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FOR ADVANCED EFL LEARNERS

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Correspondence: tarisz@hotmail.com

A Walk in Lancashire

by *John Gimlette*

Wild horses wouldn't get me to central Lancashire for a bank holiday – or so I thought. In fact, all it took was some old friends from Ribchester. 'Great walking,' they'd insisted, and before I could say 'Hey Preston,' my wife had a copy of Walking the Ribble Way, and we were on the train.

What better place to start than Ribchester? Everything about it was slightly outlandish: it was built by Hungarian cohorts, and has since been enjoyed by steamy Romans, salmon, Hospitallers, lepers, weavers and now a mysterious theatrical collective known as The Rats. Even the battered cow that hangs outside the pub calls itself The White Bull.

I could have spent the whole weekend here, poking around the Middle Ages. Sadly however, we had reservations upstream, and return tickets from Yorkshire. 'Good luck!' shouted our friends, as we padded off towards enemy territory. As a Londoner, it's not easy to understand this rose-border warfare, but I can see how suspicions were aroused. When, eventually, Yorkshire did loom into view it looked like the surface of Saturn, all brown and burnt. Curiously, Lancashire looks equally grim from Yorkshire, like a soggy, green version of Mars. Happily, neither of these planetary illusions survived closer inspection, as we would discover.

Sure, Ribbledale's green and remote, but it was hardly Martian. In fact, almost immediately, the river came to life. Ahead, the path was crowded with squirrels, herons, magpies and – for want of a real name – little purple flowers that we called 'Nancy Reagan's Handbags'. At one point, we even found two fishermen asleep under the trees with a huge basket of fish. Only walkers were in short supply. The two we did see were lost, trying desperately to follow the little yellow arrows. But for our guidebook, we'd now be drifting dangerously near to Scotland. More arrows please, Lancashire CC.

Still, Ribbledale is a delightful place to be semi-lost. There's a cosy, gentle feel to the landscape. I've never seen such an unspoilt stretch of English countryside. It seems that after the Jacobeans had built Hacking Hall (scary) and Cromwell his bridge (unsuitable for traffic), all other plans had faltered.

Naturally, in this wild, green world eating-out is a hit-and-miss affair. Some places, like the Shireburn Arms, Hurst Green, made everything sound tempting enough but what arrived was disappointing (ping-ping

soup and ping-ping pies). Other places, like the Buck Inn at Paythorne, weren't much to look at but the food was exquisite (thick lamb soup and fresh fishcakes). On some stretches, however, like Clitheroe to Paythorne, we found ourselves either too early for the pubs or in a retail desert. If it hadn't been for a car boot sale (and some colossal bacon-butties), we'd probably have starved.

We broke the journey first at Clitheroe (10 miles on), at The Station Hotel. It didn't sound great, but at £85, we got a room that was functional and spruce. Even more surprising was the wine bar opposite, which looked as if it had arrived here Tardis-like from Miami. Everything was made of glass, or leather and decking. It wasn't quite what I'd expected in this land of woods and rainbow trout, but the Clitherites (or is it Clitheronians?) loved it. Once again, Lancastrians are eating Caesar salad, just as they had almost 2,000 years before.

Our second stopover, at The Maypole Inn in Long Preston (another 18 miles on) was less of a surprise. It was more tweed than bling, but all the better for that; we unwound in a snug little bar, and re-fuelled on Yorkshire lamb and life-restoring apple crumble. Our room was so determinedly medieval that it still had giant iron hooks in the ceiling, which we assumed were for dangling either looms or bacon or perhaps even human beings.

Almost overnight, the landscape had changed. After the leisurely green curves of Lancashire, the Ribble now came frothing down from the dales. At times, the path had to climb away from the river, and we found ourselves alone in a grand and treeless world, where no-one spoke anything but Sheep. I enjoyed these blasts of heather, with all their quaintly apocalyptic features, like 'The Edge' (a cottage), 'Wild Share' (a field) and 'Scaleber Force' (a waterfall), but I wasn't sorry to be back in the valleys.

Yorkshire always makes up for the ferocity of its uplands, with the gentility of its crevices. I loved the towns squeezed into our last ten miles of the Ribble. Settle was cheekily Stuart with its little palace named The Folly and a pie-shop called 'The Naked Man'. Further up was the elegant village of Stackhouse and, beyond it, Stainforth, where the church ladies had laid on a huge cream tea, at £1 a splurge.

Things were a little wilder further up the valley. On Bargh Hill, a storm suddenly erupted from a sunny day, like a river pouring out of the sky. Then all was forgiven, with warm breezes and a pub at Helwith Bridge. It seems the war has never ended here, and there were still bombers swooping off the walls and diving round the bar. According to CAMRA, this is the best (and perhaps only) beer for miles. To enjoy it properly – as the locals do – you need to grow a long beard and sit all day at the bar. Sadly, we had a train to

catch, two miles upriver.

The Settle-Carlisle railway is a curious end to this adventure. For those who dug it out, in 1860, it was an unforgiving task, and many are buried in the valley. For us, it was like re-playing all our efforts very quickly in reverse. But in Horton in Ribblesdale, they were appalled we'd only managed 40 miles in three days. Hill-farmers here can manage 26 miles in a mere three hours.

'Aye,' said the café owner, 'they even tire their sheep dogs out.'

I know the feeling: dog-tired at the end of the way. ♦

Gerard Manley Hopkins

by *Norman Buller*

During his lifetime the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) had a readership of only a handful of his personal friends. His output was not large; the body of his mature completed verse totals just under fifty poems.

Although his work was produced during the Victorian era his collected poems were not published until 1918, some thirty years after his death. This meant that the work of an obscure contemporary of Tennyson, Browning and Arnold didn't enter the public domain until the early poetry of Pound and Eliot was already there. It is therefore not surprising that Hopkins's poems, regarded as 'difficult and obscure' even among his correspondents, should take their place alongside that of the 'difficult and obscure' modernists.

It is unlikely that any of Hopkins's verse would have survived had it not been for his friend Robert Bridges (1844-1930). The two men had met while undergraduates at Oxford and had corresponded thereafter until Hopkins's death, exchanging and

commenting on each other's poems. Although Bridges couldn't cope with Hopkins's originality, stating bluntly that he wouldn't read 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' again for any money, he must have had some inkling that Hopkins's work had merit. Bridges meticulously kept all the manuscripts Hopkins sent to him and, after the latter's death, gradually and guardedly released some of them into publication. Bridges's appointment as Poet Laureate in 1913 enhanced his influence and in 1916 he produced *The Spirit of Man*, an anthology of prose and verse which contained six poems by Hopkins. In 1918 Bridges felt that at last it was time to launch his late friend's collected poems into the public domain.

