

**Unit IV**

**Detailed:**

**R.L.Stevenson's Walking Tours**

**Non-Detailed:**

**Jerome K.Jerome's Uncle Podger Hangs a Picture**

The line seems to have been drawn expressly for the purpose of excluding the person whose portrait would have most closed the series. Goldsmith, however have been fortunate in his biographers. Within a few years his life has been written by Mr. Prior, by Mr. Washington Irving and by Mr. Forster. The diligence of Mr. Prior deserves great praise; the style of Mr. Washington Irving is always pleasing; but the highest place must, in justice, be assigned to the eminently interesting work of Mr. Forster.

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

(1850-1894)

Stevenson, the son of a Scottish engineer, was one of the greatest of story-tellers; but he was also a supremely great essayist. He was born near Edinburgh in 1850, and though he studied first for engineering and then for law, he had neither health nor enthusiasm enough for either of these. He became instead a story-teller, roaming the world in search of health and tales. He was a man of gentle character, who loved children and young people, and it was for them that his greatest work was done. The book from which these essays are taken, *Virginibus Puerisque*, was written in 1884 after a journey to America. It is a collection of admirable essays, dedicated, as the title suggests, to young people. Stevenson finally went to the South Seas in 1888 in a vain search for health, and died in Samoa in 1894. The essays are reprinted by permission of Mr. Lloyd Osbourne.

### WALKING TOURS

It must not be imagined that a walking tour, as some would have us fancy, is merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good; and none more vivid, in spite of casting ~~caps quite as good, and none more vivid, in spite of casting~~ dilettantes, than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque but of certain jolly humours — of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning, and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. He cannot tell whether he puts his knapsack on, or takes it off, with more delight. The excitement of the departure puts him in key for that of the

arrival. Whatever he does is not only a reward in itself, but will be further rewarded in the sequel; and so pleasure leads on to pleasure in an endless chain. It is this that so few can understand: they will either be always lounging or always walking at five miles an hour, they do not play off the one against the other, prepare all day for the evening for the next day. And, above all, it is here that your overwalker fails of comprehension. His heart rises against those who drink their curacao in liqueur glasses, when he himself can swill it in a brown John. He will not believe that the flavour is more delicate in the smaller dose. He will not believe that to walk this unconscionable distance is merely to stupefy and brutalize himself, and came to his inn, at night, with a sort of frost on his five wits, and a starless night of darkness in his spirit. Not for him the mild luminous evening of the temperate walker! He has nothing left of man but a physical need for bedtime and a double nightcap; and even his pipe, if he be a smoker, will be savourless and disenchanting. It is fate of such an one to take twice as much trouble as is needed to obtain happiness, and miss the happiness in the end; he is the man of the proverb, in short, who goes farther and fares worse.

Now, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be one upon alone. If you go in a company, or even in pairs, it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name; it is something else and more in the nature of a picnic. A walking tour should be gone upon alone, because freedom of the essence; because you should be able to stop and go on, and follow this way or that as the freak takes you; and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker, nor mince in time with a girl. Then you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take colour from what you see. You should be as

<sup>pipe</sup> a pipe for any wind to play upon. 'I cannot see the wit,' says Hazlitt, 'of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country,' — which is the gist of all that can be said upon the matter. There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow to jar on the mediative silence of the morning. And so long as a man is reasoning he cannot surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.

During the first day or so of any tour there are moments of bitterness, when the traveller feels more than coldly towards his knapsack, when he is half in a mind to throw it bodily over the ledge, and like Christian on a similar occasion, 'give three leaps and go on singing'. And yet it soon acquires a property of easiness. It becomes magnetic; the spirit of the journey enters into it. And no sooner have you passed the straps over your shoulder than the lees of sleep are cleared from you, you pull yourself together with a shake, and fall at once into your stride. And surely, of all possible moods, this, in which a man takes the road, is the best. 'Of course, if he *will* keep thinking of his anxieties, if he *will* open the merchant Abudah's chest and walk arm-in-arm with the hag — why, wherever he is, and whether he walk fast or slow, the chances are that he will not be happy. And so much the more shame to himself! There are perhaps thirty men setting forth at that same hour, and I would lay a large wager there is not another dull face among the thirty. It would be a fine thing to follow, in a coat of darkness, one after another of these wayfarers, some summer morning, for the first few miles upon the road. This one, who walks fast, with a keen look in his eyes, is all concentrated in his own mind; he is up at his loom,

