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BÀI LUẬN

MẪU

TIẾNG ANH

Phần 3

239. NEIGHBOURS GOOD AND BAD

LÀNG GIỀNG TỐT VÀ XẤU

Wherever we stay we are bound to have neighbours. They are the people who live nearby. Unless we go and live in the desert or deep in the jungle we will always find them near. Come to think of it there are also neighbours in deserts and jungles but they may not be of the human kind.

My family and I live in Happy Garden, a neighbourhood of terrace houses and a few rows of shops. Our house is somewhere in the middle of this housing estate so we are surrounded by other houses. Some of the neighbours are wonderful while some are horrible. Yet there are others who simply prefer not to know the others.

Right next to my house on the left is a family consisting of a young couple and their three young children. The parents earn a living selling vegetables in the night market. In the morning they go out collecting vegetables from the farms. Come afternoon they will be busy cleaning and sorting the vegetables for sale in the night. They are an industrious lot. The little ones, the youngest is about four, help their parents in their chores. We are grateful they live next door for they are helpful and kind people. We regularly get vegetables from them at reduced price and sometimes for nothing at all. In turn we keep an eye on their house whenever they are away on business, which is practically every night.

The other next door neighbour is a retired teacher and his wife. Their children have all grown up and left the nest. They are left pretty much on their own. In the ten or so years that they have been our neighbours we hardly know them. I would say they are **aloof**.¹ We tried to be friendly with them when they first moved in, but our efforts were of no avail. They simply nod their heads in reply or just ignore us completely. Now we leave them alone. That seems to be the way they want things to be. They have **erected**² an invisible wall between us and them. The other neighbours also have the same experience with them. So this ex-teacher and his wife live like **hermits**³ in the midst of so many people.

Further down the road is the noisiest family in the whole of Happy Garden. Their radio is on almost 24 hours a day at a hardly tolerable volume. Fortunately we are a good five houses from them, so the noise is not too bad. The people nearer to them either enjoy the loud music or they have become deaf to the noise. Whatever it is no one seems to complain about it. Perhaps it is because of the man of the house is a huge burly-fellow who drives a tanket for a living.

Opposite us on the other side of the road is another wonderful family. The salesman father is usually away on business. So the wife looks after their two children and the kids come over to my house often to play with our toys. They are not much younger than me so we get along very well. The wife often brings food for us to eat. She is a great cook. The biscuits and cakes she makes are especially delicious and we always welcome her to our house. The salesman's mother also live with them. She is a gentle old woman now in her late sixties. She normally sits on a **rattan**⁴ chair just outside her front door and watches us play.

The other neighbours are generally good people. I would say that our neighbourhood is free of bad habits and troublesome people. I have never seen any arguments between

neighbours. Anytime any difficulty arises we seem to be able to settle it before the situation gets **out of hand**.⁵ For example, there was a man who started bringing home his huge lorry. For a time we had to bear the noise of the diesel engine early in the morning and late in the night. Then someone must have made a complaint to this man and soon he never brought the lorry back again. So we have peace except for the fellow with his loud radio. However that is tolerable.

On the whole I suppose most of the people living here adopt a live-and-let-live attitude. We do not make trouble for each other. Some are very friendly but some are not so. However we do not have any **hostile**⁶ neighbour. That is something to be thankful for.

1. aloof /ə'lu:f/ (*adj*) hờ hững, lãnh đạm
2. erect /ɪ'rekt/ (*v*) dựng lên, thiết lập
3. hermit /'hɜ:mɪt/ (*n*) người sống ẩn dật, ẩn sĩ
4. rattan /ræ'tæn/ (*n*) thân cây mây dùng để đan sọt, bàn ghế, v.v...
5. out of hand (*idm*) không kiểm soát được
6. hostile /'hɒstail/ (*adj*) thù nghịch căm ghét

240. THE ILLS OF MODERN CITIES

NHỮNG CĂN BỆNH CỦA ĐÔ THỊ HIỆN ĐẠI

The most glaring ill of modern cities is that the people in it are always in a hurry. Businesspeople, wage-earners, labourers, **pedlars**,¹ **crooks**² and assorted characters all rush about in their activities. It is rush, rush and more rush. City folks rush to work, rush to get their work done, rush to have lunch and rush home. Then perhaps they rush to have dinner or rush to a party. Finally in the early hours of the morning it is a rush to, as they say, grab some sleep before the rush next morning.

I was in Sydney, Australia, for a visit once. As I took a leisurely stroll along the city streets, I was amazed at how everyone seemed to be walking very quickly past me. Even old ladies of seventy simply overtook me without any difficulty. Some younger ones were actually running towards God knows where. To cross the busy roads, everyone crowded near the traffic lights. The moment the lights changed to green for the pedestrians, they took off not unlike sprinters off the blocks. That was rush indeed. I was forced to walk quickly too, otherwise I was likely to be **trampled**³ on by the crowd. No wonder modern city-dwellers suffer from all sorts of stress-related diseases. Some of these stressed people are probably rushing towards an early grave too.

In a city like Kuala Lumpur, after the workers have gone home, the uglier side of the city emerges. The night-spots open up attracting all sorts of people. **Prostitutes**,⁴ drug addicts, drug **pushers**,⁵ **con-men**,⁶ **thugs**⁷ and other potentially dangerous characters abound. The police are hard-pressed to handle them. The crime rate is always rising. However, compared to other cities like New York, Kuala Lumpur is relatively tame. In New York, everyone knows that it is dangerous to even go for a walk in some areas after 5 p.m. The likelihood of getting mugged or even killed is very high. The street gangs rule and no sane person would go out to tempt them. Still robberies, murders and all manner of human perversion continue. Certainly there is great ill in this city. This trend of lawlessness is spreading in other cities as well and there is no indication that things will get better.

While skyscrapers dominate the skyline in a city, one could say squatters and **shanties**⁸ dominate the baseline. In some cities, it is estimated that these shanties occupy more than half the city space. On one side, the wealthy ones rush around in their posh cars, while on the other side, the less fortunate ones rush around stealing them. The imbalance of wealth is glaring and nothing is done about it. This is another ill of modern cities.

What are the remedies for these ills of modern cities? It would seem that nobody knows. Nobody seems to care too, which is another typical city illness. At the rate the cities are progressing, it certainly looks like they are headed for some sort of social disaster. Already the inner areas of some huge cities are experiencing a breakdown of law and order. The authorities simply cannot cope. There is not much an ordinary person can do to **alleviate**⁹ these ills. All he can do is to hope that they will go away, which seems very unlikely.

1. pedlar /'pedlə(r)/ (n) (cũng peddler) người bán hàng rong

2. crook /krɒk/ (n) kẻ lừa đảo

3. trample /'træmpl/ (v) *giẫm đạp*
4. prostitute /'prɒstɪtju:t/ (n) *gái điếm*
5. drug pusher /drʌg 'pʌʃə(r)/ (n) (cũng pusher) *người bán dạo ma túy bất hợp pháp*
6. con-man /'kɒn mæn/ (n) *kẻ lừa đảo*
7. thug /θʌŋ/ (n) *kẻ côn đồ hung ác*
8. shanty /'ʃæntɪ/ (n) *nhà ổ chuột, nhà lụp xụp tồi tàn*
9. alleviate /ə'li:vieɪt/ (v) *làm bớt gay go, làm dịu*

VĂN LÝ LUẬN

Hầu hết mọi người ai cũng muốn đưa ra những ý kiến hoặc quan điểm hợp lý và được suy nghĩ cẩn thận về nhiều vấn đề vốn là mối quan tâm chủ yếu trong cuộc sống. Ý kiến hoặc quan điểm thông minh phải dựa trên bằng chứng thực tế và hợp logic. Các ý kiến hoặc quan điểm như thế không phải là không thay đổi được một cách cứng nhắc, mà nếu như có ai đó đưa ra lập luận dựa trên một bằng chứng hoặc khái niệm mới mẻ nhưng hợp lý, thì vẫn có thể làm cho người đọc thay đổi được quan điểm của mình.

Khi biện luận cho một ý kiến hoặc quan điểm nào đó, mục đích của bạn là phải giải thích, làm sáng tỏ và minh họa được ý kiến hoặc quan điểm đó, đồng thời tìm cách thuyết phục người đọc đồng ý với bạn, bằng cách sử dụng những dữ kiện, lý lẽ, ví dụ, các trích dẫn từ những nguồn đáng tin cậy, và các loại chứng cứ khác. Bạn có thể hỏi tại sao lại phải dẫn chứng? Nếu không dẫn chứng thì người đọc không chấp nhận ý kiến của người viết sao? Bạn phải hiểu rằng, một ý kiến đơn thuần hầu như vô giá trị. Ai cũng có thể có ý kiến, nhưng nếu chỉ thuần túy trình bày ý kiến của mình thì sẽ không thuyết phục được người đọc đồng thời với mình. Người đọc có thể cho đó là một dấu hiệu của sự lười biếng, thiếu hiểu biết, hoặc là bạn không có khả năng bảo vệ ý kiến của mình. Do đó, để thuyết phục được cho dù với người đọc khó tính nhất, bạn phải hỗ trợ cho ý kiến của mình bằng những dữ kiện thực tế, các số liệu thống kê, kinh nghiệm cá nhân, ví dụ cụ thể, hoặc những thông tin trích dẫn từ các nguồn có giá trị, như là từ điển bách khoa toàn thư, sách báo, hoặc chuyên gia có uy tín về chuyên môn. Không nên đưa vào những phán xét có tính chủ quan của cá nhân bạn, hoặc những phản ứng thiên về tình cảm.

Để tạo được hiệu quả khi làm một bài văn lý luận, bạn có thể sử dụng một vài kỹ năng được áp dụng cho thể loại trình bày, như là:

- a. Để hỗ trợ cho một ý kiến hay quan điểm, hãy dẫn vào một sự việc có ý nghĩa nhằm minh họa cho ý kiến hoặc quan điểm đó.
- b. Để giải thích một ý kiến hoặc quan điểm, hãy mô tả tiến trình thực hiện hoặc tồn tại của một sự việc nào đó.
- c. Làm sáng tỏ một ý kiến bằng cách xây dựng một định nghĩa hoặc khái niệm rõ ràng.

Lưu ý:

1. Khi viết một bài văn lý luận luôn ghi nhớ rằng công việc của bạn không chỉ là *trình bày* và *giải thích* vấn đề đang tranh luận cho người đọc, mà còn phải *thuyết phục* người đọc, bằng cách sử dụng những dẫn chứng hỗ trợ hiệu quả, rằng ý kiến của bạn là đúng đắn, hợp lý và có giá trị.
2. Có vài đề bài nêu rõ thể loại yêu cầu là lý luận, ví dụ:
 - a. "20th Century is an age of greed". Do you agree with this statement ?
 - b. "Students study just to pass the exam". Do you agree ?Tuy nhiên, một số đề bài không thể hiện rõ rệt yêu cầu về thể loại. Do đó, dễ gây ra sự lẫn lộn giữa hai thể loại trình bày và lý luận.
 - a. Write about the job you think is most suitable for women
 - b. The life of a modern country undoubtedly depends on oil
 - c. Which two inventions have benefited your own country most.

(Suy nghĩ của bạn có thể khác với suy nghĩ của người khác. Do đó bạn phải tìm cách thuyết phục họ rằng hai phát minh mà bạn đã chọn là hai phát minh quan trọng nhất)

241. IS A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE DANGEROUS ? KIẾN THỨC HẠN CHẾ CÓ NGUY HIỂM KHÔNG?

Yes, a little knowledge is always dangerous not only to that person, but also to others. There is certainly a great deal of truth in this statement. We may also refer to another proverb "**empty vessels make most noise**".¹ Knowledge is desirable and should be attained by anyone at any cost, however a little knowledge, which may be slightly better than no knowledge, can be dangerous.

It is normal to see people with little knowledge trying to make others believe that they are very knowledgeable. This often makes them proud and they tend to treat others with little respect as well as looking down upon others. Sometimes, some people might believe them and with this "little knowledge", these people will try to lead others which will usually end in disappointment and disaster.

Those with little education and some of a particular age and **sects**² of women are such examples. They will try to read on a variety of subjects and then try to impress others. In employment they will think themselves to be high and mighty. They always feel that work is below their dignity. The result is that they will be **fired**.³ These people will become **dejected**,⁴ disappointed and confused.

Some people may disagree that a little knowledge is not a dangerous thing. On the other hand, it can **motivate**⁵ them to further their efforts to gain more knowledge. This may be true in some cases. But psychological studies have revealed that this type of persons are very rare.

So it is always good to know something well. Gaining knowledge in a particular field will definitely makes one a master in a subject. Let us not be **jack of all trades and master of none**.⁶ Let us at least be a master of some.

1. empty vessels make most noise (*idm*) thùng rỗng kêu to

2. sect /sekt/ (n) giáo phái nhỏ, nhóm nhỏ (những người có cùng niềm tin hoặc tư tưởng)

3. fire /faɪə(r)/ (v) sa thải (người làm công)

4. dejected /dɪ'dʒektɪd/ (adj) chán nản, buồn bã

5. motivate /'məʊtɪveɪt/ (v) thúc đẩy, làm động cơ thúc đẩy

6. jack of all trades and master of none (*idm*) biết nhiều việc nhưng chẳng tinh thông nghề nào

242. SHOULD THERE BE SCHOOL DURING WEEKENDS ? *CÓ NÊN ĐI HỌC VÀO NGÀY NGHỈ CUỐI TUẦN?*

The weekend or holiday is a **concept**¹ which came up with the observation of **Sabbath**² as a holiday by Christians who regard it as God's Day. The idea is kept true to form and so the weekend has come to stay with all nations and countries with the exception of the Islamic countries. There Friday is the weekend instead of Sunday. Whatever the idea may be, schools and other institutions observe Sunday as a holiday.

Whether there should or shouldn't be school on Sunday is a matter of opinion. Let us first see the case for the school working on Sunday. Most of the parents may be for it. For children at home on Sunday make life a hell for parents. They neither revise nor do their homework. They make a lot of noise and there is no end to their homework mischief. The parents find it difficult to concentrate on their work because children come in the way. Hence for all these reasons, they feel that the school should work even on Sundays.

Since education is a continuous process there need not be a Sunday. Just as our organs work continuously, the process of education must also be continuous. The break upsets the course since very often no useful work is done and when they come to school there is the feeling of Monday **blues**.³ Rest does not mean break from work. Very few children will be bent on any serious work during holiday. There is a lot **idleness**.⁴ Rest period in between work is desirable rather than a day long of rest. The stiffness of the limbs which goes with the long rest can be seen with the stiffness of learning process after a Sunday. Hence people argue school should work even on Sunday.

But there are people who insist on the weekend because people need rest after an **arduous**⁵ and taxing week. The rest will refresh them, and some freedom from the frame of time tables and discipline is desirable for the young minds.

Teachers need the weekend off to do serious preparation for the coming week. They also need some time to attend to their personal needs. They may even engage themselves in leisure activities in which even pupils may take part.

Since parents are also having a holiday they would like to spend some time with their children. It will help them to look into the books and notebooks of the child or perhaps help the child to do some holiday homework. For instance, there is the weekend washing. It may be worth-while to visit places or friends that day. Hence the weekend is a necessity.

1. concept /'kɒnsɛpt/ (n) *khái niệm*

2. sabbath /'sæbəθ/ (n) *ngày xaba (ngày trong tuần lễ dành để nghỉ ngơi và thờ phụng Chúa; đối với người Do Thái là Thứ Bảy và người Cơ đốc giáo là Chủ nhật)*

3. blues /'blu:z/ (n) *nỗi buồn hoặc thất vọng ghê gớm*

4. idleness /'aɪdlɪnɪs/ (n) *sự nhàn rỗi*

5. arduous /'ɑ:dʒʊəs/ (adj) *gian khổ, gay go*

243. SAY WHETHER SCHOOL HOURS SHOULD BE MADE LONGER *CÓ NÊN KÉO DÀI THÊM GIỜ HỌC Ở TRƯỜNG?*

Children of today spend a lot of time in school. Besides the normal hours in class there are also extra-mural activities, games and sports. Sometimes we spend the whole day in school. I would say that school hours should not be made longer. If possible I would rather we have shorter school hours.

School children have to sit in class everyday for about 6 hours. This happens five days a week, except for holidays. Thus it is quite a strain to spend so much time trying to learn the things that are put onto us. We have to learn mathematics, geography, history, science, art and other subjects, one after another with hardly a break. It is not easy to switch from one subject to another everytime the bell rings, but we do try. It is especially difficult after a **gruelling**¹ session in **trigonometry**² to switch to the population of North American cities. There are so many things to remember. We, as humans, sometimes do forget.

The daily break of 20 minutes is a much welcome thing. It enables us to recover a bit from the constant **onslaught**³ of information in class. But then it is back to the **grind**⁴ until school is over.

After a hard day at school we cannot look forward to any rest. There are tons of homework to do everyday. The teachers seem to think that we are only learning the subjects they teach. So they load us with homework, not realising that other teachers have loaded us with their homework as well. Rarely we get an understanding teacher who give us a minimum amount of homework. Usually we have to spend the rest of the day at home doing our homework. Otherwise we will have to answer to the teachers for failing to finish the homework on time.

Some days we have to return to school after normal school hours to participate in sports, games and other activities. These are compulsory and so we spend more time in school. These activities are interesting sometimes. Often they are not.

In short, it is evident we school children do not have much time to spend on our own. School takes much of our time. Homework takes a huge part of the rest. If we do not have such long school hours then we will have more time for ourselves to relax and do the things we want. Also shorter school hours mean that we do not have to absorb so much information. This is definitely less strain on our young minds. Furthermore we will have less teachers giving us homework. So we have less homework to do.

Some adults say that children have too much free time. They have come to this conclusion because they see some kids **loitering**⁵ in shopping complexes and public areas. What they see are only a handful of kids. The majority of us have to **slog**⁶ in school or spend time finishing our homework. Anyway these loiterers are the ones who just cannot cope with the pressure in school. So they simply give up and loaf around. I cannot really blame them for school is indeed **tough**.⁷ The weaker of us cannot take it. Long hours in school cooped up in a classroom do nothing to help the situation.

It would not be correct to say that shorter hours will make school more pleasant. I would say that longer hours will make the situation worse. We need free time for ourselves. We need to do the things we want. Sometimes we need to do nothing in particular. We have to relax and take things easy. Otherwise we are likely to go mad or join the

loiterers in the shopping complexes. So I have to say to those in power : please don't make school hours any longer. The hours are already too long.

1. gruelling /'gruːəlɪŋ/ (adj) gay go, mệt nhoài
2. trigonometry /trɪɡə'nɒmətri/ (n) lượng giác học
3. onslaught /'ɒnslaʊt/ (n) cuộc tấn công dữ dội
4. grind /graɪnd/ (n) sự cố gắng thể chất hoặc tinh thần lâu dài, đều đều, mệt mỏi và buồn tẻ
5. loiter /'lɔɪtə(r)/ (v) la cà
6. slog /slog/ (v) miệt mài, cặm cũi
7. tough /tʌf/ (adj) khó khăn, khắc nghiệt

244. DO YOU THINK THAT HOMEWORK SHOULD BE ABOLISHED¹ ?

BẠN CÓ CHO RẰNG TA NÊN LOẠI BỎ BÀI TẬP Ở NHÀ KHÔNG?

Homework is a bitter pill for many students. Teachers always give homework. They are given to help students to **revise**² what has been done in the class and also to finish a given task set in school which the pupil could not finish on time.

Education and mastery of knowledge is a matter of skill so the more practice has the better skill. There are skill subjects and knowledge subjects. Both these categories require **drill**³ and repetition. The teacher to some extent, drills the student in the class but in the classroom each individual student cannot be expected to do the same amount as skills of students vary from each other.

Homework need not necessarily be repeating what has been done in the class, it may be more study. The student goes through references and acquires more and better knowledge. The world of knowledge is so wide that the class alone cannot bring everything into the grasp of the student. So the student must take up some **initiative**⁴ of his own. This is one of the purposes of homework.

The school also must see that the students are not **overburdened**⁵ with homework. The teachers must see to it that the homework is distributed evenly throughout the week. Still there are subjects like mathematics or transcription in the lower classes which require daily attention. There are other aspects of school work which can be attended to during the weekend, for example, map making and drawing **diagrams**.⁶

Simply because some boys find homeworks too much to cope up with, it cannot be abolished. The school should provide some facilities, so that the boys can conveniently attend to their home work and the teachers can come willingly forward to help such boys.

1. abolish /ə'bɒlɪʃ/ (v) *hủy bỏ*

2. revise /rɪ'vaɪz/ (v) *ôn lại, xem lại*

3. drill /drɪl/ (v) *luyện tập tỉ mỉ bằng những bài tập thực tế và thường lặp đi lặp lại –(n) bài luyện tập có tính chất đó*

4. initiative /ɪ'nɪʃətɪv/ (n) *óc sáng kiến*

5. overburden /əʊvə'bɜːdən/ (v) *đề nặng*

6. diagram /'daɪəgræm/ (n) *biểu đồ*

**245. DO YOU AGREE THAT THE STUDY OF MATHEMATICS IS ESSENTIAL¹
TO THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN RACE ?
BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý RẰNG VIỆC NGHIÊN CỨU TOÁN HỌC RẤT CẦN THIẾT CHO
SỰ TIẾN BỘ CỦA NHÂN LOẠI?**

Though the study of Mathematics had occupied the attention of Egyptian and Greek scholars centuries ago, yet it was only after the advent of the Industrial Revolution that the importance of the subject was fully realised by scholars and educationists everywhere. Today, Mathematics is one of the most important subjects in all the schools and universities of the world.

Before the Industrial Revolution, men lived very simple lives. Agriculture, hunting and fishing were then their main sources of more comfortable if they only exercised their mental faculties a little more and organised a system of knowledge, which we now call the Science, and applied it to practical purposes. Thus, they turned to nature for **sustenance**,² and were satisfied with what they could acquire from nature with their skills. This simple mode of existence was, however, disturbed by the inventions of a few men, sometime in the eighteenth century, which caused people everywhere to think of new ways of improving their conditions of living. The inventions revealed new sources of comfort, and power for the production of goods. Thus, the Industrial Revolution began. More and more machines were invented for the rapid production of goods, and the study of Mathematics began to receive great encouragement, for it was realised that machines function on mathematical principles.

The intensive study of Mathematics revealed its **potentialities**.³ It was soon applied not only to invent new machinery but also to explain **abstruse**⁴ subjects such as Physics, Logic and many others. In fact, Mathematics is now used to teach and explain almost every important subject in schools and universities. Even the construction of buildings and bridges requires a deep knowledge of Mathematics.

The study of Mathematics has also helped to increase the mental powers of men. They are not only able to think more clearly than they could before but are also able to understand and explain many of the things which they could not understand earlier.

Sometimes, however, Mathematical principles have been applied for tragic consequences. In battles and wars, bombs and **cannon-balls**⁵ have been released with remarkable **accuracy**⁶ to destroy the enemy. this fact reveals how a knowledge of Mathematics could be used to **hinder**⁷ human progress. But such a situation develops only when men have lost their patience and their capacity for **compromise**⁸ and fortunately the leaders of the world today are trying their utmost to remove the causes for war.

In general, however, men have a natural impulse to live in peace and harmony with others, and almost every invention is aimed at promoting the welfare of the peoples of the world. Thus, the human race has benefitted from the efforts of those who have made the fullest use of Mathematical principles for all their inventions. I therefore agree that the study of Mathematics is essential to the progress of the human race.

1. essential /ɪ'senʃl/ (adj) *thiết yếu, cần thiết*

2. sustenance /sʌstɪnəns/ (n) *chất bổ dưỡng (của thức ăn thức uống)*

3. potentiality /pətenʃɪ'æləti/ (n) tiềm năng, tiềm lực
4. abstruse /æb'stru:s/ (adj) khó hiểu
5. cannon-ball /'kænənbo:l/ (n) trái phá, trọng pháo
6. accuracy /'ækjərəsɪ/ (n) sự chính xác
7. hinder /'hɪndə(r)/ (v) cản trở, ngăn chặn sự tiến bộ của ai / cái gì
8. compromise /'kɒmprəmaɪz/ (n) sự thỏa hiệp

246. PRIVATE TUITION - IS IT NECESSARY ?

HỌC TƯ CÓ CẦN THIẾT KHÔNG?

As far as I am concerned, I find that private tuition is not necessary for me. I shall give some reasons.

I find that if I pay attention in class when the teacher is teaching, it is adequate to see me through my lessons and homework. If there is any doubt I can always ask the teacher concerned.

Today most of the things taught in school are not too difficult to follow, **as long as**¹ I do not neglect my work. Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, and English are not that difficult to **handle**² **provided**³ I take an interest in them and put in some genuine effort. So in all my years in school I never had to have any private tuition. Yet I can get through my examinations without any problem.

I notice that my classmates who take private tuition are usually not interested in their studies. In class they have a "couldn't-be-bothered" attitude thinking that their tuition teachers will cover the lessons for them later. What they do not realise is that it is so much easier to pay attention in class than having to spend extra time in the afternoons just to cover up for the wasted time in school. The extra time can easily be spent for other more constructive things than having to repeat a lesson.

Also private tutors do not come cheap. The parents have to **fork out**⁴ a considerable sum of money for the services of the tutors who are ordinary teachers anyway.

The trouble with taking private tuition is that the students can become too dependent on the tutors and cannot function on their own. Everything has to be **spoon-fed**.⁵

Private tuition is only necessary if the child is really weak in certain subjects. But nowadays it is trendy to go to tutorial centres or engage private tutors.

Whether private tuition does really improve the performance of an ordinary student is debatable. Some of my classmates take private tuition. I do not see them doing exceptionally well in tests and examinations. Some of them still fail. Those who do not take private tuition perform just about the same as those who do. I, for one who does not have private tuition, does not feel disadvantaged nor less capable than those who do.

I have to **concede**⁶ that not everyone has the same ability or intelligence. So some students may really need extra tuition before they can grasp what is being taught. Perhaps then these people can benefit from private tuition. But for the majority of students, like my classmates, they do not need private tuition. What they need is to do their classwork properly and they should have no troubles passing any examination.

The teachers in school are always there to help if we bother to ask them. They are already paid for their services. So there is no need to pay them extra for the same things they teach in school.

1. as long as (*idm*) với điều kiện là; đến chừng nào mà

2. handle /'hændl/ (*v*) giải quyết, xử lý

3. provided (*that*) /prə'vaɪdɪd/ (*conj*) miễn là, với điều kiện là

4. fork out /fɔ:k ɔʊt/ (*v*) trả (tiền) một cách miễn cưỡng

5. spoon-feed /'spu:n fi:d/ (*v*) giúp đỡ hoặc dạy ai quá nhiều đến nỗi không còn để cho họ tự mình suy nghĩ; nhồi nhét

6. concede /kən'si:d/ (*v*) thừa nhận

247. STUDENTS STUDY JUST TO PASS THE EXAM. DO YOU AGREE ?
HỌC TRÒ HỌC CHỈ CỐT ĐỂ THI ĐẬU THÔI. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý NHƯ THẾ KHÔNG ?

I agree fully with the above statement. I am a student and I study just to pass examinations. It seems the same with my schoolmates. We are all only concerned with examinations. We do not study other things.

The reason that we do not study other things is because we have no time for them. School subjects take up all our time in school and much of our time out of school. Everyday we have to learn so many things whether we like it or not. Lessons continue one after the other with hardly a break. Our brains switch from history to geography to mathematics to science unceasingly. We manage most of the time, but sometimes it gets so tiring. For me, any initial interest I have in any subject is quickly killed off by the sheer amount of information I have to absorb. No one is allowed to learn at his or her own pace. Everyone is **force-fed**¹ a diet of information regardless whether he or she can cope with it or not.

Then there is always the next examination around the corner. Since very young we have been taught this : passing an examination is good, failing is very bad. We are expected to pass. Our parents, teachers and all grown-ups applaud us when we pass. If we fail, we are made to feel worthless. I myself had been **caned**² by my father because I got red marks in my report card.

No one wants to be considered worthless or be punished for failure, but that is what the world is. So we become **obsessed**³ with examinations. We study because we do not want to fail. I have heard some teachers say that we should study to acquire knowledge. Knowledge is considered something precious. It is all very well and **idealistic**⁴ to say such things but I do not see anyone practising it. The only knowledge I acquired in my years in school is that if I fail I am finished. I have to pass.

That is how I feel. For some of my classmates who cannot cope with the workload, they simply give up studying. They are already marked as failures by the teachers so they see no point in studying anymore. I do not fall in that category. I still study and do my homework as diligently as I can, but I do these things with only one thing in mind and that is : I have to pass my examinations.

So the students study, some of them very hard indeed. Passing means success in the world. Failure is unspeakable. The fact remains that they study not for the sake of knowledge but only so that they can pass the next examination. I am no different from them.

1. force-feed /'fɔ:s fi:d/ (v) *buộc (người hoặc vật) phải ăn uống*

2. cane /keɪn/ (v) *trừng phạt bằng roi vọt*

3. obsess /əb'ses/ (v) *ám ảnh*

4. idealistic /aɪdɪə'lɪstɪk/ (adj) *(thuộc) chủ nghĩa) lý tưởng và không thực tế*

248. EDUCATION IS VERY NECESSARY. DO YOU AGREE ?
BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý RẰNG GIÁO DỤC LÀ ĐIỀU RẤT CẦN THIẾT?

Whether or not education serves the right purpose in our society is a difficult question to decide. Very often people do not take up professions for which they are trained ; at other times they do not get the opportunity to use their training. When most education at the school level is either free or **subsidised**,¹ it becomes essential to examine the question in great detail.

Is education really necessary ? Did we not live before this quantitative expansion took place, before education began to be **imparted**² to members of all classes. In Britain till mid-nineteenth century education was class privilege. Britain could expand the area of its education on the basis of the industrial relation. Can the developing and the under-developed countries afford to take similar measures ?

For generations our people have depended only on life to educate them and they have all learned through experience. Even at a higher stage of education mere theoretical knowledge is not enough ; it has to be related to actual experience. Many young engineers and technicians find that what they have learned in their schools and colleges is not of much use to them and they have to learn everything **anew**³ once they take to practical work.

However solid these arguments may appear to be, I firmly believe that education alone can save us. It alone can help us build a better future. Ignorance never was **bliss**⁴ and to believe in it would be a folly. It is not gold that makes good people or good countries. It is knowledge. Knowledge is the only thing which can come to the help of mankind. Education is one we cannot neglect. If we want young minds to grow and be aware of the world around them, if we want our country to be in the **forefront**⁵ or at least **on par with**⁶ other countries, we must educate our people for all advanced knowledge and for peace and war education is necessary. We can never be free if we depend on other countries for the technical **know-how**.⁷ Even if practical knowledge is acquired in the fields and the factories, we have to have some one who knows about the soils and the fertilizers and can build our factories.

Today war is not a mere matter of bravery of courage. Wars are won or lost on the basis of literacy. Modern weapons are so sophisticated that an illiterate soldier cannot use them. Education is not a mere ability to sign one's name. It is the basis of something much more important. Even basic hygiene and cleanliness are connected with the level of education. To some extent they are also connected with the economic situation. Education helps to solve both the problems at one go. With better education better jobs will be available.

There is no time to **dilly-dally**⁸ about matters related to education. If we want progress, we must ensure minimum education for all.

1. subsidise /'sʌbsɪdaɪz/ (v) trợ cấp cho (ai / cái gì)

2. impart /ɪmpɑ:t/ (v) phổ biến

3. anew /ə'nju:/ (adv) theo một cách mới hoặc khác; lại một lần nữa

4. bliss /blɪs/ (n) niềm vui lớn, hạnh phúc trọn vẹn

5. forefront /'fɔ:frʌnt/ (n) hàng đầu hoặc vị trí quan trọng
6. on par with (sb/sth) /pɑ:(r)/ (idm) ngang tầm quan trọng, chất lượng, v.v... với (ai / cái gì)
7. know-how /'nəʊ haʊ/ (n) bí quyết thực hiện (tức kiến thức hoặc kỹ năng thực tế (trái với lý thuyết) trong một hoạt động)
8. dilly-dally /'dɪlɪ dæli/ (v) lãng phí thời gian, dilly dally

249. DO YOU THINK SCHOOL LEAVERS SHOULD GET SOME WORKING EXPERIENCE BEFORE GOING FOR FURTHER STUDIES ?

BẠN CÓ CHO RẰNG HỌC SINH TỐT NGHIỆP TRUNG HỌC CÓ NÊN ĐI LÀM ĐỂ CÓ THÊM KINH NGHIỆM TRƯỚC KHI HỌC TIẾP BẬC ĐẠI HỌC KHÔNG?

It would certainly be a good thing if school leavers get some working experience before going for further studies. One reason is that they get a taste of what work is and thus are in a better position to know what they want to study further.

As it is, the smarter students get **channelled**¹ directly into universities and colleges the moment they finish school. Most, if not all, of them do not know what the real working world is like. When they finish their studies they are plunged into the competitive work market often without a hint of what it is like. So they have to learn very quickly how to cope with the sudden change. The luckier ones get jobs they like. Many get stuck in jobs they have no inclination for and only kept at the jobs because they do not know what else they can do.

This causes job dissatisfaction. The result are unhappy workers in unhappy companies. However, if school leavers were to get a taste of working life first, they will soon have a pretty good idea of what it is. They will have probably discovered too what sort of jobs they prefer to do. With this precious knowledge, they will then know what courses to take up to ensure they secure the right jobs on graduation.

Most of my teachers are those who went straight to university or college on finishing school. They have virtually no experience of life outside school. So when they return to school to teach, they are ill-equipped to teach the children what it is like outside the school. Some teachers who had had to work outside before becoming a teacher have far better knowledge of the outside world. The difference is obvious. I am in no way saying that the **former**² are **inferior**³ teachers. It is just that they would be better ones if they have had outside experience.

As for myself, the moment I leave school, I am going to get myself a job. It does not matter what job it is or for how long I will have it. I only want the experience of working. Only by involving myself fully in the working world will I know what it is like and how to cope with it. Even if it is for a few months, by that time, I will have a fairly good idea of working life. Thus I will be in a good position to decide what I will like to do in the future. I will not be a confused jobseeker nor an unhappy employee.

1. channel /'tʃænl/ (v) hướng đến

2. the former /'fɔ:mə(r)/ (n) là đối tượng đầu tiên được nói đến giữa hai vật hoặc người (≠ the latter)

3. inferior /ɪn'fɪəriə(r)/ (adj) thấp hơn, kém hơn

250. "FAR TOO MUCH ATTENTION IS PAID TO EXAMINATION RESULTS WHEN SELECTING CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT". ARGUE EITHER FOR OR AGAINST THIS STATEMENT.

“KHI CHỌN LỰA ỨNG CỬ VIÊN CHO MỘT CÔNG VIỆC, NGƯỜI TA ĐÃ CHÚ Ý QUÁ NHIỀU ĐẾN KẾT QUẢ THI CỬ”. HÃY LÝ LUẬN HOẶC ỦNG HỘ HOẶC PHẢN ĐỐI Ý KIẾN NÀY.

I feel that today it is **no longer**¹ real **merit**² which helps one in **landing**³ a good job ; rather it is the grade one has secured on an examination. Not only the degrees have multiplied over the years, but the possible areas of specialisation have also increased. A look at the dailies is an educative experience. The various openings are for men and women who have successfully gained a large number of qualifications. It is imperative for one to have had a consistently bright academic record. A prospective candidate feels he has lost the chance even before having been fairly tried because the paper qualifications stand between him and the final interview.

It is easy enough to guess the way the employers think. They feel that anyone who has had the courage and determination to slog for long hours has proved his capacity for hard work. In the process, they assume, he has also proved his sense of responsibility and reliability. Thus the candidate's seriousness of purpose **stands him in good stead**.⁴ But would it not be worthwhile to examine the other side of the case ? The person who has slogged so hard has perhaps lost all his initiative and has not allowed his imagination scope to develop. In order to be a good examinee one may have to wear blinkers, give up all extra-curriculum and time-consuming activities and thus develop a **lopsided**⁵ personality. The qualities required for a good examinee do not always go to make a good administrator or officer or technician.

Firms, employment agencies and prospective employers who attach a great deal of importance to examination result are mistaken in their **assessment**⁶ of the examination system. A written examination is by no means a **foolproof**⁷ test of a person's intelligence. The **syllabus**⁸ seldom changes and in certain cases the questions tend to follow a set pattern. The examination system, besides being subject to many **vagaries**,⁹ leads to memorising by students. On the other hand, a candidate who may not have fared well where marks and percentage are concerned, may have a fully developed, rich personality. Instead of selecting a few important topics he might have worked hard over the whole syllabus; instead of memorising, he might have understood and grasped the course. What is more important is his involvement in extra-curriculum activities which would have been more sincere and genuine.

The main purpose of education is to teach one how to think, how to act, to develop one's initiative and to be able to take decisions. In fact, education equips us for facing life, for solving and **braving**,¹⁰ the problems which may confront us from day to day. To link education solely to the examination grades is to **distort**¹¹ its meaning, to falsify its essence, and to prove our own inadequacy in such matters.

Many businessmen a great acumen have had no formal training in the trade they pursue ; many able administrators may not have had much success in examinations. School **dropouts**¹² and **delinquents**¹³ have often risen to meet a challenge much more strongly than successful examinees. In many a village in the East it is still possible to come

across old men and women who store the wisdom of the ages. In today's world the educational system need not necessarily **inculcate**¹⁴ sound moral values, and examinations are in no way a real test of brilliance. If I were to choose people it would not bother me how well they have performed in the various examinations ; but my concern would be to discover how much they know of their subject and how quick and alert they are in their responses and the way they react to a problem. Thus the interview should be the proper base for selection and not the grading in the examination though it has to be conceded that the minimum grade should have been obtained.

1. no longer /'lɒŋə(r)/ (*adv*) không còn... nữa
2. merit /'merɪt/ (*n*) phẩm chất tốt đáng được khen thưởng
3. land /lænd/ (*v*) giành được (một chỗ làm, một giải thưởng, v.v...)
4. stand sb in good stead /sted/ (*idm*) có ích cho ai hoặc giúp đỡ ai khi cần
5. lopsided /lɒp'saɪdɪd/ (*adj*) lệch lạc
6. assessment /ə'sesmənt/ (*n*) sự đánh giá
7. foolproof /'fu:lpru:f/ (*adj*) không thể chệch hướng hay bị hiểu lầm; rất rõ ràng và đơn giản
8. syllabus /'sɪləbəs/ (*n*) chương trình học
9. vagary /'veɪɡəri/ (*n*) sự thất thường
10. brave /breɪv/ (*v*) đương đầu với (một vấn đề, v.v...) với thái độ dũng cảm
11. distort /dɪ'stɔ:t/ (*v*) xuyên tạc, bóp méo
12. dropout /'drɒpɔ:t/ (*n*) người bỏ học nửa chừng
13. delinquent /dɪ'lɪŋkwənt/ (*n*) người chểnh mảng, lơ là với nhiệm vụ
14. inculcate /'ɪnkʌlkeɪt/ (*v*) khắc sâu

251. DO YOU THINK THAT PHYSICAL EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT ?
BẠN CÓ CHO RẰNG RÈN LUYỆN THÂN THỂ LÀ ĐIỀU QUAN TRỌNG ?