It took a long time for Hopkins's work to catch on. It was startlingly different from anything produced by his Victorian contemporaries or their successors. About ten years elapsed before all seven hundred and fifty copies of the 1918 edition were sold. Gradually, however, the originality and sheer verbal vitality of his poetry began to be recognised and appreciated, especially among the academic community. Today his work is widely available and critical studies of it abound. Someone once observed that analyses of his poem 'The Windhover' had at one stage become something of a minor industry in the United States.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, the eldest of nine children, was born into a fairly prosperous, middle-class, staunchly Anglican family and grew up in Stratford, Essex, and Hampstead. He was an intelligent child and attended Highgate School from which he won an Exhibition to read classics at Balliol College, Oxford. His life as a student began happily enough but he soon fell victim to the religious doubt that troubled many young Oxford men at that time. Much to the horror and chagrin of his parents, he was received into the Roman Catholic Church by John Henry (later Cardinal) Newman who had followed the same path some years earlier.

Hopkins was all for giving up his studies but Newman wisely advised him to return to Oxford to show that becoming a Catholic had not unsettled him. Hopkins did so and was awarded a Double First Class Honours Degree in Moderations and Greats (classics). Had he remained an Anglican he could well have embarked on an academic career. As it was, his future, to say the least, looked uncertain.

In 1867, the year of his graduation, Hopkins had reached a crossroads. In deciding what to do with the rest of his life he had to take certain facts into account. There is irrefutable evidence that Hopkins was not attracted to women but was attracted to men. He was an extremely devout Christian and there was no way he would ever have put any homosexual propensity into practice. His decision to abandon the Anglican faith was not taken lightly and he did so for what he believed

were sound doctrinal reasons. But for him a life of celibacy was essential and it must have crossed his mind that becoming a Roman Catholic priest would satisfy forever any curiosity as to why he did not marry. Having decided upon that course, it was only a matter of choosing which religious Order to join.

Another factor in Hopkins's nature was an asceticism bordering on the masochistic. He had no aversion to being mastered and was willing to surrender his personal comfort and will, indeed his very individuality, to a higher authority. For Hopkins, the stricter the external discipline the more he would be able to exercise the self-discipline needed to trammel and curb his natural desires. Although his own disposition was anything but belligerent, Hopkins had a frank admiration for the armed forces and their personnel and the idea of being a soldier of Christ would have had an undoubted appeal. He therefore chose to join the Society of Jesus, an Order known for its militant practice of Christianity and its demand for unquestioning obedience from its members. He remained a Jesuit for the rest of his life and never deviated from his absolute loyalty to the Order.

As well as for its ardent defence of the Roman Catholic faith, the Society of Jesus had always been renowned for its missionary, educational and charitable work. It was an essentially active movement. It was also thought by many to be philistine in outlook. In general the Society regarded art as an irrelevance which could easily distract its members from their spiritual duty.

In the light of this one wonders whether, and to what extent, Hopkins's choice of religious Order discouraged his development as a poet. It is clear to us today that Hopkins's purpose in life was to produce the poems which no-one but he could write but there was no chance that his Jesuit superiors – or probably even he – would have seen it that way.

From then on his poetry had to take pot-luck among his other demanding duties. This denial of his essential creative self, together with his many other denials, must have caused a chronic drain on his mental and physical strength which, since his constitution had never been robust, set the seal on a life of ill-health, depression and nervous exhaustion. This continued until his premature death just a few weeks short of his forty-fifth birthday. It is not surprising that at the point of his death he was repeatedly heard to exclaim 'I am so happy. I am so happy'. This could only have been because he believed that his soul was being called by Christ, through the Cross, to perfection and that he was at last about to be released from the well-nigh unendurable burden and torment of the life he had deliberately chosen to lead.

The originality of Hopkins's verse is well illustrated by his ode, 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'. It is his

longest poem and the first to be written in Hopkins's mature style. He explained how this came about in a letter to his friend Canon Dixon: 'I long had haunting my ear the echo of a new rhythm which now I realised on paper.' Note that the rhythm haunting the ear came before writing the result on paper, which is a clear indication of the priority which Hopkins gave to sound over sight in creating his poetry. He made this abundantly clear in a letter to Robert Bridges: 'Read me with the ears, as I always wish to be read, and my verse becomes all right.'

He called this innovation 'sprung rhythm', 'sprung' in the sense of 'abrupt', since two stressed syllables can occur abruptly one after the other without any unstressed syllables between them. The principle behind it is quite different from that of ordinary metrical verse. In the latter the feet tend to be regular whereas in each foot of sprung rhythm there is one stressed syllable and either any number of unstressed syllables (though usually no more than four) or none at all. The result is an energetic bounding rhythm, rather like a creature of the wild adjusting its step in bounds according to the terrain it is crossing. This is exemplified well enough in the second stanza of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland':

I did say yes
O at lightning and lashed rod;
Thou heardst me truer than tongue confess
Thy terror, O Christ, O God;
Thou knowest the walls, altar and hour and night:
The swoon of a heart that the sweep and the hurl of thee trod
Hard down with a horror of height:
And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire of stress.

Even today this seems a remarkable and unusual way of writing the English language. Imagine its effect on readers accustomed to the soporific tones of the later Wordsworth or the mellifluous cadences of Tennyson!

Coleridge asserted that poetry gives most pleasure when only generally understood. Regarding this poem, Hopkins remarked in a letter to Bridges:

Granted that it needs study and is obscure, for indeed I was not over-desirous that the meaning of all should be quite clear, at least unmistakeable, you might … have never the less read it so that lines and stanzas should be left in the memory and superficial impressions deepened, and have liked some without exhausting all.

This was another instance of Hopkins pleading for his work to be read with the ears, for its musical structure to be accepted as meaningful, leaving the mind to catch up later.

What was it that made Hopkins feel it was essential for him to write in this way? It stemmed from his belief, which was also that of the medieval theologian Duns Scotus, that every created thing, from a mere stone to a human being, was literally inimitable, a one-off, in essence quite unlike any other. It was this factor, the sheer individuality of anything, which he sought to discover in whatever he encountered, including, as in part one of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', his own personal life experience.

