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教师阅览室

Practise Your English

G. C. THORNLEY

*a second collection
of prose, drama and verse*

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Practise Your English

A COLLECTION OF PROSE
DRAMA AND VERSE
WITH EXERCISES

Selected and edited by

G. C. THORNLEY

M.A., PH.D.



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AN OUTLINE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
CHANGING HORIZONS
EASIER ENGLISH PRACTICE
EASIER SCIENTIFIC ENGLISH PRACTICE
EASY ENGLISH
ELEMENTARY SCIENTIFIC ENGLISH PRACTICE
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STORIES FROM MANY LANDS
TELEVISION PLAN
TURNING WHEELS
WAYS OF THE WORLD

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FOREWORD

An attempt has been made to arrange these pieces in order of increasing language-difficulty; but on such a matter opinions will differ. A vocabulary roughly equivalent to that of the General Service List of the Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection has been assumed known at the start. The first five prose pieces are simple, and below the standard required in the English Composition and Language Paper of the Cambridge Lower Certificate Examination; the last seven are much harder. Between these two groups are passages of intermediate difficulty. In general it will probably be found that a later passage is harder than an earlier.

The same gradation has been aimed at in the arrangement of the plays and the poetry.

The language, except in the poetic pieces, has sometimes been simplified or adapted, but it is hoped that a good deal of the original flavour remains.

G. C. T.

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Round the World in Eighty Days



JULES VERNE

Jules Verne (1828-1905), French novelist, was born in Nantes. He wrote a number of semi-scientific novels, of which *Round the World in Eighty Days* is one of the best known. This passage gives a description of Phileas Fogg, who later travelled round the world.

WAS Phileas Fogg rich? Yes, certainly. But how he had made his money nobody knew, and Mr. Fogg was not the sort of man to tell anybody. He did not spend much money and yet he did not seem to be one of those people who loved saving money.

He talked very little; in fact nobody could have talked less. There was no secret about his habits and his daily life, but as he always did everything regularly in exactly the same way every day, people wondered more and more about him and his past life.

Had he travelled? Probably, for nobody knew the map of the world better than he. He seemed to have the most exact knowledge of every country and town in the world. Sometimes when the members of the club talked about travellers who had disappeared or become lost in some distant or unknown part of the world, Mr. Fogg, in a few clear words, would explain what had probably become of them. His explanations often proved to be quite true. He was a man who must have travelled everywhere—at least in his mind and imagination.

It was quite certain, however, that for many years Phileas Fogg had not left London. Those who knew him a little better than others did, said that nobody had ever seen him in any other place than London. Even in London the only place where he was seen was the road between his house and the club. The only things he ever did were to read the newspapers and play cards. It was clear Mr. Fogg did not play to win money, but for the sake of the game. For him a game of cards was a battle, a fight against a difficulty.

Phileas Fogg, it appeared, had neither a wife nor children—which may happen to the most honest people. Nobody had ever heard of his father or mother, or whether he had brothers and

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sisters. He lived alone in his house in Savile Row, where nobody ever paid him visits. Nothing was known about the inside of his house. One servant was enough to do the work. He had his meals at the club at exactly the same moments every day, when he sat in the same room, at the same table, always alone. He only went home to sleep, always exactly at midnight.

His home in Savile Row was a simple one, but very comfortable. His habits being so regular, and as he spent all the day at his club, his servant's duties were light. But Phileas Fogg expected from his servant an exceptional degree of exactness and regularity.

EXERCISES

COMPREHENSION

1. What do you know about Fogg's daily habits?
2. Why was it thought that Fogg had travelled a good deal?
3. Had Fogg travelled much recently? How do you know?
4. Why did Fogg play cards?
5. What family had Fogg?
6. Where did Fogg live? How many servants had he?
7. Where did Fogg have his meals?
8. Do you think that Fogg had a lot of friends? Why?
9. At what time did Fogg go to bed every night?
10. Why were the duties of Fogg's servant light?

SUMMARISE paragraphs 3 and 4 (Had he travelled . . . a difficulty) in about 70 words.