The value of physical education has been realized since the earliest times of human existence. The Greeks and the Romans considered it indispensable to the development of a good personality and character.

Today, in all schools and universities in the world, a great deal of emphasis is being placed on physical education as a means of producing citizens of good character and personality.

Physical education develops the **muscles**¹ of the body scientifically and increases muscular activity and physical strength. All this makes the body active and efficient. It is now also realized that there is a close connection between the body and the mind. Therefore, if the body is active, the mind too is active. Proof of this can be easily found among children. Children who are inactive physically are usually also mentally lazy. An active and efficient body is a healthy body. When the body is healthy, the mind too is healthy and therefore happy. Thus, physical education contributes greatly to the health and happiness of an individual. Such an individual could do a great deal for the good of society.

Physical education can also contribute to the strength of a nation. If the youths of a country receive proper physical education, they can build up a strong country to protect itself from foreign attacks or invasions.

Further, physical education provides opportunities for contacts with people of other lands. **Athletes**² of all countries meet at various countries at various times to compete with one another and thus promote common understanding among countries for the benefit of one another. It is, therefore, not without reason that physical education has been a **part and parcel** of³ **academic**⁴ **pursuit**⁵ today. I do therefore agree that physical education is important to all people.

1. muscle /'mʌsl/ (n) cơ bắp, bắp thịt - muscular /'mʌskjələ(r)/ (adj) thuộc về cơ bắp
2. athlete /'æθli:t/ (n) vận động viên
3. part and parcel of sth (idm) phần thiết yếu của cái gì
4. academic /ækə'demɪk/ (adj) thuộc nhà trường
5. pursuit /pə'sju:t/ (n) sự theo đuổi

252. PARENTS AND CHILDREN - ARE THERE WAYS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING ?

BỐ MẸ VÀ CON CÁI – CÓ CÁCH NÀO ĐỂ CẢI THIỆN SỰ THÔNG HIỂU LẦN NHAU?

In our modernised world today, we tend to take for granted others opinions and feelings. What matters most is our own opinions and ideas. Parents and their children are not excluded from this category. Parents expect their children to think and behave like they do. Their children on the other hand expect them to understand and respect their feelings. This, I feel is the root of all parent-child problems.

In my opinion, it is perfectly normal for parents to want to protect their children. However, this natural instinct should not be overdone or the consequences would be most undesirable. Youngsters of over-protective parents tend to **exhibit¹ rebellious tendencies.**² Behind their parents' backs they exhibit all kinds of bad behaviour and some even find themselves involved with bad company. Worst still, some youngsters deliberately do things forbidden by their parents right under their parents' noses. This will inevitably result in parent-child quarrels and misunderstandings.

Youngsters on the other hand, inspite of having the right of freedom of speech, thought and action should not be over-demanding. They must realize that parents most often know what is best for them. Thus, advice and, less often, scoldings, should be taken constructively and in a humble manner. They should not regard these as obstacles and hindrances but rather as care and prevention for them to face the world. After all, these parents have tasted more of the **spices**³ of life.

Thus, looking at there two points, it is important for parents and their children to **strike a balance.**⁴ Parents must allow freedom but there must be a limit to it. Youngsters must be satisfied with their freedom and respect their parents' wishes. They must take their parents' protectiveness as a sign of concern and love and not of selfishness and possessiveness.

In obtaining freedom of speech, youngsters must know the difference between **standing up for**⁵ a point and being merely rude and stubborn. Freedom of thought must be guided so as not to lead one astray. Freedom of action does not mean that one can do anything regardless of other peoples' wishes and desires. These are the techniques that parents wish to impart to their children and should therefore be accepted gratefully.

Apart from these factors, youngsters, at the age of adolescence are prone to imitating others. They get easily influenced by others, especially by the media. They become impressed by the western idea of freedom and independence. The youngsters who try to adhere religiously to this western norms often abandon the ever-essential virtue, that is, **filial piety**⁶.

The enormous generation gap between parents and their offspring is the only unavoidable factor giving rise to the parent-child problems. Parents fail to realize the needs of the child because they have never felt these needs during their times. On the other hand, their youngsters fail to realize their parents' needs as they have not reached that age of wisdom yet. Thus, in my opinion, the only way one (either parent or child) can overcome this problem is by being tolerant. As Harper Lee wrote in the book *To Kill A Mockingbird*, one can only understand others when one jumps into their shoes and walks around in them !

1. exhibit /ɪɡˈzɪbɪt/ (v) *phô bày, biểu lộ*
2. rebellious tendency /rɪˌbelɪəs ˈtendənsɪ/ (n) *khuynh hướng (muốn) nổi loạn*
3. spice /speɪs/ (n) *gia vị*
4. strike a balance /ˈstraɪk ə bæləns/ (idm) *thỏa hiệp; tìm ra điểm hợp lý, trung dung giữa hai thái cực, v.v...*
5. stand up for sth (idm) *nói, làm việc, v.v... ủng hộ ai / cái gì*
6. filial piety /fɪlɪəl ˈpaɪəti/ (n) *lòng hiếu thảo đối với cha mẹ*

253. DO YOU THINK MARRIAGES SHOULD BE ARRANGED BY PARENTS OR LEFT TO THE CHOICE FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE CONCERNED ?

BẠN CHO RẰNG VIỆC HÔN NHÂN NÊN ĐỂ CHO CHA MẸ SẮP ĐẶT HAY CHO LỚP TRẺ TỰ CHỌN LỰA LẤY?

This is a question which may be viewed from different angles, the parents' point of view, the couples' point of view and then there is also the **common sense**¹ point of view. A parent wants his son or daughter married because he wants his species **propagated**.² He wants his son or daughter married to a healthy person who would prove a good **life mate**³ for his children. The parent cares also for the stock. In other words he wants to assure himself that the person with whom his son or daughter settles down does not suffer from any disease. They must have a good name in society. Very often, the financial position of the parties concerned gets top priority. All **alliance**⁴ is made when there is a financial gain thrown in. Sometimes, the youngsters may not like such an alliance and so the marriage ends in unhappiness and disaster.

Young couples these days want to be free to choose their life long partner themselves. It may be the personal qualities of the girl he likes that he is attracted to so much so that in the first freshes of love, he is likely to **overlook**⁵ many other factors and because he is not experienced and worldly-wise, his choice may not always be correct. Such wrong alliances contributes to more misunderstanding and divorces in western countries. Under the wrong notion of love there have been more **illicit**⁶ connection and children born **out of wedlock**.⁷ So wise youngsters would better think twice before they get married. They would not lose anything by consulting their parents and getting their advice, blessing and approval before getting married.

1. common sense /'kɒmən sens/ (n) *lẽ phải thông thường*

2. propagate /'prɒpəgeɪt/ (v) *nhân giống, truyền giống*

3. life mate /laɪf meɪt/ (n) *người bạn đời (vợ hoặc chồng)*

4. alliance /ə'laɪəns/ (n) *sự kết thông gia*

5. overlook /əʊvə'lʊk/ (v) *bỏ qua, bỏ sót*

6. illicit /ɪ'lɪsɪt/ (adj) *bất hợp pháp, bất chính*

7. born out of wedlock /'wedlɒk/ (idm) *sinh ngoài giá thú / (con) đẻ hoang*

254. "I'D MUCH RATHER BE AN ONLY CHILD THAN HAVE SIX BROTHERS AND SISTERS." HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS VIEW ?
“TÔI THÀ LÀM CON MỘT HƠN LÀ CÓ SÁU ANH CHỊ EM”. BẠN ĐỒNG Ý VỚI QUAN ĐIỂM NÀY Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ?

Having an only child, the parents can spend well in the upbringing of the child. The child can be provided with better nutritious and well balanced food which may not be possible in a big family. The child can have fruits drinks, and nice things to eat like biscuits and chocolates. The child can have better clothing of good materials and new fashions.

Besides these the child can enjoy a good education. He can be sent to a good school from the beginning because the parents can afford to meet the expenses. Good education means good books, good teachers and good learning tools. For instance, where there are many children, an average parent cannot find means to provide even a good **atlas**¹ and instrument box. Picture books and story books will be out of question. Because of better attention to his education, the only child can hope to reach high **rungs**² of the ladder provided, of course, he had the brains.

Another signal advantage is the parent can attend on the child personally. This will help the parent to shape the child in the fashion he likes. Barring, petting and pampering, the parent can be helpful in the mental and intellectual growth of the child. There can be an **intimacy**³ which will help in later years.

There are also disadvantages in being an only child. The child feel lonely, companionless and no one to share his joys and sorrows. The parent cannot take the place of a brother or sister because of the age gap. Being the only child he may be petted and pampered and so will easily become a spoilt child. He will develop more negative qualities like selfishness, pettiness and obstinacy. He won't have the opportunity to develop many human qualities. Love, affection, kindness, sympathy, appreciation and many such qualities cannot easily develop in an only child. The chances for development of these qualities will be **far and few between**.⁴ There will be few opportunities to give expression to these qualities. When they are not developed, he can't have a healthy growth and he cannot become a well rounded personality. He cannot understand the value of give and take which is very important in life. He will become so selfish that he would like to have everything for himself. He cannot understand the importance of loving and giving for others.

In a corporate society each member has to live with others. This means adjustments and a lot of give and take. A big rope is after all a combination of lots of straws and its strength depends on how well it has been twisted. So too unless the society is made up of well seasoned members, it cannot stand the onslaught of bad powers and influence. So the lonely child with many a minus points cannot easily fit in. Taking all these into consideration I would like to have brothers and sisters than be a lonely child.

1. atlas /'ætɫəs/ (n) tập bản đồ

2. rung /rʌŋ/ (n) thanh ngang tạo thành bậc của một cái thang

3. intimacy /'ɪntɪməsɪ/ (n) trạng thái thân mật, tình bạn thân thiết hoặc quan hệ gần gũi

4. far and few between (idm) thất thường, với những khoảng thời gian chờ đợi lâu dài

255. YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE MORE PROBLEMS THAN ADULTS. DO YOU

AGREE ?

**LỚP TRẺ GẶP NHIỀU VẤN ĐỀ RẮC RỐI HƠN NGƯỜI LỚN. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý
THẾ KHÔNG ?**

Every person, at some point of his life, will encounter problems. I agree that young people have more problems than adults, especially in today's world where things are changing quickly.

Certainly, adults have their own share of problems. I have known of adults who face financial difficulties, particularly if they have a family to support. Some also have health problems, and there are others who worry about finding a life partner or trouble with their marriage.

Young people have their own problems. Our problems are harder to solve because there are often no **clear-cut**¹ solutions to them. One of areas that can trouble young people is the search for identity. This is an **inevitable**² problem in a teenager's life.

He is no longer a child, yet not quite an adult. Some younger people who have been pampered and sheltered during their childhood years find it hard to become more independent. I know some students who come from such a background and they have trouble adjusting to teenage life. They still expect things to be handed to them. Sometimes their parents make decisions for them.

On the other hand, there are those who want to be 'instant' adults. To show that they are grown up, they feel that they have to smoke and keep late hours. As a result, they **miss out**³ on normal teenage activities like sports and other extra-curriculum activities which they will never experience again.

Some young people also rebel against **conventional**⁴ ideas to **assert**⁵ their identity. It is typical to show their rebellion in their choices of clothes and music. But those who have weak family ties may run away from home, or be caught up in bad company.

Young people also become more aware of their looks and the opposite sex at this stage. Among some of them, there is a tendency to judge people by their looks. I have heard boys and even girls **disparage**⁶ a girl for her plain looks. This attitude can make the less attractive girl self-conscious and unsure of herself.

During the teenage years, young people begin to show an interest in dating. There is so much pressure from the popular media which constantly features stories and songs about couples and romance. Some students realise that dating will interfere with their studies, but they may feel like a "nerd" if they do not date. Young people who date often cannot handle the pressures of the relationship as well as their studies. As a result, they suffer failure in both.

Nowadays, young people face a lot of pressure to do well in their studies. For most of us, we know that academic success is good for us, but at times we do feel the stress. No one wants to disappoint his parents.

In many ways, it is wonderful to be young. There are so many things to learn, and the whole world to explore. But I think we have more problems to resolve than adults have. I suppose overcoming these problems will lead us on the path towards adulthood.

1. clear-cut /'kliə(r) kʌt/ (adj) rõ ràng, dứt khoát

2. inevitable /ɪn'evɪtəbl/ (adj) không thể tránh khỏi, chắc chắn sẽ xảy ra
3. miss out (on sth) /mɪs aʊt/ (v) mất một cơ hội được lợi từ cái gì hoặc từ sự thích thú
4. conventional /kən'venʃənl/ (adj) theo quy ước
5. assert /ə'sɜ:t/ (v) khẳng định
6. disparage /dɪs'pærɪdʒ/ (v) chê bai, xem thường

256. "MAN TO LEAD, WOMAN TO FOLLOW". DO YOU AGREE ?
BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý VỚI QUAN ĐIỂM “NAM GIỚI LÃNH ĐẠO, NỮ GIỚI PHỤC TÙNG” ?

Any man who says this to a **feminist**¹ would probably be called a "Male Chauvinist Pig", MCP for short. The days when men led, and women followed are gone.

Long ago, the men were the one who had the physical ability to provide food and shelter for his **charges**,² which included women and children. Men were made to do the job of hunting, ploughing and other activities that required physical strength and skill. Women do not have the necessary physical attributes. They were made to have children and keep a home.

Nowadays things are very different. In most parts of the world now, there is no need for anyone to go hunting for good or demanding physical work. In fact hunting has largely **vanished**.³ In its place are large farms of domesticated animals that provide all the necessary food. To work the farms, there are machines that can do the work better than any man or men. So man's physical strength is hardly necessary for survival now.

The main concern for man and woman of this age is how to survive in this increasingly complex world. This requires knowledge, not physical strength. And as far as knowledge is concerned, man and woman have about the same ability.

We have women who are doctors, engineers, teachers, drivers, lecturers, prime ministers and other professionals. They are in no way inferior to men and in some ways better although no man would like to admit this. Thus women can survive equally well in this world as men.

To ask a woman professional to **submit**⁴ to a man who does not even have half her ability would be foolish and immature. Only a male chauvinist would do this, and there are plenty around, especially the religious ones who still cling on to religious precepts although these precepts have far outlived their usefulness. It is the **egoistic**⁵ male who insists he leads when clearly he is incapable of doing so.

For the most part of man's history, men have been the leaders. If we are nature enough to look at the facts of our world, we have to admit it is these men who have made a mess of it. The men had had thousands of years of practice in running the world and they have failed miserably. They are still trying without much success. They led, and the rest suffered. This is not to say that women can do better. Perhaps if men and women had shared the reins of leadership, the world would not be in this awful mess.

It would be for the better if the human race in general discard this prejudice of women being inferior to men. Men and women are made to **complement**⁶ each other, not for one to **subjugate**⁷ the other. One cannot exist without the other, so it is only logical that they share the responsibilities of living together. It is not a matter of who leads who. It is a matter of walking side-by-side-together.

1. feminist /'femɪnɪst/ (n) người ủng hộ thuyết nam nữ bình quyền

2. charge /tʃɑːdʒ/ (n) người hoặc vật để cho ai trông nom, coi sóc

3. vanish /'vænɪʃ/ (v) thôi không tồn tại hoặc mất dần

4. submit /sʌb'mɪt/ (v) chịu phục tùng, chịu qui phục

5. egoistic /iːɡəʊ'ɪstɪks/ (adj) (về một người) ích kỷ

6. complement /'kɒmplɪmənt/ (v) bổ sung

7. subjugate /'sʌbdʒʊgeɪt/ (v) chinh phục, khuất phục

257. "WOMEN SHOULD BE RESTRICTED TO WORK CONNECTED WITH THE HOME AND CHILDREN. THEY SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN POLITICS, COMMERCE OR INDUSTRY." HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT ?

“NÊN GIỚI HẠN PHỤ NỮ TRONG NHỮNG CÔNG VIỆC CHĂM SÓC NHÀ CỦA VÀ CON CÁI. HỌ KHÔNG NÊN THAM GIA VÀO CÁC LĨNH VỰC CHÍNH TRỊ, THƯƠNG MẠI HOẶC CÔNG NGHIỆP”. BẠN ĐỒNG Ý VỚI QUAN ĐIỂM NÀY Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ?

Before I begin with my opinion of the statement, let me analyse the statement itself. The word "work" should not be taken to mean doing something for a salary but rather to **engage**¹ in an activity. To agree with the first sentence would be to say that women can only obtain jobs such as teaching, since they would be dealing with children then, if they were teaching, lower levels, or jobs like being domestic servants, seamstresses, cooks or interior decorators, since they would then be doing something connected with the home. The statement **implies**² that women should not engage in **charity**³ work, literary work, nursing, acting, singing and dancing and many other activities which they do remarkably well and have received critical acclaim for, for example Lady Edwina Mountbatten for her charity work, Jane Austen for her perceptive writing on Victorian society, Anna Parlova and Margot Fonteyn for their breathtakingly beautiful ballet dancing, and Florence Nightingale for the new hospital hygiene rules she established in nineteenth century in England and which we inherit today. Obviously, the whole idea behind the statement is that women should not engage in activities unconnected with the home and children because they are not capable of doing them at all, especially in politics, industry and commerce.

This idea is not necessarily true. For decades and centuries women have been involved in activities not even remotely connected with the home and done them well.

In the fifteenth century, the famous woman Joan of Arc led the soldiers of her country to war, to the admiration of many. Queen Elizabeth I ruled England in the sixteenth century, using her own wisdom and never allowing the decisions of her ministers overrule her, nor did she ever marry. England did not see ruin during her time and in fact, it **flourished**,⁴ especially in arts and culture. The famous and revered works of William Shakespeare, among those of other equally famous writers, were produced in that period. Queen Victoria of England ruled almost half the world, the great British Empire, at the peak of her reign in the nineteenth century. Even in contemporary times there existed Golda Meir of Israel, Indira Gandhi of India, etc. The remarkable thing about these women is that the people voted that they do such work, and they have performed on par with their male **counterparts**.⁵

With regards to industry, a tour of any factory today will yield the sight of rows of women along the **assembly lines**,⁶ working to produce consumer products which are the basis of today's civilisation. In Singapore, women contribute largely to the economy in this way and have helped fill the labour shortage in this area. This is a vital contribution since Singapore is a country based very much on industrialisation. Women are needed in industries and should engage in them, either at the assembly department or even at the top of the company as administrators.

Commerce is one area where women are not a **rarity**⁷ either and where they can succeed. Women today do set up their own businesses and make huge successes of them. Take for instance the cosmetic business with big names like Helena Rubinstein or Elizabeth Arden, or even the fashion business. True, these are businesses largely directed at women, but the fact is that women are also running them and doing it well.

Another reason why the statement restricts women to the home and children would be that if a woman was to engage in something so diversely different from the home, she may neglect her own family and home. This is a **cynical**⁸ approach because, in fact, if a woman were allowed to broaden her horizons and outlook, she would make an openminded approach towards her family and home. She would make an interesting conversationalist, relate better with her children since she could better understand what they face daily outside home and be a source of knowledge and inspiration to them and also relate better with her husband since she would understand how taxing a job or demanding activity outside the home could be. With today's modern appliances and gadgets, she would have no excuse for neglecting her housework either, and in fact, it is about time that the family helped women out with the housework.

Therefore, I feel that women should be encouraged and trained to venture into any field of activity if they feel capable of handling it.

1. engage (in) /ɪn'geɪdʒ/ (v) (làm cho một người) tham gia vào một việc
2. imply /ɪm'plaɪ/ (v) ngụ ý
3. charity /'tʃærəti/ (n) lòng từ thiện, sự giúp đỡ do lòng từ thiện
4. flourish /'flʌrɪʃ/ (v) phát triển mạnh, thịnh vượng, phát đạt
5. counterpart /'kaʊntəpɑ:t/ (n) bên tương ứng, bên đối tác
6. assembly line /ə'sembli laɪn/ (n) dây chuyền lắp ráp
7. rarity /'reərəti/ (n) sự hiếm có, sự hiếm hoi
8. cynical /'sɪnɪkl/ (adj) ích kỷ, khinh thường người khác, chỉ quan tâm đến lợi ích của mình

258. "WOMEN MAKE BETTER TEACHERS THAN MEN." DO YOU AGREE ?
BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý RẰNG “NỮ GIỚI LÀM GIÁO VIÊN GIỎI HƠN NAM GIỚI”
HAY KHÔNG ?

I do not agree with the above statement. It is unfair to both sex to make a **sweeping**¹ statement like that. I have had good women teachers as well as good men teachers. I also have had bad women teachers and bad men teachers.

Generally I can say that women teachers are gentler in their approach to teaching. They, being the so-called fairer sex, usually try very hard to make their lessons interesting. Sometimes they succeed and sometimes they don't.

A class of thirty odd young children is not a easy thing to handle by any means. Occasionally there are a class or two that are more difficult to handle than others. I happened to be in one of these classes. Though we meant no **malice**² towards any teacher, I remember making our woman mathematics teacher cry because we did not follow what she was teaching. She did her best, but looking back I could see that she was too soft with us. That made us fool around a bit thus disrupting the class.

She was replaced by a **hefty**³ six-foot muscleman. The very sight of this no-nonsense Hercules made us pay attention in class. One could say there was the proverbial "pin-drop silence" whenever he was in class. Did we learn anything from him ? Well, we all did very well in mathematics. We had to. It was better than being targets for him to exercise his muscles on.

Then there was this woman who taught us English. She **exudes**⁴ an air of strictness that would put an army **sergeant**⁵ to shame. We could not fool around with her. She had a way with words that would make anyone feel small. Her command of the English language was astonishing. To argue with her was to get a **barrage**⁶ of words that we had no reply for. So to avoid being stung by this

waspish⁷ lady we usually did as told. Though we did not like her words I must admit we learned a great deal from her. If it had not been for her I doubt if I could write as I am doing now.

I have been taught by many other teachers. They all have their own abilities and approaches to teaching. Some of them are definitely uninterested in teaching, especially some older ones of both sex. Perhaps they were fed up with teaching the same thing year after year. So they make **lousy**⁸ teachers. But for those who tried their best, which most of them did, I realise that I cannot judge them. Whether they are men or women, each have their own strong points and weak points. Each was good in his or her way. Sex does not determine how good a person is as a teacher.

1. sweeping /'swi:piŋ/ (adj) (về lời nói) không có ngoại lệ; chung chung; vơ đũa cả nắm

2. malice /'mælɪs/ (n) ác ý, ác tâm

3. hefty /'heftɪ/ (adj) (về người) to và khỏe

4. exude /ɪg'zju:d/ (v) lộ ra hoặc toát ra một vẻ hoặc một tình cảm về (cái gì)

5. sergeant /'sa:dʒənt/ (n) trung sĩ

6. barrage /'bærə:ʒ/ (n) một loạt (câu hỏi, lời phê bình, v.v...) nêu ra nhanh và nối tiếp nhau

7. waspish /'wɒspɪʃ/ (adj) có những bình luận hoặc đối đáp gay gắt, châm chọc

8. lousy /'laʊzi/ (adj) rất tồi tệ hoặc rất xấu, chẳng ra gì

259. A GOOD WOMAN INSPIRES A MAN, A BRILLIANT WOMAN INTERESTS HIM, A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN FASCINATES HIM BUT A SYMPATHETIC WOMAN GETS HIM. DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS VIEW ?

MỘT PHỤ NỮ TỐT TRUYỀN CẢM HỨNG CHO MỘT NGƯỜI ĐÀN ÔNG, MỘT PHỤ NỮ TÀI GIỎI KHIẾN ÔNG TA THÍCH THÚ, MỘT PHỤ NỮ XINH ĐẸP LÀM ANH SAY MÊ, NHƯNG NGƯỜI PHỤ NỮ BIẾT THÔNG CẢM SẼ CHIẾM HỮU ĐƯỢC ANH. BẠN ĐỒNG Ý VỚI QUAN ĐIỂM NÀY KHÔNG ?

The question deals with women of different **accomplishments**¹ and how man reacts towards them. The qualities of woman categorized here are goodness, brilliance, beauty and sympathy. Apposite to them are put inspiration, interest, fascination and getting or winning **respectively**.² To know women of these **traits**,³ one must have a wider experience which is rather difficult but the **lapse**⁴ could be made up by a knowledge of history and literature of the world. On the world stage there had been and there are still women of different accomplishments and here and there mention will be made of them. In general the question deals with man's relation with women but for a single man to have contact or relation with the different women mentioned here, the chances may be rare unless he is a great figure who has a galaxy of women hovering around him. To inspire is to give life, to fill life with hope, to pull up the **crestfallen**⁵ one from **despondency**⁶ to optimism. When we take in air we say we inspire because we are taking in the life giving, blood purifying oxygen. So the action or the words of woman may be inspiring. The one may be the wife or a good friend or as sometimes happens a mistress. To inspire, such persons must basically be good. Their words and actions must have a soothing effect on the soul and result in goodness to the recipient. Quite recently and during our times we have heard of Florence Nightingale or the Lady of the Lamp and Mother Teresa. They have given their love instinctively for the sick and ailing ; how their work has inspired many to follow their footpath. A husband or a son must be really blessed indeed to have a good woman as the wife or mother ; for the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.

To interest one is to make one think of the benefits that may **accrue**.⁷ One may be interested in a proposition because it may bring one some benefits. The benefits need not necessarily be material ; it may even be mental, say a speech. Brilliance relates to the dazzle in appearance, speech and manners. The brilliance in appearance may incite jealousy, the brilliance in wit and humour attracts and interests. It was said of late Sarojini Naidu that her conversation was full of wit and humour and so she shone among her friends like a brilliant star in the firmament. So people were interested to hear what she would say in general and in particular.

To fascinate is to attract. The fascination may be real or false, the fascination may be for good or bad. The fascination of the moth for fire is a classical example where it is attracted by the light of the fire only to die. The beauty refers, may be, only to the external a woman may be beautiful to look at and as an opposite sex, man is fascinated by her but if the inner woman is not as beautiful as the outer then the man having to do anything with her will be ruined beyond measure. There are stories of beautiful women who have fascinated men only to destroy them. That is why beautiful women are used as

spies.⁸ In World War 1 one Mata Hari was sued as a spy to destroy the morale of army men in the allied ranks. While it is true a beautiful woman fascinates there are stories in which the beauty of a woman was responsible for the destruction of a country or an empire. For example, the beauty of Helen was responsible for the fall of Troy and in the Ramayana the fall of Ravana was caused by the beauty of Sita.

To get is to own. To own means also the power to command over. When I own a horse I can ride at my will and pleasure. What I own I can easily dispose of but it is beside the point here because the question deals with the sympathy. Sympathy is to have the same feeling for. When one sympathises with another, it means the latter has the same feeling as the former, that is why we often say 'in sympathy with you'. In sympathy we see the identical views. When a woman has the sympathy she can naturally get the other. In fact the getting may be in different degrees. Some explanations will make this point clear.

Take for instance the sympathy of a nurse for a baby or a patient. In both cases the getting may not be exactly by owning but it is getting a permanent place in the heart of a baby or the patient. The sympathy shown by the mother, helps her get the child. Where children are brought up by others, the sympathy of children for their mothers is very thin indeed. A good wife must have the sympathy for her husband to get him. A classical woman is described that way. She is everything for her husband. She is the wife, the cook, the counsellor and the friend. Where she fails to have sympathy for her husband, he looks elsewhere. Kasturbai Gandhi was such a good and sympathetic woman she was able to rule Gandhi. But to see a woman of all these qualities is rare and such a one is a rare phenomenon.

1. accomplishment /ə'kʌmplɪʃmənt/ (n) tài năng, tài nghệ
2. respectively /rɪ'spektɪvli/ (adv) tách biệt ra hoặc lần lượt, theo thứ tự như đã nói
3. trait /treɪt/ (n) nét tính cách, đặc điểm
4. lapse /læps/ (n) sự lầm lẫn, sự sai sót
5. crestfallen /'krestfɔ:lən/ (adj) buồn vì thất bại, thất vọng bất ngờ
6. despondency /dɪs'pɒndənsɪ/ (n) sự tuyệt vọng, nỗi đau khổ bất hạnh
7. accrue /ə'kru:/ (v) tích lũy
8. spy /spaɪ/ (n) gián điệp

260. "I COUNT HIM GREATER WHO OVERCOME HIS DESIRE THAN HE WHO CONQUERS HIS ENEMIES; FOR THE HARDEST OF VICTORY IS THE VICTORY OVER SELF." DO YOU AGREE WITH ARISTOTLE'S VIEW ?
“TÔI CHO LÀ NGƯỜI CHẾ NGỰ ĐƯỢC MONG MUỐN CỦA MÌNH LÀ NGƯỜI VĨ ĐẠI HƠN KẺ CHINH PHỤC ĐƯỢC KẺ THÙ. BỞI LẼ CHIẾN THẮNG BẢN THÂN LÀ ĐIỀU GIAN KHỔ NHẤT”. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý VỚI QUAN ĐIỂM CỦA ARISTOTLE KHÔNG ?

Aristotle's view given here has a big philosophical **impact**.¹ This is to say that to overcome one's desire is more difficult than to defeat one's enemy. The battle against desire is difficult because it is **inborn**.²

Let us now look a bit closer at the origin of desire because when one wants to own something, desire is born. One does not desire for things one has not seen, tasted or experienced. Take a child, it desires to have a thing which another child is having. It may be the instinct to own. A drunkard wants to have more drink because he has tasted it already. One who knows the value of money desires to own more. Foretaste is the motive force of all desires.

A desire to **show off**,³ own material things, acquire wealth and for an **ostentatious**⁴ display of power and grandeur is wrong. On the other hand, the desire to learn, to serve one's own country, and to serve one's own fellowmen can never be wrong. Desire to **excel**⁵ others in one's own field of specialization is not to be **deplored**.⁶ Otherwise humanity would not be progressing and would never have reached the level it has come today. The Taj Mahal could never have been built, had Shah Jahan been satisfied with the Fort at Delhi or Agra. Siddhartha could never have become the Buddha, the Enlightened one, if he had not desired to know the cause of the ills of the world. It is a **paradox**⁷ in his case, more than in any other, that he could lay the blame on "desire" for the ills of the world. It is a paradox because the very desire forced him in the path of **penance**.⁸ So desire for great and good things cannot be condemned outright.

Desire is a double edged weapon and can lead a man to hell or glory. Only the first aspect is being notified by Aristotle and he opines that it is the hardest to overcome such a desire.

It is easier to defeat one's enemy when one can commandeer all the forces and direct them against the enemy. The enemy's strength may be known, his strategies are understood and the sources of his supplies are known. Then it is easier to defeat the enemy. That was how in the course of history several wars have been fought and won.

But in the case of desire, the fountain head of it is the self. How it develops is a mystery. Why should one steal, covet another's wife, do **heinous**⁹ crimes, the blame can be laid at the doors of desire. Psychologically the ability to desire cannot be wiped off. They would be an act of folly. But the desire must be turned to good directions and use.

Simple cases of desire can be solved, like a child stealing because it wants to have the same thing as its neighbour or friend has. The parent it wants to have the same thing as its neighbour or friend has. The parent can buy the same thing the child desires then the child would leave off stealing. But in the case of grown-ups, it is by education, by persuasion, and by appeal to the value of good conduct, one should be made to give up wrong desires. In psychology, they call it **counselling**.¹⁰ So, where desire surfaces to the

detriment¹¹ of one's name and fame, counselling by friends and religious preceptors can help a great deal. Appeal may be made to one's conscience. Will-power to resist must be built up. In public offices, the officials make cheap money by what is popularly known as **graft**¹² or **bribery**.¹³ Desire is at the root of it. But if the person concerned can be made aware of the **pitfalls**¹⁴ and the **odium**¹⁵ that may be attached to him, more often than not he can be **redeemed**.¹⁶

It is easier to write about the dangers of desire and the need to conquer it, but to overcome it actually requires great will-power. All religions of the world have condemned this kind of enemy.

It is very difficult to draw the line between useful desire and bad desire. One can get to know it through proper education, company and conviction. Still one feels how difficult it is to conquer it and in so doing shares the views of Aristotle.

1. impact /'ɪmpækt/ (n) tác động, ảnh hưởng
2. inborn /ɪn'bɔ:n/ (adj) bẩm sinh
3. show off /ʃəʊ ɒf/ (v) cố gắng gây ấn tượng với người khác bằng khả năng, sự giàu có, trí thông minh, v.v... của mình – khoe khoang
5. excel /ɪk'sel/ (v) xuất sắc hơn, trội hơn
4. ostentatious /ɒsten'teɪʃəs/ (adj) phô trương
6. deplore /dɪ'plɔ:(r)/ (v) lên án, phàn nàn về
7. paradox /'pærədɒks/ (n) nghịch lý, sự ngược đời
8. penance /'penəns/ (n) sự tự hành xác để sám hối
9. heinous /'heɪnəs/ (adj) rất tàn ác
10. counselling /'kaʊnsəlɪŋ/ (n) sự khuyên răn, chỉ dẫn; sự tư vấn
11. to the detriment of sb/sth /'detrɪmənt/ (idm) làm hại ai / cái gì
12. graft /græft/ (n) sự hối lộ
13. bribery /'braɪbəri/ (n) sự cho hoặc lấy của hối lộ
14. pitfall /'pɪtfɔ:l/ (n) nguy hiểm hoặc khó khăn không ngờ tới; chỗ bẫy
15. odium /'ɒdɪəm/ (n) sự chê bai, dè bĩu
16. redeem /rɪ'di:m/ (v) cứu (ai / cái gì / bản thân) khỏi bị phê phán hoặc lên án

261. MANY OF US "LIVE TO EAT" RATHER THAN "EAT TO LIVE." DO YOU AGREE ?

BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý RẰNG NHIỀU NGƯỜI TRONG CHÚNG TA “SỐNG ĐỂ ĂN” HƠN LÀ “ĂN ĐỂ SỐNG” ?

There is some truth in the above statement, for there are many who certainly put great importance to the food they eat until they have a problem with it.

Many people complain that they are overweight, that they have a spare tyre and how they wish that they can be **slim**.¹ For most of these people who complain thus, I can see that they are the cause of their condition, and that is, they simply eat too much. Except for rare medical cases where **hormonal**² disturbance may cause obesity, I can safely say that just about all obese people love to eat.

I have a friend who weighs 260 lb and he stands at merely 5 feet 2 inches. He looks like a ball actually. He is so fat that he cannot put his hands down his sides like normal people do. His hands sort of **dangle**³ from his shoulders. He **attributes**⁴ his obesity to "something wrong with my **glands**"⁵. He does not admit that it is his addiction with eating that is causing the problem. His ideal lunch is two plates of chicken rice, two plates of fried **koay toew** washed down with two glasses of lime juice. All these he consumes in the time I can just manage to finish a plate of chicken rice. He literally stuffs the food into his mouth and with hardly a **chew**⁶ **swallows**⁷ the whole lot. His "something is wrong with my glands" declaration is just an excuse.

Judging by the number of people who **strut**⁸ around with their **bellies**⁹ leading the way, it will not be too **far-fetched**¹⁰ to say that they "live to eat". If they merely eat to live, they will not allow themselves to bloat up as they are. It is the inevitable complaint of overweight people that they have difficulty doing physical exercises and they are prone to illness. Why then if they can see that being overweight is not something good, do they not **desist**¹¹ from eating excessively ? The answer is that they live to eat. They simply love the taste of food. In short, they are addicted to food.

This addiction is further encouraged by the many restaurants and eating shops that seem to mushroom everywhere. Young and old, rich and poor - they all patronise these places. There are always **pot-bellied**¹² experts ever willing to comment on the best dining places in town. They can describe in great detail and with great enthusiasm all the best meals they had ever had. If these people do not live to eat, who else do ?

To be fair, not everyone live to eat. There are many sensible people who eat just to keep their bodies in good working order. Overeating is out of the question for them. They know the dangers of obesity. They treasure their health more and thus live their lives minus the problems and anxieties of the obesity. There are enough problems already in this world. There is no need to add the problems of obesity to it.

1. slim /slɪm/ (adj) *thon thả, mảnh mai*

2. hormonal /hɔ:'mɒnəl/ (adj) *về một hay nhiều chất hoóc-môn*

3. dangle /'dæŋɡl/ (v) *treo lỏng lẻo, đung đưa, lúc lắc*

4. attribute /ə'trɪbjʊ:t/ (v) *cho là, quy cho*

5. gland /glænd/ (n) tuyến, tức cơ quan tách khỏi máu những chất để dùng hoặc để tiết ra khỏi cơ thể
6. chew /tʃu:/ (n) động tác nhai hoặc nghiền thức ăn
7. swallow /'swɒləʊ/ (v) nuốt
8. strut /strʌt/ (v) đi khệnh khạng, oai vệ
9. belly /'belɪ/ (n) phần bụng (người)
10. far-fetched /'fɑ: fetʃt/ (adj) cường điệu, thổi phồng
11. desist /dɪ'zɪst/ (v) ngừng cái gì, ngừng làm cái gì, chấm dứt
12. pot-bellied /'pɒt belɪd/ (adj) (về người) có bụng phệ

262. "WE DO NOT ENJOY OUR WORK, ONLY OUR LEISURE." HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE ?

“CHÚNG TA KHÔNG THÍCH LÀM VIỆC, CHÚNG TA CHỈ THÍCH NGHỈ NGƠI GIẢI TRÍ”. BẠN ĐỒNG Ý VỚI Ý KIẾN NÀY Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ?

Man leads a complex life. He works to support himself and his family. During his non-working hours, he rests and spends the time with his family and friends, or with his hobbies.

People look forward to weekends and holidays. I have also heard people say that if they were rich or if they win the lottery, they would not work anymore. It may seem as if we do not enjoy our work, we only want leisure time.

I do not agree with this. Many people may feel that they want only leisure, but if they really get their wish, I do not think they will enjoy it for very long.