Hopkins called this quality 'inscape'. When he was moved to express this in verse he sought to choose and arrange words in a way which best re-presented his experience of that unique essence. This meant forcing language to work extremely hard in the pursuit of this aim and if the current conventions of language needed to be sacrificed to that end, so be it. The result was often the compact, hard-edged, multi-adjectival, exclamatory, battering verse which, at its most successful, miraculously achieved a lyricism and beauty all its own and rarely equalled by others.

Hopkins had an interest in music throughout his life and he set to music poems by Shakespeare, Sappho and others, including verses by his correspondents Bridges, Dixon and Patmore. Little of this, it seems, has survived. It is likely that this interest in music found its truest expression in his verse structures, for these show an unmistakable musical presence which, far from being merely ornamental, is an integral part of each poem.

Hopkins's poem 'Spring and Fall' is a good example of this musicality. It also shows that sprung rhythm doesn't always have to be intense and flamboyant.

Spring and Fall:
To a young child

Margaret, are you grieving
Over Goldengrove unleaving?
Leaves, like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
Ah! As the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
And yet you will weep and know why.
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sorrow's springs are the same.
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It is the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

Various conjectures have been made as to the identity of Margaret or whether she really existed at all. Hopkins merely commented in a letter that the poem was 'not founded on any real incident'. For some

eighteen months during 1880 to 1881 Hopkins served as priest at St. Francis Xavier's church in Liverpool where he found his duties generally uncongenial. Occasionally, however, he was sent by train on a more welcome task to Rose Hill, the estate of a Catholic family near Lydiate in rural Lancashire. There he would stay the night and conduct Mass before breakfast on the following day. He explained in a letter to Robert Bridges how the poem 'came to him' on the morning of 7th September 1880 as he walked to the railway station on his return to Liverpool and he was able to send the completed poem to Bridges only three days later. Exactly what inspired the poem will probably never be known but it seems most likely that the young child Margaret never existed and was a fictional notion invented by Hopkins for the sake of the poem.

In this fifteen-line lyric the overall structure is neatly arranged, the first six lines in three rhyming couplets, and the last six also, with a rhyming triplet in between. Rhythmic unity is maintained by each line consisting of four sprung rhythm feet having four irregular stresses per line.

Hopkins, not being a North American, obviously chose the word 'Fall' in preference to 'Autumn' for its ambiguous meaning of both the descent of dying leaves and the Fall of mankind. This ambiguity is essential for understanding the poem, taking the reader into the heart of the Garden of Eden in the Book of Genesis and reminding us of the opening lines of Milton's *Paradise Lost* where 'Man's First Disobedience … Brought Death into the World, and all our woe.'

The title immediately presents a contrast between the two different and opposing conditions of spring and autumn. This also suggests, by metaphorical association, the contrasts of youth and age, innocence and experience, freshness and decay and purity and corruption.

The poem ostensibly addresses Margaret, the young child in the subtitle, though this can only be a rhetorical device since it is unlikely that any real child would have been able to grasp the significance of the poem. If we accept the fiction which the poem offers, it seems that Margaret has made it known that she is saddened by the mass death of the falling leaves. The name 'Goldengrove' indicates a place where trees (grove) bear dying (golden) leaves but it also meets the poem's requirements regarding rhythm and sound. It is known that there were at least two landed properties of that name in or near areas where Hopkins had lived.

The poem begins by examining, in the first four lines, the girl's reason for weeping. Several ideas and threads of meaning are introduced and skilfully woven together and the unusual, crabbed syntax is the result of their considerable compression. The expression of grief at the death of leaves by a child (who could well be

approaching adolescence) must seem to an adult mind out of all proportion to the ostensible reason for it. The implication is that she is experiencing, albeit subliminally, a truth far more profound than the death of leaves. The phrase 'things of man' is used to imply maturity as distinct from childhood, experience contrasted with innocence, corruption compared with purity, autumn (Fall) as distinct from the 'fresh thoughts' of spring – indeed, the whole paraphernalia of the adult world and its awareness of what is euphemistically called the 'facts of life.'

That all this should have been made available to the attentive and responsive reader in only the title and first four lines says something about the quality of the language with which we are dealing. The ability to achieve such precise suggestiveness and concentration with such musicality has been given to few writers in the history of the English language.

The Book of Genesis has it that Adam and Eve lost their perfection and immortality by activating sex and death in disobedience of God's decree. Thereafter sex and death would be mankind's fate forever and so Margaret, despite her present innocence, is destined to experience the Fall's consequences also. As she approaches adulthood, ('as the heart grows older') she will become inured ('come to such sights colder') to the death of leaves because she will become conditioned to man's fallen state and be part of the corrupted world.

In line eight the words 'wanwood' and leafmeal' are examples of how Hopkins would create new words in pursuit of the precise expression of 'inscape'. For 'wanwood' he was clearly after a word which would combine the qualities of 'wan' – dark, gloomy, discoloured, sickly, waning – with 'wood' – an area of trees. Similarly 'leafmeal', after the fashion of 'piecemeal', combines 'leaves' with 'meal', i.e. falling one by one and eventually crumbling into a fine texture.

The line 'And yet you will weep and know why' is pivotal to the poem. The implication is that the adult and mature Margaret, with her heart grown older, will certainly have plenty to weep about but, because no longer in a state of innocence and wholly involved in the process of original sin, she will be fully aware of the consequences of the Fall and therefore will 'know why' she weeps.

Lines ten and eleven advise the child not to concern herself with particular reasons for sorrow, such as dying leaves, because all sorrow stems from that one momentous cause which 'Brought Death into the World, and all our woe.' For someone of Hopkins's beliefs, no greater deprivation for mankind than the Fall could even be imagined. Lines twelve and thirteen assert that in her present state of innocence the child Margaret would find it impossible to utter (mouth) or even think (mind) what her heart was inarticulately aware of and her spirit (ghost) had subliminally

surmised.

The final couplet sums up the significance of Margaret's sorrow. In seemingly mourning the mortality of falling leaves she is really mourning the mortality of fallen mankind, 'the blight man was born for'. Since her spirit (ghost) has 'guessed' her implicated in the Fall, the girl's mourning the death of leaves is only ostensible and she is subliminally mourning for Margaret, her own fallen self. ♦

In Tasmania

by *Konrad Muller*

'It is too far south for spices and too close to the rim of the earth to be inhabited by anything but freaks and monsters'

(Abel Tasman upon sighting the West Coast of Tasmania in November 1642)

I came into the Tarkine tracing the footsteps of Jorgen Jorgensen, the former Danish revolutionist, Foreign Office intelligence asset, gambling addict and general human problem turned convict-explorer.