weaving and weaving, to set the landscape to words. This one peers about, as he goes, among the grasses; he waits by the canal to watch the dragon-flies; he leans on the gate of the pastus, and cannot look enough upon the complacent kine. And here comes another, talking, laughing, and gesticulating to himself. His face chagnes from time to time, as indignation flashes from his eyes or anger clouds his forehead. He is composing articles, delivering orations, and conducting the most impassioned interviews by the way. A little farther on, and it is as like as not he will begin to sing. And well for him, supposing him to be no great master in that art, if he stumble across no stolid peasant at a corner; for on such an occasion, I scarcely know which is the more troubled, or whether it is worse to suffer the confusion of your troubadour, or the unfeigned alarm of your clown. A sedentary population, accustomed besides, to the strange, mechanical bearing of the common tramp, can in no wise explain to itself the gaiety of these passers-by. I knew one man who was arrested as a runaway lunatic, because, although a full-grown person with a red beard, he skipped as he went like a child. And you would be astonished if I were to tell you all the grave and learned heads who have confessed to me that, when on walking tours, they sang—and sang very ill—and had a pair of red ears when, as described above, the inauspicious peasant plumped into their arms from round a corner. And here, lest you should think I am exaggerating, is Hazlitt's own confession, from his essay *on going a Journey* which is so good that there should be a tax levied on all who have not read it:—

'Give me the clear blue sky over my head,' says he, 'and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to think-

ing! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy.'

Bravo! After that adventure of my friend with the policeman, you would not have cared, would you, to publish that in the first person? But we have no bravery nowadays, and, even in books, must all pretend to be as dull and foolish as our neighbours. It was not so with Hazlitt. And notice how learned he is (as, indeed, throughout the essay) in the theory of walking tours. He is none of your athletic men in purple stockings, who walk their fifty miles a day: three hours' march is his ideal. And then he must have a winding road, the epicure!

Yet there is one thing I object to in these words of his, one thing in the great master's practice that seems to me not wholly wise. I do not approve of that leaping and running. Both of these hurry the respiration; they both shake up the brain out of its glorious open-air confusion; and they both break the pace. Uneven walking is not so agreeable to the body, and it distracts and irritates the mind. Whereas, when once you have fallen into an equable stride, it requires no conscious thought from you to keep it up, and yet it prevents you from thinking earnestly of anything else. Like knitting, like the work of a copying clerk, it gradually neutralizes and sets to sleep the serious activity of the mind. We can think of this or that, lightly and laughingly, as a child thinks, or as we think in a morning doze; we can make puns or puzzle out acrostics, and trifle in a thousand ways with words and rhymes; but when it comes to honest work, when we come to gather ourselves together for an effort, we may sound the trumpet as loud and long as we please; the great barons of the mind will not rally to the standard, but sit, each one at home, warming his hands over his own fire and brooding on his own private thought.

by fame, riches, or learning, the answer is for to seek and you go back into that kingdom of light imaginations, which seem so vain in the eyes of Philistines perspiring after wealth, and so momentous to those who are stricken with the disproportions of the world, and in the face of the gigantic stars, cannot stop to split differences between two degrees of the infinitesimally small, such as a tobacco-pipe or the Romna Empire, a million of money or a fiddlestick's end.

You lean from the window, your last pipe reeking whitely into the darkness, your body full of delicious pains, your mind enthroned in the seventh circle of content; when suddenly the moon changes, the weathercock goes about, and you ask yourself one question more: whether, for the interval, you have been the wisest philosopher or the most egregious of donkeys? Human experience is not yet able to reply; but at least you have had a fine moment, and looked down upon all the kingdoms of the earth. And whether it was wise or foolish, to-morrow's travel will carry you, body and mind into some different parish of the infinite.

## EDWARD VERRALL LUCAS:

(1868-1938)

E. V. Lucas spent his early life as a journalist and reporter. His talent, however, developed in the direction of the light essay, and in 1902 he joined the staff of *Punch*. He also wrote a few novels and some verse, but it was as an essayist that he gained a place in the world of literature. His work has probably more in common with that of Lamb than the work of any other modern essayist.