There is an old saying "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy". I think, in a similar way, we can say that "All play and no work makes Jack a bored boy." It is important for us to have balance in our lives. Work makes us feel that we are doing something worthwhile with ourselves, while our leisure enables us to have time to relax. Recently, I read a story about a man in the United States who became a millionaire after winning the lottery. He left his job and enjoyed his leisure which included his hobby of fishing for a couple of years. Then he went back to work. He told the reporter, "you can fish only for so long".

Work makes us independent. We are able to support ourselves. I think work is also good for our **self-esteem**.¹ Everyone needs to find out where his interest and talent lie. Work also makes us strive hard, and our ancestors have always **stressed**² that diligence is a virtue. People also enjoy work because it makes them feel that they are using their time constructively. Many wealthy people who do not have to work for a living still work for these reasons.

Many people also enjoy work because it gives them an opportunity to get to know and meet other people. One of my uncles, a school teacher, chose to retire early. But after two years, he decided to go back to work. He missed the interaction with his colleagues and students.

Of course, we cannot spend all our hours working, so leisure is equally important to us. During our leisure hours, we are free to make our own choices whether to pursue hobbies or to spend time with people whose company we enjoy. We can choose to pursue a lively activity or just choose to laze around reading or listening to music. Also, unlike the office or workplace, we do not have to face people whom we do not get along with. I think this freedom makes some of us feel that we enjoy only our leisure, and not our work.

Leisure breaks the **monotony**³ of the working week, and because we have fewer non-working days than days of work, we **cherish**⁴ our leisure more.

I think people need both the discipline of work and the freedom of leisure. It is quite natural to feel that we only enjoy our leisure because during our free time, we are our own boss. But I think if each of us suddenly becomes rich and we are given a choice between "all leisure" or "work and leisure", we would choose to enjoy the joys of both work and leisure.

1. self-esteem /self ɪ'sti:m/ (n) lòng tự trọng; sự đánh giá tốt về tính cách và khả năng của bản thân mình
2. stress /stres/ (v) nhấn mạnh (cái gì)
3. monotony /mə'nɒtəni/ (n) sự đơn điệu, buồn tẻ
4. cherish /'tʃerɪʃ/ (v) say mê, ham thích (ai / cái gì)

263. PEOPLE WHO LOOK FOR EXCITEMENT AND DANGER ARE FOOLISH.
DO YOU AGREE ?
NHỮNG AI TÌM KIẾM SỰ KÍCH THÍCH VÀ NGUY HIỂM ĐỀU DẠI DỘT. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý KHÔNG ?

The things that people do for fun or for money are very numerous today. Some of these things are positively dangerous, but there seem to be no lack of people eager to do them. Bungee-jumping, rock-climbing and sky-diving are certainly not everybody's cup of tea. Then there are less dangerous but no less exciting pursuits of motor-racing and professional boxing. These are all exciting and dangerous things. Some even earn a living doing these dangerous work. Why would people put themselves in such dangers ? Would they be considered foolish ?

Those who purposely go out to get some excitement are usually those who are bored with their lives. Bungee-jumping is a predominantly western invention and the participants are usually bored westerners who would do anything for some excitement. It needs a certain amount of guts to be able to jump off a bridge only to be saved from certain death by a piece of rubber cord attached to one's legs. There were cases where the cord failed and the **thrill-seekers**¹ perished. Yet the others persist. I suspect these others are not only bored with their lives, they could be unconsciously looking to either end their boredom or their lives. In short they could have **suicidal**² tendencies. Would people **bent on**³ killing themselves be called foolish ?

Rock-climbers and sky-divers also take enormous risks. Death resulting from accidents are not uncommon, but people continue to do them. I asked a friend who does rock-climbing why he pursued such a dangerous sport. He said everytime he reached the top of a rock, the feeling of excitement and achievement was quite incomparable. It is **intoxicating**⁴ and he is **hooked**⁵ by it. So he seeks to repeat the high, despite the obvious risks.

I suppose this exciting feeling holds true for the other unpaid dangerous sports as well. They get the adrenalin flowing through the blood. These excitement-seekers are obviously addicted to it. The only thing they get out of their pursuits is excitement, which have to be repeated. No other gain is forthcoming except some respect from others. Perhaps respect is also an exciting thing for some.

The professionals who take great risks are far better off than the **amateur**⁶ ones in terms of financial rewards. Race-drivers are usually millionaires. So are boxers. Also these professionals are well covered by insurance and they do not take unnecessary risks. In fact they are very careful indeed in their work.

In conclusion I would say that amateurs who look only for excitement and danger are foolish because they stand to gain nothing and to lose everything. They are putting their heads on the chopping block for the sheer thrill of it. The professionals are different. They get paid and make sure that their necks are well padded. Thus they are not as foolish, not by a long shot.

1. thrill-seeker /θrɪl 'si:kə(r)/ (n) người tìm cảm giác mạnh

2. suicidal /su:'saɪd/ (adj) muốn tự tử, muốn tự sát

3. bend (on) /bend/ (v) (bent) *quyết chí làm việc gì*
4. intoxicating /ɪn'tɒsɪkeɪtɪŋ/ (adj) *kích thích mạnh mẽ, say sưa*
5. be hooked (on sth) /hʊkt/ (idm) *nghiện, mắc nghiện (cái gì)*
6. amateur /'æmətə(r)/ (n) *người chơi tài tử, nghiệp dư*

264. "HEALTH IS WEALTH." DO YOU AGREE ?
BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý RẰNG “SỨC KHỎE LÀ VÀNG” ?

I agree whole-heartedly with the saying "Health Is Wealth". If a person is not healthy then he or she will find it very difficult or even impossible to enjoy life, even though he or she may be very rich.

If you are asked to choose one from two of the following things, which will you prefer : health without wealth, or, wealth without health ? Without hesitation I will choose the former.

Wealth is generally associated with how much money a person has, that is, how rich he is. An uncle of mine is very rich. He has just about everything anyone can hope for, and some things no one dares to hope for. That is how rich he is. He lives in a huge **mansion**¹ guarded by huge **Dobermanns**² and sophisticated burglar alarms. He has expensive cars, furniture, paintings and other rich man's toys. Well, he has everything except good health.

Everywhere he goes he carries with him a bag of medicine. He has to take pills everyday for his weak heart, diabetes and **hypertension**.³ He is about sixty years old and has spent his life accumulating wealth. Without doubt he has succeeded in becoming very rich. However he has also succeeded in becoming very unhealthy too. He **laments**⁴ about his lack of health and says that how he wished that he was young and healthy again. Unfortunately he cannot regain his health again.

This example of wealth without health is not what I want to follow. It is **ridiculous**⁵ to have so much material wealth but being unable to enjoy it. What is the use of money when one has to take so much medicine everyday just to stay alive ? How can one enjoy life then when one's body is weakened by disease and pain ? No wonder my uncle laments so.

Health without wealth is far better. That is what I have now. I do not have to worry even a bit about what I can eat or do. I eat and do what I like because my body is healthy. Of course I do not abuse it by taking drugs or overexerting myself. I take good care of my body. In that way I stay healthy.

With health I can go about my work with joy. If I become rich, then that is all right. I may lose my riches too, but that is all right too. I can always do the things I enjoy whether I am rich or not. I can play games, swim in the sea, climb hills, eat delicious fruits and appreciate the things of this beautiful Earth. This is indeed wealth - to be healthy and joyous.

1. mansion /'mæʃn/ (n) lâu đài, biệt thự

2. Dobermann /'dəʊbəmən/ (n) (dạng đầy đủ - Dobermann pinscher) một giống chó lớn của Đức có bộ lông mịn

3. hypertension /haɪpə'tenʃn/ (n) chứng huyết áp cao

4. lament /lə'ment/ (v) than vãn (về cái gì)

5. ridiculous /rɪ'dɪkjʊləs/ (adj) vô lý, nực cười, lố bịch

**265. DO YOU THINK THAT "HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY"?
BẠN CÓ CHO RẰNG “TRUNG THỰC LÀ THƯỢNG SÁCH” ?**

This is an old and often repeated proverb : but is it true ? It has a suspiciously worldly flavour, for it means that from a worldly point of view it **pays**¹ to be honest. Now a really honest man will not ask whether honesty pays or not. He feels he must be honest, even if honesty brings him loss or suffering, simply because it is right to be honest and wrong to be dishonest. This proverb is therefore **of little use**² to sincerely honest people : it is really meant only for those **unprincipled**³ men who will be honest only if honesty pays, and will be dishonest if they think dishonesty will pay them better.

Probably honesty does pay **in the long run**.⁴ In business, for example, a man who **deals**⁵ straight forwardly with the public, who sells at fair prices, who gives good quality, and can be **relied upon**⁶ not to cheat, will generally establish a reputation that will be a fine business asset. People will be glad to deal with him : and though he may not **make a fortune**⁷ he will have a sound and satisfactory business.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that success is often **due to**⁸ trickery, and great fortunes have been built up upon dishonesty. Too many successful rogues have proved by experience that for them dishonesty had been the best policy. Of course some of these people come to a bad end, and lose all they have gained by their lies ; but many maintain their worldly success is more due to ability, lucky opportunities, and business cunning, than to honesty.

And many examples could be given of men who, from a worldly point of view, have failed because they were honest. A **martyr**⁹ who prefers to be burned at the stake rather than say what he believes to be false, may be a hero ; but in the eyes of a worldly man, who thinks only of worldly success, he is a sad failure.

But if we look at such cases from the spiritual point of view - if we consider that truth and righteousness are far more important than wealth and rank and prosperity - then, in the highest sense, honesty is in the end the best policy. "For what it shall profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?"

1. pay /peɪ/ (v) có lợi
2. of little use /əv 'lɪtl ju:s/ (idm) chẳng ích lợi gì lắm
3. unprincipled /ʌn'prɪnsəpld/ (adj) không có nguyên tắc đạo đức, vô lương tâm
4. in the long run (idm) về lâu về dài
5. deal with /di:l/ (v) giao dịch với, quan hệ với
6. rely upon /rɪ'laɪ/ (v) tin tưởng vào
7. to make a fortune /meɪk ə 'fɔ:tʃu:n/ (v) tạo dựng cơ đồ
8. due to /dju: tə/ (conj) vì
9. martyr /'mɑ:tə/ (n) người tử vì đạo

266. "ADVERTISEMENTS ARE BORING, USELESS AND OFTEN MISLEADING." HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS OPINION ?
“QUẢNG CÁO RẤT NHÀM CHÁN, VÔ DỤNG VÀ THƯỜNG GÂY LẦM LẪN”. BẠN ĐỒNG Ý VỚI Ý KIẾN NÀY Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ?

In our present world of consumerism, advertisements are very much the norm because manufacturers have to attract us to their products, which they do not want and we do not need. Everywhere we go advertisements loom before us on billboards, leap out at us from magazines and newspapers, **whizz**¹ a lingering impression on the mind. Advertisement **jingles**² hail us every morning over the radio and through the day, and we watch consumer products come alive on television, singing and dancing to promote themselves.

Are they boring ? Generally not, but there are exceptions, of course. Take for instance the Pepsi-Cola advertisement on television, "starring" Lionel Ritchie and a host of dancing youths ; **exuberant**³ excited, bubbling and fizzling with life and energy. With its foot-tapping beats and delightful visual effects, one requires a great deal of self-control to sit still and not dance along. Or consider the advertisement with that famous line, "When a man you've never met before suddenly gives you flowers, that's Impulse." Yes, the advertisement for the body-spray, Impulse. The whole idea of a man absorbed in his daily routine being suddenly roused out of it by a **whiff**⁴ of Impulse and then going through a series of impulsive actions to compliment the lady wearing it, is romantic and endearing to most women. This combined with the light, tinkling piano accompaniment and soft-focus filming makes the advertisement an attractive one. Then we have the newspaper and magazine advertisements, in vibrant colour, interesting graphics and witty slogans. Take a look at most cosmetic advertisements like Maybelline or Cover girl, where the page is attractively splashed with the newest colours the manufacturer has come up with a pretty, lively girl caught in mid-laughter. Therefore, advertisements today are generally interesting due to the visual and sound effects made possible by advanced technology in the various mediums of print, sound and film, and a little imagination, especially when rival companies try their best to attract consumers and so try to advertise better.

Are they useless ? Not necessarily. In many ways advertisements help to keep the cost of most publications low so that we can afford them quite easily. This applies in the case of our daily newspaper "The Straits Times", the Sunday "Asia Magazine", the popular "Readers Digest" and especially the publication we are all familiar with, our respective school magazines. The advertisers pay to advertise and this payment subsidizes publishing cost so that we pay less than what we might otherwise have to pay. Advertisements also help to ease our boredom sometimes. How many times have people been roused out of a bored **stupor**⁵ once they see an interesting advertisement on a billboard or bus or when lazily **flicking**⁶ through a magazine. Also, advertisements either interesting or otherwise, especially of otherwise, do promote conversation among friends when they discuss them, how an advertisement is so silly, or another is unusual and imaginative and yet another is introducing an interesting and attractive product which might be worth buying. This then brings us to the last point. Are advertisements misleading ?

One of their uses is that they inform us as to what is available on the market, but is this information wholly true ? Their main function is to attract buyers so naturally, only certain details regarding a product are highlighted while others are not provided at all. We are made to believe that a product is long-lasting, worthwhile, multi-purpose and bound to give us that happiness we cannot find elsewhere. Perfume advertisements promise to bring the opposite sex falling at one's feet, dictionary and encyclopedia advertisements promise to give us all the wisdom and knowledge in the world, cosmetic advertisement for "Ponderosa Steak & Salad Restaurant" promises juicy and tender steak and delicious salad. I have eaten there and found the steak to be of very low quality, for a very high price, but the salad was everything the advertisement led me to believe.

So in conclusion, I would say that modern commerce trade and industry cannot survive without advertisement. The most advanced advertising technology course gives new ideas and also acts as "Survival of fittest" in this dynamic decade. However there should be control over misleading advertisements.

1. whizz /wɪz/ (v) (cũng whiz) chuyển động rất nhanh; vèo vèo
2. jingle /'dʒɪŋɡl/ (n) bài thơ hoặc bài hát ngắn, nhằm thu hút sự chú ý và dễ nhớ, nhất là khi được dùng trong quảng cáo trên truyền thanh hoặc truyền hình
3. exuberant /ɪɡ'zju:bərənt/ (adj) hớn hởi, hồ hởi
4. whiff /wɪf/ (n) mùi thoang thoảng
5. stupor /'stju:pə(r)/ (n) trạng thái ngẩn ngơ, sững sờ
6. flick (through sth) /flɪk/ (v) giỡ lướt

**267. "THE TWENTIETH CENTURY IS AN AGE OF GREED." DO YOU AGREE?
"THẾ KỶ HAI MƯƠI LÀ THỜI ĐẠI CỦA LÒNG THAM". BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý KHÔNG ?**

Being in an age of rapid scientific and technological development, it is only natural that man will find himself caught in the endless rat race. If before, we live in prosperity and harmony caring for our neighbours and subordinates, now we live in prosperity and harmony, but caring only for ourselves and never being satisfied with what we have. We are now, sad to say, ignoring the very existence of our neighbours. This selfish attitude is so common that we no longer regard it as a **vice**¹ but rather as life's pre-requisite.

In this **realm**² of desire for material well-being, man says that greed is an inevitable consequence. If man in the stone age believed in survival of the fittest, man in this modern era believes in the survival of the wealthiest. Many people let money rule their lives, as they feel that money can buy them fame, respect, power and even happiness.

Take for instance the attitude of children at present. How often do we find kids selecting their friends from amongst the wealthiest and prettiest only. Worst still, some parents instruct their children to behave in this manner.

The attitude of students today, whether they are in the primary, secondary or **tertiary**³ level, are also changing. The only thing on their minds is to obtain the highest possible qualifications. There is no more, or at least minimal co-operation among students. Leisure is slowly giving way to textbooks, researches and endless hours of painstaking mugging. They are aiming for an excellent pass so that they would be recognised and their names will be on the lips of everyone around their campus. They hope for the most "respectable" job offering them the highest pay.

Realizing the importance of money, man however has gone so far as to regard money as an end and not as a means. Men will do all they can do to satisfy their greed for money. It is not surprising that crime rates are soaring limitlessly all over the world today. Discontentment and greed are the most common reasons for man to fall into using **unscrupulous**⁵ means. They rob, murder, **frame**⁶ others, cheat, **swindle**⁷ and now the most popular crime is selling and smuggling drugs, to be rich within the shortest possible time.

Last but not least, the numerous crises happening all over the world are classic examples of greed. Greed for power can be seen in unnumberable invasions made by many powerful nations over the helpless Czechs, Afghanistan and Vietnam ; the sophisticated nuclear balance between Russia and America, the unending **terrorism**⁸ in Palestine, Sri Lanka the civil wars which has time and again broken up all over the American and African Continent.

Above all, the **emblem**⁹ of greed and selfishness rings throughout the world when the hard-earned money that some caring people have donated to the poverty-stricken Ethiopias was swindled by the trustees. What could be worst than this unspeakable, inhumane act ! And what can be a better proof that the twentieth century is indeed an age of greed!

1. vice /vaɪs/ (n) thói xấu xa, vô đạo đức

2. realm /reɪm/ (n) lĩnh vực hoạt động hoặc quan tâm

3. tertiary /'tɜːʃəri/ (adj) xếp thứ ba theo thứ tự, cấp bậc, tầm quan trọng v.v...

4. soar /sɔːr/ (v) *tăng vùn vụt*
5. unscrupulous /ʌn'skruːpjələs/ (adj) *không theo nguyên tắc đạo đức*
6. frame /freɪm/ (v) *tạo ra chứng cứ giả chống lại người vô tội để anh ta trở thành có tội; ghép tội oan*
7. swindle /'swɪndl/ (v) *bịp bợm, lừa đảo*
8. terrorism /'terərɪzəm/ (n) *sự khủng bố, chính sách khủng bố*
9. emblem /'embləm/ (n) *biểu tượng*

268. "EVERY MAN HAS HIS OWN IDEAL OF HUMAN GREATNESS."

DO YOU AGREE ?

“MỖI MỘT CON NGƯỜI ĐỀU CÓ LÝ TƯỞNG VĨ ĐẠI RIÊNG CHO MÌNH”. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý NHƯ THẾ KHÔNG ?

"Some are born great ; some achieve greatness ; some have greatness thrust upon them." So wrote Shakespeare in one of his plays. One is common ; everybody wants to become great. Why great ? The answer itself is obvious because the greatness has its own rewards, name and fame, **ovation**¹ and applause, red carpeted welcome and wealth. There is practically no field where one cannot achieve greatness. From the great minister to a great cook in all ranks there can be greatness.

How great ? There are degrees and shades of greatness as there are shades in colours. Greatness in a particular field cannot be equated with greatness in a different field. So each one in his specialized field has got his standard or ideal of greatness.

One thing common is that greatness cannot be achieved so easily. It is not made to measure or order and it is true also that it is not always the deserving that becomes great. To achieve greatness a lot of perspiration and hardwork is needed. One may have the genius in him but he would have to use it. Even a diamond must be polished and **faceted**² in order to sparkle ; otherwise it would continue to be a crude **lump**³ of gem. So too in order to become great, one has to work for it. Shakespeare is not fully right in his above **quote**⁴ statement. It may be true, some are made great but real greatness is the fruit of hard labour.

Now each one in his own peculiar field has his ideal of greatness. Take a politician. If he has taken politics as a career his ambition is to become a Minister one day or a Prime Minister. Whether, then, the country would gain or suffer under him is a different question. As far as the person is concerned his ideal of greatness lies in becoming a Minister.

Look at the sportsmen. Whether it be football, hockey or cricket, if he can rise and represent his country in international meets, he is considered great. He must wear the colours of his country and become the **cynosure**⁵ of the fans.

An artist wants to become great through his performance. It may be music, painting or **sculpture**.⁶ If he is recognized as unique and masterly then he is pleased. They hunger after recognition and a few of them want to leave behind a tradition. In the fine arts the idea of founding a "school" is prominent and that is the ideal of greatness for most artists.

Greatness lies in the recognition which people **bestow**⁷ on the person concerned. Until the recognition is achieved the hungry soul can never rest satisfied. Some like Captain Sentry in the Spectator's Club could never move forward though he may have the recognizable merit. Some simply spring up and **fade**⁸ away as quoted in Gray's famous line "full many a gem of purest ray serene..." In conclusion everyone wants to become great in his or her own way.

1. ovation /əv'veɪʃn/ (n) sự hoan hô, sự tung hô

2. facet /'fæstɪ/ (v) tạo thành nhiều mặt

3. lump /lʌmp/ (n) cục, tảng miếng
4. quote /kwəʊt/ (v) trích dẫn
5. cynosure /ˈsɪnəzjʊə(r)/ (n) người hoặc vật thu hút sự chú ý hoặc tâm phục của mọi người; trung tâm lôi cuốn
6. sculpture /ˈskʌlptʃə(r)/ (n) nghệ thuật điêu khắc
7. bestow /brɪˈstəʊ/ (v) ban cho
8. fade (away) /feɪd/ (v) mờ dần, biến mất dần

269. PROFESSIONAL SPORTSMEN ARE MORE INTERESTED IN MAKING MONEY THAN PLAYING THE GAME. DO YOU AGREE ?
VẬN ĐỘNG VIÊN THỂ THAO CHỈ QUAN TÂM ĐẾN VIỆC KIẾM TIỀN HƠN LÀ THI ĐẤU. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý VỚI Ý KIẾN NÀY KHÔNG ?

Spectator sports is very popular everywhere in the world. In Asia, the most popular one is football or soccer, and in America, American football and baseball are the most popular ones. Tennis and basketball are sports that have worldwide appeal.

Fans are willing to pay a lot of money to see high quality sports. Thus, there has developed in the most popular sports a group of athletes known as professional sportsmen. They are paid for playing in a team. Their payments are not **paltry**¹ sums. Professional sports is very big business, and these sportsmen can demand very high salaries depending on how good and how popular they are. The best professional sportsmen in the United States are reported to be paid salaries that run into millions of dollars.

There has been criticism that professional sportsmen are more interested in making money than playing the game. I do not agree with this criticism because of the very **nature**² of their job, which is playing in a sporting team. These sportsmen, to become professional, have to be the best talent available. Sports is a game where you cannot fake your ability. You must have natural talent, and normally people who are highly talented in their field love what they are doing. A sportsman has to have passion and drive for his sports, or else his lack of enthusiasm will show in his performance.

Besides, professional sports is a very public game. When the sportsman does not perform well, his failure is seen by thousands, even millions of stadium and television viewers as in the case of American football and basketball in the United States. Everyone, from the man in the street to the newspaper sports writer will discuss his poor performance.

Thus every time a professional sportsman does not show interest in playing the game, his career is **jeopardised**.³

We must also remember that professional sportsmen have a short career as it is based on his physical strength and agility. A sportsman hits his **prime**⁴ in his 20's, and by the time he is about 35 years old, his career is over. While in their prime, many of them try to make as much money as they can. Some make additional money by appearing in advertisements or promoting merchandise bearing their names.

I do not think there is anything wrong with this. After all, their popularity and ability to make money this way depend on their reputation as a sportsman. If they do not perform well in the game, it will **erode**⁵ their popularity and affect the sale of those products.

Due to the demand for their talent, professional sportsmen are highly paid. But the money they make is tightly linked to their ability to play the game. They cannot afford to be more interested in making money than in playing the game. If they slip in their performance as professional sportsmen, their career will soon be over.

1. paltry /'pɔ:ltri/ (adj) rất nhỏ, không quan trọng

2. nature /'neɪtʃə(r)/ (n) bản chất

3. jeopardise /dʒə'peɪdaɪz/ (v) gây hại, làm mất hoặc hủy hoại (cái gì)

4. prime /praɪm/ (n) tình trạng hoặc thời kỳ khỏe mạnh nhất, đẹp nhất, sung mãn nhất, v.v...

5. erode /ɪ'rəʊd/ (v) ăn mòn, xói mòn

270. "THERE IS NO ROOM FOR TRUE CRAFTSMANSHIP¹ IN THE MODERN WORLD OF MASS PRODUCTION." DO YOU AGREE ?
BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý RẰNG “KHÔNG CÒN CHỖ CHO TAY NGHỀ THỦ CÔNG ĐÍCH THỰC TRONG THẾ GIỚI HIỆN ĐẠI VỚI NỀN SẢN XUẤT HÀNG LOẠT NỮA” ?

To a larger extent than not, I agree with this statement.

I say this based on my experiences with hand-made and mass-produced things.

In my house there is a set of furniture handed down by my great-grandparents. Though more than a hundred years old, the one table and four chairs of this set are in **immaculate**² condition. It is obvious a lot of care has been given in making these beautiful pieces. I cannot **detect**³ a single nail in them. The wood used is **teak**⁴ and the table and chairs are still **sturdy**.⁵

In fact I would say that they are more sturdy than some new ones. They are products of real craftsmanship.

In my house too are some tables and chairs made by mass production. Most of the plastic chairs break after a few months. The wooden ones show signs of slipshod workmanship and judging by the rate of wear and tear, they will be useless long before the hand-made ones.

The craftsmen of **yesteryears**⁶ made things of high quality. Also they made them to last a long time. Mass-produced things cannot have such high quality and they do not last long. I suspect that manufacturers of mass-produced things purposely make things not to last so that the consumers will be forced to keep buying new ones. It is good business for them, not so for the consumers though.

Another thing about mass production is that the workers are generally not skilled craftsmen. They are merely employed to operate machines or do some routine work. No creativity is necessary nor encouraged. They just do as they are told, and that is to produce as much as possible as cheaply as possible. On the other hand a craftsman is usually not very much concerned about how much profit he will make. He is more concerned about how well he makes something. He has to be creative and skilful. Thus the product of his work is what we admire as craftsmanship. He may not get much for his work, but for him satisfaction is not so much in money but in a job well done.

Modern radios, tape recorders, cars, furniture, computers and other goods are made only to attract buyers. They last only until the manufacturers come out with newer ones with more **gimmicks**⁷ and features. It is an on-going game played by manufacturer on **gullible**⁸ consumers. Their advertisements are basically : "Buy, buy, keep buying our products." So the consumers keep buying and buying. The craftsmen and their laboriously slow ways are forgotten.

1. craftsmanship /'kra:ftsmənʃɪp/ (n) tay nghề khéo léo, sự lành nghề

2. immaculate /ɪ'mækjələt/ (adj) hoàn hảo, không chê vào đâu được

3. detect /dr'tekt/ (v) dò tìm, khám phá

4. teak /ti:k/ (n) gỗ tếch, một loại gỗ cứng và chắc dùng đóng đồ đạc, đóng tàu, v.v... có nhiều ở châu Á

5. sturdy /'stɜ:di/ (adj) chắc chắn, vững chắc

6. yesteryear /'jestəjɪə(r)/ (n) *quá khứ gần đây*
7. gimmick /'ɡɪmɪk/ (n) *mánh lới quảng cáo, thủ thuật chiêu dụ*
8. gullible /'ɡʌləbl/ (adj) *cả tin, ngờ nghệch*

MỘT SỐ BÀI LUẬN ĐỌC THÊM

Như trên đã nói, ta không chỉ có bảy thể loại luận văn, bao gồm miêu tả, tường thuật, kể chuyện, tưởng tượng, trình bày, phản ánh và lý luận: mà thật ra còn có rất nhiều thể loại khác, chẳng hạn văn chứng minh, văn bình giảng, văn báo cáo, văn viết thư (riêng phần văn viết thư chúng tôi đã có một phần riêng biệt nằm tiếp ngay sau phần này), v.v... Trong phần này, bạn sẽ có trong tay 95 bài thuộc mọi thể loại, nhưng chủ yếu bao gồm 7 thể loại đã nêu trên, và không sắp xếp theo một trật tự nhất định nào cả. Nhiệm vụ của bạn là tham khảo và tự mình nhận dạng thể loại mà đề bài yêu cầu. Vì đây chỉ là những bài gợi ý dùng để tham khảo, chứ không phải là những bài hay nhất và có tính điển hình nhất, nên có thể sẽ nảy sinh những phản ứng khác nhau từ người đọc, hoặc khen, hoặc chê, hoặc tán thành hoặc không đồng ý. Bạn có thể luyện tập bằng cách viết lại một bài luận khác sử dụng đề bài đã cho, để nâng cao kỹ năng viết luận của mình. Chúc các bạn thành công.

271. STORM CAUGHT

GẶP BÃO

It does not happen to everybody to come face to face with a storm. I had had such a bitter experience. Even today I wonder how I kept alive in that storm.

It happened this way. The afternoon was just pleasant and I took my bicycle and was on my way to a village some six kilometres away where a relative of mine lived. The path lies through an avenue of trees with fields on either side as far as the eyes can see. But for one or two stray cottages here and there, there is nothing to shelter one on the road. When I was about half way, dark clouds gathered in the sky. It was threatening and I pedalled hard but before I had gone a few hundred metres, there was a sudden burst of thunder and a blinding lightning. It began to rain cats and dogs and the rain came down in big drops. The light was very poor and the road was bad. As the rain was **lashing**¹ on my face I could not pedal at my bicycle. I knew it was dangerous to go and take shelter under a tree in such a heavy rain because lightning would strike green trees, so with great effort I kept to the middle of the road. Suddenly the wind rose and gained **momentum**². It grew wild and before its force the trees simply danced. One could hear the howling noise of the stormy wind.

I was soaked to the skin. My fingers were benumbed. I could not push hard. Now and then I could see the heavenly **rage**³ in the lightning flashes which appeared to hiss almost by my side. To add to my fear, there was a sudden thunderclap and a big tree crashed to the ground. In this situation the will to live alone **goaded**⁴ me on. As the road was soaked with flood water, I could not ride the bicycle. Even pushing it along as an ordeal. There were pot holes and **swirling**⁵ water. But it was not a question of abandoning. I prayed to God to conduct me safely.

At long last, the flickering light from the village was seen and I was in my relative's house after a few minutes. What a relief to be under a roof behind closed doors in such a weather ! My relative gave me a change of warm clothing and I had never enjoyed a warm cup of tea as I did that day.

1. lash /læʃ/ (v) quất mạnh

2. momentum /mə'mentəm/ (n) động lượng, xung lượng (tức lượng vận động của một vật đang chuyển động được đo bằng khối lượng của vật đó nhân với tốc độ của nó)

3. rage /reɪdʒ/ (n) cơn cuồng nộ

4. goad /ɡəʊd/ (v) thúc đẩy

5. swirl /swɜ:əl/ (v) cuộn, xoáy

272. A NIGHTMARE

CƠN ÁC MỘNG

I was seriously preparing for my school examination. Normally people call it exam fever and I believe I was haunted by the feeling of falling ill while the examination was on. But I was able to **banish**¹ such fears and concentrate on my studies. But this fear crept into my **subconscious**² mind and it played havoc on me. I have now the **consolation**³ that it was all a dream.

On Nov. 16, my birthday was arranged to be celebrated in a colourful manner. There was a small party that my father arranged for my friends. I spent the whole evening enjoying myself while my parents were busy watching television. I **pretexted**⁴ as though I had to prepare for the examination, but I was cheating myself with the thought that I would wake up early in the morning and make up the lost time. While in bed, sleep seemed to **elude**⁵ me and the bug of falling ill during the examination began to harass me. However after sometime I slept.

If Alice's experiences in the wonderland were **bizarre**,⁶ mine was shocking. To my subconscious mind the **bogey**⁷ of illness during the examination was true. I felt a sudden irritation in both my eyes and what started as an irritation became an unbearable pain. I started shouting and my parents rushing into my room. They consoled me, more than that they could do nothing. It was ten at night. My mind became agitated that, I thought that I might not be able to sit for my English and Mathematics examinations.

My father soon realised the problem I was facing, "The Exam Fever". He made me stand against the wall and by understanding my agony, he carried me downstairs. He then put me in his car and drove me to a nearby hospital. On the way he was consoling me about the examination and trying his level best to make me relax. I explained that I was having an irritation in my eyes as though thousands of needles had **pricked**.⁸ On arrival at the hospital, the doctor performed many tests and finally told my father that, due to nervous feeling of examination, I had spoiled my brain which had affected my eyes. I could not sit for the examination, and he would issue a medical certificate to be produced to the authorities.

My father was **undaunted**⁹ by the doctors' decision. In total desperation he put me back in his car and drove to another hospital. He explained to a doctor about my case but not the real situation. The doctor had diagnosed correctly at the first sight itself. Before he applied any medicine he asked me to open my eyes slowly. I said that I could not open, but the doctor insisted. By the time tears started rolling down my cheeks and, with the tears forming between my eyelids, I could open my eyes. The room was dark but for a small lamp. There was no doctor and where had my father gone. I still felt the tears rolling down my cheeks. All I saw was the clock on the wall opposite my bed. Now I realised ! Oh ! It's a dream. Soon I overcame myself and was happy to realise my folly. I am really happy if it was all just a dream - or was it a nightmare?

1. banish /'bæniʃ/ (v) *xua đuổi (suy nghĩ, nỗi sợ hãi, v.v...) ra khỏi tâm trí*

2. subconscious /sʌb'kɒnʃəs/ (adj) *(thuộc) tiềm thức*

3. consolation /kɒnsə'leɪʃn/ (n) *niềm an ủi*

4. pretext /'pri:tekst/ (v) viện cớ, lý do (không thành thật)
5. elude /i'lu:d/ (v) tránh né
6. bizarre /bi'zɑ:(r)/ (adj) kỳ lạ, kỳ dị
7. bogey /'bɒʊgi/ (n) (cũng bogy) vật gây sợ hãi, thường không lý do; không ngáo ộp
8. prick /prɪk/ (v) châm, chích, chọc
9. undaunted /ʌn'dɔ:ntɪd/ (adj) không ngã lòng, không sợ hãi

273. THE FUNNIEST INCIDENT IN MY LIFE

SỰ CỐ KHÔI HÀI NHẤT TRONG ĐỜI TÔI

Everyone in his life experiences some incidents good or bad. There may be the happiest, the saddest or the funniest incident in one's life.

One Sunday morning I received an invitation from a friend of mine, Mr. Sudhir, as I had come from the U.K. back to my native land. I got up early in the morning and started preparing myself. My sister gave me a cup of tea early in the morning. Then I took my bath, and got ready. My sister then again asked me to take some snacks and tea but I refused to take as I was very anxious in getting to my friend's house. She kept insisting me to take a heavy breakfast but I did not care for it. I walked out to the Bus Stop. Soon a bus came and I got into it and asked the conductor for a ticket for Babar Lane. The conductor frowned at me saying "This bus is not going to Babar Lane. It's going in the reverse direction, you can get down at the next stop and catch another bus." I was **baffled**¹ for some time at this sudden bit of information. Then I alighted from the bus and again waited for the next bus for Babar Lane.

I boarded the bus and reached 15, Babar Lane. But when approached my friend's house, the door of his house was all locked up and closed. I was wondering whether I had come to the right place. As I was gazing and **pondering**,² a neighbour of my friend came and asked me, "Why are you standing here ? Do you want to meet someone ?" I replied. "Yes, I want to see Mr. Sudhir living in Quarter No. 15". He replied "He has moved house on Wednesday and has gone to Changi."

Frustratedly, I came back to the bus stop. I was feeling thirsty and hungry. Soon it started drizzling. I was now in a **fix**³ as I had no umbrella. My confusion became worse with the pouring rains. I thought for a while that I had refused my morning breakfast in the hope that I would take it at my friend's house. At this stage my anger was mounting. I was cursing myself as well as my fate. I was soaking wet and instead of going home, I made up my mind to meet Sudhir, come what may.

An idea hit me. I telephoned the Enquiry Office at Changi. The operator told me his address. So I made my journey to Changi. I reached the address given to me by the operator. I rang the door bell. Tapan, a tiny **tot**⁴ (Sudhir's youngest brother) came out and greeted me with a "Hello, uncle." The moment I entered the drawing room, I saw the parents of Sudhir sitting on the sofa. They offered me a seat and I sat between them. As I was going to ask about the invitation extended to me by Sudhir, Dolly (Sudhir's sister) came with a tray of tea. She was a pretty and **vivacious**⁵ girl. I remembered that I used to love Dolly during college days and had written to her many love letters, proposing marriage. Now Sudhir's mother began to talk very politely. "Look son, the invitation to tea was a joke, as you know today is the First of April. But you are fortunate in the sense that your proposal of marriage has been accepted by all the members of the family." I was thrilled to hear this news from Dolly's mother.

My joy knew no bounds. My spirit felt lifted. Dolly was looking at me silently, her eyes expressing her love for me. We had tea to our heart's content. I rushed home to give the glad news to my parents. This day, indeed, is the most funniest and happiest day in my life.

1. baffle /'bæfl/ (v) làm bối rối
2. ponder /'pɒndə(r)/ (v) suy ngẫm, cân nhắc
3. fix /fiks/ (n) tình thế khó khăn
4. tot /tɒt/ (n) đứa trẻ nhỏ
5. vivacious /vɪ'veɪʃəs/ (adj) sôi nổi, hoạt bát

274. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WERE AT THE SCENE OF A SERIOUS ACCIDENT ?

BẠN SẼ LÀM GÌ NẾU CÓ MẶT TẠI NƠI XẢY RA MỘT TAI NẠN NGHIÊM TRỌNG?

Road accidents are common nowadays because of the fast moving vehicles, **congestion**¹ on the roads and careless drivers. In trying to overtake or knocking against another vehicle accidents occur. It may be a **false move**² involving collision in which lives may be lost.

When one is at the scene of an accident one can help to attend to the victim. If there are cuts and blood is **oozing**,³ try to arrest the blood. If the cut is deep one can apply a tourniquet. If the wound is dirty, clean it with water and tie a bandage. If there is a fracture, try to support it with a bandage or a piece of a cloth. If the fracture is complicated simply tie a bandage. If the victim is about to **swoon**⁴ from bloody wounds, give him some cold drinks, never any hot drinks. In the case of an ordinary fainting, some hot coffee may be helpful.

First the crowd must be cleared so that the patient may get fresh air. If possible the patient's possessions must be secured. Note the number of the vehicle involved. It may be useful later on in helping the patient at the court or to get insurance benefits. The police must be informed. This is very important to avoid complications.

Arrange to transport the patient to the nearest hospital for delay could mean a life in danger. Talk to the hospital authorities and see that quick action is taken. In very serious case you can phone up the hospital for an ambulance. If the address of the patient is known, his near and dear one has to be informed. After having **seen to**⁵ the comfort of the patient, make a report to the police.

All that have been mentioned can be done by an experienced hand. It is useful for every citizen to have some training in dealing with accidents. That is why first aid lessons are taught in schools, in scouting activities and Junior Red Cross Classes.