It is a remnant of wild nature in Tasmania's fantastically remote northwest. Jorgensen was searching for sheep country or at the very least stock routes. This was a mission doomed from the start. The Tarkine – as the area is now called after one of the ancient indigenous tribes of the island, the Tarkayna – is a land of wild seas and monumental sand dunes, stony high country clad in heath and moor, and river valleys where there stretches the largest span of cool temperate rainforest outside Alaska. Very soon

Jorgensen and his companions were stalled in rainforest, having seen almost nothing fit for sheep. There in his Journal the Dane observed of his comrades: ‘Bread and a good piece of pork would afford them more delight than the most sublime or beautiful prospect of nature.’ The year was 1827; evidently there was only one Wordsworthian here.

It was not only in his attitude toward nature that Jorgensen felt a man apart. His West Coast Journal also records the first glimmerings of an intellectual interest in the hunter-gathers of Tasmania, that unique people isolated by flooding seas for some ten thousand years until the appearance of the first Europeans.

Already, when Jorgensen travelled in the west, flames were being fanned across the island in Tasmania’s infamous Black War that would end with the native tribes largely wiped out. That dirty war was fuelled by land competition (and the abduction of black women); and Jorgensen’s employer, the Van Diemen’s Land Company, played a prominent part. In fact, the northwestern tribes suffered some of the worst violence, and the Chief Agent of the Company was effectively satrap in the area. A determined gentleman called Edward Curr, he openly used the word ‘extermination’, and, amongst other things, threatened to place the heads of blacks on the roof of a stock hut as a deterrent.

By contrast, Jorgensen wrote privately to the Governor in Hobart warning correctly that the abuse of Aboriginal women by Company staff risked spreading the war to the northwest. During his foray into the Tarkine, he also took careful note of the local tribes:

March 31, 1827: We observed a very compact native hut far different (as are all huts in this quarter) from those seen to the east. It was a complete piece of gothic architecture, in the shape of a dome and presenting all the first rudiments of that science. It was made to contain twelve to fourteen people with ease. The entrance was small and not above two feet high. The wood used for the supports had been steamed and bent by fire.

The Danish convict-explorer was, after a fashion, an intellectual. Thirteen years later, when he was fished out of a Hobart gutter and dragged away to the old Colonial Hospital to die, he was still working on a sympathetic, ethnographic study of the Tasmanian Aborigines, and even today I am told by descendants of the indigenous tribes Jorgensen is remembered for his efforts to preserve shards of their lost languages.

These former themes of nature, isolation and violence, and the strange counter-example of a Danish reprobate, recurred to me when I walked in the Tarkine this autumn. For they seemed to echo eerily in the present.

I wanted to walk on the Tarkine coast.

Past lakes and peaks, I drove six hours over Tasmania's central plateau to Corinna, an old gold-mining town in the west transmogrified by green financial alchemy into a hub for eco-tourism. The woman at the front desk asked, 'At what point when you don't return do you want us to alert Emergency?' My face must have betrayed me, because she added: 'Well, you might break your leg.' 'I have no intention of breaking my leg,' I finally replied. 'As far I'm concerned, you can alert Emergency whenever you think reasonable.'

I took a boat down the Pieman River. As we puttered along, mist ghosted through the foliage on the hillsides that fell into the black waters and were reflected back in perfect clarity. It is the tannins from the heathlands above that, draining into the rivers of the Tarkine, give them their extraordinary resonance; and now images of leatherwood and myrtle, sassafras and celery pine, blackwood and ti-tree, trailed beside me in the inky waters.

At length, the rainforest receded and the coast announced itself.

The white surf and the golden spray could be seen for hundreds of metres from the river's mouth, where the waves of the Southern Ocean, roaring in, struck a sandbar and sent jets spouting high above the jagged rocks. Those rocks might have been dragon's teeth stained orange by lichen. If ever Abel Tasman's remark about freaks and monsters on Tasmania's west coast rings true, it is surely in these seas. Wild winds and breathtaking waves (the highest recorded last winter was a mere twenty-two metres, I was told by one local) are generated by a movement of air and water undisturbed by any landmass between Tasmania and Patagonia half a world away. It is a coast littered with wrecks.

I was dropped some way short of that sandbar at a place called Hardwicke Point. Here the jetty was a few rotted planks the colour of tobacco. I took my pack and headed north on a muddy track. Behind me the foaming violence of the ocean could be heard. Ahead I saw the southern flanks of the Norfolk Ranges, mantled in green. On I walked through a veil of sea mist. The only contemporary signs were a few empty beer bottles, a tossed cigarette lighter, and a rusted forty-gallon drum from Korea that was rolling in a shingled cove. *'Warning may cause an allergic reaction. Avoid skin contact. Wear protective gloves,'* it read.

Already the air hinted of rain and I stopped above a stream. But I didn't hear any water murmur over the stones that night. For a deluge came and the wind rose and tossed my tent like a plaything.

In Hobart I had met a fellow called Rob Fairlie. He runs wilderness treks through the Tarkine and on a map he'd marked for me the many prehistoric sites to be found on the coast between the Pieman and the

Interview Rivers. Next morning that map was disintegrating in my hands through the ministrations of wind and rain. But I could still see where Fairlie had inscribed the letter M for midden, and in truth the indigenous sites were not difficult to find.

On lonely bluffs and headlands I found myself walking directly onto these signs of ancient human habitation: piles of sea-shells collected in great sandy heaps and left there in seeming perpetuity as a reminder of a vanished people. White shells of sea snails, and shells of the much larger abalone that still released their iridescent play of pink and blue and grey when scattered up to the light.

Artefacts, too, were buried here, stone tool heads, and human bones. In one midden I picked up an object. A chiselled piece of tawny stone with a sharp cutting edge, I thought it was possibly a piece of spongolite – very hard rock quarried from just one source on the island and traded in prehistoric times for the fashioning of tool heads. Elsewhere on the coast are rock carvings that in their geometric motifs are a form of abstract art; and hut epressions marking the location of the dwellings described by Jorgensen in his Journal. I couldn't see any, but even to my eye this was a landscape of great archaeological richness.