### HER ROYAL 'TUMNAL TINTINESS

She is absurdly small — a homoeopathic dose of a dog. Nothing but the folly of Western fashions prevents her from being carried in the sleeve, as Nature and Art intended her to be. But she is small only in figure; in all else she is as large as a Newfoundland — in fidelity and courage and spirit and protectiveness and appetite (proportionately), and love of ease — while in brain power she is larger. Although not six months old, she has the gravity of age, she suggests complete mental maturity. If she were ten she could not open an eye upon a superfluous caress with more languor or disdain. Her regality is such that one resorts to all kinds of expedients to win her favour. She has the more radiant merits of the cat — she eats like a cat, with all its meticulous cleanliness and precision, she plays with a cottonreel like a cat, she has a cat's flexibility in her toilet. On your knee she sinks into complacency like a cat. None the less she is a true dog too, with nearly all the stigmata of her kind — the black muzzle, the deep stop. the

flat forehead, the plumed tail carried high, the bowed legs, the minutes, the nervous fluid. Her hue is that of a beech leaf in autumn.

When she runs from room to room she beats the floor with her forepaws with a gallant little rocking-horse action. When she runs over grass she makes a russet streak like a hare, with the undulating ripple of a seaserpent, and her soft pads reverberate like muffled hoofs. When she is no-running she is asleep. When she sleeps the most comfortable place in the room is hopelessly engaged until she wakes. However fast she may be sleeping, she wakes directly her particular friend leaves the room, her religion being sociability. Left alone she screams. Put out of the house alone, she circumnavigates it with the speed of thought, seeking an open door or window. The sunlight through her tongue is more than rubies.

One difficulty that seems to confront many owners of Pekingese spaniels is the finding of a suitable name; for it should of course be Chinese and also easily pronounceable. But to those who have the honour to possess Professor Giles's 'Chinese Biographical Dictionary' the situation is without such complications. Turning over its pages I quickly alighted upon a choice of engaging females whose names might fitly be conferred upon Her Autumn Leafiness. To mention a few, there is A-chiao, who, when a child, was shown to the Emperor Wu Ti, also a child, and he was asked what he thought of her as a possible wife. 'Oh,' said the boy, 'if I could get A-chiao I would have a golden house to keep her in.' There is Chao Fie-yen, who was so graceful and light that she was called 'Flying Swallow' There is Chao Yun, who died with these words from the

'Diamond Lutra' on her lips: 'Like a dream, like a vision, like a bubble, like a shadow, like dew, like lightning.' There is Chi' Nu, who had two lovers, one of which lived on the right of the house and the other on the left. Her father bade her tuck up the sleeve which corresponded to the man whom she preferred, and she tucked up both, saying that she would like to live with the handsome one and eat with the rich. (This dog is very like that.) There is Féng Hou, one of the favourites of the Emperor Wu'an Ti, who, when a bear escaped, did not flee with all the other ladies, but remained to face the bear, saying: 'I was afraid lest some harm should come to Your Majesty's person.' There is Hsi Chih, who was never so lovely as when she knitted her brows; and P'an Fei, the favourite of Hsiao Pao-chüan, who said of her, 'Every step makes a lily grow' and Pei Ch'i Kung Chu, who awakened in the breast of her lover such a flame that it set fire to a temple; and Tao Yun, who when her brother likened a snow-storm to salt sprinkled in the air, corrected the feebleness of his smile by comparing it to willow-catkins whirled by the wind; and Ts'ai Luan, who compiled a rhyming dictionary and ascended to heaven with her husband, each on a white tiger. Here, you observe, is a considerable range — although by no means all — for the selecting mind to consider.

The choice fell upon Féng Hou. That is the name to which, since it is hers and she is all caprice and individuality, she refuses to answer.

The dog will come when he is called,  
The cat will turn away.

-- so wrote an old observer. It is true of dogs and cats, but

## B. ANSWER BRIEFLY THE FOLLOWING IN ABOUT 30 WORDS

- Is a walking tour, undertaken for the sake of seeing landscape?
- Why does Stevenson say that a walking tour should be undertaken alone?
- Whose view does the author quote in support of his own view of walking as a pleasure to be enjoyed alone and what is it?
- 'I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy' says Hazlitt. Why does Stevenson not approve of leaping and running as pleasures of the walking tour?
- What good does walking do to a modern man of business?
- What are the books Stevenson recommends to be taken on walking tours?