COMPOSITION

What can we learn about a man from his daily habits? (About 300 words.)

LANGUAGE

- I. Write sentences of your own containing the following:
 - (a) make money.
 - (b) become of.
 - (c) it proved to be false.
 - (d) at least.
 - (e) for the sake of.

2. Fill in the spaces with the correct words:

secret; regular; map; imagination; club; honest; comfortable; exactness; degree; exceptional.

- (a) If you want to find Baghdad on the —, look at Iraq.
- (b) I do not know where Tom is now; he is not a man of — habits.
- (c) Einstein was a man of —brilliance.
- (d) He would not tell me about the agreement; he said it was a —.
- (e) The writer, H. G. Wells, was a man of unusual —.
- (f) Henry goes to his — every evening to meet his friends.
- (g) — people tell the truth.
- (h) That soldier has a high — of courage.
- (i) Let us all sit down in — chairs and talk.
- (j) The professor solved the problem with — and skill.

3. Notice: *Nobody knew the map of the world better than he did.* *Than* is a conjunction and is followed by a nominative (subject). Put suitable pronouns at the ends of these sentences:

- (a) Tom did his work more quickly than —.
- (b) Fogg was a silent man; no one talked less than —.
- (c) Mary and Tom ran a race, but Tom ran faster than —.
- (d) Two men and a boy were at work, but the boy was much lazier than —.
- (e) In our quarrel with Henry, he said much worse things than —.

4. Notice: *He was a man who must have travelled.*

This means: *It is certain that he had travelled.*

Use *must have* to give the same meaning as the following:

- (a) The rain is coming in. It is certain that someone opened the window.
- (b) It is certain that Henry reached Blackpool because I had a letter from him there.
- (c) Tom was in the aeroplane that crashed, and so he was certainly killed.
- (d) There is a broken cup on the floor. It was certainly dropped by someone.

- (e) Oh! Here is my pencil. It is certain that I put it in this pocket without thinking.
5. Put the following into the negative interrogative form :
 E.g. Fogg was rich.
 Was not Fogg rich?
- (a) He talked very little.
 (b) Fogg would explain.
 (c) It was clear that Mr. Fogg did not play to win money.
 (d) For him a game of cards was a battle.
 (e) He had his meals at the club.
6. Change the words in *italics* into other suitable words:
- (a) It was quite *certain* that for many years Fogg had not left London.
 (b) Phileas Fogg, it *appeared*, had neither a wife nor children.
 (c) At exactly the same *moments* every day.
 (d) As he spent all the day at the club, his servant's duties were *light*.

Kidnapped



R. L. STEVENSON

Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson (1850-1894) was born in Edinburgh and became a lawyer. But he later wrote novels and essays. His bad health drove him to Samoa, where he continued to write, and where he died. In this extract from *Kidnapped* David Balfour is looking for the House of Shaws, which he imagines to be magnificent.

ON the morning of the second day, coming to the top of a hill, I saw all the country fall away before me down to the sea; and in the midst of this descent, the city of Edinburgh smoking like an oven. There was a flag upon the castle, and ships moving or lying in the mouth of the river; both of which I could see clearly; and both brought my heart into my mouth with excitement and delight.

Soon after, I came to a house where a shepherd lived, and he

told me in which direction Cramond lay; and so I worked my way to the westward of Edinburgh, till I came out upon the Glasgow road. And there, to my great pleasure and wonder, I saw the soldiers marching, every foot in time, with an old red-faced general on a grey horse at one end. The pride of life seemed to mount into my brain at the sight of the red coats and the hearing of the merry music.

A little farther on I was told I was in Cramond, and I began to ask for the house of Shaws. It was a word that seemed to surprise those of whom I sought my way. At first I thought the plainness of my dress, all dusty from the road, agreed ill with the greatness of the place to which I was going. But after two, or perhaps three, had given me the same look and the same answer, I began to take it in my head there was something strange about the Shaws itself.

To set this fear at rest, I changed the form of my inquiries; and seeing an honest man coming along a lane with a cart, I asked him if he had ever heard of a house they called the house of Shaws.

He stopped his cart and looked at me, like the others.