Unfortunately, the shell middens on the Tarkine coast are at the centre of controversy.

Two years ago the federal government gave them National Heritage protection and a ban was placed on vehicles being driven through the sand dunes and over the bluffs to stop the prehistoric sites being damaged. Then, last year, the Tasmanian state government, chasing some sort of off-road motoring enthusiasts' vote, pledged to reopen tracks in the area for four-wheel drives and – why not? – Mad Max-style quad bikes with souped-up wheels. I saw no vehicles when I walked (only those discarded beer bottles), because the matter is now before the courts and an injunction exists. One out-spoken former Parks manager has described the Tasmanian government's pandering to 'ego-driven macho men and their machines' and has spoken of 'anarchy in a lawless wild West.'

As with the archaeological sites, so with the wider Tarkine landscapes.

Earlier in the summer I walked through the rainforest and on the button grass heath of the high country. These are natural and scientific wonderlands, still housing their many living marvels – giant freshwater crayfish, and the largest of wedge-tail eagles, and the Tasmanian devil, and not least, the ancient species of tree that, hugging the cool dark river valleys, descend from the broken supercontinent of Gondwana. Conservationists have long sought the area's protection, and their literature has made frequent reference to the first recorded evocation of the rainforest, that of the Danish convict-explorer in his

West Coast Journal:

March 19, 1827: Fallen trees in every direction had interrupted our march, and it is a question whether ever human being, either civilized or savage, had ever visited this savage looking country. Be that as it may, all about us appeared well calculated to arrest the progress of the traveller, sternly forbidding man to traverse those places which nature had selected for its own silent and awful repose.

Nature has not been heard. Where previously sheep condemned the north-western tribes to 'extermination', the interests of the extractive industries (logging and especially mining) have more recently prevented the Tarkine landscapes, which the indigenous mapped, used and traversed, from being properly protected. Around forty per cent of the area is now covered by mineral exploration licenses, and at the height of the mining boom, following a campaign by unions, the federal environment minister rejected advice from the Australian Heritage Council that the entire Tarkine be given possible World Heritage Listing. (As it happened, the promise of jobs proved chimerical: mining projects were shelved when the global iron ore price fell.)

And yet, though pockmarked here and there by tailings dams and acid leaching and clear-felled rainforest, the Tarkine still possesses landscapes of immense natural beauty that can be salvaged. It is glorious to walk here on the golden moors in the sun, clapping your hands to warn off the flickering black tiger snakes; or in a forest glade to stop and see a myrtle-beech, its trunk several-arm spans wide, towering overhead, or fallen in its fluorescent green majesty.

The Tarkine coast, too, has a certain power. This autumn I walked on beyond the Interview River. And here on a grassy verge above another tannin-dark stream I suddenly saw stretching away to the north a line of golden sand dunes. In their immensity they were the shape and hue of lions' paws. No human sound was to be heard and no machine. Everything seemed to be on the rim of dissolution: the soft grey sky and the foaming turquoise sea, the mist and the sea spray, the opalescent sheen of the wet sand and the washed-up spumes of the tannins. Into that emptiness, I could have kept walking (I had food for two days and water was abundant). But I had to turn around.

At Hardwicke Point I had a boat to meet, or they would be calling Emergency. ♦

Malraux, Camus and the Nobel Prize

Jeffrey Meyers

André Malraux (1901-76) was born in a bourgeois quarter of Paris, Albert Camus (1913-60) in a working-class district in the provincial Algerian town of Oran. Despite their different backgrounds they had significant emotional, intellectual and aesthetic affinities. Camus's father was killed on the Marne in October 1914; Malraux's father committed suicide in December 1930. Camus begins *The Myth of Sisyphus* by asserting: 'There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide.' In Malraux's *The Walnut Trees of Altenburg* the motives for the suicide of the hero's uncle, Dietrich Berger, remain mysterious. Malraux and Camus did not write about each other (though Camus planned an essay) and left no detailed accounts of their meetings, but it is possible to trace the intriguing progress and sad dissolution of their friendship.

The young Camus first saw Malraux in June 1935 when the famous writer gave an eloquent, fiery and spellbinding anti-fascist speech in Algiers. Camus was then a student at the university. Malraux had been notoriously arrested for stealing Khmer sculpture in Cambodia, had published *The Conquerors* (1928) and *The Royal Way* (1930), and had won the Prix Goncourt for *Man's Fate* (1933), his novel about the betrayal of the Communist revolution in Shanghai. In July 1935 Camus told a friend 'how much I admire André Malraux.'

That same year Camus asked permission for his amateur theatre to produce an adaptation of Malraux's latest novel *Days of Wrath* (1935). The title comes from the medieval hymn *Dies Irae* about the fate of the saved and damned in the Last Judgment: 'Days of wrath and doom impending, / Heaven and earth in ashes ending.' In this novel and in Camus's *The Stranger* the hero is tried and condemned to death. But in Malraux's book Kassner, a Communist leader arrested by the Nazis, is released when a comrade takes on his identity. Malraux replied to Camus's request in a one-word telegram, "*Joue*" (Play), and pleased the recipient by using the familiar *tu* form. Herbert Lottman wrote that in January 1936 Camus used 'off-stage narration' and 'rapid shifting of scenes through use of spotlights'. The play was a great success and roused the enthusiastic audience to sing the *Internationale.*

Malraux had a heroic career in the Spanish Civil War and World War II; Camus, suffering from chronic

tuberculosis, was a non-combatant. During the Spanish war in 1938 Camus, still fascinated by the courageous adventurer, wrote to a friend that 'Malraux prefers the epic aspects of revolution ... and risks his life every day to justify his way of seeing.' After attending a private screening of Malraux's poignant film based on his Spanish war novel, *Man's Hope*, Camus exclaimed, 'I was overwhelmed. What a joy to be able to admire something wholeheartedly.' When he finally met Malraux through their mutual friend, the writer and journalist Pascal Pia, Camus added, 'I spent a fascinating hour with a person full of tics, feverish and disorganised, but with an amazing intelligence.' Malraux had acquired his nervous tics flying combat missions in Spain.