If people are indifferent, it is not because they do not want to help but the difficulties involved in going for help. An accident may involve going to the court several times causing a lot of inconvenience, especially of time and work, but it is the moral duty of every citizen to help victims of accidents and not to be a silent and helpless witness.

1. congestion /kən'dʒestʃən/ (n) tình trạng bị tắc nghẽn

2. false move /fɔ:ls mu:v/ (n) hành động không khôn ngoan hoặc đã bị cấm, có thể gây ra những hậu quả không may

3. ooze /u:z/ (v) (về chất lỏng sền sệt) rỉ ra hoặc chảy ra chậm chậm

4. swoon /swu:n/ (v) bất tỉnh, ngất

5. see to (sth) /si: tə/ (v) chăm lo hoặc giải quyết (cái gì)

6. indifferent /ɪn'dɪfrənt/ (adj) bàng quan, thờ ơ

275. IF I WERE A MILLIONAIRE

NẾU TÔI LÀ TRIỆU PHÚ

We often hear elderly people advising their young ones to forget the past and the future and care for the present only. But there is hardly any one who has no ambition for a higher status than his present one. This constant struggle for a higher position and money remains with a man till the last day of his life. This struggle, in fact, is essential for achieving higher ends in life.

I belong to the middle-class. I can never think of earning million of dollars but there is nothing wrong in harbouring the hope that I might win a lottery. Suppose I am fortunate enough to win a lottery of millions of dollars, I will try to spend it in the most appropriate manner so as to derive the maximum pleasure out of it.

My colleagues advise me that **at the very outset**,¹ I should endeavour to improve my lot. I should have a huge mansion to live in and a car for the family. But my idea of life is quite different. Rather than improving my lot, I am much more interested in uplifting the condition of the poor masses of the country.

My country is poor. There are people in my country who hardly get two square meals a day, what more to speak of enjoying the comforts and luxuries of life. They are **semi-fed**² and **semi-clad**.³ Most of these people are living in villages, where the main occupation of the people is agriculture. I will offer them a loan at a very **nominal**⁴ interest to enable them to purchase tractors, fertilisers and better seeds. This scheme will save the villagers from the village money lender.

I will invest a good portion of my money in constructing a hospital with all the modern amenities. I will employ highly qualified doctors. This hospital will be run free of charge for the poor masses. Charities will always be awaited from the rich classes. This will save people from the jaw of death.

Many people, particularly in villages, have no means of **recreation**⁵, I shall spend a part of my wealth to provide means of recreation for the poor. I shall open various social and educational centres at various places.

Since there is no adequate **provision**⁶ for the support of orphans and widows, I would, therefore, lose no time in opening new centres for widows and orphans. They will work and earn their livelihood honourably. This will certainly help in the cause of country's advancement.

There may be people who will **jeer**⁷ and **mock**⁸ at my utter foolishness of spending millions of dollars in this manner. Probably they do not realise that a man gets inner happiness in helping the poor, which is much more than the sensual pleasures that a man can get from the money he possesses. To spend money like this, will be my dearest hope and aspirations.

1. at the outset (of sth) /'aʊtset/ (idm) ở sự khởi đầu (của cái gì)

2. semi-fed /'semɪfed/ (adj) ăn không đủ no

3. semi-clad /'semɪklæd/ (adj) mặc không đủ ấm

4. nominal /'nɒmɪnəl/ (adj) (một số tiền) rất ít, nhưng phải trả vì việc trả là cần thiết; trên danh nghĩa

5. recreation /rekri'eɪʃn/ (n) *sự giải trí, sự tiêu khiển*
6. provision /prə'vɪʒn/ (n) *thực phẩm dự trữ*
7. jeer /dʒɪə(r)/ (v) *cười nhạo, chế giễu*
8. mock /mɒk/ (v) *nhạo báng*

**276. THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN HELPED OR HINDERED BY RELATIVES
AND FRIENDS IN PREPARING FOR EXAMINATION**
CÁCH THỨC NGƯỜI THÂN VÀ BẠN BÈ ĐÃ GIÚP ĐỠ BẠN CHUẨN BỊ CHO KỲ THI

Examinations are like running a race. It is not always the one who deserves that win. Some proper training is indeed essential for passing examinations well. With all one's innate intelligence one may require proper guidance. Some grasp quickly and can do further work by themselves. These are people with a high **intelligent quotient**¹. Average people can surely succeed in examinations with positive help. It is something like oiling the wheel. One may know the answer but how it is put and present makes a lot of difference. Experienced people may show the way. Hence, nowadays, people seek even outside guidance by having private tuition at home or joining an institute giving expert tuition.

Of course in my case I am lucky that all along I have been helped by my relatives and friends. To begin with I can't forget the help my mother used to render in the primary classes. She was ready to help and so I never worried about my homework. Not only did she use to urge me to do the task but patiently helped me along.

When I came to the higher classes, I could confidently depend on my brother and sister. They would teach me mathematics and help me do the problems. Since they always wanted me to do well in the examinations, they not only gathered question papers from other schools but also patiently saw to it if I completed those papers by myself.

One of my teachers used to help me whenever I approached him. He knew that I wanted to score first in the examination to get into a professional college. Unless one is really competent, one cannot hope to enter the professional college easily. So my teacher showed me the way how examinations should be **tackled**². We used to discuss in a general way about various problems both national and international and I can say it has stood me well in competitive examinations. That again has helped me in **viva voce**³ examinations because I had a **first-hand**⁴ practical knowledge.

Last but not least, I can't fail to mention that some of my friends really helped me. We used to compare notes and help each other when one was not attending the class. We used to take down notes from **reference books**⁵ and discuss them. We formed almost a team and, with a competitive spirit went for the examination. There was no jealousy among us and in doing practical work one always helped the other. When looking back I am grateful to all of them who helped me ungrudgingly.

1. intelligent quotient (IQ) /ɪnˌtelɪdʒənt 'kwɒʃnt/ (n) *chỉ số thông minh*

2. tackle /'tækl/ (v) *xử lý, giải quyết*

3. viva voce /ˌvaɪvə 'vəʊsɪ/ (adj) *có hình thức thi vấn đáp*

4. first-hand /'fɜːsthænd/ (adj) *trực tiếp, mắt thấy tai nghe*

5. reference book /ˌrefərəns 'bʊk/ (comp. n) *sách tham khảo*

277. MY EXPERIENCE AS A SCHOOL PREFECT¹

KINH NGHIỆM LÀM TRƯỞNG LỚP CỦA TÔI

The classroom is a noisy place and when the master is not there the children have a tendency to indulge in all sorts of mischief. Childish pranks are good but often children tend to quarrel and fight. The more healthy and vigorous the children are, the more chances of these fights occur. To keep the class under discipline, a prefect is appointed by the teacher. He becomes an understudy of the teacher only that he doesn't teach. He can order and command the class. Other students are afraid of him because he can make a report to the teacher or the headmaster and punishment is sure to follow. A prefect need not be a strong, healthy fellow. He can even be small built but the teacher knows he is capable of controlling the class. A prefect must be a boy of characters, doesn't **take sides**², must be **assertive**³ and stand by his words. The prefect system has been working well in schools in England and it has been introduced in schools in other parts of the world.

A prefect can help the teacher in many ways. He can bring teaching materials like maps, globes, charts and books to the class. He can collect and distribute notebooks, library and exercise books.

I was chosen prefect. I was **reticent**⁴ and had no gang and was attentive in class. At the beginning of the term, when the teacher announced my name as prefect there was hush and silence in the class and dozens of pairs of eyes peered at me. I stood up and marched to the teacher's table when he made the announcement. There was a mild cheer and I bowed my head and returned to my seat.

As a prefect I made it a point to be regular and **punctual**⁵. Thank God I was enjoying good health, so there was no need for absenteeism. I chose four of my classmates as my helpers. One to look after the register, the second to look the tidiness of the class, the third to be in charge of the field and sports equipment and fourth was in charge of helping the teacher. I was in over all charge besides looking after the library books and aids. We had many types of audio - visual aids and I took a keen interest in them. I looked after the Bulletin Board to make it lively with newspaper **cuttings**⁶. I would ask a friend of mine who could write in a decent hand, to write the daily news. Thus I tried to make the class a beehive of activity.

Whenever two boys quarreled and fought I tried to **reconcile**⁷ between them by finding out who had been the first offender and making him apologise to the other. There were cases of petty thefts but I always tried to trace the culprit and restore the lost article to the owner. The culprit himself would get his due punishment.

In short I like the post in which I **fared**⁸ well.

1. prefect /'pri:fekt/ (n) *lớp trưởng*

2. take side /teik saɪd/ (idm) *bày tỏ sự ủng hộ ai trong một cuộc tranh chấp; đứng về phe này hoặc phe kia*

3. assertive /ə'sɜ:tɪv/ (adj) *quyết đoán*

4. reticent /'retɪsnt/ (adj) *kín đáo, dè dặt, trầm lặng*

5. punctual /'pʌŋktʃʊəl/ (adj) *đúng giờ*

6. cutting /'kʌtɪŋ/ (n) (cũng clipping) *bài, v.v... cắt ở báo, v.v... để giữ làm tài liệu tham khảo*
7. reconcile /'rekənsaɪl/ (v) *hòa giải, giảng hòa*
8. fare /feə(r)/ (v) *xoay sở, sống, làm ăn, v.v...*

278. AMBITION

THAM VỌNG

Ambition provides the spur to action. A target in life is a psychological necessity. A man without an ambition may be **likened**¹ to a ship without a **rudder**.² "**Vaulting**³ ambition" as Shakespeare says may "overleap itself". What is needed is a realisable aim. **Overweening**⁴ ambition can lead to disastrous consequences.

Ambition, of course, is not confined to physical or **worldly**⁵ matters. In the spiritual realm, too, one's ambition can be realised. One of the best dressed men in the most fashionable city of Paris walked the dusty streets of Goa and Malacca with a begging bowl in his hand. Francis Xavier, the pleasure-seeking youth, was seized by the yearning not "to suffer the loss of his soul". His motivation called "faith" gave him wings and he soared to great heights.

The path to our goal is not always **strewn**⁶ with roses. Discovery of truths which we take for granted today brought hardships and loneliness for those who worked untiringly against a mocking world. Louis Pasteur who said that germs cause diseases was **scoffed**⁷ at and ridiculed by "learned" doctors. This **indefatigable**⁸ Frenchman had to spend as much time fighting **superstition**⁹ and **scepticism**¹⁰ as he had to spend fighting **pathogenic bacteria**.¹¹ Again **unswerving**¹² drive helped Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Barrett to steer clear of the pride and prejudice of the male-dominated world and realise their ambitions.

Realisation of ambition comes sometimes at unexpected moments. William Henry David, for example, failed to sell his collection of poems. He published his poems again. One morning, looking down from his **cubicle**,¹³ he found many cars waiting in the muddy lane. He was surprised to learn that the rich people of high social standing had arrived to invite him to dinner for G.B. Shaw had recommended his book. But it should not be **surmised**¹⁴ that achievement of our aim depends on blind chance. Take the case of the unexpected discovery of penicillin, the wonder drug that has saved millions of lives. True, Alexander Fleming left the bacteria culture carelessly open and this resulted in the discovery. We are, in fact, obvious of his drive, enthusiasm and initiative which contributed to his success and so to his greatness.

Material shortcomings need not stop us from reaching our goal. Abraham Lincoln could not afford books, so he increased his vocabulary by learning the meanings of words from the old newspaper wrappings from the grocer's. Even the past poor examination results need not hamper you. Winston Churchill, a great prime minister, one of the architects of Second World War victory, writer, historian, orator and painter failed in his examinations many times and had the unsavoury experience of being detained in the same class two or three years. But his ambition made him persevere and finally succeed.

Ambition-sprung actions seem to be very light. Since the work is done in the pleasurable associations of our own desires, nervous energy expended is cut to the minimum. Paradoxically, hard work ceases to be hard when "ambition-joined". Consider the willingness with which the Japanese sportsmen undergo the rigorous physical training.

1. liken /'laɪkən/ (v) *so sánh*

2. rudder /'rʌdə(r)/ (n) *bánh lái*

3. vaulting /'vɔːntɪŋ/ (adj) có tính khoe khoang, khoác lác để thu hút sự chú ý của mọi người
4. overweening /əʊvə'wiːnɪŋ/ (adj) tỏ ra quá tự tin hoặc tự cao tự đại
5. worldly /'wɜːldli/ (adj) trần tục, vật chất
6. strew /struː/ (v) (strewed-strewn) rắc, vãi
7. scoff /skɒf/ (v) nhạo báng, phỉ báng, chế giễu
8. indefatigable /ɪndɪ'fætɪɡəbl/ (adj) bền bỉ, không mệt mỏi
9. superstition /suːpə'stɪʃn/ (n) sự mê tín
10. scepticism /'skeptɪsɪzəm/ (n) (cũng skepticism) chủ nghĩa hoài nghi; thái độ hoài nghi
11. pathogenic bacteria /pæθə'dʒenɪk bæk'tɪərɪəl/ (n) vi khuẩn gây bệnh
12. unswerving /ʌn'swɜːvɪŋ/ (adj) kiên định, trước sau như một
13. cubicle /'kjuːbɪkl/ (n) phòng ngủ nhỏ
14. surmise /sə'maɪz/ (v) phỏng đoán, ước đoán

279. MY SECRET AMBITION

HOÀI BẢO SÂU KÍN CỦA TÔI

I may call my ambition to become a pilot a seven-years old obsession. My parents seem to have decided what my career should be. As I learn more about aircraft I become more and more interested and I believe soon I will have to disappoint my parents.

My parents want me to be something else. They have told me several times that they would like me to take up architecture. But I know that my **aptitudes**¹ are different. My mother was very frightened ; she mentioned all the air crashes she had read about and told me that it was a hazardous occupation. My father was not concerned about the hazards and it seems he wants to realise in me an ambition which he would have nursed in his youth. My friends seem to think that being an air-pilot is as good a job as any other, but they wonder if I am suited for it. Some of my friends think that I am only interested in the idea of being a pilot, and have warned me against deceiving myself.

I should think that this idea developed in me when at the age of nine my father took me for a jolly ride on a Cessna. I still remember its name--The Sky Hawk. I watched what the pilot did from the time of take-off until landing. I then imagined myself **strapped**² in the **cock-pit**,³ handling the controls. When an Air Show was held, I went everyday of the week to see the demonstrations. It was this air show I believe that made me more determined. I am a member of the Air-Training Corps. One of my hobbies is building model aircraft, and I have more than a dozen plastic models suspended from the ceiling of my room. I also make aircraft models with balsa wood and paper, and spend hours flying the in them open field next to my house.

I feel that I have the necessary qualities to become a pilot. My little mathematical ability should enable me to study the theoretical part of the pilot's course. I am in the science stream and the Physics I learn at school will be an advantage. My vision is 6/6 and I am above the average in height. My school has developed in me a sense of responsibility and I am safety-conscious.

I am not sure whether I would like to be a commercial pilot handling passenger air-craft or a fighter-pilot in the air force. Being a commercial pilot has several material advantages. Commercial pilots are very highly paid and are also given many fringe benefits. They can travel to all the cities that their airline serves. If they get tired of one circuit, they can always switch to another and visit all the countries in the new **itinerary**.⁴ When out of station, they are given excellent accommodation and food.

Being a fighter pilot, though it means being paid less and having less material advantages, has its thrills and excitement. Aeroplanes have always fascinated me and will continue to do so. I find myself thrilled at seeing new engines, and new control systems. I shall be able to take my craft very high and **penetrate**⁵ the atmosphere, I can dive down, make arcs and do a whole lot of other feats which I will not be able to do as a pilot officer of a commercial plane. As a commercial pilot, I would not have as rough a time as a fighter-pilot. Except for a few **squalls**⁶ and fogs and mist, commercial pilots control their aircraft with a certain amount of boredom, and the routine makes their job dull. Fighter-pilots have to keep on testing new techniques.

As other boys of my age, I have also an ambition. The realisation of it may not be possible. I have at least the satisfaction of having a goal before me and the desire to

reach it will give me sufficient motivation. I hope my ambition will remain a secret in a conventional sense at least.

1. aptitude /'æptɪtju:d/ (n) *khả năng tự nhiên, năng khiếu*
2. strap /stræp/ (v) *giữ buộc (ai / cái gì) bằng dây da*
3. cock-pit /'kɒkpɪt/ (n) *khoang lái (trên máy bay)*
4. itinerary /aɪ'tɪnərəri/ (n) *kế hoạch hoặc ghi chép về một cuộc hành trình*
5. penetrate /'penɪtreɪt/ (v) *xuyên qua, thâm nhập*
6. squall /skwɔ:l/ (n) *gió mạnh đột ngột, thường kèm theo mưa hoặc tuyết rơi*

280. MY LIFE IN TWENTY YEARS²

CUỘC ĐỜI TÔI TRONG HAI MƯƠI NĂM TỚI

Though this period of twenty years is negligibly small on the evolutionary time-scale, it is, when considered in terms of man's span of life, a considerably long period. My friends frown upon my pessimistic attitude and I shall be optimistic when I think of what life has in store for me. If everything remains equal, I would be comfortably off and be pleasantly burdened with responsibilities.

My physical energy would be very much diminished and I would have retired from football. I hope to be a **veteran**¹ badminton player, playing doubles at least twice a week. Perhaps I would not take to golf, even if I have the opportunity, for badminton is my second passion today, football being the first. I could be mentally restless and I would have developed a few hobbies and orchid-growing will be one of them. I would be inviting friends to play bridge with me on Sundays and we would be absorbed in the game, unaware of the world around, like the **lotus-eaters**.²

Now I find myself wildly enthusiastic about everything I do and I have made great plans for the future. I have variously decided to become a pilot, a journalist, an officer, a teacher and a doctor. I wonder how many of my dreams will be realised. In twenty years, I shall be thirty six. At the age of thirty six, I would have chosen one occupation and stuck to it. At the moment, the **prospect**³ of a routine life terrifies me, but at thirty six, any other way of living would be difficult.

In spite of all my protestations of remaining a bachelor, I have a feeling that I will be married and be having children by then. I would probably have not more than two or three children. I shall probably have a couple of girls and a boy. I am not really in a position to say anything definite about the kind of woman I am going to marry. Probably I shall be married to a very quiet but intelligent woman who is very practical, efficient, understanding and realistic in her attitudes.

Perhaps I would have finally decided to become a teacher. If I would emulate my teachers I should be dedicated and efficient, preparing my lessons thoroughly and teaching effectively. I would be conscious of the teacher's responsibility for the mental, physical and moral development of the taught. I would be the badminton master of the school. If I would be a successful teacher, I would not **eschew**⁴ the idea of becoming a headmaster.

I shall have some material comforts and live a happy life. I will probably have a house of my own. I wonder what kind of magnificent television sets we will have then. There will be a whole lot of channels to choose from. If the satellite system is perfected, we shall be able to view television programmes from all over the world. I love music. I expect in twenty years, the degree of **fidelity**⁵ in electronic sound reproduction to be so high that I can actually listen to great, realistic concerts in my own room. At the rate we are miniaturising electronic combinations, I expect my entire sound system to be the size of a match box. My telephone will have that gadget that will enable me to see the person I am talking to. I wonder if domestic lighting will be the same. I can safely predict that my kitchen will probably look like some high-class science laboratory. There will be numerous labour-saving devices that will ease our domestic burden.

Videotape recorders and regular home movies might help us to while away our time. I wonder what my car will look like.

The material comforts that I would enjoy will not make me lose my values. I will not be living in an artificial world of my own. My children would be my first responsibility and I would treasure the company of my friends and relatives.

1. veteran /'vetərən/ (*adj*) *kỳ cựu, dày dạn*
2. lotus-eater /ˌləʊtəs ˈi:tə(r)/ (*n*) *kẻ hưởng lạc, kẻ thích nhàn hạ*
3. prospect /'prɒspekt/ (*n*) *viễn cảnh, viễn tượng*
4. eschew /ɪs'tʃuː/ (*v*) *tránh, kiêng cử*
5. fidelity /fɪ'deləti/ (*n*) *(về âm thanh) độ trung thực*

281. MY MOTHER, WHOM I ADMIRE MOST *MẸ TÔI – NGƯỜI TÔI NGƯỠNG MỘ NHẤT*

My father who is generally **niggardly**¹ with praise is extremely generous where mother is concerned. He spoke of her once as selfless, sacrificial and devoted and I would like to add that she is helpful and understanding. It is not unusual for us teenagers to run into little problems and then to **boggle**² at them. Whatever you do, she is there solidly with you to help you. Perhaps one of the greatest things in life is to have a devoted, selfless, helpful mother and the person whom I admire most is no one else but my mother who seems to have these qualities.

There is no gap separating us, children, from our mother and we do not create that artificial barrier called the generation gap. To her I am an open book and, as a rule, I do not **pry**³ into her personal problems, if at all she has any. She speaks little and has a patient ear for our **rigmarole**.⁴ Our conversation, often one-sided, can be long and topics may range from the pranks of the little sister to something new in Chemistry that I learnt at school.

A quality that I admire most in her is her selfless devotion for us. Her own interests are of little importance to her where ours are concerned. The meals will be ready at the time we need. She can **forego**⁵ a good night's sleep without a **murmur**,⁶ nursing us when we are ill. Her personal possessions are **meagre**⁷ and they have to be so for in her scheme of things our interests come first. The little she seems to excel us ; she seems to take secret delight in seeing us fashionably dressed.

My mother has an undeclared philosophy and that is to use to the full one's ability and she practises it without preaching it. In spite of the domestic chores, she finds time to read and often she reads books that have an educative value. She should know about child psychology and now adolescent psychology. The **culinary**⁸ art for her is something that is to be further developed. She avidly reads health magazines as if to regulate our intake of vitamins, minerals, etc. She keeps abreast of developments, both national and international, and is particular to read the newspaper early in the morning.

She believes that our ties with relatives and friends should be maintained and makes it a point to visit them at regular intervals. Since my father fights shy of people not so close to him, I would say it is our lot, to accompany her when this tendency seizes her. Perhaps she needs one of us as an escort, partly because tradition requires it ; it could also be because she is timid. When visiting, she ably exchanges niceties and invites them all home as if we do not give her the company she needs.

My mother does not have a black list of don't's ; she gives us freedom of speech and action ; but ensures, by what she does, that responsibility is not dissociated from freedom. At times, when we get on her nerves, she keeps a statue-like silence and the little things we do to please her and to make her break this vow of silence seem to have their sudden effect. She does not compete with us in any way and she does not believe in forcing us to study. Perhaps she feels that we emulate her and that all she wants us to do is to do our best. She does not wait eagerly at the gate to know our position in class and she learns of our performance in the examination only when we, with certain amount of pretended modesty, present our report cards for her signature.

To my father she is secretary, companion, domestic accountant - all rolled into one. Her devotion to him is typically oriental and at times it would appear that her only goal in life is his happiness. It is not unusual for him to run into a bad temper and my mother's moderating influence has a telling effect on him. He seldom talks to us, but mother as his secretary keeps him informed of our activities. My father is appreciative of her loyalty and devotion for us and as I said earlier he is rather extravagant in praising her motherly qualities.

Perhaps my mother should have her own share of weaknesses and it is not prudent to be conscious of them in one whom I admire most. I am inclined to believe that it is the mother that keeps the members of the family happily together and in this she succeeds amply and hence my admiration for her.

1. niggardly /'nɪɡədli/ (adj) hà tiện, keo kiệt
2. boggle (at sth) /'bɒɡl/ (v) do dự, ngần ngại (về cái gì) trong tâm trạng lo sợ hoặc kinh ngạc
3. pry /praɪ/ (v) soi mói tọc mạch, dính mũi vào
4. rigmarole /'rɪgmərəʊl/ (n) câu chuyện hoặc sự kể lể dông dài, lan man
5. forego /fɔ:'ɡəʊ/ (v) (cũng forgo) từ bỏ, thôi không nhận (một cái gì dễ chịu)
6. murmur /'mɜ:mə(r)/ (n) tiếng lầm bầm
7. meagre /'mi:ɡə(r)/ (adj) ít về số lượng và tồi về chất lượng
8. culinary /'kʌlɪnəri/ (adj) thuộc việc nấu nướng - culinary art (n) nghệ thuật nấu ăn

**282. HOUSEHOLD TASKS : WRITE ABOUT ONE THAT YOU ENJOY DOING
AND ONE THAT YOU DISLIKE**
**CÔNG VIỆC NỘI TRỢ: TRÌNH BÀY MỘT CÔNG VIỆC BẠN THÍCH LÀM VÀ
MỘT CÔNG VIỆC BẠN KHÔNG THÍCH LÀM**

I am not one of those that find happiness and delight confining themselves to the house during holidays and spending time on household chores. My brother, Paul, should be my mother's pet for in spite of his devotion to studies he finds time to help her in her household tasks. I **subscribe**¹ to his view that all at home must co-operate in doing these domestic chores - cooking, mopping, ironing, etc, and also the task that I detest - dish-washing.

I leave most of the tasks to others to allow them to **live up to**² their maxims regarding co-operation at home, but I seem to have a **penchant**³ for cooking and I enjoy this culinary occupation immensely. My mother is the chief at home ; but she is not only one for often my dishes, though I let myself be guided by instinct rather than by any thought or plan, turn out to be delicious and, what more, appetising even to those weight - conscious members of my family. I **don**⁴ by apron on Sundays when we make sure that Mom is absolutely free from all work so that she can relieve her care-free days at least once a week. But she seems to like to be in the kitchen and help me when I cook.

Cooking, as they say, seems to have some **therapeutic**⁶ value. What I often succeed in accomplishing are preparing vegetable dishes. Washing vegetables is not a pleasure and the washed vegetables are cut and, of course, mother is by my side helping me regulate the sizes. The frying pan is kept handy and the different ingredients could be taken easily because the **receptacles**⁷ containing them are labelled. When my **contraption**⁸ is fried I become meek and speak rather pessimistically about the outcome of my enterprise. To see the contents in the frying pan change colour and turn into a dish to be served is indeed a pleasure. My experiments in the kitchen give my mother a brake from the routine, and the members of my family get something different.

I should not make the others do what I do not like. I follow this principal after meals. After lunch, I force myself to the wash-basin in which would have piled up all the plates, cups, spoons etc. The receptacles which I had used for cooking would have found their way into this basin earlier. Like a doctor getting ready for an operation (for I am **allergic**⁹ to vim which we use for washing dishes) I put on my gloves. My innate dislike for this washing up seems to be in line with my body's chemical reaction ! I think of all the nice things I have done in the past or visualize a badminton game which I had won. This little trick of self-deception makes me forget the tedium that awaits me. Usually it takes me a full half hour to wash and clean these dishes. In the process I would have sprinkled some water around ; hence the kitchen is to be tidied up. The washed plates are wiped and placed in the proper places. I feel a sense of relief when this post-cooking task is completed.

After siesta both these tasks are forgotten. I look forward to the next Sunday though my enthusiasm is invariably dampened by the self-imposed domestic task of dish-washing.

1. subscribe /səb'skraɪb/ (v) đồng ý (với một ý kiến, lý thuyết, v.v...)

2. live up (to sth) /lɪv ʌp/ (v) cư xử phù hợp với cái gì; sống theo

3. penchant (for sth) /ˈpaːnʃaːnt/ (n) *sự thích thú hoặc sở thích (về cái gì)*
4. don /dɒn/ (v) *mặc (quần áo, v.v...)*
5. apron /ˈeɪprən/ (n) *tạp dề*
6. therapeutic /θerəˈpiːtɪk/ (adj) *thuộc thuật chữa trị bệnh tật, thuộc liệu pháp*
7. receptacle /rɪˈseptəkl/ (n) *đồ đựng, chỗ chứa*
8. contraption /kənˈtræpʃn/ (n) *dụng cụ hoặc thiết bị thuộc loại kỳ cục hoặc phức tạp*
9. allergic /əˈlɜːdʒɪk/ (adj) *bị dị ứng*

283. WHAT I DISLIKE MOST IN PEOPLE
ĐIỀU TÔI GHÉT NHẤT NƠI CON NGƯỜI

What I dislike most in people is when they do not keep their word. I have had many encounters with people who do this and I must say I find it most unpleasant.

I usually keep my word. If I find that I am not able to because of extraordinary circumstances, I make it a point to tell the person involved so that he or she will not feel **let down**.¹ For example if I were to tell a friend that I will come to her house at 9 a.m. but cannot do so, I will make sure I let her know before that time so that she will not have to wait for me in **vain**.²

However, I know from experience that many people do not keep their word. I have been kept waiting a number of times by friends who said they will meet me at a certain time but come later or do not show up at all. What's worse is that they do not even apologise or say why they did not keep their word. These people then become less of a friend and more of just an acquaintance. I do not feel sorry for it. I am definitely better off without having to endure further disappointments.

It seems to me that some people simply say things without meaning what they say. They just utter words out of convenience. There is a man who replies "no problem" to any request made to him. He works as an electrician-cum-plumber. When we require his services we would ring him up and invariably his answer will be "no problem". He always promises to come the next day but almost always he fails to show up. So we ring again and he will again say "no problem" but again he will fail to keep his word. Perhaps after a week or so he will appear to render his services. Sometimes we can wait, but more often now we get someone else to do the job. This someone else also does not usually keep his word but at least he does not say "no problem".

Then there is an uncle of mine who is just as bad. Once he borrowed my father's **crash-helmet**³ promising to return it the same evening. He never did return the helmet. When asked he denied that he ever borrowed the helmet. My father decided to let the matter rest as it was an old helmet not worth arguing over. It goes to show how untrustworthy a man can become. His word means nothing. It has no value at all.

I always go by the saying "say what you **mean**,⁴ and mean what you say". It seems many people can't be bothered about saying what they mean and meaning what they say. They just say anything they like and do something else. It is impossible to trust people like this. They will let you down.

It is best that we keep away from such people. However this is almost impossible to do because the whole world is filled with them. It seems to me there are more people who do not keep their word than people who do. Perhaps this is the result of living in the modern world where people are more concerned about making money than keeping their word. Money can be kept in the bank, words can't. Money can be used to buy things, words can't.

As for me, I would rather keep my word. At least I also keep my integrity and honesty. If I do not have these two so important things, then whatever I do in the world will only make things worse, for I will have cheated and lied. I will become just another untrustworthy person that I dislike. I cannot allow myself to dislike myself.

1. let (sb) down /let daʊn/ (v) làm (ai) thất vọng, làm (ai) chán ngán
2. in vain /veɪn/ (idm) hoài công, không ăn thua gì, vô ích
3. crash-helmet /kræʃ 'helmt/ (n) mũ bảo hộ
4. mean /mi:n/ (v) 1. (nhằm) truyền đạt điều gì; muốn nói; 2. có ý định gì (một cách nghiêm túc và thật sự)

284. THE THINGS I TREASURE MOST IN LIFE NHỮNG ĐIỀU MÀ TÔI QUÝ TRỌNG NHẤT TRONG ĐỜI

Does one not really sit down and question oneself ? What is it that I hold precious ? It is a difficult question to answer because one takes so many things for granted and yet even if one of them was removed we would miss it terribly. Many people cannot do without money or the comforts which money can buy ; but I think **in the long run**¹ these are the things one may manage without. There are other things which are indispensable and which are precious in life. Health is the foremost amongst them. One cannot enjoy anything without health. One thing is more important than health and that is positive outlook. A positive outlook is the basis of all that makes a good life. It makes a person warm and understanding, outgoing and likeable. It helps one to win friends.

It is on this base that one can build a structure of those values which have meaning in life. It is self-respect and sincerity which are important. I value my self-respect. If one lacks this respect for one's inner self, one may stoop down to the worse possible things. The claims of one's conscience, the necessity of facing one's own self and cultivating and maintaining a sense of **integrity**,² of responsibility, of truth - these are valuable in life. Take away self-respect, destroy a man's conscience and he is no better than a beast. A man without a conscience may well become ruthless, brutal and immoral for he never feels the necessity of self-examination. Or he may stoop down to the level of self-abasement and be **abject**³ and servile. I value my self-respect for it keeps me upright and any day I can confront my inner self without any hesitation or **qualm**.⁴

Another thing I value is the feeling of doing something worth-while ; to have a sense of satisfaction at doing or having done a job well. It is immaterial what we do ; what matters is the amount of involvement and sincerity we bring to it. And finally the amount of satisfaction we derive from having done it well.

I also had intellectual curiosity in great respect. It is necessary to have it in some measure so that one can keep on growing and not remain stagnant. If one wants fulfilment and purpose it is impossible to derive it from a limited, daily routine. Intellectual curiosity leads to involvement and to a widening of interests and the need to meet challenges in life. To continue living day after day in the same limited pattern is a difficult and a suffocating experience. Intellectual curiosity is accompanied by intellectual alertness and a keen power of observation. There is a great beauty and a great wealth in the world of nature ; only one should be **gifted**⁵ with observation to enjoy it.

Given these gifts one should be able to have the warmth of friends and a happy family life and these are things that I value in life.

1. in the long run (*idm*) *rất cục, sau cùng thì*
2. integrity /ɪn'tegrəti/ (*n*) *phẩm chất trung thực và chính trực*
3. abject /'æbdʒekt/ (*adj*) *(về người, hành động, hành vi) thiếu tất cả sự hãnh diện; đáng khinh*
4. qualm /kwa:lm/ (*n*) *mối lo ngại, day dứt, băn khoăn*
5. gifted /'ɡɪftɪd/ (*adj*) *có nhiều tài năng hoặc năng khiếu tự nhiên – gift (n) năng khiếu*

285. THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BEING A MEMBER OF A LARGE FAMILY

THUẬN LỢI VÀ BẤT LỢI KHI LÀ THÀNH VIÊN TRONG MỘT GIA ĐÌNH ĐÔNG CON

In a few years, the large family will be considered a thing of the past; today it is no longer a status symbol. A large family is different from a joint family of a few decades ago. A large family may consist of the father, the mother and four or more children. A small family which, because of population increase and food shortage, is considered ideal today, may consist of the parents and two children. There are advantages and disadvantages of being member of a large family.

Growing up in a large family may develop in one discipline and a feeling for the others - qualities that are desirable for good citizenship. Food and other consumer items will not be sufficient and the members will learn to share things fairly and forego little things that may not be indispensable. Everyone in the family will have his share of domestic chores to do and what he does and the problems of the parents that he is often made to feel will stand him in good stead when at last he sets up his own home. Thus the children in a large family are apt to grow up as responsible adults conscious of the needs and desires of others.

A large family will be a lively family and life at home will never be dull. There will be many to talk to and discuss with. A problem that is brought by one will be shared by all others. When one is in distress, one can be assured of warmth and affection. Every member is a distinct individual and hence the views of the different members on a subject under discussion will be different. What an opportunity to see a problem from different **angles**!¹ The interests of the children will be different and life would be one of variety.

There are disadvantages too. When parents **raise**² a large family, and are unable to discipline them, their children will become noisy, quarrelsome and **vindictive**.³ The father or mother can cause a **rift**⁴ in the family just by showing **partiality**.⁵ Some parents, unable to discipline their children, resort to excessive punishment which only serves to alienate the child further. There are some of the reasons which family planning associations state to show that a large family is disadvantageous.

Members of a large family may be denied the benefits of higher education. In a competitive society, children who are denied proper education, may be unsuccessful and the chances are that they would be bitter and disappointed. The helplessness of the parents and their poor financial position may have an adverse effect on the children. The children may be denied the luxuries. Berefts of parental care, children may resort to evil ways and become social liabilities. The bitterness they develop as children will influence their attitudes and they may fail in life.

In the past, when more children meant more hands on the farm, it was advisable to raise large families. Times have changed and soon a large family will become an **anachronism**.⁶ Today our attitudes have changed and those who are conscious of the harsh realities of life are aware of the disadvantages of a large family.

1. angle /'æŋɡl/ (n) *quan điểm, góc độ (một sự kiện, một vấn đề, v.v...)*

2. raise /reɪz/ (v) *nuôi, nuôi dưỡng*

3. vindictive /vɪn'dɪktɪv/ (*adj*) không khoan dung; hận thù
4. rift /rɪft/ (*n*) sự rạn nứt
5. partiality /pɑːʃɪ'ælətɪ/ (*n*) sự thiên vị, sự thiên kiến
6. anachronism /ə'nækrənɪzəm/ (*n*) người, phong tục hoặc tư tưởng bị xem là lỗi thời

286. IS FAMILY PLANNING NECESSARY ?
KẾ HOẠCH HÓA GIA ĐÌNH CÓ CẦN THIẾT KHÔNG ?

My answer to this question is a **definite**¹ Yes ! My reasons are as follows.

When a man and woman settle down and start having children without considering what sort of life they and the children will have, they are behaving very irresponsibly. Often the result of such irresponsibility is a family that will undergo a lot of hardship. I give an example of this.

An uncle of mine works as fishmonger. In the eight years of his marriage he already has eight children and more seem to be on the way. He can hardly make enough to feed himself and his wife. With eight more young mouths to feed it is not surprising that he simply cannot cope.

His children do not have decent clothes to wear or sufficient food to eat. They live in a **squalid**² squatter **shack**³ near the edge of town. My mother, who is his sister, does what she can to help. However the amount of help she can give is limited for she is a housewife and my father is not too keen on giving unending assistance to someone (my uncle) who is so irresponsible. So my uncle moans about his misfortune and complains that no one wants to help him. What he will not admit is that he is the cause of his own misery. He suffers the consequences of not planning his family.

There are hundreds of families that live the way my uncle does in the squatter settlement. I have visited them on numerous occasions and have to say that they live in miserable conditions. They do not have piped water or proper drains. Basic hygiene is not observed. As a result the people living there are not healthy. The children are especially prone to all sorts of illness. My cousins seem to have perpetual runny noses and smelly bodies.

The future of these children is not bright. Without proper upbringing many of them will end up on the wrong side of the law. I know that some of the residents of this area are thugs and gangsters. Some of them have already been arrested for crimes such as drug trafficking and armed robbery. What hope is there for children brought up here ?

On the other hand one of my father's cousins is careful about his children. He only has three, all of which are given a good home to grow up in. He is **by no means**⁴ rich. He earns his living as a van salesman. The difference is that he is concerned with the quality of the children he has, not quantity. He makes sure they have enough food so eat and their well-being are looked after. The result of such care is so obvious. The children live in much better conditions. They are a joy to be with. At least there is less risk in getting some kind of sickness from them, as is the case with my less fortunate cousins.

On the whole I will say that a planned family of about two or three children is best. The children have a chance of a happy childhood. The likelihood is that they will grow up to be good responsible citizens too. In a large unplanned family the parents have not enough time to bring the children up properly. Besides having a difficult childhood, the chances of growing up into wrong company is very real indeed. Consequently they suffer the rest of their lives.

