

Practice Set IX (10)

#1

We shall pick you up in the morning on our way to the exhibition for the T.V. I shall then return home with you and if it is convenient, shall lunch and have dinner with you on the 31st. On the 30th I seem to have got tied up with appointments. If there is a moment, I shall drop in or at least phone. Anyway we are looking forward to seeing you at dinner and the theatre.

#2

The pride and arrogance of youth is long since gone, replaced by a deep humility not only personal but for the whole human race. Aren't we presumptuous in equating ourselves with the world? Does it really matter if the human race as we know it ceases to exist? The earth will continue and probably another species evolve!

#3

This year we in India seem to have more than our share of difficulties. These are partly inherent in the process of growth but aggravated by the war (with Pakistan) and the burden of ten million refugees followed by a terrible drought which has caused shortage of food and drinking water and of power which has affected our industries also. So the Opposition is having a field day.

#4

Thank you for your messages. There is so much I wanted to write to you about and I had put this card aside for the purpose. But Christmas is already here so I hasten to send my love and good wishes.

#5

I have thought of you a great deal and long wanted to write. If I can get a moment either on the plane or on my return, I shall write in detail.

#6

As you say the whole world is "in a mess" yet when one looks closely, many long-standing problems are being solved. Perhaps that is life itself - a mixture of good and bad. But because of the advance of science and technology, everything is so much faster and such a vaster scale and hence more complex.

#7

I shall insist on any right I may possess to have the quotation removed from p.ii of this book; and the book will be improved by its removal. It is dragged in, and has nothing to do with the authors' argument; in eight lines they have made seven alterations (and one in Macaulay over the page); and it was not the German Emperor but the German people which called ours a mercenary army, as in fact it was and is.

#8

Many thanks for your kind congratulations. Joy does predominate over sorrow, as I am fond of money and fond of leisure; but as I am also fond of solitude, and shall not have it at Cambridge, there is some sorrow mingled with the joy; apart from leaving friends at the College.

#9

I have read Mrs. Taylor's poems, that you were kind enough to give me, with a good deal of pleasure and interest. there are phrases and lines that are quite beautiful, and she has not only technical skill but impulse; and yet there is a curious indistinctness about the general impression, and hardly a poem that rings clear. She is rather like the second Lord Lytton; susceptible to the beauty of other people's poetry, and giving out an answering note, beautiful in its way; and she is not so terribly fluent as he was, not such a bare-faced thief. The appeal to the optic nerve is almost shameless, and becomes monotonous. I like best some of the short pieces, like "The Young Martyrs". The poem on the Magi, as you said, is also good.

#10

I am anxious to know what it is that you think British Art requires in order to regenerate it: whether it is ribald laughter going up to heaven, or a river of laughter coming down from heaven; for the papers are not agreed.

Practice Set X (10)

#1

It is true that there is in Europe, in France, in Italy and in Germany a class of men who give themselves the title of Liberals, but who have nothing of the Liberal about them but the name, and who are the most dangerous of men. They are not Liberals; they are revolutionaries; in their principles they are so extravagant that they aim at nothing less than the destruction of modern society. With these men we have nothing in common, but it is the tactics of our adversaries always to identify us with them.

#2

For my part, as I have already said, I am a Liberal. I am one of those who think that everywhere, in human things, there are abuses to be reformed, new horizons opened up, and new forces to be developed. Moreover, Liberalism seems to me in all respects superior to the other principle. The principle that desire for happiness with which we are all born into the world, which pursues us throughout life, and which is never completely gratified on this side of the grave. Our souls are immortal, but our means are limited. We constantly strive toward an ideal which we never attain. We dream of good, but we never realize the best. We only reach the goal we have set for ourselves, to discover new horizons opening up, which we had not before suspected. We rush on toward them and those horizons, explored in their turn, reveal to us others which lead us on ever further and further. And thus it will be as long as man is as he is, as long as the immortal soul inhabits a mortal body; his desires will be always vaster than his means and his actions will never rise to the height of his conceptions. He is the real Sisyphus of the fable; his work, always finished, must always be begun again. This condition of our nature is precisely that which makes the greatness of man, for it condemns him irrevocably to movement, to progress; our means are limited, but our nature is perfectible and we have the infinite for our arena. Thus there is always room for the perfecting of our nature and for the attainment by a larger number of an easier way of life. This, in my eyes, is what constitutes the superiority of Liberalism.