In 1941 Pia sent Malraux, then an editor at the leading French publisher Gallimard, the typescripts of Camus's *The Stranger* and *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Malraux enthusiastically praised the powerful ideas and persuasive technique: 'I read *L'Etranger* first. The theme is very clear. [It] is obviously something important. The strength and simplicity of the means, which end up forcing the reader to accept the character's point of view, are all the more remarkable given that the fate of the book depends on how convincing this character is. And what Camus has to say, what he has to convince us about, is not insubstantial.' Malraux added that *Sisyphus* is 'remarkable, and what he has to say gets through, which is not very easy. The book completely illuminates the novel.' Camus gratefully responded, 'You are among those whose approval I sought. If my manuscripts bring me nothing but the pleasure and sympathy of some minds I love and admire, it will be quite enough.'

Malraux was pleased to see two favourable references to himself in *Sisyphus*. Camus placed Malraux with Dostoyevsky as a novelist-philosopher and also stated, in his discussion of Kafka, that 'Malraux's thought ... is always bracing'. Camus's two books, published in 1942, immediately established his reputation and were also a great coup for Gallimard. But Malraux had considerable perspicacity to recognise their merit. In three notorious examples of modern literary blindness, André Gide had rejected Proust's *Swann's Way,* T.S. Eliot would reject Orwell's *Animal Farm* and Elio Vittorini would reject Lampedusa's *The Leopard*.

The two authors had their first social meeting at the Gallimards' Parisian flat early in 1944. Lottman reported that they 'seemed to take to each other at once. They left the Gallimards together' and Camus planned to walk Malraux home. Instead, they changed direction, turned toward Camus's house and continued to converse until the German curfew drove them home. Though Malraux was a compulsive talker, Camus managed to get a word in and later said they had had a

lively rapport.

Two incidents that took place during the Nazi occupation in 1944 illuminate their friendship. While editing the clandestine newspaper *Combat*, Camus was also active in the Resistance. Malraux found him a trustworthy and dependable comrade. Curtis Cate wrote that Malraux turned to Camus for urgent help when 'he needed a hide-out for an English major [George Hiller] he had brought with him and who was arranging to have weapons parachuted to the *maquisards* in the Dordogne.' Camus explained that he had no room in his flat and was closely watched by the Gestapo, but he was willing to take the risk and managed to hide the major with a friend. ♦

Sinners' Corner

by *Mark Sadler*

I returned to work on a dismal Tuesday morning, emerging from the main entrance of London, Fenchurch Street, railway station under opaque grey skies. During my extended absence, the shopfronts of the old city had been divested of their brightly-coloured festive decorations. Gone was the red tinsel foil and shiny burgundy-coloured baubles garnishing the window display of Charlie Davies' Tailory in Leadenhall, where a fortnight before they had rekindled the glare of the spotlights in the warm emulsified tones of a log fire, dimly reflecting in the contents of a wine glass. Absent this brightening influence, the winter streets, and the overcast faces of those who paraded up and down the cold grainy pavements, appeared to have been permeated with the stark greyness of a new year that was yet to form an identity of its own.

I walked the full length of Eastcheap, easily matching my pace with that of a large truck that crawled along beside the curb. Men dressed in

fluorescent jackets were hauling dessicated Christmas trees from the lobbies of office buildings and pitching them into the bin that occupied the back of the lorry, where they piled-up haphazardly, like a small, densely-wooded hill.

The working day was marred by the sounds of a demolition that was underway in the churchyard of St Mary's, across the road from my place of business. Every so often, a chorus of men's shouts, emanating from the site, would build to a collective heave, heralding the imminent crashing of one of several large, and already fractured, panels of glass, as they were dropped into the yawning mouth of a skip. The sound grew more jarring on the nerves as the day wore on, and elicited alarmed inquiries from clients on the other end of the phone, who assumed that it had originated in our office.

The object of the ground clearance was a glass-walled building which had briefly occupied a disused corner of the churchyard, before collapsing suddenly during the early hours of Christmas Eve. In the short time that it stood, it had vaguely resembled a small chapel with a sharply-peaked, spired roof that incorporated a slight twist a few feet below the tip. The modernity of the design made it an incongruous neighbour to the medieval place of worship that it shared common ground with, which was a square-towered, 14th century stone church, belted around the midriff with a dark band of knapped flint.

The purpose of the new structure was altogether less sacred. During its fleeting existence it had housed a small shop, the purpose of which was to raise funds for the church. Space had also been made on the premises for three pop-up retail units that were intended for rental. Prior the collapse of the building, these had accommodated a stall selling resin-cast snowman-shaped lamps, another specialising in cushions embroidered with expressions of seasonal goodwill, and a refreshment stand, peddling Christmas cake and a non-alcoholic mulled beverage that was ladled from a large cauldron.

As a further addition, some narrow wooden sheds had been erected temporarily along a new fixed-gravel path, leading from the gate to churchyard, up to the entrance to the chapel. These were occupied by Christmas-themed shops and were liberally decorated with blue fairy lights.

When the weather is good, I will sometimes eat my lunch on a south-facing bench in the churchyard. A few months after the demolition of the glass chapel, I happened to make conversation there with one of the volunteers who help to manage the grounds; a man named Gordon Booth. Before his retirement, he had worked as a stockbroker in the city.

It was early March and I recall that clumps of daffodils had sprung up against the walls of the old

church. Booth sat down next to me and made an appreciative remark about a large tree close-by, with a broad spread of branches that were speckled with emerging bright-green foliage.

“William Blake claims to have seen angels roosting in the boughs,” he said. “There is a short walk called the Angel Path that you can take through this part of the city, that visits all of the places where he witnessed the heavenly host watching over London. We have a pamphlet on it in the church foyer if you are interested. Occasionally, on the weekends, one of us will provide a guided tour for small groups. The next one is on the fourteenth. If you would like to come, I could add your name to the list.”

I passed some comment about avoiding London at the weekends. This seemed to ruffle his feathers a bit. I attempted to mollify him by asking whether he had ever laid eyes upon any angels during his comings and goings at the church.

“Ha! It was Dickens, wasn’t it, who described London as a city of devils. But I have seen some strange things,” he said.

I steered the conversation towards the glass chapel. The business around it seemed to be of interest to him and he became a great deal more animated.

“That whole enterprise had the air of money lenders in the temple. It upset a lot of the established congregation, myself included. A handful of people who had worshipped here for years left in protest and haven’t returned.”

He leaned forward and fixed me with a milky blue-eyed stare.

“The problem is that we do need the dosh.”

I asked him whether the cause of the collapse had been identified.

“It was very odd. Nobody knows quite what to make of it.”