The signs are obvious. A planned family has a much better chance of being a happy one. An unplanned one has virtually no chance at all.

1. definite /'defɪnət/ (*adj*) rõ ràng, dứt khoát
2. squalid /'skwɒlɪd/ (*adj*) rất bẩn thỉu và khó chịu (do cầu thả hoặc quá nghèo khó)
3. shack /ʃæk/ (*n*) túp lều, lán, nhà, v.v... dựng lên một cách sơ hãi
4. by no means /mi:nz/ (*idm*) không tí nào, không chút nào

**287. SHOULD PARENTS WHO HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD TREAT ALL
OF THEIR CHILDREN IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY ?**
**CÁC BẬC CHA MẸ CÓ ĐỒNG CON CÓ ĐỐI XỬ VỚI MỖI ĐỨA THEO CÁCH
THỨC HOÀN TOÀN GIỐNG NHAU KHÔNG ?**

Normally parents tend to treat all children alike. They are given the same food, sometimes the clothing and very often the same time of schooling. There is nothing unnatural about it and it is as it should be. Where the family shares to a common table all shall be served the same food. Similarly in the matter of clothing children are dressed alike. This in fact helps to avoid a quarrel among the children. If say John is not given the same type of clothing as Charles, he frowns and may cry and quarrel. Where food and clothing are concerned, there need not be a separate treatment.

In educating the children, the same treatment may be all right in the lower classes. But when it comes to a matter of higher education the difficulty comes in. Children of the same parents are not alike. Even in the case of identical twins the difference is perceivable. In the case of normal children there is **bound**¹ to be vast differences physically and intellectually. In the same family we might come across highly intelligent children as well as **muffs**.²

So certainly there should be different treatment for different children. A wise parent should never try to put all children into the same **mould**.³ The children vary in their attitude to work, study and play. One may be physically strong and prefer physical rather than intellectual work. The second may prefer sports, games and active open air life rather than classroom work. Still a third may like to read a lot. So it is for the parent to observe closely and study the attitude of individual child. Accordingly he must choose the career of the child. It is easily said than done. There are many problems in choosing what type of education the child must be given. The difficulty may be in the means. All facilities cannot be provided by the parent. That is why most parents choose the **line**⁴ of least resistance and send children to the public school or grammar school. Since these schools cannot cater to the individual needs for children, many of the children leave school as **misfits**⁵ or with an aversion for the scholastic life.

Even a **discerning**⁶ parent cannot theoretically speaking treat children differently according to their talent and capacity. Where the parent fails the Government must step in. For ideological or political reasons this is not being practised in democratic countries. Whereas in **totalitarian**⁷ countries, the State takes a stern view of the education of children and makes them fit into the groove in which they can set themselves in. The question of a square man in a round hole may not arise. This is a very delicate question and unless the parent treats children intelligently there may be more harm than good.

1. bound /baʊnd/ (adj) *chắc chắn, bắt buộc*
2. muff /mʌf/ (n) *người vụng về, chậm chạp; người hậu đậu*
3. mould /məʊld/ (n) (cũng mold) *khuôn, khuôn đúc*
4. line /laɪn/ (n) *đường lối, biện pháp*
5. misfit /'mɪsfɪt/ (n) *người không thích nghi với ngoại cảnh*
6. discerning /dɪ'sɜːnɪŋ/ (adj) *thể hiện sự suy xét thận trọng*
7. totalitarian /ˌtəʊtəli'ʔeəriən/ (adj) *cực quyền, chuyên chế*

288. SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF LOOKING AFTER YOUNGER BROTHERS OR SISTERS

MỘT VÀI KHÓ KHĂN TRONG VIỆC CHĂM SÓC EM TRAI HOẶC EM GÁI

Being an elder brother or a sister has its advantages as well as problems. In a big family, the elder one has to share some of the responsibilities of both father and mother. This can be **looked upon**¹ as a necessary difficulty which one cannot avoid. For the smooth running of the family, such a service of the elder child is always expected.

Now let us see some of the problems of looking after the younger ones. They have to be kept away from the kitchen where mother is busy cooking. If you prevent them from going into the kitchen they will cry. This will disturb mother. If one or two slaps are administered, they will start screaming. The elder one is asked to dress up the younger ones about their clothes, make the task very hard and one will lose all patience. Quite often, they have to be **coached**² in their school work. They won't come at all for studies when called. The elder one has to be infinitely patient. If the elder one were to lose patience, only he or she will be blamed.

Another difficulty is that the elder one cannot own anything new or attractive ; the younger ones too want to have it. It may be a pen, an instrument box or even a pencil eraser. The elder one may protest but to no avail, it will be the younger ones who will get their way.

Another trying occasion is when mother goes to a theater or visits a friend. The younger ones make a hell of that time. They will pick quarrel among themselves, fly at each other's throat, want to eat something and if they are given what they want, they will demand more of it. If they are refused they will complain to mother. The younger ones always spy on the elder one. They want to accompany the brother or sister wherever he or she goes. They will always be ready to carry real or imaginary tales to the mother. They want to be with their elder brother or sister but at the same time they want to have their own way, they would not want to listen to their elder brother or sister.

These kinds of situations are very common in large families and only in rare instances can we find families where the children are loving and close to each other.

1. look upon (sb/sth as sb/sth) /lʊk ðpʊn/ (v) xem ai/cái gì, là ai/cái gì

2. coach /kəʊtʃ/ (v) dạy (phụ đạo) để thi kiểm tra

289. THE PROBLEM OF OVERPOPULATION

VẤN ĐỀ ĐÔNG DÂN SỐ

The world today faces many problems despite the fact that it has taken long strides in science, technology and knowledge. One such problem is over population especially in developing countries. The population is growing so fast, that it grows in **geometric progression**¹ whereas economic goods grow only in **arithmetic progression**² that **demographers**³ say there will not be literally any standing space on earth for her teeming millions. Let us find out the causes for such a growth, the problem or problems such a growth causes and the possible remedies.

The fast growth in population can be attributed to good health, lowering of mortality rate, combating **famine**⁴ when and where it occurs. With the knowledge of science many killer diseases have been literally conquered. For instance, smallpox which used to take a heavy toll of lives has been **eradicated**⁵ from almost all countries, so too has **cholera**,⁶ **plague**⁷ and so on. Even **tuberculosis**⁸ is kept under control. The wave of flu which accounted for millions of death in 1919 was nothing but a common cold. Infant mortality has been reduced considerably by taking pre-natal and post-natal care. Child mortality is kept under check by protecting the child against **tetanus**⁹ and **polio**.¹⁰ Thus while the number of deaths is reduced, there is no control on birth as a result the population is increasing at a runaway speed.

Again periodic famine in certain countries used to take away the lives of thousands of people. Now with the better management of the world's food, in the matter of production, storage and distribution, no part of the world needs suffer from famine. Add to this the better methods of producing more food that are being adopted. By using better manures and fertilizers, high yielding seeds, by pest control and water management, there has been a revolution in food production. These are some positions which contribute to the growth of population.

The growth of population has its problems as we shall see. As there are more and more mouths to be fed, there comes a great strain on the resources of a country ; this is real in the case of developing countries with the result they are unable to push ahead economically. As food is not sufficient there is chronic **malnutrition**¹¹ in these countries especially in women and children resulting in weaker population who would only economically be a drain on the country as their productive years will be short. As health and education are the State's affair, they affect the country's finances. So in developing countries, health and illiteracy continue to be the problem. The unwieldy growth of population leads to the problem of housing and sanitation. In many countries the slums are a sore to the eyes. Slums grow round big cities and are found with all the drawbacks. These are the areas of disease, filth and crime.

Now people have realized the dangers of over population. Every country is caught up with this problem and population growth control has become an economic necessity. In fact it is a survival necessity. Family planning has become a household word. Though there has been objections on religious and other grounds, people have come to accept family planning as a fact of life. Some countries have taken it seriously that it has become a national effort. Through mass media people are being warned and educated. **Inducements**¹² are made in the forms of free treatment, earned leave and cash gifts.

Men and woman in their productive age can get themselves **sterilized**.¹³ Vast research is going on to introduce simpler methods.

Still the world may be saved from population explosion. May be there are more Green Revolution miracles up the sleeves. May be birth control miracles in the next ten years may save us. Right now the whole world seems bored with Family Planning. Can the world afford the luxury of such boredom ?

1. geometric progression /dʒiəˌmetrɪk prəˈɡreʃn/ (n) cấp số nhân
2. arithmetic progression /əˈrɪθˌmetɪk prəˈɡreʃn/ (n) cấp số cộng
3. demographer /dɪˈmɒɡrəfə(r)/ (n) nhà dân số học
4. famine /ˈfæmɪn/ (n) nạn đói, nạn đói kém
5. eradicate /ɪˈrædɪkeɪt/ (v) trừ diệt, thủ tiêu
6. cholera /ˈkɒləərə/ (n) bệnh dịch tả
7. plague /pleɪɡ/ (n) bệnh dịch
8. tuberculosis /tjuːˈbɜːkjʊˈləʊsɪs/ (n) bệnh lao
9. tetanus /ˈtetənəs/ (n) bệnh uốn ván
10. polio /ˈpəʊliəʊ/ (n) (cũng poliomyelitis /ˌpəʊliəʊˌmaɪəˈlaɪtɪs/) (n) bệnh bại liệt
11. malnutrition /mælnjuːˈtrɪʃn/ (n) sự suy dinh dưỡng
12. inducement /ɪnˈdjuːsmənt/ (n) sự thuyết phục, sự khích lệ
13. sterilize /ˈsterəlaɪz/ (v) làm vô sinh, triệt sản

290. WHAT MAKE GOOD PARENTS

NHỮNG YẾU TỐ TẠO NÊN CÁC BẬC CHA MẸ TỐT

The **bond**¹ between parents and children is one of love and affection, yet we **come across**² people who hate their parents and also people who feel that their parents have let them down. Why is this the case ? Are these people unnatural or are they **justified**³ ? Perhaps in some cases they are justified. Most men and women get married and have children but not all of them are worthy of being parents. Parenthood, like other jobs, needs devotion, dedication and preparation. Prospective parents must recognize their responsibilities and realise what **parenthood**⁴ involves.

The first essential of good parenthood is the acceptance of the role. Men who marry very young may resent their first child for it would be a rival for the affection of the lady of the house. Women may resent their first child because it suddenly puts them in a different class of women. They can no longer call their time their own. Often the newcomer may **necessitate**⁵ changes in the household routine, giving up of a job on the part of the mother and various other sacrifices. The world of affection which should surround a child should precede its birth it is here that good parenthood begins.

Fondness, however, is at no stage a synonym of pampering and spoiling children. Parents have the responsibility of cultivating those qualities in their children which may help them to face life, make them brave and likeable human beings, impart to them a sense of integrity and strength and these lessons cannot be learnt **haphazardly**⁶ or in an erratic fashion. Parenthood is a wholetime task and the only way of cultivating the right habits is through example and by providing an atmosphere which is conducive to the growth of these qualities. A child learns these virtues at home and the influence of his parents can counteract all other influences whether good or bad.

This is the theoretical aspect ; in practice, the recipe for good parenthood is love and understanding. These two envelop a whole world in themselves. Love means love in the right degree, love which does not ignore discipline, love which does not yield for the wrong reasons and for the wrong ends, love which can provide security and confidence for the growing child, love which leads to sacrifices and makes one devote some time and join in enjoying the simple pleasure of childhood. Understanding means trying to find what the child wants and why, giving him the freedom to try new ideas, to experiment with hobbies, learn from the world of nature. Understanding in love becomes hiding one's fears and allowing the child to develop a sense of adventure and fearlessness ; it means loving without being clinging. It is not only confined to this, it extends further. It includes patience and **forbearances**.⁷ There may be occasions when a child may be afraid of things : of participation in social and public functions, of swimming, of heights and endless other things. Understanding means trying to find out the reasons for the fear and perhaps giving in for the time being and helping the child to overcome it gradually.

Whatever is of value in the human character is born out of love and understanding. There can be no strict rules that one should say "No", or put one's foot down or allow a child complete freedom. Each situation has to be judged and examined individually and each parent has to make the decision himself. But there can be one rule : don't corrupt the child. Don't teach it to accept the second best, don't bribe it into obedience, don't be

tyrannised⁸ by its **tantrums**,⁹ don't **blackmail**¹⁰ it or allow it to blackmail you. If the child remains incorruptible, it has every chance of growing up to be a person of generosity and compassion.

Being a good parent is in itself a process of growing up. One should have the capacity to love and to love wisely ; it is this kind of person who makes a good parent. Share yourself with your children and they will love you and learn from you.

1. bond /bʊnd/ (n) *điều liên kết hoặc ràng buộc*
2. come across /kʌm ə'krɒs/ (v) *tình cờ gặp*
3. justified /'dʒʌstɪfaɪd/ (adj) *có lý do chính đáng để làm điều gì*
4. parenthood /'peərənθud/ (n) *tư cách làm cha mẹ*
5. necessitate /nɪ'sesɪteɪt/ (v) *bắt buộc phải có, phải làm, v.v...*
6. haphazard /hæp'hæzəd/ (adj) *bừa bãi, không có kế hoạch hoặc trật tự gì* - haphazardly /-lɪ/ (adv)
7. forbearance /fɔ:'beərəns/ (n) *sự tự chủ kiên trì, sự độ lượng*
8. tyrannise /'tɪrənəɪz/ (v) *áp chế, hành hạ*
9. tantrum /'tæntərəm/ (n) *cơn cáu kỉnh hoặc giận dữ bùng nổ (của một đứa bé)*
10. blackmail /'blækmeɪl/ (v) *buộc ai phải làm gì bằng cách hăm dọa*

291. QUALITIES OF YOUR IDEAL WIFE OR HUSBAND *NHỮNG PHẨM CHẤT CỦA NGƯỜI BẠN ĐỜI, LÝ TƯỞNG CỦA BẠN*

An ideal wife or husband would be a person who is an ideal companion. Does that **appear**¹ I am running round in circles ? No. Though the traditional role of a husband is different from that of a wife, the qualities of a person are not sex-**oriented**;² they are person-oriented. What do I want in the person I marry ? My list may be a long one ; but it is sound in its priorities. I want the man I choose as a husband to be generous, to have a sense of humour and to be trusting and trustworthy. I would like to build our relationship on affection and respect and on complete **frankness**.³ A tall order ? Let me explain myself.

Affection and respect put together are the essence of love. They are more durable than the **euphoria**⁴ of romantic love linked to physical attraction. It is true that beauty contributes a great deal towards life's pleasantness, but unreflecting, unthinking beauty has nothing to recommend itself. What is perhaps welcome is a general smartness of behaviour and looks ; but there may be cases when this is also shelved to the background. Respect in a relationship is very important, and note I mean respect, not awe or fear or any other feeling but respect which includes self-respect and can be stretched a long way to cover the **crevices**⁵ of feelings.

I would like my future husband to be frank with me and to discuss financial, emotional and other problems with me. For if there is any ground on which I cannot tread, or any occasion when I find the door closed against me, or any time when whispered conversations take place, or papers and letters are kept away, or I look **askance**⁶ and don't get a reply, then there lies the beginning of distrust and rift. A marriage is a companionship ; it extends into old age and can mature into a relationship where words need not be exchanged and still complete understanding may exist. It is a relationship which cannot be built on lies or half-truths. When I use the word "frank" I do not only more emotional friendships though they too are included. Is it not more graceful that my friends of the days when I was not yet married be known to my husband than that I spring a surprise on him or leave him to work his imagination in different directions ? Similarly I would like to know about my husband's friends - men and women. Frankness should extend to all money matters. I should know (and so should he) what our economic position is.

A marriage is the basis of a family ; it grows and matures and strengthens over the years. It cannot do so when the partners concerned pull in different directions. A home is a place where one feels there should be no uneasiness, no appearances to maintain, where one should feel free to express oneself and be one's own true self. This is possible if there is some basic generosity in the members of the family for generosity **backs up**⁷ the desire to understand, to be less critical and more forgiving in one's approach.

Don't you know that a **grim**⁸ man is stern and unforgiving ? There are numerous little problems which can be laughed away. At times this capacity to take things lightly, to see the funny side of an otherwise grim situation may **cement**⁹ a relationship much more than anything else. Laughter keeps one young. It is the best medicine. So let's live and laugh together.

1. appear /ə'piə(r)/ (v) có vẻ, hình như, xem ra
2. -oriented /'ɔ:riəntɪd/ (tạo nên tính từ ghép) hướng về
3. frank /fræŋk/ (adj) thành thật - frankness (n)
4. euphoria /ju:'fɔ:riə/ (n) cảm giác sung sướng và phấn khích mạnh mẽ
5. crevice /'krevɪs/ (n) tường nứt, kẽ hở
6. askance /ə'skæns/ (adv) nhìn (sang một bên) với vẻ ngờ vực hoặc không tán thành; lườm
7. back up (sb/sth) /bæk ʌp/ (v) ủng hộ hoặc khuyến khích (ai/cái gì)
8. grim /grim/ (adj) với nét mặt rất nghiêm khắc hoặc nghiêm nghị
9. cement /sɪ'ment/ (v) thiết lập (cái gì) vững chắc; củng cố

292. THE QUALITIES OF AN IDEAL SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN YOUR OPINION *NHỮNG PHẨM CHẤT CỦA MỘT HIỆU TRƯỞNG LÝ TƯỞNG THEO Ý BẠN*

People who are interested in education speak very often of Dr. Arnold of Eton School as an ideal Headmaster. He was good in every way as a Headmaster. Those who came under his influence became really great and famous. He contributed a lot in the field of education and every student liked to emulate him.

To be ideal principal, he must be a teacher with all the qualities that go to make a teacher. As such he must be able to teach well and know the subject or subjects he teaches thoroughly. He must have the **breadth**¹ and depth of educational knowledge. He must be able to **put across**² the subject he teaches clearly and **lucidly**.³ He must make the students understand for what he teaches so he has to adopt various methods. He must be well-read, thorough and up-to-date. He knows when to mete out punishment and when to approve and appreciate. He must be an artist and must have certain artistic qualities in him. Since students are bound to imitate him in everything he does, he must be a role model. He must be able to mingle with the students and at the same time he must keep his respect. He must have wit and humour. He has to be an adviser to the pupils under him.

As a principal he should be a good administrator. He must know about office routine and be able to command the respect of the office staff and teachers. He must have a sound knowledge of the maintenance of the school and its funds.

As a principal he should also be like a public relation man to maintain **cordiality**⁴ with the parents as well as the general public. Like a **sage**⁵ of ancient days, he must be able to advise the people on many matters. He must be able to occupy positions in public bodies when offered. He may be capable of guiding the deliberations of public bodies. Without taking sides, he should be capable of enlightening the public on many matters. Thus he is an important citizen.

He must be a model for others in everything like the village school master described by Oliver Goldsmith, "How such a small head as his could carry all he knew."

1. breadth /bredθ/ (n) (về kiến thức) tầm rộng
2. put across /pʊt ə'krɒs/ (v) truyền đạt, bày tỏ
3. lucid /'luːsɪd/ (adj) rõ ràng, minh bạch, dễ hiểu
4. cordiality /kɔːdɪ'æləti/ (n) sự chân thành và thân mật
5. sage /seɪdʒ/ (n) nhà hiền triết

**293. WHAT QUALITIES WOULD YOU CONSIDER NECESSARY FOR AN
INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE ?**
***THEO BẠN, NHỮNG PHẨM CHẤT NÀO CẦN THIẾT CHO MỘT NGÔN NGỮ
QUỐC TẾ ?***

The need for an international language cannot be **gainsaid**¹ and its need has been felt more now than before. But such a language must have certain qualities so that it could be accepted as an international language. The purpose of this essay is to discuss some of those qualities.

Any language must have its own alphabets. The Roman Script in which most of the European languages are written is very convenient as it has the smallest number of letters. It is only twenty six and compared to the thousands of letters of Chinese, it is very easy to master Roman Script. But even here there are certain difficulties because all sounds could not be expressed in the Roman Script. That is why experts like Bernard Shaw suggested a forty script language. So an international language must have a small number of simple scripts and must be useful to express any sound.

Secondly it must have a rich vocabulary. There are dozens and dozens of highly developed languages in the world with their beautiful vocabulary. Some of those words, if they are already popular and could be easily understood, must find a place in the international language. These words must have the respectability capable of being used in the newspaper, in conferences and international meets. Those words must be acceptable to the people of the world, at least that educated who would be using them very often.

Thirdly it must have good idioms and expressions. Only these make any language **virile**² and the international language must absorb those idioms into it so that it will be better understood in suitable form. Since in an international meet, all kinds of people from different countries would be present, the idioms must be acceptable to all and intended only for international usage. All that is peculiar to a particular tongue need not be there. The language must be capable of being spoken and written by many, neither too hard to understand nor too simple to be forgotten.

It must not have a **cumbrous**³ and difficult grammar. Each language has its own rules of grammar, some of them not very logical on the face of it. For example, in English we say "I read, you read and he reads". This has proved a headache to many a beginner of English. In fact in almost all languages these peculiarities are also found. So the international language must have a simple grammar.

The language must be capable of being used in the august assemblies of the world. But that is not enough ; it must be capable of being used by the man in the street as well ; otherwise it will become dead soon. It has been the fate of some great languages of the world, for instance, Sanskrit, which continued to be the court language and the language of the **elite**⁴ and so it became dead. To attain an international status, it must be the language at that level. It must be used in world bodies so that translation could be avoided.

Since the international language will have to be evolved it must avoid the pitfalls in other languages. Newspapers of repute can have their edition made in the international language. Great books of the world must be translated into the international language.

The whole trouble is that a language has to **evolve**⁵ and is never made. So the birth of an international language may have its birth pangs but it may be worthwhile to make an attempt.

1. gainsay /geɪn'seɪ/ (v) *phủ nhận, chối cãi*
2. virile /'vɪraɪl/ (adj) *có sức mạnh, có sức sống*
3. cumbrous /'kʌmbərəs/ (adj) (cũng cumbersome) *chậm và không hiệu quả*
4. elite /eɪ'li:t/ (n) *nhóm người được xem là tinh hoa trong xã hội*
5. evolve /ɪv'blv/ (v) *phát triển một cách tự nhiên*

294. THE SUBJECT I CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT *MÔN HỌC TÔI CHO LÀ QUAN TRỌNG NHẤT*

Of all the subjects that I study in school, I think that English is the most important subject. It is mainly through the English language that we gain access to the various sources of knowledge.

English is a language which is spoken and understood by many people in most countries of the world. It is, in fact, the most important means of communication among the various countries of the world. Knowledge of new discoveries and inventions in one country is **transmitted**¹ to other countries through English for the benefit of the world. In this way English helps to spread knowledge and progress.

It is true, however, that in the modern age, the study of Science and Mathematics too should be considered very important. Science has conferred many benefits on man. But it requires little thought to realise that scientific principles cannot be understood well without a good knowledge of a language. And, though other languages, such as German and Russian, are important in the world of Science, it is English that plays the most important role in spreading scientific knowledge. There is, in fact, no branch of study that has not been communicated in English. The original writings of great scientists, economists, **philosophers**, **psychologists**³ and others, who did not speak and write the English language, have all been translated into English. Therefore, one who has a good knowledge of English has access to all the sources of information.

Further, as the English language is used by people of different lands and cultures, it has become very rich. It contains so many words, ideas and thoughts that a good knowledge of English enriches the mind and enables one to express oneself well. It also helps one to think better and to understand the people of other lands. It is for all these reasons that I consider English the most important subject in school.

1. transmit /trænz'mɪt/ (v) *truyền, phát*
2. philosopher /fɪ'lɒsəfə(r)/ (n) *triết gia*
3. psychologist /saɪ'kɒlədʒɪst/ (n) *nhà tâm lý học*

295. WHAT OPPORTUNITIES HAVE YOU HAD AT SCHOOL OR ELSEWHERE OF LISTENING TO AND SPEAKING ENGLISH ? HOW FAR HAVE THEY BEEN HELPFUL ? WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU SUGGEST ?
NHỮNG CƠ HỘI NGHE VÀ NÓI TIẾNG ANH Ở TRƯỜNG VÀ CÁC NƠI KHÁC MÀ BẠN CÓ ? CHÚNG CÓ ÍCH Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ? CÁC THAY ĐỔI MÀ BẠN ĐỀ NGHỊ ?

All the subjects in school are taught in Bahasa Malaysia except for English Language. Thus the opportunity for using English in school is very limited. I do converse in English with some of my friends, but only with a few of them. This is because most of the others cannot converse in English.

Some of these others do not have ample command of the English Language. Yet there are others who are either too shy to speak English or they simply refuse to do so. The teachers are not much help either for some of them can hardly speak English. It is only outside school hours that I get to speak English to teachers who can do so. Such opportunities only come when we have to return to school for games or other activities.

It would be beneficial if the school could have special periods or days each week where the students and teachers are encouraged to converse in English. In that way both sides benefit and we do not have to be at a disadvantage because of our poor command of English, as is facing us now. My father's generation are proficient in English because English was the medium of instruction then. I am not saying we should go back to their time. I am just saying that we should not lose our proficiency in English and thus become handicapped when we face the outside world.

However the mass media provide much opportunity for listening to English. Television especially is very helpful. Most of my favourite programmes are in English and we hear it being spoken, although mostly by Americans. I cannot complain though for I do learn a lot from them. In fact I can see how different spoken English can be in the U.S.A, England, Australia, India, Malaysia and other countries. Though it is basically English each speaks, the pronunciation, accent and local flavour are plainly **discernible**.¹ I can, quite accurately, tell where a person is from by listening to the English he speaks.

Unfortunately while I can hear English being spoken **via**² the television or radio, I cannot speak back. So again the opportunity to speak English is limited.

I suppose I have to live with the fact that the opportunities for listening and speaking English is limited. That does not mean that I give up using English. I realise that English is a very important language in the world and it is definitely important that I become **proficient**³ in it. We all should be proficient in it because most of the important discoveries and advances in science, technology and other fields are available in English. So if our command of English is lacking then we will lose out and always be left behind.

1. discernible /dɪ'sɜːnɪbl/ (adj) có thể nhận rõ được

2. via /'vaɪə/ (prep) theo đường (gì); qua

3. proficient /prə'fɪʃnt/ (adj) tài giỏi, thông thạo

296. THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF CO-EDUCATION *NHỮNG THUẬN LỢI VÀ BẤT LỢI CỦA VIỆC NAM – NỮ HỌC CHUNG*

I study in a co-education school. In my class there are about twenty boys and twelve girls. We learn many things about one another in the course of being in the same class everyday. Sometimes the interaction is pleasant and sometimes not. In other words co-education has its good points and bad points, that is, its advantages as well as its disadvantages.

The main advantage that I can see is that we learn that boys are different from girls in many ways. In short, we learn how to handle each other. Boys tend to be more physical, while girls are far gentler. However this is not a universal rule, for **tom-boys**¹ do exist in our class and they pack a harder wallop than some sissies, who also exist in our class. Anyhow I learn that the two sexes behave generally in fixed manners although there are exceptions. I suppose this sort of interaction will come in useful in the future when boys and girls become men and women who will produce the next generations. I am a boy and I have to admit that I learn a lot about how to handle both boys and girls by being in my class. I have a friend who studies in an all-boys' school. He always asks me how I handle the girls. He is quite ignorant about girls, for I have seen him being **tongue-tied**² in front of girls. None of my classmates have such a problem.

The one big disadvantage about having boys and girls in the same class is when we go for physical education. Boys and girls just cannot do the same type of exercise or play the same game together. So we need to have two teachers, one for the boys and one for the girls. Our headmaster has come up with the ingenious solution of having two classes doing P.E. at the same time so that the boys and girls from each class combine together under one teacher each.

Another advantage of a co-education school becomes obvious when the school holds the school sports, concerts and other functions. In sports a co-education school can see full participation from both sexes. Also the harder physical work of preparing for a sports meet can be done by the boys while the gentler tasks of preparing food and drinks as well as serving guests are best left to the girls. The boys and girls get to learn their social roles.

In concerts and other functions it is undoubted that both boys and girls are needed. In a co-education school there is no problem of finding the persons to take part. However in an all-boys' or an all-girls' school, they will have to "borrow" the necessary boys or girls in order to run their functions. I myself and other boys have had to go and serve our all-girls' neighbour for some of their functions. I have to admit I thoroughly enjoyed my duties there, for the girls there really appreciate our help thus lavishing their attention on us. I suspect that they enjoy our being there too.

Our girls too get to go and help out at an all-boys' school. I am sure they enjoy themselves too.

I have not studied in an all-boys' school before so I do not really know what sort of situation exists there. However I would not change my place here for anything else. It is definitely better to have girls around than to see only boys everyday.

1. tom-boy /təm bɔɪ/ (n) cô gái thích các trò thô bạo, âm ỹ

2. tongue-tied /'tʌŋ taɪd/ (adj) im lặng vì e thẹn hoặc bối rối

297. THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN SCHOOLS TẦM QUAN TRỌNG CỦA HƯỚNG NGHIỆP TRONG NHÀ TRƯỜNG

The present for us is one of special significance. This is an era of changes. New patterns emerge and new ideal are proposed. The era of independence and the attendant changes have radically altered the context in which the school pursues its aims. Change which symbolizes progress demands an urgent re-orientation of the attitudes of the students towards jobs. In the process of mopping up the cobwebs of prejudice against **blue-collar**¹ jobs and **dissemination**² of occupational information, the school has to pay an important role.

In the past in the whole complex and complicated field of education there was no aspect more neglected than vocational guidance. Thanks to the dynamism and foresight of the education authorities, the student has ample opportunities to gain sufficient occupational information to equip him to choose a job that is consistent with his aptitude and general ability. The student who leaves school without at least a vague idea of the job that he would take up is apt to fall into a taste of flux and there is the danger that he may choose the wrong job and so despair. Today, the school leaver would have at least a vague idea of the job he intends taking up.

Each year, there is a large number of school-leavers. It is important, therefore, that young citizens should be guided to the right career when they leave school. A youth who plunges blindly into a job for which he is not suited, or for which he has no interest, can very aptly be likened to a round peg in a square hole. No country can afford to have such a state of affairs. It is, thus, of **paramount**³ importance that every individual is properly guided in the choice of a career so that he can contribute his maximum to society.

About two-thirds of a man's life is spent in work even in these days of automation. And, the choice of a career is certainly a delicate issue for him. Making the wrong choice can land him in a world of endless frustration ! Very often, the first job that a school-leaver gets is the one he has to stay at throughout his working career. So, unless he is content with and suited to the job he has, he will never be happy. Vocational guidance is thus important as its fundamental aim is to help the individual choose a career according to his aptitudes, interests and training.

The industries are confronted with the problem of shortage of skilled workers. This shortage of trained man-power to meet our industrialisation programme is a reflection of the inadequacies and short-comings of a past education which was ill-equipped to prepare young school-leavers with the necessary knowledge and skills for employment in industries. This problem, however, is further aggravated by certain values developed from the colonial era when many were groomed for clerical positions and **white-collar**⁴ jobs. The traditional prejudice against blue-collar jobs is still firmly entrenched. The reluctance to train for blue-collar jobs means an inadequate number of skilled workers and technicians. Such **ingrained**⁵ negative attitudes towards manual jobs indeed necessitate vocational guidance in schools.

1. blue-collar /'blu: kɒlə(r)/ (adj) thuộc về hoặc liên quan đến lao động chân tay

2. dissemination /dɪsemɪ'neɪʃn/ (n) sự phổ biến

3. paramount /ˈpærəmaʊnt/ (*adj*) có tầm quan trọng và ý nghĩa lớn nhất
4. white-collar /ˈwaɪt-kɒlə(r)/ (*adj*) thuộc về công việc của công chức, lao động trí óc
5. ingrained /ɪnˈgreɪnd/ (*adj*) (về thói quen, xu hướng, v.v...) thâm căn cố đế

298. CHOOSING A CAREER CHỌN NGHỀ

It is not easy to choose a career today. Hundreds of students are leaving schools and universities every year to seek employment in the various professions, though employment opportunities are not increasing **proportionately**.¹ As a result, there is a lot of unemployment.

The inability of the various professions to absorb all those seeking employment makes the choice of a career more difficult. Before one leaves school or university, one has many plans, confident that choosing a career will not be difficult. But when the time comes to choose a career, one finds that there are others with better qualifications waiting to enter the same profession. **Disillusioned**², one then looks for any kind of employment. In this way, many who wanted to become police inspectors or field assistants in the rubber estates in this country, become teachers instead, and many who wanted to become teachers, have become clerks.

The lack of institutions where people could acquire the skills necessary for a particular career, makes the choice of a career even more difficult. For example, if one desires to become a journalist, one has to receive some training and instruction in a school of journalism. But if there is no such school, one is compelled to think of some other career.

On the other hand, even if there are institutions where one could acquire the necessary skills, one may still experience difficulty in gaining admission to them because one may not have the financial resources or the academic ability. Thus, many who wanted to become doctors and lawyers have actually become clerks and teachers.

Further, even if one has all the academic and intellectual requirements for the career that one has chosen, one's temperament may not enable one to make a success of that career. Thus, many who passed several professional examinations and began their career as teachers are now working in the banks and other commercial **firms**.³

All this indicates the difficulty in choosing a career. Only a few are able to remain in the professions of their choice.

1. proportionate /prə'pɔːʃənətl/ (adv) theo tỷ lệ tương ứng

2. disillusioned /dɪsɪ'luːʒnd/ (adj) bị vỡ mộng

3. firm /fɜːm/ (n) công ty doanh nghiệp; hãng

299. I CHOOSE A CAREER

TÔI CHỌN NGHỀ

Soon I will be joining the hundreds of school leavers to enter the world of the adults. Childhood seems to have lasted such a short time and I wish that it could last longer, but it cannot be.

The next **phase**¹ of my life will require that I choose a career, or at least some kind of employment so that I can become a useful member of society. This presents some difficulties.

I am not inclined towards any career in particular. Some of my friends know exactly what they want to do in the future, but most of us do not. I actually have no idea what sort of job I would like to do. Any job seems all right to me. However I have to consider my parents and I try not to displease them.

It is their wish that I become a doctor, or a lawyer at the least. I suppose those are the dreams of most parents. A doctor or a lawyer is highly respected and makes lots of money. So they are the aspirations of many young people. I have to be realistic though. I cannot becoming a doctor because I am not in the science class. So becoming a doctor is out of the question. I could study to become a lawyer, but I have absolutely no interest in law. So becoming a lawyer seems remote too.

What else could I do ? I have to list the possibilities down : teacher, banker, businessman, soldier, policeman, politician, artist, writer, journalist, sailor, **interior decorator**,² farmer, race-driver - the list seems endless. Unfortunately the hippies seem to have faded from the scene. It would be an experience if I could join them for a year or two. That would make my father's blood pressure shoot up for sure. Come to think of it, my father grew up during the time when the hippies were a rage, so he might not mind.

Anyway hippies and bumming around are definitely not suitable. I have to earn some money in order to live.

If I **narrow**³ down the list I find that the greatest possibilities lie in journalism, writing or being a commercial artist. These three things are what I would not mind doing for a living. The other professions contain too many things I do not like. So unless I have no choice I probably would not do them.

To become a writer or an artist means that I will have to take up a course for these things. I will have to start finding out what sort of courses are available locally. I definitely cannot go overseas to do them. My parents will not be able to afford it. So immediately after leaving school I will have to make efforts to see whether these possibilities can be realised. If not then I will have to look for other possibilities.

Anyhow I feel better now after having some idea of what I can do in the future. It is still not definite what career I will take up. At least I know where to begin.

1. phase /feɪz/ (n) thời kỳ, giai đoạn

2. interior decorator /ɪnˌtɪəriəˈdekəreɪtə(r)/ (n) chuyên viên trang trí nội thất

3. narrow /ˈnærəʊ/ (v) thu hẹp

300. WHAT CAREER WOULD YOU LIKE TO CHOOSE AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL?

BẠN SẼ CHỌN NGHỀ GÌ SAU KHI RA TRƯỜNG ?

Today, it is not easy to choose a career. Hundreds of students pass various examinations every year and compete with one another for positions in the various professions which are not so many as there are **applicants**.¹ I would, however, like to choose teaching as my career.

Teaching is an interesting career for several reasons. As a teacher I can learn many things, especially if I teach in an **upper-secondary**² school. If I teach History or English, for example, I have to read many books to make my teaching lessons more interesting to my pupils. Thus, I can acquire more knowledge of the subjects that I teach than what I can learn from the class text books. It is indeed a fact that a teacher learns a lot from the class text books ; but that is hardly enough to make the teacher's lessons interesting to pupils. A good teacher must there-fore read many other books.

Again, as a teacher, I have to speak well so that my pupils will be able to understand my instructions well. In this way I can improve my powers of expression. Even my **pronunciation**³ of words will improve to great extent.

Further, as a teacher, I shall have enough leisure to read and prepare for various examinations. It is possible today to sit for many important examinations by studying entirely at home. Thus, I can acquire important qualifications.

Finally, as a teacher I will be respected as an educated person. People will assume that I have certain qualifications and show their regard for me and the opinions that I express. Thus, I shall be able to live a happy life.

1. applicant /'æplɪkənt/ (n) người xin việc
2. upper-secondary (school) /ʌpə'sekəndrɪ/ (adj) (trường) cấp ba
3. pronunciation /prənʌnsɪ'eɪʃn/ (n) cách phát âm

301. ADVANTAGES OF LIFE AS A WAITER

NHỮNG THUẬN LỢI TRONG ĐỜI SỐNG CỦA NGƯỜI LÀM NGHỀ BỒI BÀN

Life as a waiter has multiple advantages. Not that it is all pleasure and no drudgery. Its greatest advantage is the crowd of people one meets. As a waiter does not meet them at a social level, there is no question of being involved. Nobody seems to mind the waiter. People sit and talk over cups of coffee and plates of sandwiches, over hamburgers and lunches and dinners and they pay little heed to the shadow figure **hovering**¹ around their table, catering to their requirements and bringing things to and fro. They discuss business deals and family affairs ; they discuss problems, delinquent children as well as courtships and marriages. A waiter can, if he so desires, become a very knowledgeable person simply by listening to these conversations. He also learns about the happenings in town and may become the best informed person regarding the **scandals**,² next perhaps only to the barber.

I took this job up as a temporary measure when I had just finished school and was on the look out for an opening. But it has so far proved fairly lucrative and I am happy and so I am still working as a waiter after four years.