## C.

- 'When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country'—*Explain.*
- 'Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure' says Milton he has yet one jewel left; ye cannot deprive him of his covetousness'—*In what context does Stevenson use this saying?*
- 'You lay aside all your own hobbies, to watch 'provincial humours' develop themselves before you, now as a laughable farce, and now grave and beautiful like an old tale'—*Explain 'Provincial humours'*
- 'After all, it is not they who carry flags, but they who look upon it from a private chamber, who have the fun of the procession'—*What does this show of*

*the author's attitude to life? In the essay there are many other sentences expressing the same view. Make a list of the same.*

## D.

## a. Write Essays on :

- Prerequisites for enjoying a walking tour. (300 words)
  - Variance in the mood of the walker. (100 words)
  - The pleasures of resting in an inn after a day's walk. (300 words)
- b. Stevenson's essay on walking tours not only describes the beauties of the countryside but also underlies an attitude to life.—Discuss: (1000 words)

E. V. LUCAS

(1868—1938)

## HER ROYAL 'TUMNAL TINTINESS

## A.

- |                                 |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| a. homeopathic dose of a dog    | : | A tiny dog, homeopathic drugs are given in very small doses |
| b. The monkey god of the Hindus | : | Hanuman the famous Hindu God with the face of a monkey      |
| c. The Forbidden City           | : | Lhasa, the capital of Tibet                                 |
| d. Rhinoceros                   | : | large wild animal with horns on the nose                    |

NOTES AND EXERCISES

d. 'But all the wealth which Lord Clive had brought from Bengal, and Sir Lawrence Dundas from Germany, joined together would not have sufficed for Goldsmith'.—Express the idea in other words.

D. a. Narrate in about 300 words Goldsmith's wandering till he settled down as a writer.

b. Write in about 100 words, how Dr. Johnson saved Goldsmith from a financial crisis by arranging for the publication of 'The Vicar of Wakefield'.

c. Make an estimate of Goldsmith as a dramatist in the context of the sentimental plays that were written in his time. (300 words)

d. Reconstruct, after Macaulay, a portrait of Goldsmith. (1000 words)

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

(1850-1894)

WALKING TOURS

a. Canting dilettantes : hypocrites with only a superficial knowledge of the subject

b. Curacao : drink flavoured with orange peel

NOTES AND EXERCISES

c. The merchant Abudha

: probably some merchant of the Eastern stories who was in possession of a wicked spirit form which he could not escape

d. Troubadour

: one of a class of lyric poets

e. the epicure

: lover of pleasures used here with reference to Hazlitt.

f. acrostics

: a poem or puzzle in which the first or the last letters of each line, if they be taken in order, will spell a word or a sentence

g. bivouacs

: open-air resting places for the night

h. fete

: holiday

i. the flood

: the great deluge spoken of in the Bible

j. elixir of life

: magical drink supposed to confer immortality

k. Heine's songs

: songs of Heinrich Heine, a popular poet and hero of the times

l. Tristram shandy

: a whimsical novel by Laurence Sterne (1713-68)

m. Burns

: Robert Burns (1759-96), a Scottish poet of popular lyrics and ballads

n. Philistines

: uncultured people

o. egregious

: stupid.



an uproar. "We've decided that every one who has dined here tonight shall receive a brand new shilling. I see Mr. Septimus Lovatt, from the bank, there, with a bag. He will attend to you as you go out. (Wild outbreak and tumult of rapturous applause.) And now, three cheers for your Mayor and Mayoress."

It was colossal, the enthusiasm.

"And for Gas Gordon!" called several voices.

The cheers rose again in surging waves.

Every one remarked that the Mayor, usually so imperturbable was quite overcome—seemed as if he didn't know where to look.

Afterwards, as the occupants of the platform descended, Mr. Gordon glanced into the eyes of Mrs. Curtenty and found there his exceeding reward. The mediocrity had blossomed out that evening into something new and strange. Liar, deliberate liar, and self-accused gambler as he was, he felt that he had lived during that speech—he felt that it was the supreme moment of his life.

"What a perfectly wonderful man your husband is!" said Mrs. Duncalf to Mrs. Curtenty.

Clara turned to her husband with a sublime gesture of satisfaction. In the brougham, going home, she bewitched him with wifely endearments. She could afford to do so. The stigma of the geese episode was erased!

But the barmaid of *The Tiger*, as she let down her bright hair that night in the attic of *The Tiger*, said to herself:

"Well, of all the—" Just that.

## UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE

(Jerome K. Jerome)

You never saw such a commotion up and down a house, in all your life, as when my Uncle Podger undertook to do a job. A picture would have come home from the framemaker's, and be standing in the dining-room, waiting to be put up; and Aunt Podger would ask what was to be done with it, and Uncle Podger would say,

'Oh, you leave that to me. Don't you, any of you, worry yourselves about that. I'll do all that.'

And then he would take off his coat, and begin. He would send the girl out for sixpenn'orth of nails, and one of the boys after her to tell her what size to get; and, from that, he would gradually work down, and start the whole house.