After I pressed him for further information, he furnished me with a recent history of the church. The area of the grounds where the glass chapel stood had not been a part of the original churchyard. The plot had been expanded, during the 1860s, to incorporate adjacent land to the south. The additional space was required to accommodate human remains disinterred from nearby churchyards, that had been cleared to make room for the Midland railway.

The newly acquired land had previously been occupied by illegally-constructed dwellings that were in a dilapidated and tumbledown state. After the slum housing was cleared and the ground had been reseeded with grass, all but a small part of it was consecrated by the Bishop of London. The exception was an area in the southern-eastern corner. It seems that, following the removal of the old buildings, an excavation had uncovered elements of an unholy altar; something ancient and pre-Christian. A man from the British

Museum examined some carvings on one side of it and passed on his report to the church authorities. Evidently what was written down in this document was sufficient for that part of the site to be deemed an unsuitable spot for Christian burials. It was instead designated as a place of final rest for those who had been executed at Newgate Prison. These unfortunates were buried in unmarked graves and any record of who they had been in life was withheld from the parish ledgers.

"Murderers I suspect. Wicked men," surmised Booth.

He reached into the pocket of his jacket and removed a package of sandwiches, so tightly-wrapped in cling-film that they had been rendered oddly shapeless. He carefully opened it on his lap.

"When we eventually managed to wrangle planning permission for the new shop, one of the conditions was that it be located a fair distance from the church – I forget the exact figure, but it effectively banished the building to the sinners' corner.

"Well, all of the marked graves in that part of the yard were cleared after the war so that wasn't a problem, but nobody had ever investigated the Newgate plot. We hadn't the faintest idea of what was down there.

"The church commissioned an archaeological survey. They uncovered twelve bodies in total, all adult males, all apparently buried without coffins. Given these circumstances, there was some interest as to how their skeletons had remained intact and had not been scattered throughout the soil.

"We re-interred the bones in a single grave on the north side of the yard and marked the spot with a simple memorial. The reverend Cowcher said a few words over it. Something about restoring long lost souls to the sight of God."

He took a thoughtful bite from one of his sandwiches.

Construction had commenced on the glass chapel in July. I remember watching from my first-floor window across the street, as small protests assembled on the pavement adjacent to the church railings. Placards bearing bible quotations jostled for prominence, and occasional choruses of *My Faith is like an Oaken Staff* and *Onward Christian Soldiers* would rise above the background traffic noise, commencing with great fervour before gradually thinning out, only to recover some of their earlier strength in the final verse, at the behest of whoever was leading the group.

"Things started to go funny after that," said Booth. "Not ha-ha funny. Just unusual."

When he was not immediately forthcoming I prompted him:

"What kind of things exactly?"

"It was small at first. One of the ladies who helps to clean the interior of the church tripped on something in

the yard and cracked her skull on a headstone. She said, as she fell, she thought she saw something like a blanched tree root protruding from the soil. We had a good look around, but we never found anything.

"Then there was the elderly gentlemen who jogs in the area every morning and used the churchyard as a shortcut between King William Street and Woodengate. On one particularly foggy day he swore blind that something that felt like a set of bony fingers had gained a tight hold on his ankle. He said that it spread a chill up his entire leg. When he reached down to free himself, there was nothing there. He still goes out for his morning run, but he goes around the churchyard now.

"The worst of it was one of the pupils from the convent school. She arrived at the school gates one morning, quite beside herself. Something in the graveyard had absolutely terrified her. They could never get from her exactly what it was. The police were summoned and the entire area was searched without any success. In the aftermath, we held an emergency meeting to discuss whether criminal background checks should be made on the builders who were working on the chapel, and how best to broach the topic with the contractors. In the end there was a lot of dithering and nothing was done.

"While all of this was going on, the churchyard was undergoing subsidence. The first we knew of it was when one of the old stone vaults tilted a full six inches on one corner, apparently overnight. This continued until, after a few weeks, it looked as if some large creature had rampaged across the yard on a diagonal course, starting from the north side and heading towards the chapel, knocking the grave markers askew as it went. We contacted the council and asked them for details of any underground works that were in progress. Of course there were none. We had a man come to survey for foxes or badgers. He found no surface evidence of any animal activity but suspected some form of tunnelling.

"A few days before the glass chapel collapsed, the ground under one of the temporary sheds abruptly sunk down a few inches and the whole thing toppled over. It pulled half of the fairy lights down with it. I suspected that the chapel was listing slightly, the day before it fell, but I didn't say anything. Thankfully it happened at half past one in the morning when nobody was inside."

"It seems to me that your resident angels have been remarkably lax in keeping unquiet spirits at bay," I said.

"Well that's the thing. In January we had some surveyors visit from the insurance company. With them came a few of the people who had worked on the original survey. They dug down around what remained of the chapel. A few feet beneath the turf they began to

uncover the skeletal remains of twelve adult men. If that wasn't a chilling discovery in and of itself, it was their positioning that was truly strange. They were standing upright, crowded together, with their arms stretched out and raised above their heads. The bones of their hands were pressing under against the underside of the concrete foundation. One of the archaeologists recognised a distinctive crack in one of the skulls. She swore that it was identical to an injury on one of the skulls that she had helped to exhume the previous summer, and then witnessed being re-interred on the opposite side of the churchyard. There was some very reluctant talk of unsealing the new vault where we had buried those remains. In the end we called a vote on it. Everyone was in agreement that it was best to leave things as they were."

In the wake of this revelation a stillness seemed to fall across the churchyard.

"Anyway," said Booth after a long pause. "It seems that the occupants of the old plot, whoever they may have been, were rather attached to their quite corner of the churchyard away from the sight of god, where the soil was steeped in their own wickedness. They resented their eviction from it and wanted it back. They clawed their way across the graveyard and came up underneath the chapel like sharks intent on capsizing a small boat. Old Cowcher has taken to referring to them as the jury; twelve angry men, unanimous in their judgement.

"I have to visit that part of the yard every so often to clear away the weeds. I always feel distinctly unwelcome there, as if there are multiple presences lurking just outside my field of vision, glowering at me with barely-restrained malice. I do not linger any longer than I have to. There is something very strange about the way the shadows fall there. Some have no physical counterparts while others seem to be portmanteaus of objects that, as far as I can ascertain, do not exist."

His gaze settled on the stiffly swaying boughs of the large tree ahead of us, where the poet, William Blake, had once borne witness to a gathering of the heavenly host.