We can afford to begin our day lazily for it stretches into the night. Yet we are supposed to be no very lazy. So by nine, the day begins with cleaning and polishing of the tables and the silver. Except for one or two stray clients, the real arrival of customers is only at about eleven. For about half an hour or a little more, students from the university, businessmen, office goers, bank employees turn up. Other periods of peak activity are the lunch time from about one to three and then the evenings from six-thirty to seven or so. I don't really care very much for the rush hours in terms of work ; but it is the best time for **tips**³--all kinds of tips--money and information. As for work, one is kept **on one's toes**,⁴ rushing to and from and often there are quarrels and violent disagreements in the kitchen when everyone wants to get his order complied with first, when the cooks are also hot and harassed and the manager is also curt and impatient.

My job becomes very difficult at such times for inside the kitchen I have to be aggressive or the cooks would not attend to me at all, and outside the kitchen I have to be polite and courteous, the perfect gentlemen-waiter. So a complete switch-over of behaviour has to take place. But towards the **lull**⁵ of the lunch hour, one can relax for by then only the leisurely business crowd is left. They linger over their meals when they want to strike a **deal**.⁶ It is a time that they reveal a great deal about investments. (And one can benefit from this **eavesdropping**.⁷) Moreover, if the deal has been an important one, the host is liberal with tips.

Besides the businessmen, people who tip fairly handsomely are young lovers or a mature couple celebrating an anniversary. Never expect anything from college students. But those in love have eyes for nothing else but each other and in their joy they want to share their happiness. Everyone loves a lover. I have often watched love travelling its normal course through desire, happiness, courting, adoration, worry and uncertainty towards love and maturity and marriage.

What I detest most is the late hour when the customers do not move, when perhaps only those who have no homes linger in restaurants. By the end of the evening, one is tired

and ready to sleep, ready also never to think of becoming a waiter. Yet the next morning the day begins and one is back at work ! This is the law of nature.

1. hover /'hʊvə(r)/ (v) *lởn vởn, lảng vảng*
2. scandal /'skændl/ (n) *vụ bê bối, vụ tai tiếng*
3. tip /tɪp/ (n) *tiền phục vụ, tiền boa* – (v) *boa*
4. on one's toe /təʊ/ (idm) *sẵn sàng hành động*
5. fagend /fæg'end/ (n) *cái còn lại thấp kém hoặc vô dụng; phần vô giá trị của cái gì; đầu thừa đuôi thẹo*
6. deal /di:l/ (n) *sự thỏa thuận (trong kinh doanh)*
7. eavesdrop /'i:vzdrɒp/ (v) *nghe trộm*

302. JOURNALISM¹ AS A CAREER

NGHỀ LÀM BÁO

Almost everywhere who can read and write sometimes feels the urge to write on some favourite topic. But some people love writing so much that they spend much of their time in writing something on various subjects for the sheer pleasure of writing. Such people usually become skilful writers ; and if the ability to write with ease and facility was enough to achieve success in the field of journalism, many people would make journalism their career.

In countries like England and Japan, where there are hundreds of newspapers and journals, journalism is an attractive **profession**². It is a very good source of income to many. But in Malaysia there are so few newspapers and journals that journalism offers almost no prospect of success. Even in England and Japan, however, many people have failed to achieve any success in this field. To be successful in journalism, one must have many other qualities, besides the ability to write effectively. One of the most important qualities is the ability to judge what the average reader likes or dislikes. If one writes for a political journal, one should have a fair knowledge of what the readers of that journal expect from it. If one writes for a women's journal, one should know almost instinctively what is readers prefer. Accordingly, the journalist should gather information from all possible sources for his articles and stories for publication. He may even have to distort or omit certain facts and information, which in his judgement may appear unpleasant to his readers. Further, if certain unpleasant facts have to be revealed to his readers, he has to employ words with such skills that his readers will take almost no offence. All these require great intellectual qualities.

Besides, to collect information, the journalist has to travel extensively and meet many people, far and near. As to much travelling involve great physical activity, the journalist has to pay sufficient attention to his health to keep himself strong. He has also to cultivate pleasing habits unpleasant circumstances. For example, if he is working for a popular newspaper, he may have to be at the scene of a battle and risk his life to send his report to his newspaper office. All this involves great personal sacrifice.

Finally, a good journalist should have a good grasp of the constitutional rights of the citizens of his country and the policies of his government. He should also know the laws of **libel**³ and **slander**⁴. Ignorance of any of these may lead him to make unfair criticisms and **disclosures**⁵ which may cause serious troubles in the country. Thus, success in journalism is not easy to attain, and only a few people make it their career.

1. journalism /'dʒɜːnəlɪzəm/ (n) công việc thu nhập, viết, biên tập và xuất bản tài liệu trên báo chí hoặc trên truyền hình và truyền hình

2. profession /prə'feʃn/ (n) nghề, nghề nghiệp

3. libel /'laɪbl/ (n) lời bôi nhọ; tội phỉ báng

4. slander /'slændə(r)/ (n) sự vu khống, sự vu cáo

5. disclosure /dɪs'klɒʊʒə(r)/ (n) sự tiết lộ (cái gì) cho mọi người biết

303. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT "COMMERCE AS A CAREER" ?

Ý KIẾN CỦA BẠN VỀ “NGHỀ THƯƠNG MẠI” ?

In all organisations commerce has an indisputable place. Where there is buying and selling commerce begins. Just like the producer, the commercial group is one of the important pillars of society. Without this groups, things cannot move from place to place and find a market. The producer will not be able to find a suitable market for his goods and wares. The consumer is assured of his product in season and out of season, thanks to the commercial people. So commerce as a profession is a must in any society.

To be successful in commerce requires a lot of training and **shrewdness**¹ and common sense. A successful commercial man knows when and where to buy and where and how to sell. He knows also the **taste**² of the people ; may be, nowadays, he creates a taste by intelligent advertisement and marketing operations. He takes a certain risk in stocking goods and for which he gets a return called **profit**.³ So far as it is within a reasonable range, to get and make profit is quite legitimate. The morality of huge profit is being discussed subsequently.

Commerce as a profession is rather risky as mentioned above for the simple reason that money in the form of capital will have to be ploughed in ; it must be properly utilized in buying and selling. Otherwise it would be a dead capital. There is a period of waiting in between production and sales. Even in the course of production, it may mean a long time of waiting. Raw materials will have to be handled, labour wisely managed, things produced up to the standard and the customers pleased. In between the commercial man must keep his body and soul together. So to be a successful commercial man it requires a lot of training, background and, believe it or not, a stroke of luck.

As mentioned earlier if one knows how to buy and sell, he can choose commerce as a profession. Psychologically he must have a mental equipment for success in this career. He must be a successful mixer, a good conversationalist, and one who could argue his way without wounding the **susceptibilities**⁴ of his customer. He should be a good contact man and must be able to pinch without making the other fellow feel it. He must be aware of the possible competition and know how to pilot his wares. He must have the horse's sense. Thus to become a successful commercial man one must be naturally endowed with the qualities mentioned ; other than the required training. That is why today, business management has been raised to the level of high, sophisticated science.

Because the commercial man makes a profit he has always been looked upon with suspicion ; much more so after the publication of 'Das Capital.' There are two opinions about it and it is very difficult to reconcile between the two. But where the government themselves have taken upon production, there is nothing on record to say they have done spectacularly well. The profit motive is not such a crime provided the profit is out of all proportions. The profit motive acts as an **incentive**⁵ and there is rapid expansion of production. Suppose either Great Britain or the U.S.A. were to have become a communist country in the middle of the nineteenth century they would not have achieved many of the things they had.

Commerce appears to be a jealous profession and unless one is clever to navigate safely in turbulent waters, commerce should be given up. Governments must realize that some freedom given to the commercial people will ultimately do good to the country. They

should realize it is the commercial man who feeds the **coffers**⁶ of the government much more than any other class in society.

1. shrewdness /'ʃruːdnɪs/ (n) *sự sắc sảo và khôn ngoan, linh lợi*
2. taste /teɪst/ (n) *thị hiếu*
3. profit /'prɒfɪt/ (n) *lợi nhuận*
4. susceptibility /səseptə'bɪlətɪ/ (n) *tính nhạy cảm, tính dễ xúc cảm*
5. incentive /ɪn'sentɪv/ (n) *sự khích lệ, động viên*
6. coffers /'kɒfəz/ (n) *kho bạc*

304. OLD AGE AND YOUTH

TUỔI GIÀ VÀ TUỔI TRẺ

Everything that begins will surely end. That is an indisputable fact of living. All of us were born into our bodies some time ago, and some time ahead our bodies will surely die. In between birth and death we go through many periods where our bodies change slowly but imperceptibly. Youth and old age are **but**¹ two of the distinct periods that many of us go through, the exceptions being the ones who die before they can complete the normal course of living.

The differences between youth and old age are obvious. A young man is usually full of vigour and energy. His body is in its prime and he can do anything that requires physical strength easily. Usually youth is the time when young men and women look the most attractive. Their skin shines with the glow of life. They are drawn to each other and eventually pair off to produce children of their own. They are full of hope for a wonderful life together. They laugh, sing and seek all sort of things to enjoy themselves with.

Old age is a totally different matter. An old person no longer possesses the vigour and energy of youth. Physical exertion is out of the question. Even climbing the stairs can be impossible. Wrinkles and age-spots **ravage**² the once-smooth skin. The glow of life is gone and the body is no longer attractive. In fact it can even appear **repulsive**.³ The magnetic attraction for the opposite sex fades, memory fails, and possibly **senility**⁴ sets in. For most old people laughter is rare and hopes are dashed. The future is only the grave.

Examples of these vast difference between youth and old age are my grandparents. I had, on occasions, gone through the family album. Inside the album, in black and white prints are photographs of my grandparents. My grandfather was a handsome young man and my grandmother was not unlike the many pretty girls I meet on the street. I am sure my grandfather was a strong man judging by his considerable muscles in the photographs. Grandmother's skin was smooth and fair.

That was many many years ago. My grandfather is already in his grave and my grandmother is in her late seventies. I remember just before he died a few years back, he was a bent old man withered with age. He could not walk after having a **stroke**.⁵ He either lay in bed or had to be pushed around in a wheelchair. It was quite unbelievable that the handsome young man in the photograph became the helpless cripple. Time really changes everything.

My grandmother is still living, but what a hellish life it is for her. She has become what we might call senile. She cannot remember simple things like where she left her comb. Also she gets upset because she knows she cannot remember and keep saying how useless she is now. We, the younger ones, try to help her as much as we can, but she, despite being old, is very stubborn. Sometimes she does remember bits and pieces of things but she cannot put them in any logical order. This adds to her confusion. All we can do is to attend to her daily needs and keep an eye on her so that she does not endangers herself. Sometimes I wonder how could such a pretty young thing turn into such a helpless old woman. Again times changes everything.

In my youth then, I see that I am headed for old age. If I live to see my old age, I would not like to end up like my grandparents. However I do not know if this is for me to choose or not. Only time will tell.

1. but /bʌt/ (*adv*) *chỉ*
2. ravage /'rævɪdʒ/ (*v*) *tàn phá*
3. repulsive /rɪ'pʌlsɪv/ (*adj*) *gây ra cảm xúc ghê tởm*
4. senility /sɪ'nɪlətɪ/ (*n*) *tình trạng lão suy*
5. stroke /strəʊk/ (*n*) *cơn đột quỵ (của não)*

305. THE PROBLEMS FACING OLD AND YOUNG IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING SOCIETY

NHỮNG VẤN ĐỀ ĐẶT RA CHO LỚP GIÀ VÀ LỚP TRẺ TRONG MỘT XÃ HỘI ĐANG THAY ĐỔI NHANH CHÓNG

We are living in a world which is characterized by change. Generally speaking, the change has been towards progress. Change and progress have created certain problems that confront both the young and old. Old values stand at a discount and new values are accepted, though with reluctance. Social life has become complex and new social problems have **cropped up**.¹ The change has been so rapid that many find themselves in a state of **flux**.²

The head of the family who traditionally enjoyed importance at home, now finds that much of it has **whittled**³ away. He has to respect the view of others at home and has to recognise their attitudes and manners. Reason, he finds, has substituted, to a large extent, tradition and obligations. He can no longer impose his will on others and where conservatism has got the better of him, he feels dejected and ignored. This sense of loss of position and importance can have bad psychological consequences.

The old have to change their attitude towards jobs. They find that in the rat race, they have to learn and equip themselves with necessary skills if they want to compete. The experience that they have gained at a particular job can no longer be equated with security and promotion. They have to compete with those equipped with new knowledge and expertise.

The old have to accept the changed values, and values prescribe certain principles of personal and corporate conduct. As society changes, values change and thus changed values would imply changed morality. But one must hasten to add that the basic values of the present generation are not different from those of the earlier. Corruption is not justified on the ground of changed values. But our attitude towards elders, jobs, the family etc. have changed and the old find it difficult to accept them. With the disappearance of the extended family system, the old family ties a pre-eminence of the oldest members, the old are often left in the home of the aged. The old find it difficult to reconcile themselves to the situation. The old feel that the young do not understand or appreciate their values and attitudes.

Young people today experience problems which were unheard of before. They are often **branded**⁴ as a generation with no respect for anyone. The information they have gathered about the problems of growing up make them feel more about them and they demand sympathy and understanding. To them the problems are genuine and the old ignore them. In their search for **solace**⁵ and comfort, they value the company of their peer-group more than the affection of parents which is often not demonstrated. They are often driven off their homes, often there develops a conflict at home, the parents enforcing discipline and the children asserting their independence.

The undue importance given to material wealth makes the parents search it at the expense of their parental obligations. Money becomes an obsession and the children are left uncared for. Parental attention and affection are important in developing well-adjusted individuals. **Bereft**⁶ of these, the children despair and are apt to develop anti-

social habits. Parents desire their children to accomplish ambitions beyond their ability and when their attempts are **thwarted**⁷ both the parents and children feel frustrated.

We are living in a fast changing world. The developments in the last three decades or so have transformed traditional life patterns. The rapidity of this transformation requires man to be adaptable and this need for adaptation creates problems for both the old and the young.

1. crop (up) /krɒp/ (v) *xuất hiện hoặc xảy ra bất ngờ*
2. flux /flʌks/ (n) *tình trạng không ổn định*
3. whittle (away) /'wɪtl/ (v) *dần dần giảm đi*
4. brand /brænd/ (v) *cho là, quy là*
5. solace /'sɒlɪs/ (n) *sự khuây khỏa*
6. bereft (of sth) /bɪ'reft/ (adj) *bị mất (năng lực hoặc khả năng)*
7. thwart /θwɔ:t/ (v) *cản trở, ngăn cản*

306. THE IMPORTANCE OF A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR WOMEN *TẦM QUAN TRỌNG CỦA VIỆC GIÁO DỤC ĐẠI HỌC CHO PHỤ NỮ*

The university education as compared to the general education in the secondary school stands as a class apart. Whereas the aim of the secondary school education is to give a general knowledge to all, the university education, helps specialization in various faculties. Besides this, of course, there is the life which is lived by the **alumni**¹ which goes to improve the character and outlook of the life of the student. It was the tradition of great universities like Oxford, Cambridge and Harvard that their dons received not only a degree but also a **hall-mark**² of quality.

Till recently university education was the preserve of men folk and to see a woman in the university was strange. But now the universities have opened their doors to women students. There is no department of study where women do not compete with men. Even in faculties like engineering and law which were entirely men's preserve, have yielded to women. Women have understood the need for higher education and there has been an awakening among them.

It will be worthwhile to study the importance of a university education for women. There are many influences working in favour of women seeking higher education. First and foremost is the political awakening. In all countries women have been **enfranchised**³ and so women are entering politics in large numbers. There are women Prime Ministers today. So politics gave incentive to the **impetus**⁴ for women seeking higher education. Politics helped them, in fact, shake off the feminine reserved nature and they came out of the **cloistered**⁵ life.

Further, old customs and traditions that kept women bound to their kitchen and thought that sewing and stitching were their occupations were broken. Mingling with young men in the colleges was no more a hindrance or an anathema in women seeking higher education. Women have begun to seek career and marriage was no more the be-all and end-all of their lives. To be successful in a career, naturally higher education was sought after. Further the value of higher education for women began to get recognition, though slowly.

A university education for women has its own values as it renders them useful citizens, helpful wives and mothers and very often useful neighbours and sometimes good social workers. Since women are equal to men according to any modern constitution, they form the major bulk of the electorate. They, more than their menfolk exercise their franchise wisely and independently and can also occupy seats of importance.

Any day an educated wife and mother is an asset to family. They may lighten the burden of the husband by taking off his shoulders some of the financial commitments. They may give him good company by discussing intellectual topics and share the finer things of life. Children are the ones that gain really ; for, an educated mother looks after the education of her children. Her influence will be really greater than that of an uneducated mother. Even in the matter of running the household she will be found more **rational**⁶ than the uneducated mother.

Yet there is another value which is derived from their university education apart from entering a career in times of need, such as the desertion of the husband, when the woman can stand on her own feet and look after her children.

But wisdom calls for a different type of curriculum for women. The education which women get at the university should be complementary to what men folk get there, rather than being a rival to them. So far, this aspect has not been fully appreciated, though it is so apparent.

1. alumni /ə'λmni/ (n) (*snh. của* alumnus) *nguyên nam sinh trường phổ thông, cao đẳng và đại học*
2. hall-mark /'hɔ:lma:k/ (n) *dấu hiệu xác nhận tính ưu tú*
3. enfranchise /ɪn'fræntʃaɪz/ (v) *cho (ai) quyền chính trị, nhất là quyền bầu cử quốc hội*
4. impetus /'ɪmpɪtəs/ (n) *sự thúc đẩy*
5. cloistered /'klɔɪstəd/ (adj) *tách biệt, ẩn dật*
6. rational /'ræʃnəl/ (adj) *sáng suốt, hợp lý*

307. "WOMEN SHOULD BE RESTRICTED TO WORK CONNECTED WITH THE HOME AND CHILDREN. THEY SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN POLITICS, COMMERCE OR INDUSTRY." HOW FAR DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT ?

“NÊN GIỚI HẠN PHỤ NỮ TRONG NHỮNG CÔNG VIỆC CHĂM SÓC NHÀ CỬA VÀ CON CÁI. HỌ KHÔNG NÊN THAM GIA VÀO CÁC LĨNH VỰC CHÍNH TRỊ, THƯƠNG MẠI HOẶC CÔNG NGHIỆP”. BẠN ĐỒNG Ý VỚI QUAN ĐIỂM NÀY Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ?

The given statement might have been correct long ago, perhaps till the end of the last century. In so far as the family was the unit and the bringing forth and rearing of children rested on the women's shoulder-her place was always **relegated**¹ to the home. She played many roles, none of them demanding. She was the housewife, mother, manager of the household and the first educator of children. Her minor role as a knitting woman or a washer woman was recognized but not mentioned.

Those days are gone and nobody who is educated and civilized looks upon woman as a doll to be kept at home at the will and pleasure of men folk. Of course there are exceptions in certain societies where the in-laws play a dominating role. With the education of women and the change in economic status, women are enjoying a lot of freedom. There are many up and coming women in the world in recent times. Women are in politics today and some have gone to become Prime Ministers.

There has been strong **resentment**² among the women, about the way they have been treated. There is the women's liberation movement called Lib Women. One of their major platform is equality of status, equal pay for equal work and the security.

Some old societies still treat women as **chattels**³ who could be easily disposed of. In very primitive societies even today women are treated as a commodity which could be bought and sold and even loans are raised on the security of women. These are far and few between. At the other end of the scale some women want complete freedom to live as they please. They want to have freedom of sex and don't want to be bound by wedlock. This is only an extreme view and not so common even among those who vociferously cry for women's freedom.

Women have all along been treated as a weaker sex. The connotation changes from person to person. Physically of course they are not as hardy as men but that doesn't mean they don't have a strong heart. In fact they are stronger than men in certain aspects in that they are able to stand physical hardships. In their make up they are equipped for certain nature's ordeals which men are not subjected to. Whether they like it or not, generally women have more to do with children especially in their infancy and early childhood. This makes women distinctly different from men ; their being soft and kind need not be taken for their weakness. If they appear weak sometimes it is to maintain the dignity of family life, so that children do not become a bad copy of the mother. Motherhood is so sacred that trying to **tamper**⁴ with it **in the name of**⁵ the lib movement would make society wild and disorganized.

Women's finger of accusation in the matter of employment and security is correct. There are jobs and jobs but only a few of them are really suited for women. Take for instance, mining, lumbering and fishing. These are definitely men's areas. But where women can

be employed let them have their chance. Where they are employed they have definitely proved better than men.

What makes women appear in bondage is the tradition and culture. Man is the only animal who has got the institution of marriage. Marriage is not for simply the **propagation**⁶ of life but its main aim is the preservation of stock, safety of children and their upbringing. Marriage is not a contract which can be dissolved at one's whim and fancy. Unless it is looked upon as a bond of love for life, children will suffer first and society ultimately. Some of the western societies are paying the price heavily for their free notions of marriage.

Menfolk themselves are not so free. Wherever they work they find opposition, injustice and exploitation. The mental strain which they bear is heavy, which women at home are spared from.

Under the present laws of the world, no nation bars employment to women in the name of sex. Nowadays we find women in many walks of life which were once the preserve of men.

1. relegate /'releɪt/ (v) hạ tầng; chuyển xuống một nhiệm vụ, tình trạng thấp hơn
2. resentment /rɪ'zentmənt/ (n) sự phẫn nộ, sự bực tức
3. chattel /'tʃætəl/ (n) đồ vật, vật sở hữu
4. tamper (with sth) /'tæmpə(r)/ (v) can thiệp vào
5. in the name of sb/sth (idm) nhân danh ai/cái gì
6. propagation /prɒpə'geɪʃn/ (n) sự nhân giống

308. WOMEN SHOULD BE PAID THE SAME WAGES AS MAN *PHỤ NỮ PHẢI ĐƯỢC TRẢ LƯƠNG NGANG VỚI NAM GIỚI*

The equality of women with men is a new concept and has been raging for sometime now. It was an article of faith that women were **subservient**¹ to men and were glad and happy to play their role at home and to **preside**² over the destiny of the household. They were happy to bring up a healthy family and see their sons and daughters well placed in life. They looked after many chores of the house and it came naturally to them. Quite recently indeed when women began seeking career, the question of equality and the equal wages for the same work as men do, has come up.

Women were looked upon for long as weaker sex and they were to be protected by men. History has it in abundance to prove this. In peace and war, and in councils it was men who had **wield**³ power though there had been case of brave and wise women who could decide the fate of a country. But it was far and few between. Now that women have taken to careering ; their equality has come up and we find women in factories and offices working along with men. Hence it is only natural that they demand the same wages.

The case against them is that they are physically weak and so cannot do the same **quantum**⁴ of work as men. But it has not been proved in practice. Whenever women are found to be more efficient and capable they deserve better attention. They do work neatly and quickly too because by nature women are **fastidious**.⁵ As a rule whatever they do, they do it better and in a nicer way. This fact cannot be **shrugged off**.⁶ Another reason why women are preferred to men nowadays is they are not distracted so easily and are not so argumentative as men. At the worst in bad situations they resort to tears whereas men start fighting.

If women are paid less, it may be because people feel they are not as productive as men. It may be because they get tired easily and cannot work longer hours as men. Another reason is the mobility in women from one work to another, or from one place to another. Hence the employer manipulating this situation, bargains to his advantage. The clamour for equal wages for equal work has not only caught the imagination of women but also men and has been gaining momentum. It is only natural they should ask, for their rights to be recognised without any insidious distinction between men and women especially in the matter of wages at public level, that is, in the government. So more and more women are seeking careers which were once the preserve of men folk. But the distinction of the sexes is certainly still prevalent for those in private employment. This, one may hope, is to become a thing of the past. In fact, because of their concentration and nimble fingers in certain industries, women are preferred to men, for instance, in the electronic industry. One thing is certain that it should be a case of division of labour and not competition, so that it would not tell on the social fabric of the future society.

1. subservient /səb'sɜːviənt/ (adj) *phụ thuộc*
2. preside (over sth) /prɪ'zaid/ (v) *điều khiển hoặc chịu trách nhiệm về cái gì*
3. wield /wiːld/ (v) *nắm trong tay và sử dụng*
4. quantum /'kwɒntəm/ (n) *phần; mức, định lượng*
5. fastidious /fə'stɪdɪəs/ (adj) *khó tính, kén chọn*
6. shrug (sth off) /frʌg/ (v) *bỏ qua (cái gì) vì không quan trọng*

309. SHOULD MARRIED WOMEN GO TO WORK ? *PHỤ NỮ ĐÃ LẬP GIA ĐÌNH CÓ NÊN ĐI LÀM KHÔNG ?*

The question whether married women should take up jobs or not has attracted much attention lately and there are sensible reasons for **advocating**¹ both the courses of action : going to work and not going to work. It would be fair to assume that this is by and large a middle class problem. Amongst the working class there is no **taboo**² on women - whether married or single - taking up jobs outside the home whether it is in the field or the factory. It is a normal practice for women to be helpmates in earning money. As working has ordinarily been associated with the need to earn money, the problem has not arisen amongst the rich classes. This question, because it is associated with the middle class, has two important aspects to it : first, the notion of respectability which hinders women from taking up jobs once they are married ; and second, taking up a job means spending time away from home and may thus interfere with the smooth running of a household and the bringing up of children.

When men feel that their wives should give up a job simply because of marriage, the idea strikes one as ridiculous. This kind of an attitude **detracts**³ from the pleasure of doing a job for its own sake and reduces it to a merely material contract. When a married woman takes up a job, why should it reflect on the husband's ability to maintain her and his family or affect adversely his sense of respectability ? Working outside the home besides providing an opportunity for self-expression also helps in the growth of personality. It gives a woman a much-needed sense of independence and self-reliance. Some men also object to their wives taking up jobs because they feel that when women work in offices or libraries they have to mix with other men and this somehow **sullies**⁴ them or poses a threat to their integrity. This is not really so and most balanced and mature women should be capable of taking this in the stride. And even if this is true then the remedy does not lie in segregating women from men or treating them as a different species but in educating menfolk towards decent behaviour. If a man respects his wife and the other women he meets or works with, this problem of social behaviour would be solved.

As long as working outside the home is not **detrimental**⁵ to the health of the lady concerned there is no harm in working. It is true that tradition has defined the role of a woman as a mother and as a wife and many women grow up to think that their sole duty lies within the house but in the present day circumstances this is no longer practicable. Besides economic help which a working woman provides, there is an extra dimension to her character which makes her a better wife and mother. Because a working woman comes into contact with the outer world and is likely to have wider interest ; she can help to create a healthy atmosphere in the home. With her increased knowledge and better understanding she can also make a better mother. A woman who has to stay away from her home for considerable stretches of time and who has only limited time for her children will ordinarily try to do her best for them and to make the best of her time with them. If she has some imagination she can do a great deal for them.

Women need jobs as much as men for a well-organised home does not need the housewife's presence the whole day long and children also grow up, go out to school and later to work and they get married, thus leaving a big gap in the mother's home. Thus

marriage and motherhood have no right to enslave a woman for a lifetime if they cannot provide the necessary degree of response. A job becomes a burden when it is undertaken under compulsion, or in ill-health, or if it makes claims which are difficult to fulfil. Otherwise work should be pleasure. Married women may find it difficult to take up jobs when they have very young children. In order to help solve this problem many employers are willing to provide part-time jobs and are also willing to allow two women to share one job. With the growth of opportunity many married women have been able to start small industries or business which need not take them away from home. With most governments insisting on limited families and with husbands willing to share household duties, the present age is prepared to accept a married woman who works. And women themselves with better educational opportunities are willing to accept the challenge of a job alongside marriage.

1. advocate /'ædvəkeɪt/ (v) ủng hộ
2. taboo /tə'buː/ (n) điều cấm kỵ
3. detract /dɪ'trækt/ (v) làm giảm giá trị
4. sully /'sʌli/ (v) bội nhọ
5. detrimental /detrɪ'mentl/ (adj) có hại

310. LIBRARIES

THƯ VIỆN

Books cost a fortune and this means that not everybody can afford to buy many useful reference books. There are many people who crave for knowledge but are unable to satisfy their needs due to lack of money. Libraries can help solve this problem.

Libraries are important to people whether it is a developed or developing country. Well-maintained libraries in each town are gift to the people. It is very much a basic need for students ranging from the primary school children to the college students. The public too can make use of the library for a leisure reading and to gain more knowledge thereby making good use of their free time.

A well maintained library should have a wide selection of books. They should have books on almost all subjects such as science, literature, English, art, history, philosophy, engineering, medicine, technology, etc. In addition, newspaper, magazines and periodicals should be available. **Hard cover**¹ story books, **paperback**² novels, plays, should also be available in abundance. They should be neatly arranged by sections and **labelled**³ easy access.

Singapore is a model country where everything is properly planned. Each town has its own library which is in turn controlled by the National Library of Singapore. In addition professional bodies and councils have their own libraries catering to their own need. The National Library of Singapore serves the people of all age groups. Ranging from children to senior citizens, separate facilities are provided. The current best sellers, periodicals, magazines from local and oversea publishers are also available in the National Library. Hence the people should make use of the library to gain more knowledge.

1. hard cover /hɑ:d 'kʌvə(r)/ (n) *bìa cứng của một cuốn sách*

2. paperback /'peɪpəbæk/ (n) *sách bìa mềm*

3. label /'leɪbl/ (v) *dán nhãn*

311. THE IMPORTANCE OF READING *TẦM QUAN TRỌNG CỦA VIỆC ĐỌC SÁCH*

Reading has at all time and in all ages been a source of knowledge, of happiness, of pleasure and even moral courage. In today's world, with so much more to know and to learn and also the need for a conscious effort to conquer the divisive forces, the importance of reading has increased. In the olden days if reading was not cultivated or encouraged, there was a substitute for it in the religious **sermon**¹ and in the oral tradition. The practice of telling stories at bed time compensated to some extent for the lack of reading. In the nineteenth century Victorian households used to get together for an hour or so in the evenings and listen to books being read aloud. But today we not only read, we also want to read more and more and catch up with the events taking place around us. The various courses and classes being conducted in rapid reading support this belief.

The amount of reading one should get through is of course nobody's business. There is no end to it for there is a variety of subjects to read about. The daily newspaper or the popular magazine, while discussing topical issues and raised **controversies**,² also provokes thought and throws light on human nature. It brings the news of wars, rebellions, organisations, political stances, heroic deeds etc., together and helps knit a world of some sort. There is then the serious reading undertaken for research and for satisfying one's longing for knowledge. It may be a subject of scientific significance, or a subject of historic or philosophic importance - varying according to the taste of the person. This kind of reading disciplines the mind and trains one for critical and original thinking. There is yet another kind of reading - reading for pleasure. Though serious reading is also a source of pleasure, reading which is devoted mainly to it differs in one respect. It grows upon one, it gives before demanding and it soothes and relieves tension and loneliness. The only kind of reading which neither stimulates thought nor provides knowledge is one which is approached negatively, with the simple motive of escape and of "killing" time.

A person who is widely read is able to mix with others ; he is a better conversationalist than those who do not read. He can stand his ground. Reading broadens the vision ; it is in a way a substitute for travel. It is not possible to travel as much as one would like to and reading can fill in the gap created by the lack of travel. "Reading" - as Bacon wrote in his essay, 'Of Studies' - "maketh a full man ; conference a ready man ; and writing an exact man". Thus a widely-read man is a better conversationalist and is able to see the other point of view.

Literature is a form of art which can cross barriers and if one does not know the language in which a piece of literature is written, one is willing sometimes to learn it. Even if one does not learn a language, one reads the literary work in translation. This contributes to the growth of understanding and tolerance amongst people. Reading also helps one to see the present in relation to the past and the future, and thus develop a historical perspective.

Care is needed to ensure that reading does not become a substitute for real life. The moment one ceases to enjoy the ordinary pleasures and happiness of life and is content

to enjoy them **vicariously**³ through fictional and historical representations, one loses all the benefits of reading and loses contact with life.

With the cinema and television taking up a great deal of attention of children, teenagers and even adults, the habit of serious reading is dying down. People are content to read abridged versions, see films, go through illustrated comics and be content. But just as reading should not become a substitute for the joy of living or drive out the other forms of entertainment, other substitutes should not be accepted for the pleasure of reading which lies in the act itself. One may be selective, may be discriminating but no one can afford to shut himself off from this rich and evergrowing world of literature.

1. sermon /'sɜ:mən/ (n) *bài thuyết pháp, bài thuyết giáo*

2. controversy /'kɒntɹəvɜ:sɪ/ (n) *cuộc tranh luận công khai về vấn đề gì mà nhiều người không đồng tình*

3. vicarious /vɪ'keəriəs/ (adj) *thay cho* - vicariously /-li/ (adv)

312. "A NOVEL IS INTENDED FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF THE READER, NOT FOR HIS EDUCATION" ? DISCUSS

“TIỂU THUYẾT CHỈ NHẪM ĐỂ GIẢI TRÍ CHỨ KHÔNG CÓ TÁC DỤNG GIÁO DỤC” ? HÃY THẢO LUẬN

Enjoyment is something **sensuous**,¹ that is, the enjoyment comes through the sense organs. For example, we enjoy food when our tongue recognizes the taste and then mind registers it. When either of the two is not functioning, we cannot enjoy food. This so happens when the tongue is dull because of cold or indigestion or when the mind is occupied elsewhere as when one is angry or sad. One enjoys music because he has trained his ear to do so. Where there is no experience there can't be real enjoyment. An unpleasant experience can in the same way drive away enjoyment.

With the above as an index let us see how one reacts towards a novel. There are personalities, life situations, human feelings and conflicts of interests and so on. In these the reader may, perhaps, see a projection of the world he has seen and known. If he is familiar with many of them he enjoys the novel. He may be interested in following the course of action, the **plot**², the **climax**³ and the end. Here he is like a spectator who follows the career of a sportsman. His emotions are highly strung in so far as the sportsman is in action and once the man retires, the spectator almost forgets him or remembers him only when a similar situation crops up. So just as one enjoys a cup of tea or a whiff of cool breeze one may enjoy a novel. At a higher level one may enjoy the art of the novelist, how deftly he creates and caricatures his characters, how he mocks at the ways of the world and so on.

Now what is education ? Education draws the best powers in the individual and trains him to desirable levels and degrees. In fact, this is the real meaning of education which means **to draw forth**. Man is born with instincts, emotions and sentiments. These will have to be properly channelled and developed. So situations are created in which education takes place and capabilities are improved.

In this sense a novel does not educate. Novel may bring wider experience but cannot claim to develop capabilities. The language ability may develop but not in all who read novels. It does so only when a novel is read with a purpose, as a piece of literature in connection with a course of study ; otherwise the novel doesn't educate. Novels may again make a man reflective and that is because of experience and not because of education.

Still a student of literature may study novels for his education. People were educated even in ancient times but the novel is a comparatively new-comer in literature. So this makes it clear that novels are intended for the enjoyment of the reader and not for his education.

1. sensuous /'sensʊəs/ (adj) ảnh hưởng đến giác quan, do giác quan ghi nhận hoặc gây thích thú cho giác quan

2. plot /plɒt/ (n) cốt truyện

3. climax /'klaɪmæks/ (n) cao trào (của một cốt chuyện, một vở kịch, v.v...)

**313. "GREAT LITERATURE BELONGS NOT TO ONE AGE BUT TO ALL AGES;
NOT TO ONE COUNTRY BUT ALL COUNTRIES." DISCUSS.**

**“TÁC PHẨM VĂN HỌC VĨ ĐẠI KHÔNG THUỘC VỀ RIÊNG MỘT THỜI ĐẠI NÀO
MÀ LÀ THUỘC VỀ MỌI THỜI ĐẠI; KHÔNG THUỘC VỀ RIÊNG MỘT QUỐC GIA
NÀO MÀ THUỘC VỀ TẤT CẢ CÁC QUỐC GIA”. HÃY THẢO LUẬN.**

Literature, a **narrative**¹ of human events, reflects all the hopes, emotions, feelings, sorrows and frustrations that men have had in the course of their long struggle for survival in this beautiful world. Its appeal is therefore universal.

Since the time men learned how to read and write, some people have always felt the urge to exercise their literary skills for the sheer pleasure of writing. Fascinated by the beauty of language and ideas, many scholars, since the dawn of history, have engaged themselves in exploring new avenues of thought, and in the process contributed to the production of great literary works. The sufferings of humanity have also contributed their share in **impelling**² writers in all lands to write in the most vivid and expressive language.

As man is the theme of all literature, any great literature is appreciated in all countries, at all times. The works of great writers, such as Homer and Shakespeare, have indeed become **immortal**³ for their universal appeal. They have been read for centuries in all countries. Such writers have revealed human nature to all generation of men. It is now realised that the fundamental emotions and desires of men are same everywhere, thought they may be divided by race, language and culture. Even their problems are the same. An Asian has the same problems of obtaining food or of providing for his family as a European has. Both laugh at and cry for the same things. The recognition of these facts has increased the feelings of oneness among the people of the world.

The ideas that have been expressed by great writers have influenced the people of all countries. When a good idea is expressed by a writer of one country, it is absorbed by people in many other lands. The ideas that the Greeks had centuries ago on a government and society have continued to influence the minds of men till this day. In the same way, the literature of many other countries has influenced the thinking of the peoples of the world.

Great literature reveals the common ties that exist among men. By emphasizing the bonds of sympathy between men, it helps the people of one country to look with affection upon the people of another country, and makes men conscious of their common destiny. For this reason, many great works in one language have been translated into several other languages. This had the effect of promoting better understanding among the people of the world and widening the mental horizons of men. There is therefore a great urge today to read the literature and history of all countries. Thus, there is much truth in the statement that "Great literature belongs not to one age but to all ages ; not to one country but to all countries".

1. narrative /'nærətɪv/ (n) câu chuyện kể

2. impel /ɪm'pel/ (v) ép buộc hoặc thúc giục ai làm cái gì

3. immortal /ɪ'mɔ:tl/ (adj) bất hủ, bất tử

314. WHY IS IT THAT A PLAY CAN TELL A STORY IN FAR FEWER WORDS THAN A NOVEL ? ILLUSTRATE YOUR ANSWER WITH REFERENCE TO PARTICULAR PLAYS AND NOVELS

TẠI SAO KỊCH NÓI LẠI CÓ THỂ MÔ TẢ MỘT CÂU CHUYỆN VỚI ÍT LỜI LẼ HƠN TIỂU THUYẾT ? HÃY MINH HỌA CÂU TRẢ LỜI BẰNG NHỮNG TÁC PHẨM CỤ THỂ ?