'Now you go and get me my hammer, Wil?' he would shout: 'and bring me the rule, Tom; and I shall want the step-ladder, and I had better have a kitchen-chair, too; and Jim! you run round to Mr. Goggles, and tell him, "Pa's kind regards, and hopes his leg's better: and will he lend him his spirit-level?" And 'don't you go, Maria, because I shall want somebody to hold me the light' and when the girl comes back, she must go out again for a bit of picture-cord; and 'Tom?—where's Tom?—Tom, you come here; I shall want you to hand me up the picture.'

And then he would lift up the picture, and he would try to save the glass, and cut himself;

and then he would spring round the room, looking for his handkerchief. He would not find his drop it, and it would come out of the frame, and handkerchief, because it was in the pocket of the coat he had taken off, and he did not know where he had put the coat, and all the house had to leave off looking for his tools, and start looking for his coat; while he would dance round and hinder them.

'Doesn't anybody in the whole house know where my coat is? I never came across such a set in all my life. Six of you—and you can't find a coat that I put down not five minutes ago! Well, of all the...'

Then he'd get up! and find that he had been sitting on it, and would call out:

'Oh, you can give it up! I've found it myself now. Might just as well ask the cat to find anything as expect you people to find it.'

And, when half an hour had been spent in tying up his finger, and a new glass had been got, and the tools, and the ladder, and the chair, and the candle had been brought, he would have another go, the whole family, including the girl and the charwoman, standing round in a semi-circle, ready to help. Two people would have to hold the chair, and a third would help him up on it, and hold him there, and a fourth would hand him a nail, and a fifth would pass him up the hammer, and he would take hold of the nail and drop it.

'There!' he would say, in an injured tone, 'now the nail is gone.'

And we would all have to go down on our knees and grovel for it, while he would stand on the chair, and grunt, and want to know if he was to be kept there all the evening.

The nail would be found at last, but by that time he would have lost the hammer.

'Where's the hammer? What did I do with the hammer? Great heavens! Seven of you, gaping round there, and you don't know what I did with the hammer!'

We would find the hammer for him, and then he would have lost sight of the mark he had made on the wall, where the nail was to go in, and each see if we could find it; and we would each discover it in a different place, and he would call us all fools, one after another, and tell us to get down. And he would take the rule, and re-measure, and find that he wanted half thirty-one and three-eighths inches from the corner, and would try to do it in his head, and go mad.

And we would all try to do it in our heads, and all arrive at different results, and sneer at one another. And in the general row, the original number would be forgotten, and Uncle Podger would have to measure it again.

He would use a bit of string this time, and at the critical moment, when the old fool was leaning over the chair at an angle of forty-five, and trying to reach a point three inches beyond what was possible for him to reach, the string would slip, and down he would slide on to the piano, a really fine musical effect being produced by the

suddenness with which his head and body struck all the notes at the same time.

And Aunt Maria would say that he would not allow the children to stand round and hear such language.

At last, Uncle Podger would get the spot fixed again, and put the point of the nail on it with his left hand, and take the hammer in his right hand; And, with the first blow, he would smash his thumb, and drop the hammer, with a yell, on somebody's toes.

Aunt Maria would mildly observe that, next time Uncle Podger was going to hammer a nail into the wall, she hoped he'd let her know in time, so that she could make arrangements to go and spend a week with her mother while it was being done.

'Oh! you women, you make such a fuss over everything.' Uncle Podger would reply, picking himself up. 'Why I like doing a little job of this sort.'

And then he would have another try, and, at the second blow, the nail would go clean through the plaster, and half the hammer after it, and Uncle Podger be precipitated against the wall with force nearly sufficient to flatten his nose.

Then he had to find the rule and the string again, and a new hole was made; and, about midnight, the picture would be up—very crooked and insecure, the wall for yards round looking as if it had been smoothed down with a rake, and

everybody dead beat and wretched—except Uncle Podger.

‘There you are,’ he would say, stepping heavily off the chair on to the charwoman’s corns and surveying the mess he had made with evident pride. ‘Why, some people would have had a man in to do a little thing like that!’