'What?' cries the carter, in so sharp a note that his horse started; and then, 'Well,' he added, 'it's none of my affairs; but you seem a well-spoken boy; and if you'll take a word from me, you'll keep away from the Shaws.'

The next person I met was a neat little man whom I saw to be a barber¹; and knowing well that barbers were great talkers, I asked him plainly what sort of man was Mr. Balfour of the Shaws.

'Oh,' said the barber, 'no kind of a man, no kind of a man at all'; and began to ask me closely what my business was; but I was more than equal to him at that, and he went on no wiser.

I cannot well describe the blow to my hopes. What kind of a great house was this, that all the village should start and look when I asked the way to it? Or what sort of a gentleman, that his ill-fame should be thus common knowledge on the wayside?

It was nearly sundown when I met a large, dark, bad-tempered looking woman walking heavily down a hill; and she, when I had put my usual question, turned sharp about, went back with

¹ Barber: Hairdresser; one who cuts hair.

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me to the top she had just left, and pointed to a great building standing very bare upon a green in the next valley. The country was pleasant round about, running in low hills, pleasantly watered and wooded, and the crops, to my eyes, wonderfully good; but the house itself appeared to be a kind of ruin; no road led up to it; no smoke arose from any of the chimneys, nor was there any garden round it. My heart sank.

EXERCISES

COMPREHENSION

1. What did he see from the top of the hill?
2. What was the effect of the view on him?
3. What did he see on the Glasgow road?
4. Where did he want to go?
5. How, at first, did he explain to himself the surprise of those to whom he spoke?
6. What did the carter tell him to do?
7. Whom did he meet after the carter? Why did he expect to get news from this man?
8. Whom did he meet just before sundown? Where did she take him?
9. What kind of country surrounded the house?
10. Describe the house that he saw.

SUMMARISE the first two paragraphs in about 60 words.

COMPOSITION

You are in a strange city, and are trying to find the house of one of your relations. Describe how you find it. (About 250 words.)

LANGUAGE

1. Explain the following in your own words:
 - (a) I saw all the country fall away before me.
 - (b) An oven.
 - (c) A shepherd. .
 - (d) Every foot in time.
 - (e) Merry music.

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- (f) I began to take it in my head that.
 - (g) A lane.
 - (h) The horse started.
 - (i) The blow to my hopes.
 - (j) Pleasantly watered and wooded.
2. Give the opposites of the following. All the opposites are in the passage.
- (a) ascent; (b) source of a river; (c) pale-faced; (d) agreed well;
 - (e) untidy; (f) to ask me carelessly; (g) good reputation;
 - (h) good-tempered; (i) mountain; (j) My heart jumped with joy.
3. Notice: *Both of which I could see clearly.*
Write original sentences containing the following:
- (a) each of which.
 - (b) neither of which.
 - (c) all of which.
 - (d) some of which.
 - (e) a few of which.
4. What kind of clauses are those in *italics*?
- (a) He told me *in which direction Cramond lay*.
 - (b) I was told *I was in Cramond*.
 - (c) My dress agreed ill with the place *to which I was going*.
 - (d) In so sharp a note *that his horse started*.
 - (e) *If you'll take a word from me*, you'll keep away from the Shaws.
 - (f) I asked him plainly *what sort of a man was Mr. Balfour*.
 - (g) It was nearly sundown *when I met a woman*.
 - (h) She, *when I had put my usual question*, turned sharp about.
 - (i) The next person *I met* was a neat little man.
 - (j) It seemed to surprise those *of whom I sought my way*.
5. The following are answers to questions. Write the questions:
- (a) It brought my heart into my mouth.
 - (b) To the westward of London.
 - (c) No, they were marching.
 - (d) Because my fears have been set at rest.
 - (e) The barber.

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- (f) Because it is not your business.
- (g) Oh, no; it is common knowledge.
- (h) By pointing with her finger.
- (i) On the low hills.
- (j) Crops.

Three Men in a Boat



J. K. JEROME

Jerome Klapka Jerome (1859-1927) was a dramatist, novelist, journalist and editor. *Three Men in a Boat* is a humorous story and one of his best known. The three men are George, Harris and myself. In this extract they begin to pack for the trip.