The fundamental difference between a play and a novel is that in one the actors present themselves and act and speak what is in the play. In a novel except for the **contrived**¹ conversations it is only a narration. The flesh and blood have to be supplied by the novelist to create an atmosphere. In a play emotions are almost seen (even while reading) but in a novel they are not specially displayed. In a play, the events are not isolated islands ; one sees the direct link. In a novel one has to go about looking for the events. If a single illustration could help, it is like this a play is like being at a shop and the novel is like going to a shop. The things are there in the one instance and in the other one has to visualize and wait to move. They play has a more direct appeal to our senses than the novel.

There is a famous **lore**² in "Julius Caesar". The conspirators struck Caesar and among them was Brutus, the one time friend of Caesar. When Caesar saw Brutus striking him he said, 'Et tu Brute ! Then falls Caesar'. He dies so saying. These six words describe the whole world of relations between the two and the emotions involved. If it were to be a novel, the whole situation may require not six words but six pages. At the hands of Scott, Hardy and others it would have taken even a whole chapter.

Again let us look at the pitiable. Othello who had murdered his wife out of jealousy. Having killed her, he says in self pity, 'I have no wife'. Those who have been following the play thus far can easily understand Othello's mental torture. These words would be meaningless in a novel unless description followed as to how he wept, howled and tore his hair. The play shows the act but the novel only describes.

"Oliver Twist" is a powerful novel indeed and Dickens has shown his **def**³ hands there ; but the same in the form of a play is more powerful. Just imagine the scene where Oliver asks for more. Dickens has, in fact, made it more dramatic ; but the scene in a drama can be shorter and more effective. The play allows you to visualize and almost you are a party there but it is different in the case of a novel.

Satires,⁴ **puns**⁵ and jokes are more **poignant**⁶ in a play than in a novel. We enjoy a Falstaff, a Touchstone or a Jaques in their flesh and blood in the play. There is some identity and there is sympathy. In the play you are not told certain things but you are an unconscious actor; never so in the case of a novel.

In the play the climax is worked out very quickly and one need not wait for hours to see the end coming. You sense it and is ready for the end to come. In the case of the novel the climax and the end are far apart. This can be seen in "Hamlet", "King Lear" or "Macbeth".

In a novel small things do not play any role at all as in the case of a play. A handkerchief, a chain and a flower may be almost a character. Thus the handkerchief plays a role in Othello, the chain in "As You Like It".

Comparison and contrasts are brought out efficiently in a play not so easily in the novel. Characters small and big are there to see side by side, one acting as a foil to another. Thus we find in Adam, the old servant of Orlando who is faithful and the treachery of Oliver.

In short, a play while it economises on words can illuminate the characters much better than the characters in the novel. While a novel is like an intricate canvas with all its magnificence, only an art critic can appreciate and comprehend. A play is like the laughter of a child or a tear in the eye of one's beloved which requires no explanation.

1. contrived /kən'traɪvd/ (adj) *hư cấu, không giống thực tế*
2. lore /lɔ:(r)/ (n) *kiến thức và truyền thuyết (về một vấn đề gì)*
3. deft /deft/ (adj) *khéo léo*
4. satire /'sætəɪə(r)/ (n) *sự trào phúng, châm biếm*
5. pun /pʌn/ (n) *sự chơi chữ*
6. poignant /'pɔɪnjənt/ (adj) *chua cay, sâu sắc*

315. "READING MAKETH A FULL MAN, CONFERENCE A READY MAN AND WRITING AN EXACT MAN" (BACON). WHAT INFLUENCES DO YOU THINK READING, CONVERSATION AND WRITING HAVE IN MAKING YOU A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD ?

“ĐỌC LÀM CON NGƯỜI HOÀN THIỆN, NÓI NHANH NHẠY, VIẾT CHÍNH XÁC” (BACON). THEO BẠN THÌ ĐỌC, NÓI VÀ VIẾT CÓ NHỮNG ẢNH HƯỞNG GÌ TRONG VIỆC GIÚP BẠN TRỞ THÀNH MỘT CÔNG DÂN CỦA THẾ GIỚI ?

The major aim is to become and be a citizen of the world. One may be a citizen of a town or city or country. That is easy because the spirit of the place grows into one's own blood as it were. Thus one can be easily a Malaysian, an American and so on. But to be a citizen of the world it calls for a much more broad outlook, deep understanding and a judicious appreciation of other cultures. Very few people could claim to be a citizen of the world. But there have been and there are people who have reached that height. If we analyse and study their lives we could see how their education, interactions with others and writings have made them citizens of the world. So let us see the role played by reading, interactions and writing in the make up of the citizen of the world.

First of all take the case of reading. One reads for pleasure, for understanding or for improving his stock for knowledge. What we read in the school or college or professional institutions is only the beginning and they show and guide what and where to look for. For example specialists like doctors, lawyers or engineers cannot be content with what they have studied in their colleges. Unless they study professional publications later they cannot be up to date. Thus a lawyer may study law reports ; a doctor may study professional magazines and **monographs**.¹ For pleasure we read a lot in our own mother tongue and in other languages as well. The companionship of books is the best that one could look for. Books may please you but never offend you. The reading may be light as a weekend magazine or it may be a masterpiece. One may read materials pertaining to his profession or personal interest ; he may also read books on other areas for fun. Thus one may read books on dozens of different interests and this reading surely goes to make him a full or an all-round man. Such people of wide knowledge are really useful.

Very few people are good conversationalists though there are many well-read men. To be a good conversationalist, one requires certain qualities. Basically one must be a good **mixer**;² in other words one should like to **socialise**³ and **have the gift of the gab**.⁴ He must be a good conversationalist and listener and must never be offensive or must not wound the feelings of the other. At a higher level when a man meets others in conference he learns a lot from them. To be a success at a conference one must have the ability to put forth his arguments forcibly and logically and convincingly. He must have the patience to hear the other man. He must grasp the other man's point of view quickly and reply. This makes one a ready man.

Coming to writing, we write when we cannot directly converse or talk to. In writing, words are recorded and once the writing goes out of one's hand and reaches the other person it becomes a record. The right word in the right place shows the depth of knowledge of the writer and his penmanship. One may write simple, loving family letters, serious stories, poems, dramas, business letters and short articles. What ever is

written, the flow of words shows the man. You must write what you want to express in plain, straight forward language avoiding redundancy. In conversation one may be wandering ; digressions are permissible but in writing each word or sentence must take you forward. We can see this in the great essays of master writers. The power of the written word has been proved in the great books of the world. From the Bible to the Communist Manifesto we find the effect of the written word. The compactness, the exactness, the sequence of logic, all these make good writing. The more one writes, the more chastered he becomes like the polishing of a precious stone.

So to be a good citizen of the world one must read a lot, one must learn from companions and one must write. Then can he become a full, ready and exact man.

1. monograph /'mɒnəgrɑ:f/ (n) *chuyên khảo*
2. mixer /'mɪksə(r)/ (n) *người hòa đồng*
3. socialise /'səʊʃəlaɪz/ (v) *hòa nhập với xã hội*
4. to have the gift of the gab : *có tài ăn nói; lém; bẻm mép*

316. KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

TRÍ THỨC LÀ SỨC MẠNH

In general it is true that the man who knows has an advantage over the man who does not know. **The educated classes**¹ have always been able to rule **the ignorant**.² This can be illustrated in various ways.

Physically, man is one of the weakest of animals. Without the wonderful tools he has invented, he cannot fly like the birds, he cannot run like the horse. He has no weapons of defence like the tiger's **fangs**³ and claws, and he is **no match for**⁴ the lion and bear in strength. Yet he conquers all these strong and fierce beasts, and forces some of them to be his servants. His superior intelligence and knowledge make him the master of creatures physically his superiors.

In the same way, and for the same reason, civilised nations dominate and enslave ignorant races. A handful of Europeans in Africa controls millions of African savages. It is their superior knowledge, and the weapons, organisation and character which that knowledge has given them, that gives them power over these races which are physically their equals.

In the Middle Ages in Europe, only the educated men were the priests. Great barons, brave knights, ruling princes and kings very often could not even read and write. In consequence kings had to appoint priests as their ministers to carry on the government of their country. Unless the king was a man of very strong character, the power, nominally his, was in the hands of the clever and learned priests. The soldier, the man of the sword thought he was the master : but he was really in the hands of the priest, the man of the pen. The same was the case in India. The learned Brahmins were for ages the real rulers in Indian states, and dominated all lower castes.

Today, in Europe and America, education is so universal that even the working classes are educated people. As they have advanced in knowledge they have advanced in power : so that now the people of these countries rule themselves, and are no longer under the domination of priests and kings.

1. the educated class /'edʒəkertɪd kla:s/ (n) *giai cấp trí thức*

2. the ignorant /'ɪgnərənt/ (n) *kẻ ít học, người dốt nát*

3. fang /fæŋ/ (n) *răng nhọn có nọc độc*

4. no match for /mætʃ/ *không đuổi kịp; thua xa; không xứng*

**317. A MAN WOULD REACH A GREATER HEIGHT IF HE HAD MORE
DEPTH. DISCUSS THE VIEW
CON NGƯỜI CÓ THỂ VƯƠN ĐẾN ĐỈNH CAO NẾU CÓ ĐƯỢC CHIỀU SÂU. HÃY
THẢO LUẬN QUAN ĐIỂM NÀY**

To understand the meaning of height and depth we have to study them separately. Let us take the question of depth first and see what it consists of. The depth here refers to the depth in faculties. Physical faculties are just as desirable as mental faculties. Mental faculties consist of intelligence and intellectual abilities. While these faculties are naturally found in some, they can be nurtured in many.

In the nurturing process of man, education plays an important part. Education is exactly drawing the best out of one. Good education provides opportunities for developing one's intellectual faculties. The more one learns from his teachers and books the more one becomes intellectual. The quick grasp, the ability to digest and the capacity to integrate the new with the old, are the intellectual faculties. Newton saw the apple falling just like anybody would have done but his enquiring mind did not stop there. In this he could find and answer why the planets and other orbs are kept in position and so he gave the law of **gravitation**.¹ Fleming saw a mould in the culture solution which was **inhibitive**² to the growth of **microbes**.³ This led to the discovery of Penicillin which revolutionized the whole thinking in medicine and become the fore runner of many antibiotics. With the growth of an enquiring faculty, depth in knowledge grows.

Knowledge must be applied and that is intelligence. This faculty is inborn but surely it can be developed. Without intelligence mere intellect would be like a body without life. One should learn from examples and to act intelligently. It requires quick perception and decision. Only those who could decide and act can become leaders. If such decision is for the good of many, then such leaders become great indeed. Great decisions have changed the course of history. Washington, Lincoln, Gandhi and others had made historic decisions which have made them near and dear in their countries.

Knowledge of men, material and manner, knowledge of the working of mind and knowledge of how one would react under certain circumstances, are some areas where one must have competency to become great. We may add the depth of understanding. This makes one human. With understanding one can avoid conflicts and one is able to resolve difficulties. This human element is very often found in great people.

Now we shall discuss what is height. The height here however does not refer to physical height. It is the height of glory, fame and name that is meant here. The way to such **eminence**⁴ is not paved with soft, well-ordered stones. The path is hard and one will have to work to reach that height. If one has the many faculties mentioned above and applies them in the right place at the right moment, one can reach the height. Some having the depth do not reach the height because they fail to take the tide. There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at its height will take him to eminence ; failing which he will be **lolling**⁵ in the **trough**⁶ of despondency. Dash and drive are needed to reach the height.

So, with proper development of one's intelligence and intellectual faculties,,one could hope to reach great heights.

1. gravitation /grævi'teɪʃn/ (n) *lực hút, trọng lực*
2. inhibitive /ɪn'hɪbɪtɪv/ (adj) *để ngăn chặn, để kiềm chế*
3. microbe /'maɪkrəʊb/ (n) *vi khuẩn, vi trùng*
4. eminence /'emɪnəns/ (n) *sự nổi tiếng hoặc xuất chúng*
5. loll /lɒl/ (v) *buông lơ, thả trôi*
6. trough /trʊf/ (n) *vùng lõm giữa hai ngọn sóng*

318. "IT IS ALWAYS A PITY WHEN A MAN'S EDUCATION ALIENATES HIM FROM HIS OWN PEOPLE." DISCUSS THIS STATEMENT IN THE LIGHT OF¹ YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE

“THẬT ĐÁNG TIẾC KHI SỰ GIÁO DỤC CỦA MỘT NGƯỜI LẠI TÁCH BIỆT NGƯỜI ĐÓ RA KHỎI NHỮNG NGƯỜI XUNG QUANH”. HÃY THẢO LUẬN Ý KIẾN NÀY DỰA TRÊN KINH NGHIỆM CỦA CHÍNH MÌNH.

The statement assumes that when a man is educated it alienates him from his people. Let us look at how well educated he is. Education is not merely getting certain diplomas and degrees. Education is to civilise the man and to draw the best in him. It must result on an all-rounded personality, physically, mentally, intellectually, morally and spiritually. He is humble, readywitted, able to look after himself and others, can act as the occasion demands, morally upright and can be useful to himself and to others.

What do we see today ? The so-called educated class display their **snobbery**.² They form a class apart from others. They think they know too much and they should not be found in ordinary man has no place. The so-called educated is good at quoting from books and papers he has read. His morals are only **superficial**.³

The fruit of his knowledge does not normally filter to the ordinary level. So the fruits of his knowledge are no more fruits since they do not reach the common man for further propagation. This snobbery is seen even among the members of a family, especially when the son educated in a college begins to look down upon his own parents and their ways of life. The life in a hostel does not normally improve the character of a student. Hostel is after all a place where one pays for the services, and having enjoyed certain conveniences, the educated boy or girl returns home only to find things very different. He cannot adjust himself to the common surroundings since he has had a taste of the artificial world outside. Thus the educated man is an alien in his own home and familiar surroundings.

In most contries the type of education given is only to fit the student for a particular job ; very rarely is education given to fit him for life outside. Very often a student going to a western country tries to ape the habits, way of life and puts on artificial way of talking.

In order to overcome this lopsided development, educationists from Rousseau downwards have recommended methods where the child will learn in a natural atmosphere instead of being pulled out of it. The glamour of studying abroad is always attractive. There is a need for change in the philosophy of education so that the life's purpose may be made clear and the objectives or goals reached.

1. in the light of (*idm*) vì cái gì, dựa trên cái gì

2. snobbery /'snɒbəri/ (*n*) sự màu mè, sự hợm hĩnh

3. superficial /su:pə'fiʃəl/ (*adj*) nông cạn, hời hợt, thiển cận

319. VOLTAIRE SAID : "ALL MEN ARE EQUAL ; IT IS NOT BIRTH BUT VIRTUE ALONE THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE". DO YOU AGREE ?
VOLTAIRE NÓI: “TẤT CẢ MỌI NGƯỜI ĐỀU BÌNH ĐẲNG; KHÔNG PHẢI DÒNG ĐỒI MÀ CHÍNH ĐẠO ĐỨC ĐÃ TẠO NÊN SỰ KHÁC BIỆT”. BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý KHÔNG ?

The statement is clear and easy to see as the palm of one's hand unless one is stone blind. Before arriving at a conclusion, let's examine the statement in greater detail and depth.

All men are equal in what ? They are all equal as an organism. From the way they are conceived until death, in the physical form and growth, the man follows the same time table. Differences there are ; but they are only quantitative, for instance one may be taller than the other ; the second weigh more ; the third may eat more. But basically there is no difference for they eat alike, breathe alike and the functions of the body are like. His faculties are almost alike; given the chance and training all can use his or her hands and feet to the same advantage. What a white man can do, a coloured man can do with equal grace. In creativity man has shown the same aptitude in all climes and countries. So, as a creature, men are all equal.

But birth makes a difference in this world. We find the rich and the poor, we find the forward and the less developed. This difference is being brought about more by circumstances rather than by the physical act of birth. The same child will behave differently in different places according to how and under what influence it has been brought up. Two children of the same parents will grow and behave differently if they are separated from birth and are brought up in different environments. The differences brought about thus are sociological. Children brought up in an ideal classless society may not feel the difference created by birth or circumstances. Colour of the skin or hair may be looked upon as something useful for identity as birth marks.

Differences created by birth have always led to conflicts. The high and low, the haves and have-nots are some such differences we see today in our society. The law of inheritance, the law of property and the ownership rights all create problems. In a world where man is free to think and act, these differences are explosive in nature and are at the bottom of social **upheavals**.¹ History is replete with such instances. The so called civilization is nothing but the tidal waves caused by such upheavals on the sea of humanity. Anyway there is no meaning in differences caused by birth.

But there are real areas of difference among men. Sociologically we may try to put all men under the same roller and flatten them all out of shape. We may give them equality in every aspect of life; there may be no rich or poor ; there may be no classes, the owners or the owned. All men share the fruits of their labour equally. This society is possible theoretically.

But there is an area where differences do exist and in the long run they count. This is what Voltaire calls virtue. Virtue, briefly means, the good qualities of head and heart. It is a strange phenomenon of nature that these qualities do not develop in the same way on all. Even in the same family the traits do not run the same way. One is noted for virtue while the other is far from it. Even in twins the differences persist.

How are these differences brought about ? Still we are **probing**² to find the answer. Nature and nurture have been found to play a prominent role in the formation of these virtues. Nurture much more than nature has a great part to play in developing the virtues. Chance and circumstances go a long way in developing the virtues. **Uproot**³ a child from its bad surroundings and transplant it in an area where it will come across virtuous men and their deeds, then it is quite possible the child acquires all virtues. The exception is also possible but the exception only proves the rule.

Circumstances develop the virtue in men as could be seen in the great lives of the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Emperor Asoka, Emperor Akbar and so on. In the great story of **Les Miserables** by Hugo we find how the virtue of a man can be completely reformed by **fortuitous**⁴ circumstances.

Only the differences of virtue will sustain. The other differences of birth, **caste**⁵ or **creed**⁶ will be forgotten because only the men and women of virtue stand apart like stars in the firmament guiding the fate of men and nations. They are like the beacon of light in the surrounding gloom ; their lives, their words and deeds bring solace to millions. They shape the course of a people and they alone in the right sense make history. History is not the battles won or the treaties made but it is the battle between vice and virtue and good and bad, where virtue ultimately wins. The cross has a greater meaning than the Taj Mahal. At all times and in all climes virtues have led people from destruction to salvation. So it is not birth of men but it is the virtue that makes the real difference.

1. upheaval /'ʌp'hi:vəl/ (n) *sự bùng nổ, sự biến động*
2. probe /prəʊb/ (v) *xem xét kỹ; thăm dò*
3. uproot /ʌp'ru:t/ (v) *buộc ai phải rời bỏ nơi đã sinh ra hoặc đã ổn định cuộc sống*
4. fortuitous /fɔ:'tju:ɪtəs/ (adj) *xảy ra một cách tình cờ hoặc trùng hợp ngẫu nhiên*
5. caste /kɑ:st/ (n) *chế độ đẳng cấp*
6. creed /kri:d/ (n) *tín điều, tín ngưỡng*

320. JOHN MILTON SAYS : "CHILDREN SHOW THE MAN, AS MORNING SHOWS THE DAY." TO WHAT DEGREE DO YOU THINK IT IS TRUE TODAY ?

JOHN MILTON NÓI: "TRẺ EM LÀ DẤU HIỆU CỦA CON NGƯỜI CŨNG NHƯ BUỔI SÁNG LÀ DẤU HIỆU CỦA NGÀY". THEO BẠN, CÂU NÓI NÀY ĐÚNG VỚI XÃ HỘI NGÀY NAY Ở MỨC ĐỘ NÀO ?

The famous quotation from the pen of the famous author speaks of the importance of children. To understand the full implication, the **simile**¹ must be understood. The implication appears to be that the early signs and symptoms are the pointers to future growth. How far ? That is the purpose of this essay.

What the morning is may be the indicator of what the day is going to be. If it is bright and clear, a warm clear day may be indicated. It will be otherwise if it is cloudy, dull or foggy with child winds blowing. So it is common to judge the day from the morning.

This need not be the whole truth ; for what promises to be a bright day may suddenly become windy and cloudy followed by rain. Perhaps Milton's knowledge of weather is confined to England, for his **prophecies**² would prove false in the tropics or near the Equator where the clouds, rain and sunshine can play havoc. The conditions of the morning may prove deceptive and change from being bright to dull and vice versa. So one cannot lay hope on the signs of the morning for what may follow in the day.

This is true in the case for children. There are cases of children who were dull in their childhood days and later on proved to be brilliant scholars. The opposite is also true in the children who proved brilliant in their childhood and had gone on to be dull. For instance, Napoleon was never so brilliant as a child nor was M.K. Gandhi and both of them became notable figures in history. Robert Clive was dull as a boy but later in his life he was able to build an empire.

Early brilliance is only an indicator that the child may prove to grow great and brilliant. But circumstances may change and environment too which will tell on the growth of the child. It may be a physical ailment, a **bereavement**³ in the family, a change of circumstance in the fortunes of the family and many others which could intrude upon the growth of the child. In the adolescent age, the bad influence of parents and the company in which the child finds itself may corrupt it.

A case in point is the refugee problem. Tragedy is played that way sometimes and children who have witnessed horrors at their doors get hardened and change their characters.

There are other influences nowadays like the television, books and magazines, companions and prevalent thought. Due to the bad influence and example of companions, a youth may turn out to be hippie throwing away all decorum. The brilliance of youth will have no chance of free growth and sunshine in totalitarian states. Witness the world today. The free movement of men, thoughts and manners nowadays have a great influence in the moulding of the character of youth. In a traditional society things went on smoothly. Now the changes brought about by science and technology are cutting as under the roots which bind the society together. With the rift in the society, the youth is the first **casualty**.⁴

Though it is true to say that the seed shows the tree, how healthy and well the tree grows depends on many other factors. So too in the case of the child. The signs of

brilliance seen in one's childhood may not ensure bright manhood or womanhood because life is subject to **mutations**⁵ over which very rarely the individual may have any control. Thus the statement is only partially true.

1. simile /'sɪməli/ (n) *sự ví von, sự so sánh*
2. prophesy /'prɒfəsi/ (n) *lời tiên tri*
3. bereavement /bɪ'ri:vmənt/ (n) *tình trạng mất người thân*
4. casualty /'kæʒʊəlti/ (n) *nạn nhân*
5. mutation /mju:'teɪʃn/ (n) *sự thay đổi, sự biến đổi*

**321. "HE ALONE CAN COMMAND WHO KNOWS TO HOW TO OBEY." HOW
DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS MAXIM ?**

***“NGƯỜI TA CHỈ CÓ THỂ RA LỆNH KHI CHÍNH MÌNH PHẢI BIẾT VÂNG LỜI”.
BẠN GIẢI THÍCH THẾ NÀO VỀ CÂU CHÂM NGÔN NÀY ?***

The success of a society depends on the co-ordination between the various components which make up that society. This involves some command from some which has to be carried by some or many. As the saying goes no man is an island, nor is everyone having the same talent in the same ways. It is nature's order that a few could think and plan while others must execute. Then can society be stable and function for long.

It is a question of leadership. There are very few leaders but most of them are developed. Accidents find them in positions where they could develop into leaders. But in those positions they should learn from others until in their own day, they could bloom into leaders.

Great men of industry, great doctors and great lawyers have come up the hard way. Usually they are all apprenticed to a big one from whom they learn the art of their respective trade. They may have the basic knowledge and they may know all the fundamentals but these do not make them leaders. They have to work under a senior and gradually they evolve.

This apprenticeship calls for humility, hard work, sustained interest and above all obedience. Obedience is to obey. So the apprentice has to obey his master. Juniors under a lawyer plod long hours so that they can master the **intricacies**¹ of law. Young doctors have to sweat and labour in an operation theatre such that they may become successful surgeons later. Great soldiers learn the first lesson of obedience as soon as they wear the uniforms and for them obedience is the first and the last word. There is no profession like that of a soldier where unquestioned and **unstinted**² obedience is called for. The great generals then and now ought to have learnt the value of obedience the harder way. Leadership needs discipline and dedication.

These people know the value of obedience. They know how thing may go wrong if obedience is lacking. It was said of a business **magnate**³ that he insisted on all those who worked under him to be punctual. If anyone was later he used to fine them. If he himself was not punctual he would pay the fine from his pocket and thus he was able to set an example.

There is a great story of a King. Once he was on his rounds in the night in disguise to see that **miscreants**⁴ were not on the **prowl**.⁵ He heard a man and woman talking in a house. He had prior information that the man of the house was away and that the fidelity of the woman was **questionable**.⁶ He knocked at the door of the house and to his surprise he saw the man of the house there. Apologizing, the King returned to his palace. The next morning the man came to the King and complained that a man came and knocked at his door the previous night and requested the King to punish the offender. The punishment, according to the law of the land was to cut off the hand of the culprit. The story goes to say that the king cut off his hand immediately. That shows even a king must obey.

It is clear from the above that those who would command must know how to obey before they can expect other to obey.

1. intricacy /'ɪntrɪkəsi/ (n) *điều, sự việc, v.v... rắc rối, phức tạp*
2. unstinted /ʌn'stɪntɪd/ (adj) *không giới hạn, không hạn chế*
3. magnate /'mæɡneɪt/ (n) *ông trùm (nhà công nghiệp giàu có và nhiều quyền thế)*
4. miscreant /'mɪskrɪənt/ (n) *kẻ côn đồ, kẻ làm điều sai trái*
5. prowl /prəʊl/ (n) *sự rình mò*
6. questionable /'kwɛstʃənəbl/ (adj) *đáng ngờ*

322. LEADERSHIP

THUẬT LÃNH ĐẠO

Ours is an organized society and any organization, for the accomplishment of its objectives, requires efficient leadership. Efficient dedicated leadership and resources, both natural and human, are requisites for a nation to develop and progress. The days when people could be driven are long gone and today people are led. An educated and sophisticated group of people need an intelligent and forward-looking leader. The students have their teacher to follow, the family, the father, and the nation, its political leader.

The leader is the symbol of unity. The British Crown is symbolic of the links that bind the members of the **Commonwealth**.¹ It is often leadership that strengthens an organization and makes it vigorous and viable. Often, when a leader is discredited, the organization is thrown into a minor **tumult**² and rival leaders **vie**³ to checkmate one another. Where the leader is not acceptable to the majority, the members will be divided, and a fragmented organization will be an ineffective one.

In school, the Principal is the leader of the teachers and the students. Where he fails, the mental, physical and moral welfare of the students will be neglected. The teachers look up to their Principal for guidance and leadership. Having won the confidence of the teachers, he is able, with their help, to create an ethos which is so vital to the effective functioning of the school. In the church the congregation receive their spiritual guidance from the priest. At home, the head of the family would be able to foster in the children the virtues that he displays.

Leadership should be dynamic and forward-looking. The leader should be able to adapt his policies to the changing circumstances and find new solutions to old problems. When he is conservative and unwilling to change because of his traditional beliefs, he becomes ineffective as a leader and loses his hold on his members. The smug satisfaction which a leader enjoys when he comes into the lime-light should not make him complacent and idle. By his dynamism, new followers are to be won and opponents transformed into friends and followers. He should be quick to abandon out-moded and decadent ideas.

A leader should be patient and tactful. A leader in a hurry often fails. A leader should be aware of the susceptibilities of his people and should not **jibe**⁴ at their weaknesses. The measures that he adopts should not run counter to their beliefs and customs for the success of any plan depends on the involvement of the majority of the members. **Arbitrary**⁵ decisions can lead to failure. A leader should be resourceful and must be capable of sound judgement. He must be tolerant of the weaknesses of others and should be prepared to accept criticism.

Leadership should be efficient and intelligent. A good academic qualification is a "**sine qua non**"⁶ of leadership. The intellectual acumen that usually goes with a high standard of education is necessary to find solutions to the many problems that he meets with. Almost all leaders have the gift of the gab. With the ability to speak fluently and impressively he is able to win over his members and influence their thinking.

Leadership should not be corrupt. A mercenary is easily spotted and isolated. Corruption precedes decay and disintegration. The leaders that shine forth in the political horizon

today are those who have forsaken selfishness and self-interest. To be admired more at home the leader should be admired abroad.

Bereft of an efficient, honest, intelligent leader, a nation falls divided and an association or an organization becomes static. Where the very existence is threatened, a dynamic and efficient leader can create calm out chaos and help the nation to progress.

1. the Commonwealth /'kɒmənwelθ/ (n) *khối thịnh vượng chung (gồm Vương quốc Anh và một số quốc gia độc lập)*
2. tumult /'tju:mʌlt/ (n) *sự náo động, sự hỗn loạn*
3. vie /vaɪ/ (v) *giành giật (cái gì với ai) một cách quyết liệt*
4. jibe /dʒaɪd/ (v) (cũng gibe) *giễu cợt, chế nhạo*
5. arbitrary /'ɑ:bitrəri/ (adj) *chuyên quyền, độc đoán*
6. sine qua non /ˌsɪneɪ kwɑ: 'nəʊn/ (n) *điều kiện thiết yếu, cái cần thiết*

323. DISCIPLINE¹

KỶ LUẬT

Discipline mean the learning to obey certain necessary **rules of conduct**.² The very **essence**³ of discipline is obedience - obedience to rules ; and the word is derived from "**disciple**"⁴, a learner, pupil or follower of a teacher. We may discuss the question from two points of view ; the discipline, or training of an individual, and the discipline, or order, maintained in a society or body of individuals.

The training of a child is a good example of discipline in the first sense. The first lesson it has to learn is obedience ; and then it has to be taught how to behave - how to avoid conduct which is considered unbecoming and wrong, and how to form good habits. The methods of training are patient instruction, example, and punishment.

In the same way, domestic animals, such as a dog or a horse have to be trained before they can be of any use to men. Like the child, they must first learn to obey ; and the horses must learn how to carry a man and draw a carriage, and dogs how to guard the house and look after flocks of sheep.

When we come to maturity we have to learn self-discipline--how to govern and rule ourselves. This is the hardest task of all.

When men wish to act together in societies or companies, they have to agree upon certain rules of conduct ; and the enforcement of obedience to these rules is called discipline. A society that has no rules or which does not see that its rules are obeyed, will soon fall to pieces.

Rules and discipline are necessary even in games. If a batsman refuses to go out when he is **bowled**⁵, or players defy the referee whistle when he gives a foul or off-side, there is an end of cricket and football.

A regiment or an army without discipline is a mere mob. Soldiers have to learn to act together as one man under the command of their officers ; and the object of military drill is to make their obedience to orders so perfect that it will become automatic.

In the same way no school or college can exist long where discipline is not **enforced**.⁶ If the boys can do as they like, regular teaching becomes impossible, and education a **farce**.⁷

1. discipline /'dɪsəplɪn/ (n) kỷ luật

2. rule of conduct /ru:l əv kən'dʌkt/ (n) qui tắc đạo đức

3. essence /'esns/ (n) bản chất, thực chất

4. disciple /dɪ'saɪpl/ (n) môn đệ, môn tòng, học trò

5. bowl /bəʊl/ (v) loại ra (trong môn cricket)

6. enforce /ɪn'fɔ:s/ (v) cưỡng bách, thi hành (kỷ luật)

7. farce /fɑ:s/ (n) trò hề

**324. "DISCIPLINE MUST BE THE BASIS OF ALL ACHIEVEMENT - EVEN OF
LEARNING." DISCUSS**
“KỶ LUẬT PHẢI LÀ CƠ SỞ CỦA MỌI THÀNH TỰU – NGAY CẢ KHI HỌC TẬP”.
HÃY THẢO LUẬN

Discipline is a word often used but the least understood. Discipline refers to a system where actions are controlled by certain almost fixed rules. So wherever there is systematic work, we find discipline. This way anything having a system of rules and regulations is looked upon as discipline. In this sense even subjects are considered disciplines. Every branch of knowledge is supported by a system of rules. There is no question of denying them. The grammar of a language is a good enough example of discipline. Without understanding grammar one cannot become a master of that particular language. Again mathematics or science has its own discipline. Because they are so well disciplined they have become exact Sciences. The law of the land is again another discipline.

Discipline or norms have spread to human affairs. In every walk of life there must be discipline. Thus if everyone is asked to keep to the left of the road and the people follow it then they are disciplined. In behaviour also we speak of disciplined behaviour. People at all levels have a way of behaviour. If the outcome of such behaviour is good for all then such people are said to be disciplined. This is often used to judge school boys. If they behave well in class, in public and at home, then we say the boys are disciplined. There can't be a better example of a disciplined organization than our body. How the various parts and organs of our body function is something wonderful ; it is a **marvel**¹ of discipline. So we can easily say the end product of discipline is efficiency ; whether it be our body or a people there must be discipline.

Now the question speaks of discipline being at the basis of all achievements. What is achievement ? You try to do a thing and after many trials and errors you succeed. That is achievement ; for instance an **acrobat**² does something wonderful ; it may be a physical act of a few seconds but for achieving it he must have worked hard for hours on end. A famous example is to run a mile within four minutes. The first man Banister to do it practised it so vigorously and regularly. Now following his foot-steps many are able to run a mile, in fact within four minutes.

For such an achievement the mile runner ought to have a disciplined body. The astronauts have to go through a vigorous discipline before they can be put into space.

Take an example from the humdrum world. A man of business house becomes a success. They cannot achieve anything by sitting and chanting a verse from the Bible. "Thy work in a disciplined way". They know their goals, they know the **loopholes**³ and they know the pitfalls. Having known all this they work in a disciplined way and achieve success. This is true of an empire. When the machinery of government is highly disciplined, the government achieves best. The achievements of the English nation are worth remembering.

So this scene of discipline holds good even in learning. Take for instance learning to ride the bicycle. You have to follow certain rules strictly if you want to master cycling. Every young man who has learnt cycling knows this best. Discipline in learning may involve doing the right thing in a right way using the right tools. Learning very often

involves humans and the learner must go to the right person. People who have studied chemistry do know this. In qualitative analysis there is what is called systematic analysis. If one follows it, very rarely will one miss; but if one adopts guess work, more often than not be will be wrong. So in learning also discipline is necessary.

To conclude, discipline makes life easier. It makes for achievements in all walks of life easier. Last but not least, it makes learning efficient, effective and lasting. But the best discipline is that which is developed within and not forced.

1. marvel /'mɑ:vəl/ (n) *sự kỳ diệu hoặc phi thường*
2. arobat /'ækrəbæt/ (n) *người nhào lộn*
3. loophole /'lu:phəʊl/ (n) *kẽ hở, lối thoát*

325. THE PURPOSES OF PUNISHMENT

MỤC ĐÍCH CỦA HÌNH PHẠT

There is a tendency in man to **deviate**¹ from the right path and act in such a way that the interest of another is injured. Society bind its members to a certain line of conduct so as to ensure security for all. It is this function of ensuring safety through right behaviour that has given rise to the idea of punishment. Punishment is intended to prevent, **deter**² and **reform**.³

The individual is a member of society and he needs society for the development of his personality. He has his freedom but it cannot be absolute. His freedom to direct his own share of the common life is balanced by the freedom of society to dissociate itself from his actions which conflict with its interests. Therefore, punishment is essentially disowning by society of acts done by its members when such acts are in conflict with the general interest.

The theory of **retribution**⁴ has few defenders today. The main objection to retributive theory is that it inflicts pain for the sake of pain. Hammurabi's famous code contained the principle of "eye for eye". Society feels that the criminal should get the taste of violence which he has inflicted on his victim. The penalty given is to be **equated**⁵ with the seriousness of the crime. Thus, when a criminal is punished, society is expressing its antagonism and this, it is said, is necessary for the preservation of the character of society. Those who oppose this purpose of retribution believe that the aim of penal sanction is not revenge for retribution which is associated with revenge is incompatible with forgiveness. However, it must be observed that the only person who can feel revengeful is the injured person. If A injures B, it is absurd for C to forgive.

When a person is sent to prison for life or hanged, he is prevented from repeating his offence. If he is sent for a period of time, he may be deterred from committing further crimes. Punishment can also have a deterrent effect on would-be criminals. It is possible that one who is punished realises the error of his ways. In prison he may be visited by the chaplain or the **psychiatrist**⁶ and he may decide to go straight in future. But there is the opposite view that when a prisoner is discharged he is charged to the eyes with venom and hatred and therefore punishment cannot have a deterrent effect.

The modern tendency is towards reform and society's attitude towards criminals today is more humane. Punishment is no longer an occasion for community entertainment. Society, instead of disowning him, tries to understand him because punishing a criminal is like treating the symptoms of a disease. A case study is made of the criminal and psychologists and social workers try to detect reasons for the actions of the criminal. Some of the factors considered to be responsible for crimes are lack of affection at home, the environment, upbringing and frustration. The aim is to remove the factors that make a man deviate from the right path and help him to fit himself into society. In the prison, the emphasis is on reform. He is taught a skill so that his prison term could be profitably spent and he could secure a job on release. The remedial measures adopted are intended to make a criminal a normal person. After all, killing the offender does not **revive**⁷ the life of the victim.

Punishment, in essence, is the method by which society tries to maintain its moral standard. It also enables others to enjoy their freedom. As understood today, it is not

revenge. The aim is to guarantee each man to run his own life as he thinks fit until he has done something which gives society reason for invading his freedom.

1. deviate /diːvi'eɪt/ (v) *đi sai đường, lệch đường*
2. deter /dɪ'tɜ:(r)/ (v) *ngăn cản, răn đe* - deterrent /dɪ'tɜ:rənt/ (n, adj) (vật) *ngăn cản hoặc nhằm để ngăn cản*
3. reform /rɪ'fɔ:m/ (v) *sửa đổi, cải cách, cải tạo*
4. retribution /retri'bju:ʃn/ (n) *sự báo thù, sự trừng phạt* - retributive /rɪ'trɪbjʊtɪv/ (adj) *để báo thù, để trừng phạt*
5. equate (sth to/with sth) /ɪ'kweɪt/ (v) *coi ngang, làm công bằng*
6. psychiatrist /saɪ'kaɪətrɪst/ (n) *chuyên gia về tâm thần học*
7. revive /rɪ'vaɪv/ (v) *làm sống lại, làm hồi sinh*

326. GOOD MANNERS

CÁCH CƯ XỬ TỐT

Bad manners are always **objectionable**.¹ We can excuse ignorant and badly brought up people, who know no better ; but there are many, who do know better, who **pride themselves on**² being rude and off-hand; and these we cannot excuse. Some of these people (conceited fellows!) think that rudeness is a sign of independence and manliness. And others say that politeness is a form of insincerity, and hold that to say that you are glad to see a person whom you really dislike, or that you are sorry when a visitor has to leave when all the time you are glad to get rid of him, or to ask after a person health when you do not care whether he is alive or dead, is simply hypocrisy. There may be something in this objection; and yet a little innocent pretence and a few mild "social lies," may be less morally wrong than the unnecessary wounding of people feelings. Even if you do not like a man, it is not always necessary to tell him the brutal truth.