- P. 32, L. 16 **LOVED**: woman—i.e. Clara, now married to Curtenty.
- P. 32, L. 22 **GERMAN COMPETITION**: earthenware manufactured in Germany were cheaper than the earthenware manufactured in the Five Towns, hence the competition.
- AMERICAN TARIFFS**: duties or customs paid in America on imported goods.
- P. 33, L. 15 **ALL'S RIGHT WITH THE WORLD**: the concluding line of Pippa's song by Robert Browning which reveals the poet's optimism. Hence a member of the Browning Society would be an optimist.
- P. 33, L. 27 **CALYPSO-LIKE**: Calypso was the nymph with whom Odysseus lived for seven years in the island of Ogygia and who promised him immortality and eternal youth if he would never leave her.
- BARMAID**: waitress.
- P. 33, L. 32 **MARATHON**: the battle of Marathon was fought between the Greeks and the Persians, in 490 B.C., in which the Greeks were victorious despite their numerical inferiority.
- P. 34, L. 11-2 **SCHOPENHAUER**: German philosopher (1788—1819) who was the apostle of pessimism just as Browning was an apostle of optimism (p. 33, L. 15).
- P. 34, L. 22 **BRENT** (Also Brant) smallest species of wild goose visiting Britain in winter.
- BARNACLE**: (Also Bernacle) Arctic goose also visiting Britain in winter.
- P. 34, L. 29 **CALLEAR'S**: Callear's shop of poultry.
- P. 35, L. 2 **HANBRIDGE**: another town in The Five Towns.
- P. 35, L. 8 **CHICAGO OF THE FIVE TOWNS**: just as Chicago is the great commercial centre in the U.S.A., so also Hanbridge is the great commercial centre in The Five Towns
- P. 35, L. 12 **JOS**: short for Josiah.
- P. 35, L. 27 **VICE**: instrument with two jaws between which a thing can be gripped.
- P. 36, L. 5 **SOBRIQUET**: nick-name, i.e. 'Gas' Gordon.
- P. 36, L. 24 **HILLPORT**: a suburb of the town.
- P. 37, L. 24 **MELTON**: kind of cloth.
- P. 38, L. 1 **LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE**: adopt easiest method or course which was to be led onward by Mr. Curtenty.
- P. 38, L. 9 **PROMETHEAN**: like that of Prometheus who stole fire from heaven and taught men the use of fire.
- P. 38, L. 12 **ST. LUKE'S SQUARE**: another street.
- P. 38, L. 13 **OLDCASTLE STREET**: a third street.
- P. 38, L. 26 **SKYSCAPER**: skyscraper is a tall building with many storeys.
- P. 39, L. 13 **VELVET**: i.e. the collar of his over-coat.
- BROUGHAM**: closed carriage drawn by one horse.
- P. 39, L. 19 **SHE**: his wife, Clara.
- P. 39, L. 30 **"THE FIRS"**: the house of Mr. Curtenty.
- P. 41, L. 20 **WILLIAM MORRIS**—(1834-96): a pre-Raphaelite poet who founded the firm of Morris & Co. for the provision of artistic furnishings for the home.

- REGENT STREET**: London's great shopping centre.
- P. 41, L. 30 **TITANS**: a family of giants in Greek mythology.
- P. 44, L. 30 **COUNTESS OF CHELL**: wife of the Earl of Chell who was the Mayor of Bursley.
- P. 44, L. 32 **THE DEPUTY OF A COUNTESS**—i.e. Clara wife of Josiah Topham Curtenty, the Deputy Mayor.
- P. 45, L. 1 **HARRY**: Henry, son of Curtenty and step-son of Clara.
- P. 45, L. 8 **KENSINGTONIAN**: Characteristic of Kensington, a borough (called the royal borough of London).
- P. 48, L. 10 **SIGNAL**: a Hanbridge newspaper.
- P. 48, LL. 23-24 **HANBRIDGE**.... Turnhill: four of the towns (Bursley being the fifth town) forming the district called The Five Towns.
- P. 49, L. 3 **INFERNO**: hell.
- P. 52, L. 7 **BILL**—(Hindustani) ishtihar.  
**HOARDING**—notice-board.

## UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE

[JEROME K. JEROME]

Jerome Klapka Jerome, British author, was born in 1859. He made his name with **THREE MEN IN A BOAT** (1880). In 1892, having earlier scored another success with **THE IDLE THOUGHTS OF AN IDLE FELLOW**, he started a monthly magazine called **THE IDLER**. In 1893 **TO-DAY** appeared under his editorship. As a serious novelist, Jerome made a success in 1902 with **PAUL KELVER** and as a playwright with **THE PASSING OF THE THIRD FLOOR BACK** (1907). His autobiography, **MY LIFE AND TIMES** appeared in 1925. He died in 1927.

## THE PRIZE POEM

[P. G. WODEHOUSE]

Pelham Grenville Wodehouse, British humorist, was born on October 15, 1881. He was educated at Dulwich. His first stories were of school life. However, fame came when he began to write books of a humorous kind, creating such characters as Jeeves, Psmith, and Ukridge.

