 我們到 Scarborough 去一個月。

自己 這樣全家的出行，風俗是如此的麼？

Mr. R. 是的，所有英國的中等人家，大概都是全家搬到海邊，或鄉村上，去避半個月或一個月的暑。

自己 我想這樣對於小孩子們是有益處的。

Mr. R. 於大人也有益處，我希望你能加入，同我們去一個禮拜。

自己 謝你的盛意，不過我現在已沒有餘暇，我在這裏還有許多事要做哩。

Mr. B. 那麼,你要記牢,無論你甚麼時候來,我們都
歡喜見你的,如果要來,你可以打電報通
知我們,你在什麼時候來,那麼我們好等
候你。
自己 你真是太客氣了。



中華民國捌拾叁年叁月貳玖日

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VOLUME ONE

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- 2, 本書所列對談式五十課皆深切實用遺詞遺句亦極斟酌篇幅長短分配均勻俾學者循序漸進不感困難
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