Good manners may be superficial, and sometimes they may be a little insincere ; but they are as necessary to the continuance of society as oil is to the working of a machine without **friction**.³ And with people who have naturally kind hearts, politeness is neither insincere nor artificial. For the essence of good manners is consideration for the feelings of others ; and surely this is a virtue. Some one has called good manners "surface religion", because the essence of true religion is unselfish sympathy. You cannot like or **approve**⁴ of all you meet ; but you can and must learn to be kind to all, even to your enemies ; and the least you can do is to treat them courteously. There is enough sorrow in the world without our trying to increase it by unnecessary unkindness, which is the essence of bad manners. And it costs so little to be polite--showing respect without servility to our superiors, courtesy to our equals, and consideration for those below us.

The true gentleman is one who instinctively thinks of the feelings, the comfort and happiness of others, before his own. He will therefore be courteous to all. And there are true gentlemen, nature's gentlemen, even amongst the poor and ignorant, who, though they have not had the chance of learning all the rules of etiquette, have kind hearts.

1. objectionable /əb'dʒekʃənəbl/ (adj) đáng chê trách

2. pride oneself on /praɪd wʌn'self/ (v) lấy làm kiêu hãnh về

3. friction /'frɪkʃn/ (n) sự cọ xát

4. approve (of) /ə'pru:v/ (v) tán thành, chấp nhận

327. THE NEED FOR KEEPING ONE'S TEMPER UNDER CONTROL

SỰ CẦN THIẾT PHẢI KIỂM CHẾ CƠN GIẬN DỮ

Temper can be defined as the mental **vibrations**¹ is **consonance**² with the external events which touch our senses. The reaction may be calm and quiet or violent. When one is subject to sudden conclusions of mental reactions to externals, he is said to be **temperamental**.³ In such cases, reason which helps one to keep **poise**⁴ is either absent or fails to help the subject.

Temper is a matter of training. It is the domestic environment that is responsible for the development of temper in children. The child may be pampered and wants to have his will and when he is not satisfied he flies into tempers. There is much more so in the case of a child who is lonely and who has no brothers and sisters; or again the child may be petted by all those around him he may become a spoiled child subject to tempers. This is how man grows to be temperamental.

To keep up one's temper requires a lot of insight into things. Simply because certain things happen in certain ways not to the liking of the subject, it is no reason why one should **fly into a temper**.⁵ There are innumerable occasions when things go wrong in spite of perhaps careful preparation and so on. To quote an instance, one may be in a hurry to open a lock ; in spite of the key being there it takes some time before the lock is opened. In between, the person may **lose his temper**.⁵ Very often we find people standing in a queue getting bored and so losing their temper. Unless one applies his reason calmly to know why certain things are happening the way they do, he is likely to lose his temper. When we say 'he' it includes 'she' also. Of course she is more subject to tempers than he. Those who are in the higher rungs of society appear to be more subject to temper than those at the lowest rung. It may be because the former assumes that things should be as they please simply because they command. One very common instance would suffice to bring home the point. One is in a hurry to dress and to go and attend a function or meeting. At the last minute he takes out a shirt from the cabinet and finds out to his chagrin either the shirt has been torn by the washerman or the buttons are missing. He could have avoided the problem had he but given thought to it before.

When one loses one's temper it leads to many undesirable consequences. One is easily upset, with the blood circulation going quicker, using angry words and offending others. In extreme cases it leads to a nervous breakdown and it may be sometime before the subject comes to the normal self. Such a person may lose friends, lose the sympathy and co-operation of servants. He may upset the peace and calm at home. He may prove a poor executive and in the mart he may create enemies. A man of temper is prone to commit crimes.

Then how to control oneself and keep up the mental poise ? This requires training in **introspection**.⁶ No use of fretting and fuming over spilt milk. Reason should dictate how to avoid it the next time the unexpected does happen, then there is no meaning in losing one's temper. In routine affairs, with regular planning, things may be made to move smoothly without jolt or hitch ; everything in its proper place and everything in its proper time. If one were to follow this there may be few occasions for losing one's temper.

One should develop his faculty of reasoning ; then he could easily keep his temper under control. It is also a matter of philosophy as in the case of **stoics**.⁷ There is a

classical case of temper under control. In the Battle of Philipines, Brutus and Cassius quarrelled and Brutus called Cassius names. That was quite unusual of Brutus. Cassius himself felt that it had come to that extent. Then some friends nearby whispered into the ears of Cassius that Portia, the dear wife of Brutus had been dead. Any one other than Brutus would have burst into tears, torn his hair and so on, but he never did any such thing. When Cassius heard it he could only say 'sorry'.

By keeping one's temper under control one saves a nervous breakdown. His friends and relatives would like him. He is saved from wrong judgement which he arrives at when he loses his temper.

A man who can keep his temper is a sweet person. He is happy and makes others happy. He illumines the company where he is found. He will never be subject to a nervous breakdown. So let us learn to keep our temper under control.

1. vibration /var'breɪʃn/ (n) *sự rung động*
2. consonance /'kɒnsənəns/ (n) *sự hài hòa, sự phù hợp*
3. temperamental /tempərə'mentl/ (adj) *tính khí thất thường, hay thay đổi*
4. poise /pɔɪz/ (n) *sự tự chủ, điềm đạm*
5. fly into a temper (idm) *nổi cơn thịnh nộ* - keep/lose one's temper (idm) *giữ được/mất bình tĩnh*
6. introspection /ɪntrə'spekʃn/ (n) *sự tự xem xét nội tâm*
7. stoic /'stɔɪk/ (n) *người khắc kỷ*

328. "THE WAY TO GET ALONG IS TO GO ALONG" (JOHN F. KENNEDY).

WHAT DOES THIS STATEMENT MEAN ?

*"PHƯƠNG CÁCH ĐỂ HÒA HỢP LÀ PHẢI TIẾN LÊN" (JOHN F. KENNEDY). LỜI
TUYÊN BỐ NÀY CÓ Ý NGHĨA GÌ ?*

To get along is to accomodate with others. To go along is to proceed with the task on hand. To proceed confidently and to reach the goal, it requires certain qualifications and make up. They are not only physical but also neutral and emotional. It refers to the mental and social aspect. To go along implies a company or companion. It may be for then individual, a group, a country or countries at large. No man is an island. So far as man is a part of a society he has to live in it which means he must be able to get along with others. This requires a mental set up such that getting along may not be a problem. What is the mental set up ? One must recognize there is place for everybody under the sun. Theoritically at least that is the fact. Circumstances may change but still everybody expects to live and make the best of one's life. He needs food, clothing and shelter. He may need some more comforts. In trying to acquire them or secure them there is the **clash**¹ coming. Because all are not endowed with the same faculties and capacities and there is always a **perennial**² clash. To avoid such a clash one must know how to give and take.

Viewed closely this is a matter of environment, upbringing and education. All these play a vital role. Children must be taught how to live with others ; how they should not be selfish, how they should be able to share what they have with others ; and how they must have their emotions under control. In this the parents and the school play a vital role. Of course, other movements like the Scouting for boys and Guiding for girls go a long way to help them in getting along. As the saying goes "Charity begins at home", once the children have learned quite early in life in their homes, there may be no problems. When they grow old they will practise it in their lives, whether it be in the mart or the **senate**.³

To go along is not only true of individuals but also of States. The world as it is today is a package of different countries with different strengths, economically and politically. But all these countries must get along if the world has to avoid another **catastrophe**⁴ which cannot be imagined what with all the military hardwares piled up these days.

Countries must learn to be good neighbours. Look at what is happening in West Asia. Israel and the Arab countries are at each other's throat. It is a dangerous situation which may explode at any moment. The creation of Israel after the Second World War was perhaps a great casualty. But the Arabs must know how to put up with that. "Thy must have the historical perspective." The claim of the Jews to their ancient land cannot be overlooked. The best thing should be an understanding and adjustment on both sides.

This is true of countries of different **ideologies**.⁵ With the rapid growth of science and technology, the world is moving towards the concept of one world. No country can sit in an ivory tower and close it eyes to what is happening elsewhere. Natural calamities in one area will have their repercussions in another area. If there is draught and famine in one country, another country which enjoys favourable conditions must come forward to help the other nation. Otherwise complications will set in which will have a chain reaction. Now than at any time, no country can live in isolation.

Political divisions must be forgotten for the world to prosper. So to get along is to go along, whether it be in the family, or within a nation or among the nations of the world. This is the type of things great men like Welland Wilkie, Bertrand Russell, Jawaharlal Nehru, Poet Tagore and perhaps Kennedy were dreaming of.

1. clash /klæʃ/ (n) *mâu thuẫn sâu sắc, sự xung đột*
2. perennial /pə'reniəl/ (adj) *luôn luôn tái diễn*
3. senate /'senɪt/ (n) *thượng viện*
4. catastrophe /kə'tæstrəfi/ (n) *thảm họa, tai ương*
5. ideology /aɪdɪ'ɒlədʒi/ (n) *hệ tư tưởng*

**329. TOLERANCE¹ IS ESSENTIAL FOR PEACE AND HARMONY IN ANY
COMMUNITY OR COUNTRY. DISCUSS**

**LÒNG KHOAN DUNG LÀ YẾU TỐ CẦN THIẾT CHO HÒA BÌNH VÀ SỰ HÒA HỢP
ĐỐI VỚI MỌI CỘNG ĐỒNG HOẶC QUỐC GIA. HÃY THẢO LUẬN**

The progress of any community or country depends largely on the conduct of the people who reside in it. Discontent, jealousies, prejudices and intolerance among a few of the people can cause great damage to the whole community or country.

Gregarious² by nature, men hate to live in isolation. The urge for association, therefore, enables men to tolerate the view and habits of others, to great extent. Most men have come to realise that the cohesion of society cannot be secured without the exercise of tolerance on the part of its members.

A community or country is composed of various types of people, whose psychological social and temperamental attitudes and needs are not the same. In a great number of cases, there are fundamental differences even in race, language and religion among the people. This is the result of the economic and social necessities of the modern age, which have compelled people to leave their original homes and live among people of foreign descent. These **diversities**³ in a community or country necessitate the maintenance of a tolerant attitude on the part of the people towards one another. They have to respect the cultural and social habits and beliefs of one another and refrain themselves from doing or saying things which might offend the susceptibilities of some people. The racial and religious clashes that have occurred in various parts of the world indicate the damage that the expression of hatred and prejudice can cause in a country. Even differences in the colour of the skin can cause trouble and violence in a community, and when passions are aroused, men lose their reason and sense of proportion and indulge in the most **barbaric**⁴ acts. Innocent lives become the victims of **insensate**⁵ cruelty.

That tolerance is essential for peace and harmony in a country could be illustrated by reference to the people in Malaysia, a country in which people of various races reside. Despite cultural, racial and religious differences among themselves, the people here have lived for generations in peace and harmony. They have also helped one another in various ways at various times. It must be admitted, however, there have been a few incidents from time to time caused by communal differences in certain localities, yet they can hardly be attributed to the general **uprising**⁶ of the races against one another. In fact, the goodwill that prevails among the different races of people here has contributed to the development of a new nation, which has become the envy of many countries. The racial unity among the people is the main factor that has contributed to the progress of the country in all spheres of activity.

Another country that deserves mention is the United States of America. The people of this country too are made up of a diversity of races and cultures. Yet, by tolerance, co-operation and goodwill among the people as a whole, it has become the richest country in the world. All this proves what could be achieved by the people of a community or country, who exercise tolerance among themselves.

1. tolerance /'tɒlərəns/ (n) sự sẵn sàng hoặc khả năng dung thứ; lòng khoan dung
2. gregarious /grɪ'geəriəs/ (adj) thích sống với người khác
3. diversity /daɪ'vɜːsəti/ (n) tính đa dạng
4. barbaric /bə:'bærɪk/ (adj) dã man
5. insensate /ɪn'senseɪt/ (adj) vô tri vô giác
6. uprising /'ʌpraɪzɪŋ/ (n) cuộc nổi dậy, cuộc khởi nghĩa

330. WAR AND PEACE *CHIẾN TRANH VÀ HÒA BÌNH*

Since the time men learned to live in communities, in the remote past, wars have been fought at regular intervals in various parts of the world. In fact, the history of the human race is mainly a record of the battles and wars fought in the past between communities and nations.

Wars are caused mainly by human greed and ambition. In the early days of men's existence, many communities lived a very hard life, owing perhaps to the lack of geographical advantages or intellectual ability. As a result, the prosperity of other communities aroused their greed and envy, and wars between communities became inevitable. One side fought to conquer the prosperous communities in order to gain control of the means of prosperity, and the other side fought to defend its independence and way of life. With the passage of time, the communities developed into nations, and wars were fought on a bigger **scale**¹; but the basic causes of war remained the same. It was only occasionally that battles were fought with other aims, such as the capture of a woman to satisfy the sexual lust of a conqueror or ruler.

However, success in wars **stirred**² the ambition of many nations. Wars were then fought for domination and extension of power. Several small nations soon came under the **dominion**³ of a powerful country, which then developed into an Empire. The Roman Empire, for example, was created mainly by conquest. Even the personal ambitions of some individuals have been the cause of wars at times. The ambitions of Napoleon and Hitler for conquest caused many battles, in which millions of people, young and old, gave their lives.

The **devastation**⁴ caused by wars, however, has always aroused the conscience of several nations, and attempts have been made by such nations to prevent wars in the future. Their leaders have met at various times, in the course of history, to discuss peace and to find a way of removing the causes of war. It is this urge that led to the creation of the United Nations, after the failure of the League of Nations, which today is doing its utmost to maintain peace between nations.

But the desire peace has instead led to further wars, for peace often demands the destruction of the ambitions of those who begin wars. The wars begun by Napoleon and Hitler could be ended only by fighting further wars to destroy these men, who have been responsible for the greatest sufferings in the history of the world. Human ambition, however, is indifferent to the lessons of history. In times of wars, men seek peace; but when there is peace, there are attempts to begin wars. Once a war is begun, however, those responsible for it are crushed in the end. Yet ambitious, countries and individuals are still trying to extend their power, but they are being opposed by those who love peace. Thus, wars will continue to exist, while at the same time attempts will be made to attain peace in the world.

1. scale /skeɪl/ (n) *phạm vi*

2. stir /stɜː(r)/ (v) *khuấy động*

3. dominion /də'mɪnɪən/ (n) *quyền thống trị*

4. devastation /devə'steɪʃn/ (n) *sự tàn phá hoặc bị tàn phá*

**331. THROUGHOUT HISTORY, MEN HAVE BEEN
WILLING TO FIGHT AND DIE FOR FREEDOM. WHY ?
LỊCH SỬ ĐÃ CHO THẤY CON NGƯỜI LUÔN SẴN SÀNG CHIẾN ĐẤU VÀ HY
SINH VÌ TỰ DO. VÌ SAO ?**

Men have been willing to fight and die for freedom. Yes; that is the **essence**¹ of history. Where freedom fails or is denied, man is willing to fight and die ; history is **replete with**² examples. The countries which have found freedom newly have had to fight against the **erstwhile**³ colonial rule. The fight is still on in some countries even today.

Why is this fight happening ? This is a psychological question. A boy does not allow another boy to sit in his place in the classroom; a casual traveller in a bus or train claims his place ; a child does not allow another child to touch its playthings. At the bottom of all this lies the sense of ownership, temporarily or otherwise. Ownership and **acquisitive**⁴ tendency go together. What has been acquired and owned must be saved and protected and when the ownership is in danger fight ensues. This is a basic animal instinct and man has not reached a magnanimous stage, in spite of his long **sojourn**⁵ on earth, to overcome this instinct. The ideal socialistic state is only a pipe dream and whether the world will reach that stage at all is anybody's guess.

Another factor that leads to this sort of fight or revolt is the opposition to the imposition of authority from outside. We see children singing or playing on their own accord. But when someone asks them to do it again they feel shy or don't want to do it. In the case of a country it may even do things leading to its' own destruction. Even then it would not like an external interference. In the name of human sympathy some Western nations deliberately impose their will on another nation and are now paying a heavy penalty for it.

Freedom is very precious. It cannot be decided on the battlefield. Freedom is essential for natural growth. A **creeper**⁶ always moves towards light and air. However much one tries to turn it the otherway, it will always strive to seek light ; so with people. They want to be free as the bird in the air. The spirit of "Who are you to tell me ?", is always within us.

The sense of being and feeling free is fundamental to make life worthwhile and hence man has always been fighting for it. But there cannot be absolute freedom.

1. essence /'esns/ (n) bản chất, cái cốt lõi
2. replete (with sth) /rɪ'pli:t/ (v) có nhiều, đầy đủ
3. erstwhile /'ɜ:stwaɪl/ (adv) ngày xưa, xưa kia, trước đây
4. acquisitive /ə'kwɪzətɪv/ (adj) ham mê vật chất
5. sojourn /'sɒdʒən/ (n) sự lưu lại tạm thời
6. creeper /'kri:pə(r)/ (n) dây leo

332. UNION IS STRENGTH ĐOÀN KẾT LÀ SỨC MẠNH

The best illustration of this saying is the familiar fable of Aesop. An old man, being distressed by the constant quarrelling going on between his sons, one day called them to him and showed them a bundle of sticks tied together, and asked if any of them was strong enough to break them. First one, and then another tried; but although they were all strong young men, they all failed. He then untied the bundle, and told them to break each stick separately. This they did easily, and all the sticks were soon broken in pieces. Thus he taught them that united they would be strong, but disunited they would always be weak.

The same lesson can be learnt from the organisation of an army, or a football team. The strength of a regiment consists in all the soldiers acting together as one man. This is the secret of the constant drilling on the parade ground, and army discipline. If a thousand men go into battle who have never learnt to act together, each man fighting as and when he likes, they will be defeated with ease by a disciplined and united company of only a hundred strong. One of Napoleon's favourite maxims was, "Divide and conquer." If he could divide the enemy's army up, and take one part at a time, he could conquer it **piecemeal**¹ ; or he could subdue a whole nation by **fomenting**² **discord**³ among its different classes, and breaking it up into **warring factions**.⁴

In the same way, the success of a football team in a match depends very much on their "team work" ; that is, the way the members work together and co-operate with each other. A team composed of comparatively weak individual players, but well-organised and playing heartily together, has often defeated an ill-organised team composed of much better players.

In all departments of life union, or co-operation, is strength ; disunion is weakness. A united nation, a united community, a united family, a united society of any sort, is strong ; but disunited, quarrelling, split up into factions, they are all weak. United they stand ; disunited they fall. Their motto must be, "One heart one way."

1. piecemeal /'pi:smi:l/ (*adv*) từng phần một, từng cái một

2. foment /fəʊ'ment/ (*v*) kích động, xúi giục

3. discord /dɪ'skɔ:d/ (*n*) sự bất hòa, chia rẽ

4. warring factions /,wɔ:riŋ 'fækʃnz/ (*n*) các bè phái xung đột với nhau

333. PATRIOTISM LÒNG YÊU NƯỚC

Patriotism, which means **literally**¹ the love of the fatherland, is a noble sentiment and a national virtue ; and the man who lacks it has indeed, as Sir Walter Scott says, "a dead soul" :

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land !"

But the word has been so misused to cover the most selfish aims and narrow passions, that Dr. Samuel Johnson said in disgust, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a **scoundrel**"².

We must, therefore, distinguish between true patriotism and the **spurious**³ article.

False patriotism is an enlarged selfishness and a narrowed **nationalism**.⁴ Patriots of this kind support their country simply because it is to their own private interests to do so ; and they do so blindly. Their **motto**⁵ is, "My country, right or wrong" ; that is, whatever foreign policy our nation adopts, whether just or unjust, we must support it, without criticism, simply because it is the policy of our country. Such spurious patriots are narrow nationalists, and teach that we cannot love our country without desiring and hating all other nations. They form the Jingo, or war-loving, party in any country, which is always crying out for war with other nations on the slightest **pretext**.⁶ Their motto is, "Might is right".

The true patriot, on the other hand, is an unselfish lover of his country. His sincere desire is to serve it in all ways possible. He is proud of his country ; but just because he loves it, he does not hesitate to expose its sins, denounce its abuses, and, if he thinks it necessary, to criticise its policy. He is more anxious that his nation should be right than that it should be powerful. While he loves his country, he loves other nations too, and gladly recognises their virtues and achievements. He would therefore cultivate international friendship, and hates and opposes wars. But if war breaks out, then he is the first to fight for his land, and willingly sacrifices his life even in its defence. Such patriotism is one of the noblest virtues.

1. literally /'lɪtərəli/ (*adv*) theo nghĩa đen
2. scoundrel /'skaʊndrəl/ (*n*) tên lưu manh, côn đồ
3. spurious /'spjʊəriəs/ (*adj*) giả tạo, không xác thực
4. nationalism /'næʃnəlɪzəm/ (*n*) chủ nghĩa dân tộc - nationalist (*n*)
5. motto /'mɒtəʊ/ (*n*) khẩu hiệu, phương châm
6. pretext /'priːtekst/ (*n*) cớ – the slightest pretext cớ nhỏ nhất

334. IS PATRIOTISM OUTMODED ? *PHẢI CHĂNG LÒNG YÊU NƯỚC ĐÃ BỊ LỖI THỜI ?*

Patriotism is a loyal feeling which one has about his own country. In the words of Scott, when he said "This is my own, my native land", he must have a deep and passionately loyal feeling for his country. According to this a man without this feeling dies unsung and unhonoured. This feeling had **kindled**² many dormant nations into actions. It has made people fight against tyrants and deposed them. It has shaken the very roots of empires. In every nation and in every language, the **bards**² have sung about the greatness of patriotism and they have called upon patriotism to brook no delay in throwing out the conquerer. History is replete with instances where patriotic people under an able leadership rallied round and resisted aggression and saved their land. Joan of Arc, Simon Bolivar and M. K. Gandhi are some of the famous names who fought for the freedom for their countries, with a burning patriotic zeal.

One must take pride in the culture and beauty of one's own country. The rivers, mountains, hills, valleys and dales must inspire his patriotic feeling. He must fight against the forces that **tarnish**³ the fair name of his country. Given the chance, he should encourage the art and trade of his country. He must support his country as his duty. He will never do anything that would bring down the fair name and image of his country.

One must live for his country and even be prepared to sacrifice all for the sake of his country. Today, unfortunately after the Second World War we find acute-nationalism wrongly identified with patriotism.

Nationalism is a phenomenon mostly seen today in many countries. These people become militant and are against foreigners who had come and settled in one country. There may be legitimate fear warranting such action as in the case of 'The White Australian Policy'. This is patriotism **laced**⁴ with self interest. This is the cause of much misunderstanding and bickering among nations.

In the present context of the world, narrow patriotism is really outmoded. No country today, however, powerful or rich can stand aloof. The world is shrinking with the coming of faster modes of communication and no country is too far away. The complex economy of the world had every country depending on one another. What affects the people in Pakistan may affect the people in the U.S.A. This interdependence cannot be overlooked. Self-contained condition is only a thing of the past. Every culture today is what it has rowed from other cultures ; no culture can boast of being pure. So there is no meaning in narrow nationalism.

It is safe to conclude that fanatic patriotism is bad though loving one's own country and contributing for its betterment and good ideals is a noble act.

1. kindle /'kɪndl/ (v) *nhện lên, khơi gợi*
2. bard /bɑ:d/ (n) *thi sĩ, nhà thơ*
3. tarnish /'tɑ:nɪʃ/ (v) *làm hoen ố, làm nhơ nhuốc*
4. lace (with) /leɪs/ (v) *pha trộn, pha thêm*

335. I AM PROUD OF MY COUNTRY *TÔI TỰ HÀO VỀ ĐẤT NƯỚC TÔI*

In his poem of patriotism Scott says if a man is not proud of his country, he will be buried without honour. When a man returns after a travel to his country he must be **bubbling**¹ with enthusiasm and his heart must be **pulsating**² with joy to land on his native soil. We have heard of great martyrs who sacrificed themselves for the sake of their country. So it is only proper and fair that one should love one's country.

To love one's country one need not have taken part in the liberation movements. One need not have carried the flag, shouted slogans and stood in the front line of agitators. His ancestors need not have shed blood for the sake of the land, nor there is any need for any material sacrifice. Still one may be proud of one's country.

There are many things why one must be proud of one's country. It may be due to the climate, natural regions, its people and the government, its tradition and culture and manufactures. The relation which the country has with other countries is also a point to be considered.

Considering the above norms let me say why I am proud of my country. My country has an equable climate. We are having bright sunshine throughout the year and plenty of rain. There are virgin evergreen forests. There are some good rivers, and the hills and valleys make the country beautiful. The sea coast is not straight but has bays so there are some good harbours.

Our people are quiet, hard-working and peace loving. They know their land gives them plenty in the form of grains and fruits and so one need not be hungry. The forests have natural wealth and the plantations are rich producing money spinning rubber. Our mines produce valuable tin making the country rich. We are a developing nation and a lot of good things will have to be done.

We have a good government which is **democratic**³ in set up. We have had a **succession**⁴ of enlightened rulers who have taken measures for improvement. The upheavals we see in some countries are practically absent in our country and the people are law-abiding.

Our country has had a long history of several centuries. Several cultures have flowed in here and so there we see a mixed culture. This is reflected in the way people dress and eat ; the buildings show the effect of these over-riding cultures. Our country has very friendly relation with the neighbouring countries and we are held in high esteem. Considering all these I am proud of my country.

1. bubble (with sth) /'bʌbl/ (v) tràn ngập (những cảm giác)

2. pulsate (with sth) /pʌl'seɪt/ (v) rung động, rộn ràng (do một xúc cảm mạnh)

3. democratic /demə'kræɪtɪk/ (adj) dựa trên các nguyên tắc của chế độ dân chủ

4. succession /sək'seɪʃn/ (n) sự nối tiếp nhau; sự kế tục

336. "THE TWENTIETH CENTURY IS AN AGE OF GREED."

DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS OPINION?

"THẾ KỶ HAI MƯƠI LÀ THỜI ĐẠI CỦA LÒNG THAM". BẠN CÓ ĐỒNG Ý VỚI Ý KIẾN NÀY ?

To be greedy is to own more than what one can legitimately claim. This is very well illustrated by the parable of the greedy dog which wanted to have the bone seen in the reflection. It lost the bone thereby. That is greed. All people are greedy; it is not only the poor who are greedy but also those who are very rich. When Alexander and most conquerors went on expeditions, it was their greed to extend and expand their empire. Muhammad Ghalib invaded India allured by its wealth. European nations went to the New World in search of gold and silver. Even in the United States people went west in search of gold. There are many instances in fact the pages of history books are replete with wars fought for this reason. Even now the super powers are not **exempt**¹ from greedy expansion motives.

To avoid being greedy, the child must be educated. The parents at home have got a great responsibility in this respect. Children must not be allowed to have more than what they need, whether it be in food, toys or clothes. Greed and jealousy go together. Hence to avoid being jealous one should overcome greed.

Let us see if the twentieth century is an age of greed. The First World War was the result of Kaiser's ambitions to build a German Empire. He was **itching**² for it and the murder of the prince at Sarajevo was only a pretext to start a war. Then came Hitler. From the beginning he wanted to continue from where Kaiser failed. Slowly and steadily he built up an army and thus the rape of Czechoslovakia (former) followed. At the same time Mussolini invaded Abyssinia. All these **culminated**³ in the Second World War. Japan followed the Axis partners and it started on an expansion **spree**.⁴ After the Second World War many small things happened which, viewed in their proper perspective, was nothing but greed. Only the offending parties gave them different names just as once they looked upon African countries as the white man's burden.

Greed in modern politics appears in different guises. Look at the latest Afghan debacle in which Russia has deliberately invaded that country and has created a political unsettlement there. Russia had adopted **subtle**⁵ ways to expand its hegemony.

Looking at modern day individuals, we can say they are in no way worse than those who had lived in previous centuries. One thing we can say that in this century which is becoming more and more materialistic, moral forces are on the wane. The influence of home and church does not seem to turn out good citizens. When man's needs were few, chances for his being greedy were also minimal. Now that there is more for material possession and man growing ever greedy than before. Temptation and greed are the two sides of a coin. To overcome them, moral education and a very disciplined way of life is essential. So it can be concluded that this century alone is not an age of greed.

1. exempt (from sth) /ɪg'zempt/ (adj) miễn (không bị ràng buộc)

2. itch (for sth) /ɪtʃ/ (v) cảm thấy luôn luôn ham muốn cái gì

3. culminate /'kʌlmɪneɪt/ (v) cuối cùng đã dẫn đến

4. spree /s'pri:/ (n) cuộc đi chơi vui vẻ và sôi nổi

5. subtle /'sʌbtl/ (adj) vi diệu, tinh vi

337. CO-OPERATING WITH ONE'S NEIGHBOURS *SỐNG HÒA ĐỒNG VỚI HÀNG XÓM LÁNG GIỀNG*

Living next to next is the principle of a neighbour. Good **neighbourliness**¹ is the ideal to be aimed at and pursued. People are thrown into the same neighbourhood by chance. One may try to choose the neighbourhood for many reasons. Sometimes it may be aesthetic and very often convenience. It may be the nearness to one's office of work, school, traffic centres and so on. As the saying goes, no man is an island ; he has to live with his neighbours. To make life tolerable and bearable one must co-operate with one's neighbour.

One's neighbour may be temporary as in the case of travelling by bus or train. Here the neighbour is with one for a few minutes or few hours. Even here if there is understanding between the neighbours the travel will be pleasant. Good neighbourliness generates good company and especially during travel it helps to take away the boredom. There are cases when such travel has culminated in longstanding friendship.

Whether one likes it or not, one cannot do without neighbours. Even where houses are isolated as in the case of bungalows there is inevitably the neighbour. Normally one may think one can do without neighbours because one can command all comforts and services, so the services or the need for a friend may not arise. However serviceable the radio or the TV may be in providing the recreation, they cannot supply all the human elements. The sympathy, the admiration and the appreciation which a neighbour may offer will have great humanizing influence. To share one's view and sometimes even one's sorrows one needs some neighbours. Because man is gregarious he cannot live in isolation.

But all neighbours are not always keeping the cordial relationship. Stresses and strains develop because of misunderstandings. The cause may be very trivial or **flimsy**,² still tension develops ending in **animosity**³ and **feud**.⁴ Jealousy may be another cause for such a tension. The neighbour may be doing fine, has earned a lot of money, his children are doing well, he gets quick promotions, there and such others may create jealousy. Once this is generated, this leads to non cooperation and petty quarrels. Very often children may be the cause for strained feelings.

Children may quarrel drawing the elders into the **fray**⁵ The neighbour's son may pick a flower or a fruit from your garden. Again he may throw his ball at your window pane damaging it. These are not unnatural so far as the younger one is concerned but it is for the elders to view at them with **equanimity**⁶ and make up for it. This may read easy on paper but not so in practical life. But with some broad outlook one must be able to tolerate.

Another reason for tension may be the animals. Your neighbour's dog may be a real nuisance or his poultry which would come into your garden and eat away the young saplings.

In all these cases, to keep up good neighbourliness, some understanding between the neighbours is important. Small differences can be easily patched up or ironed out. Care can at times play the good samaritan and helps the neighbours in a small or big way. Nobody is perfect and it is better not to speak disparagingly of your neighbour.

A cheerful word or a nod or a casual enquiry will strengthen the feeling of good neighbourliness. Negatively, one must not pry into what the neighbours is or does.

Tolstoy speaks in one of his stories how neighbours should behave. A child was wearing a new shirt and the neighbour's child threw mud on it and thus spoiled it. Women folk started the quarrel and men folk entered into the fray ending in a few heads broken and so on. By then the children forgot all their quarrel and were playing. Tolstoy draw a moral from the story namely neighbours must be quick to forget small wrongs done.

Neighbourliness is not only for individuals but it is important also in a great measure between neighbouring countries. History has got a lot to teach in this respect. Unless countries learn to live as good neighbours, there cannot be peace on earth. So children must be taught at home and in the school to co-operate with the neighbours and be friendly with them. The basic principle is to give and take and to develop a sense that the other man has as much right as you have and some degree of tolerance is very necessary.

1. neighbourliness /'neɪbəlnəs/ (n) sự ăn ở hòa thuận (giữa hàng xóm láng giềng với nhau)
2. flimsy /'flɪmzi/ (adj) hời hợt, nông cạn, yếu ớt
3. animosity /æni'mɒsəti/ (n) sự thù oán, lòng hận thù
4. feud /fju:d/ (n) mối cứu hận lâu dài và gay gắt
5. fray /freɪ/ (n) cuộc đánh nhau, cuộc tranh cãi hoặc đua tài, v.v...
6. equanimity /ekwə'nɪməti/ (n) tính bình thản, sự điềm tĩnh

338. THE AREA NEAR WHERE I LIVE

VÙNG NƠI TÔI Ở

I am living in the midst of an agricultural community and our house is situated in a village. Naturally the people are agriculturalists. Since the village is served by a river which supplies enough water almost throughout the year, agriculture is a profitable occupation here. There are **luscious**¹ fields of green paddy around and normally people raise two crops a year.

Since they are agriculturalists following traditional farming, there is a set pattern of life among them though modernity has recently invaded their homes. Thus most of them own a radio and their houses have electricity. Their children go to the neighbouring town for their education. Most of them own bicycles and a bus service connects the village with the neighbouring town. In fact my neighbours are actively interested in the politics. They are no more the innocent **rustics**,² they were once believed to be. Some of them aspire to hold offices in the village councils.

These people are looking forward as agriculturalists. Some of them even own tractors and almost all of them know the value of good seeds and fertilizers. For them agriculture is no more a shaky gamble of the unknown. They use **pesticides**³ and **insecticides**⁴ and have built a marketing federation to sell their products at a profit. They make use of the bank facilities so that they need not be a pawn in the hands of the village pawn broker and money lender.

Paddy growing is the major occupation though some adventurous farmers have switched on to cash crops like sugar cane. They employ casual labour when there is an intensive operation as in the transplanting, hoeing and harvesting season. But for those who actually own no land, the life of the casual labourer is very often uncertain. In an agricultural economy this can't be helped.

The people when not employed go about in a leisurely way. There is a tea shop in the village where people gather for gossip over a cup of tea. If you sit there for some time you can learn all about the village. Besides that, the cinema and films seem to be the most favourite topic with the villagers since they love frequenting the theatre.

There is a small school which is not a hot favourite with the affluent villagers. The affluent villager prefers to send his children to the Convent or English Schools in the neighbouring town. The village school has its strength of students drawn from the lower **strata**⁵ of the society. The **chapel**⁶ is visited by the parish priest once a week on Sundays. The Christian community in my village is a minority group.

1. luscious /'lʌʃəs/ (adj) (về mùi vị) ngọt ngào, thơm ngọt

2. rustic /'rʌstɪk/ (n) người nông dân quê mùa chất phác

3. pesticide /'pestɪsaɪd/ (n) thuốc trừ sâu

4. insecticide /ɪn'sektɪsaɪd/ (n) thuốc trừ sâu

5. strata /'strɑ:tə/ (n) (snh. của stratum) tầng lớp hoặc giai cấp trong xã hội – giai tầng

6. chapel /'tʃæpl/ (n) nhà thờ nhỏ

339. EARLY MORNING WALK

ĐI BỘ VÀO SÁNG SỚM

This looks like a scientific topic. Yes, an early morning walk is good for one's physical and mental health. Of all the recreations that men indulge in, a morning walk is one of the most rewarding. The air is fresh and free of dust, smoke and pollution. This is the only time that the roads are not crowded with heavy traffic. One can enjoy one's walk. As one walks, all care, anxieties or worries fade away. He becomes refreshed with good blood circulation and fresh air.

But is this possible for everyone in a city where life is mechanical on weekdays and **sombre**¹ on holidays ? It may not be possible for the young people as they have to go to school or colleges. However, this is very good for the old as the early walk is good for the health and makes them feel **refreshed**.²

In the early hours of the morning, nature is at its best. The dew drops on lush green grass and leaves of plants look like pearls. The splash of colours created by flowers laden with dew fills the air with fragrance.

A walk in the big park or along the coast of a bank or a **reservoir**³ is even more charming and rewarding.

The morning walk is very invigorating. It **tunes**⁴ one's body system and prepares him for a new day.

1. sombre /'sʊmbə(r)/ (adj) buồn chán, ảm đạm

2. refreshed /rɪ'freʃt/ (adj) tỉnh táo, khỏe khoắn

3. reservoir /'rezəvwa:(r)/ (n) hồ chứa nước

4. tune /tu:n/ (v) điều chỉnh

340. CAMPING IN THE HIGHLANDS *CẨM TRẠI Ở MIỀN CAO NGUYÊN*

The highlands have their fascination for those who love camping. With its hills and **dales**,¹ green valleys, murmuring rivers and silence only to be broken by the **chirping**² of birds, and the buzzing of **beetles**,³ the attraction will be endless. One must be a seeker and be willing to keep company with nature, be physically hardy and resolute to face hardships have a philosophical attitude and be poetically inclined to enjoy the pleasures of camping in the highlands. It would be to have one or two companions to share the joy and adventures of camping in the highlands.

For a city-bred person who is accustomed to noise, dust, smells and all sorts of pollutions, camping in the highlands has its thrills from sunrise to sunset. One may study the habits of birds and animals. One may enjoy the sky at night with its **sentinel**⁴ stars. One also can find time to read, draw or reflect. That is why most of the saints of the world sought the peace of caves and mountains.

To enjoy camping, one must be familiar with forest craft even though one need not be an expert. For instance, one must enjoy walking, be able to climb trees and hills, be able to satisfy with simple food which he has to prepare, and revere the habitat of animals. He must be able to pitch his tent and know how to go about preparing the camp site.

A tent when properly set up will give a certain amount of protection against wind and rain as well as shelter for sleeping. A provision box should be well provided with necessary things for making food, a few plates, cups and saucers and other necessary items for cooking. One must take pleasure in cooking, otherwise there mustn't be enough food to last for the period of camping. A radio set or a cassette player with a selected list of tapes would help drive away the silence and loneliness of the night. Anyway before going on a camp one must plan well to avoid disappointments. Above all what is needed is a mind to enjoy it.

Great philosophers and writers have praised the value of camping in the great open. For instance, R.L. Stevenson praises such a life in his "night among the pines". Thoreau, the American philosopher has a lot to say about such a life far from the maddening crowd.

I will certainly enlarge ones views of life and may help one to see the hands of God shaping nature around us.

1. dale /deɪl/ (n) *thung lũng (nhất là ở vùng Bắc nước Anh)*
2. chirp /tʃɜ:p/ (v) *kêu chiêm chiêm*
3. beetle /'bi:tl/ (n) *bọ cánh cứng*
4. sentinel /'sentɪnl/ (n) *lính canh, lính gác*