Every year the students of the Sixth Form were compelled to compete for the prize poem. One of them, Smith, asked an elderly friend to write the poem for him. This friend, Reynolds, wrote down four lines on a piece of paper. He then copied them twice on two different pieces of paper. Two of the pieces of paper were blown away by the wind. They were picked up by two other students named Montgomery and Evans. However, Evans handed over his piece of paper to Morrison. Thus the poems submitted by three of the students (Smith, Morrison, and Montgomery) began with exactly the same four lines. The Headmaster wanted to punish them for collusion. However, when they confessed the truth, the rules of the competition were altered and from thence no one was compelled to compete for the prize.

P. 60, L. 25 **GERMAN MEASLES**: a disease resembling measles but mostly less prolonged and severe.

# WALKING TOURS

*-ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON*

Walking tours by Robert Louis Stevenson is a chronicle of his own travels. One can easily call it a story of a flaneur, who is on the roads, walking across Europe, all alone. It is philosophical in nature, while chronologically chalking out each of his accounts and adventures. He also ruminates on all the things he sees, all the people he meets and all the experiences that he undergoes. It's a reflective account that is both external and internal in nature. It gives an account on the benefits of solitary walking.

Stevenson began his literary career as a writer of essays, going so far as to embark on experiences for the purpose of writing about them afterwards. In addition, he wrote essays whose themes were based upon his experiences in childhood and youth. His first contribution to periodical literature was "Roads" published in the port folio in 1873.

The period from 1870 onwards was chiefly passed in travel, which bore fruit in many essays, and Stevenson's first two books were devoted to accounts of Continental wayfaring. During that time Stevenson was trying to assert his right to do what he liked and to write what he felt and he thought. He had in a courageous and conscious manner, to tell the world that he was there, especially after giving up law for literature. And throughout his wandering life, which ended in his death in 1894 in Samoa, he travelled in fancy to his "Auld Reekie" a process that was part and parcel in his creative life.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Robert Louis Stevenson was one of the greatest of story tellers; but he was also a supremely great essayist. The essays from this book are taken from "Virginibus Puerisque" which was written in 1884.

## **WALKING TOURS:**

Walking as practice is historically determined- different times bring forth different modes, meanings and motivations. Distinctive discourses

attached to walking were forged largely in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, as walking became a cultural choice rather than a necessity. Walking was compared to autonomy and freedom, which such properties frequently aligned with an imperative to walk alone.

Essayist William Hazlitt, the first to write specifically about the pleasures of walking in the essay 'Going on journey' (1822) in the solo walker's early spokesperson. According to him, one of the pleasant things in the world is going on a journey alone. Hazlitt's chief objection to walking with others is that it provides occasion for – and an expectation of – talking. If walking alone allows escape from 'the demands of human community' talking ties the walker to these demands, framing walking as a means for reflection and contemplation (of sights, ideas and memories). Hazlitt presumes such occupation and pleasures debased or interrupted by the presence of others.

Hazlitt's essay also points towards the presence of social, etiquette and the cultural expectations of being in company. Robert Louis Stevenson, responding to Hazlitt's essays in 'Walking tours' (1876) similarly underscores the astronomy of the lone walker: the freedom to set one's direction and pace, numbered either by the speed of the champion walker or slowness of the mining girl. Slighting Hazlett's opinion of walking and talking 'I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time'. Stevenson adds that there should be no cackle of voices at you elbow, to join on the meditative silence of the morning.

The essay 'Walking Tours' prevents Stevenson's attitude towards going on journey, his stay at a hotel for a night, smoking his pipe and indulge in meditative contemplation. To him these are hours of reflection, accompanied by drinking and sitting besides the fire.

Stevenson presents his aesthetic principles which, when followed will help the traveler not only to enjoy the tour, but to associate himself with it. Combining aesthetic principles with sensual pleasures, he establishes his traveler as more pilgrim than pedestrian, who is in pursuit of unity which only he can provide. He enjoys so rare a perception of romantic landscape

that the beauty of the tangible world is set in his heart in the beginning, and to the end he rejoices in it.

Throughout the journey, Stevenson takes delight not only in the beauties of Nature, but in her good company. Making the most of his keen senses of sight and hearing, he achieves his purpose. Stevenson's philosophy of outdoor life is shown through his love of nature, which, since Wordsworth, has been so great and beautiful, an element in English literature. The interesting thing is that this love of nature is for its own sake. At the same time, it is associated with its love of travel for its own sake. Stevenson continues to journey along the countryside road, which is one of the pleasant things in the world. Stevenson argues the benefits of solitary walking, seeing in companionship a denuding of the experience of reflection and a reduction of freedom.