#3

We can now admit that both in Ontario and Quebec we have been imprudent in intensifying the feelings of the people as we have done. But without recriminating on the past, we have to look squarely at the situation.

#4

The party have been instrumental in making Cartier what he was amongst us. They took him when he was nothing, and for years fought all his battles. They approved of everything he said or did, they represented him as a pillar of the altar, and they poured the blessings of the Church over all his scandals. Cartier, as long as he was weak and needy, humiliated his despotic nature to them, and was in their hands a pliant tool. But when, after Confederation, he found himself supported by an overwhelmingly majority, he gave free vent to his own haughty nature. He did nothing against them, it is true, but he treated them as inferiors, and no longer submissively kissed their hands; that was enough to alienate their affections. He did still more: he gave them to understand very freely that he was the master, that he could rule and would rule without them.

#5

Well, sir, the government are very windy. They have blown and raged and threatened and the more they have raged and blown, the more that man Greenway has stuck to his coat. If it were in my power, I would try the sunny way. I would approach this man Greenway with the sunny way of patriotism, asking him to be just and to be fair, asking him to be generous to the minority, in order that we may have peace among all creeds and races which it has pleased God to bring upon this corner of our common country.

#6

Your Grace may perhaps tell me that these concessions do not go far enough. Was it possible to secure more? That is the first point to determine.

#7

By the bye - I spoke some time ago of coming to visit you for a week in the summer, and you suggested fixing a date. If you still want to have me, how would the second or third week in August do? I should like it because I shall have finished my examining then which usually leaves me rather knocked up, and a holiday with you would be just the right tonic. Let me know how it would suit you. If this won't do, I should then - as a second choice - take my week with you as a preparation for examining instead of a cure, and come about the second week of July. But of course it is nicer to take the medicine first and the sweet after, than vice-versa. I try not to spoil this visit by thinking too much about it, but every now and then it comes over me with a delicious whiff of anticipation.

#8

About (Geoffrey) Dennis: I doubt whether the kind of effects he aims at could be attained by a simpler style, tho' an effect you and I prefer probably could be. Still, one mustn't be dogmatic about simplicity. It may be our favourite style - but the pomps and sonorities are good in their different way none the less.

#9

The most interesting thing that has happened to me since I last wrote is reading War and Peace - at least I am now in the middle of the 4th and last volume so I think, bar accidents, I am pretty sure to finish it. It has completely changed my views of novels.

#10

While having a few days in bed recently I tried, at W's earnest recommendation, to read the Three Musketeers, but not only got tired of it but also found it disgusting. All these swaggering bullies, living on money off their mistresses - faugh! One never knows how good Scott is till one tries to read Dumas. Have you noticed how completely Dumas lacks any background? In Scott, behind the adventures of the hero, you have the whole society of the age, with all the interplay of town and country, Puritan and Cavalier, Saxon and Norman, or what not, and all the racy humour to the minor characters: and behind that again you have eternal things - the actual countryside, the mountains, the weather, the very feel of travelling. In Dumas, if you try to look even an inch behind immediate intrigue, you find just nothing at all. You are in an abstract world of gallantry and adventure which has no roots - no connection with human nature or mother earth. When the scene shifts from Paris to London there is no sense that you have reached a new country, no change of atmosphere. And I don't think there is a single passage to show that Dumas had ever seen a cloud, a road, a tree. In a word, if you were asked to explain what you and I meant by "the homely" in literature, you could almost reply, "It means the opposite of the Three Musketeers." But perhaps I am being too hard on what after all was written only for amusement. I suppose there must be a merit in the speed and verve of the plot, even if I don't like that kind of thing.

COMPLEXITY PRACTICE SETS - SCORING KEY

SET:	IX	X
1	1	1
2	3	5
3	3	2
4	2	4
5	1	3
6	4	1
7	1	3
8	4	3
9	3	1
10	3	6