WE made a list of the things to be taken, and on the next day, which was Friday, we got them all together, and met in the evening to pack. We got a large bag for the clothes, and a couple of big baskets for the food and the cooking utensils. We moved the table up against the window, piled everything in a heap in the middle of the floor, and sat round and looked at it.

I said I'd pack.

I am rather proud of my packing. Packing is one of those many things that I feel I know more about than any other person living. I impressed the fact upon George and Harris, and told them that they had better leave the whole matter entirely to me. They agreed to this suggestion with extraordinary eagerness. George lit his pipe and spread himself over the easy chair, and Harris put his leg on the table and lit a cigar.

This was hardly what I intended. What I had meant of course was that I should be in charge of the job, and that Harris and George should follow my instructions. Their taking it in the way they did annoyed me. There is nothing that vexes me more than seeing other people sitting about doing nothing when I'm working.

However, I did not say anything, but started the packing. It

seemed a longer job than I had thought it was going to be; but I got the bag finished at last, and I sat on it and strapped it.

'Aren't you going to put the boots in?' said Harris.

I looked round and found that I had forgotten them. That's just like Harris. He couldn't have said a word until I'd got the bag shut and strapped, of course. George laughed—one of those maddening, senseless laughs of his. They make me so wild.

I opened the bag and packed the boots in; and then, just as I was going to close it, a horrible idea occurred to me¹. Had I packed my toothbrush? I don't know how it is, but I never do know whether I've packed my toothbrush.

Of course I had to turn everything out now and, of course, I could not find it. I found George's and Harris's eighteen times over, but I couldn't find mine. I put the things back one by one, and held everything up and shook it. Then I found the toothbrush inside a boot. I repacked once more.

When I had finished, George asked if the soap was in. I said I didn't care whether the soap was in or whether it wasn't; and I banged the bag to close it, strapped it, and found that I had packed my tobacco and had to reopen it. It got shut finally at 10.5 p.m., and then there remained the baskets to pack. Harris said that he and George had better do the rest; I agreed and sat down.

EXERCISES

COMPREHENSION

1. Why did the three men meet in the evening?
2. Why did he say that he would pack?
3. What did George and Harris do when he said this?
4. What annoyed him? Why did it annoy him?
5. Why do you think he sat on the bag?
6. Why did Harris's question about the boots annoy him?
7. What horrible idea came into his mind? Why was it horrible?
8. Where was the toothbrush found?
9. Why had he to reopen the bag after strapping it?
10. What had to be packed in the baskets?

SUMMARISE the passage in about 175 words.

¹ Occurred to me : Came into my mind.

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COMPOSITION

Preparations for a long journey. (About 300 words.)

LANGUAGE

1. Make other parts of speech from the following words, and say what parts of speech you have made:

(a) entire; (b) suggest; (c) intend; (d) eager; (e) agree;
(f) instruct; (g) annoy; (h) vex; (i) forget; (j) final.

2. Fill in the spaces with the correct words:

couple; utensils; pile; impressed; intended; instructions;
vexed; horrible; banged; basket.

(a) She arrived home with a — full of fruit.

(b) All the cooking — had been stolen from the kitchen when we ran in.

(c) We were all — by the excellent lesson which the teacher gave.

(d) His angry father — the door as he walked out of the room.

(e) The numerous and unnecessary questions — me.

(f) From the bad egg there came a — smell.

(g) Hundreds of papers stood in a — on the desk.

(h) I certainly — to go, but I was unable to do so.

(i) A — of policemen were watching the people who got off the ship.

(j) If you follow my —, no harm will come to you.

3. Point out the present participles (they do the work of adjectives) in the following sentence:

There is nothing that vexes me more than seeing other people sitting about doing nothing when I'm working.

4. Point out the gerunds or verbal nouns (they do the work of nouns) in the following:

(a) I am rather proud of my packing.

(b) I did not say anything, but started the packing.

(c) There is nothing that vexes me more than seeing other people sitting about doing nothing when I'm working.