In his three walking tours Cockermouth and Keswick, A Winter's Walk in Carrick and Halloway and An Autumn Effect, Stevenson takes delight in natural scenes and meeting different kinds of people. Thus the essay 'Walking Tour' gives an account of the benefit of walking.



## UNCLE PODGER HANGS A PICTURE

-JEROME K.JEROME

### INTRODUCTION:

In 'Uncle Podger hangs a picture' by Jerome K.Jerome, we have the theme of gender roles, responsibility, inequality, control, ignorance and independence. Taken from his Three Men in a Boat collection the reader realizes after reading the story that Jerome maybe exploring the theme of gender roles.

### SUMMARY:

The story 'Uncle Podger hangs a picture' is about the whole description of how Uncle Podger hangs a picture on the wall. He was very confident as he assumes himself to be the best to complete the job. Once a picture had come the frame makers, Uncle Podger asked Aunt Podger to leave the job of hanging the picture to him. He took off his coat and he asked the children to fetch the hammer, nails, etc.. Everyone was busy obeying his instructions. And when the picture was about to be hanged, he dropped the picture and cut himself with a broken glass. He moved around the room, looking for his handkerchief and later found it in his coat pocket and he himself was sitting on the coat. He made a mess of things. It was only after a few minor incidents and injuries Uncle Podger managed to get the picture on the wall, crooked and insecure, around midnight. But Uncle Podger looked at the job with pride and satisfaction. All this prove him to be funny, lovable person but, good for nothing!

### AUTHOR'S OPINION ABOUT THE STORY:

There does not appear to be anybody in the house, especially female, who has the ability to hang a picture, at least not in Podger's opinion. He alone is qualified to hang the picture and bark orders at others. This may be significant as Podger is taking on the role of the fixer that is usually associated with males. He is physically stronger than others and as such is qualified to hang the picture. However it is clear to the reader that Podger is not qualified and the job could easily be done by someone else in the house regardless of the sex of the individual but this is not something Podger thinks. If anything Jerome might be highlighting how stuck in his way is Podger, how he likes to dictate others and forgets at the same time he is far from independent himself and is reliant on others for tools.

### UNCLE'S CHARACTER:

It is interesting that Uncle Podger does not take responsibility for his actions, which, in many ways might be the moral of the story. It is possible that Jerome is suggesting that men in general like to be in power but do not necessarily do a good job of it, which

is very much the case when it comes to Podger's actions. It is also noticeable that Podger not only blames others for his actions but he does a lousy job at the same time (a job that someone else could have done better, regardless of their sex). Aunt Maria knows that Podger has taken on more than he can chew but she remains relatively silent and non-critical. Though she does suggest the next time that Podger wants to hang a picture, she would be better off going to her mother's for a week. This is the only real verbal criticism of Podger throughout the story and rightly it comes from a woman who is witnessing a man doing a job he has no idea about. Though the job is relatively straight forward, Podger makes a mess out of it.

### **CHARACTER ANALYSIS:**

There may be some critics who suggest that Podger has every right to do as he has done, due to the fact that he is the man of the house. However by agreeing with this statement, many critics will find that they have fallen into the trap of stereotypical gender roles, with the man having one role and the women having another. If anything, Podger is being selfish and acting with a degree of inequality by doing the job off of his own back. He refuses the help of others when as mentioned others might have done a better job and not have caused the havoc that Podger caused due to his own inadequacies. They are not only blamed for Podger's dysfunction but they are made to feel as though they are beneath Podger. Again only Aunt Maria is reasonable with her decision to move out of the house the next time Podger decides upon doing something in the house.

### **A MAN'S PRIDE:**

There will be some readers who will have sympathy for Podger's ignorance. They believe he is only trying to help; however, the reality is that he wants to be in control of what is happening in the house. Everybody must jump when Podger talks. Something that is clearly noticeable when it takes Podger and half a dozen people to hang the picture. If anything, the scene is farcical through serious at the same time. A male is trying to dictate to others that he does not believe are his equal. Though Podger can't be blamed for his actions, he may have grown up with the belief that the male is the dominant force in a household.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Things have changed considerably over time with most households being more equally balanced. Women have taken on the role of the male and the male has taken on the role of the female in many households. It's just not the case when it comes to Podger. He will continue to control others around him and remain blind to his ignorance because of his upbringing.