St Mary's church has returned to drawing revenue from more restrained fund-raising activities. No attempt has been made to reinstate the glass chapel. The corner of the yard where it stood is a gloomy, unattended quarter, cast into permanent shadow by the surrounding buildings. Since hearing Booth's tale I have given the area closer scrutiny and have noticed that very few people set foot there. ♦

Side by...

...by side

Az utazótáska

Hamvas Béla

AZ ILYEN EMBERNEK, amilyen ez is itt velem szemben, vonatra se szabadna ülnie. Az imént utazótáskáját kibontotta. Nem az volt a kiábrándító, hogy rendetlen, és nem az a szégyenletes, hogy célszerűtlen. Nélkülözte a kicsinnyel szemben való tiszteletet, és mindjárt láttam, hogy ez az ember szerencsétlen, mert hiányzik belőle a dolgok iránt való elemi kegyelet, ami nélkül senki sem lehet boldog. Almát vett ki, a szegény, egy összegyűrt zsebkendő mellől, papucsában fogpaszta volt, melléje gyűrve a hálóing, fölötte konzervdoboz, és elszórva néhány keksz, gyűrött papír és morzsa. Ennek az embernek nem lenne szabad utazni, mert nem ismeri az utazótáska költészetét.

Mikor az utazás napja már biztos, a pénz megvan, az útlevél kész, az ember egy órára magányba vonul, papírt, ceruzát vesz elő és mély meditációba merül. Mindenekelőtt az utazók nagy ősére, Robinsonra gondol, s elismételgeti azt a listát, amit a halhatatlan hajótörött a magányos szigeten készített. Ezután lassan jegyezni kezdi: cipő, harisnya, nadrág, ing, hálóing, pi-

The Holdall

translated by *Tárnok, Attila*

SUCH A MAN as this one across from me should not be allowed to board a train. He has just opened his holdall. Disappointing it was not merely for its disorder, it is a shame that his packing is irrational. He is lacking any respect for detail, and I immediately noticed that the man leads a miserable life because he is in need of the elementary appreciation of objects without which nobody can be happy. He took an apple, miserable fellow, from beside a creased handkerchief, he kept his toothpaste inside his slippers crammed with his mussy nightgown, above it a tin of meat and scattered morsels of some biscuits in crumpled paper. This man should not be allowed to travel because he knows nothing about the poetics of the holdall.

When the date of a journey is determined, the money for expenses is allocated, our passport is valid, one should go into retreat for an hour with pencil and paper at hand and immerse oneself in deep meditation. Above all, one has to contemplate Robinson Crusoe, the great ancestor of all travellers and murmur

zsama, kesztyű, nyakkendő, s így tovább. Külön az élelmiszert. Külön a könyvet és az írószert. Ha valamije nincs meg, más papírra írja fel, s azt be kell szereznie. Amikor a jegyzék kész, letisztázza, többször elolvassa, s tűnődik, hogy mit felejtett el. Ilyenkor az ember már utazik s ez egyike az út legzavartalanabb perceinek.

A csomagolás már nem kontemplatív foglalkozás. Körültekintő és bölcs foglalkozás ez, amelyet szintén nem lehet fohász nélkül kezdeni. A táskába legalulra olyan tárgyak kerülnek, amelyeknek a gyűrődés nem árt, de nem kemények. A hézagokat nem szabad zsebkendővel kitölteni. Ezt csak barbár teszi. A zsebkendő szépsége a vasalás. A réseket a kegyeletes utazó trikóholmival tölti ki: úszónadrággal, pulóverrel, harisnyával. Gyűrni ezt sem szabad.

Minden utazótáskában legyen valami, éspedig minden utazás alkalmával, ami teljesen fölösleges, és amire az ember csak úgy hirtelen gondolt. Ilyen lehet egy alumíniumpohár, vagy egy kis csomagban szárított levendulavirág.

A mosdócikkek célszerű elhelyezése a kis bőrtok. Egészen különös figyelem szentelendő a szappannak, mert nem szabad elfelejteni, hogy az úton a szag a ruhába szívódik. Kellemesnek és finomnak kell lennie. Nem szabad elfelejteni az öngyújtóbenzint, a tűzkövet, a hashajtót és a kis üveg konyakot. Úton az ember általában csak ásványvizet igyon, és hajnalban egy ke-

the list the immortal castaway had prepared on the desert island. Only then would one slowly begin to take notes: shoes, socks, trousers, some shirts, pyjamas, gloves, a tie and so on. Food provision noted separately. Books and stationery separately. If there is something to buy, make a shopping list. After notetaking, revise more than once and think hard lest anything be forgotten. by this time you are already a traveller and these are the most tranquil moments of the jouney.

When it comes to packing, there is no room for contemplation. Circumspect wisdom is needed here and don't even start without a prayer. AT the bottom I place objects that are not hard and crushing cannot harm them. Gaps should not be filled with a handkerchief, only barbarians would do such a thing. A handkerchief comes alive when ironed. A blessed traveller fills crevices with woolies, jersey or swimming trunks, but even these should not be creased.

A holdall should always contain something utterly superfluous and what we put in at haphazard in the last minute. A tin cup or a little bag of lavender will do.

A small snap case is useful for the toiletry-set. Pay special attention to soap for on the road your clothes absorb alien odours. Choose a fine and pleasant soap. Don't forget about flint and gas for your lighter and a small flask of brandy. In general, while travelling one

vés igazán jó pálinkát.

A toalett-neszesszert csavarja törülközőbe és tegye könnyen megtalálható helyre, ha reggel a vonatban vagy a hajón a mosdóba indul, kéznél legyen. Kölnivíz kell. Mosdás után nélkülözhetetlen. Egyesek sósborszeszt ajánlanak, és megpróbáltam, és bevált, a magam részéről azonban nem a mentolosat szeretem, hanem az erősen alkoholosat.

A csomagolás elsőszörre ritkán sikerül. Lehet, hogy van olyan képességekkel rendelkező utazó, akinek mindjárt minden egyezik. Nekem még nem sikerült. Nem baj. Kirakom és újrakezdem. A tervszerű és logikus gondolkozást intuíciónak kell kiegészítenie. Ha a csomagolónak nincs ihlete, vagy egyébként kihagy, halassza másnapra, mert a merő szisztematika kevés, sőt az embert nagy tévedésekbe is hajthatja.

A legalul elhelyezett ruhadarabok fölé ajánlatos a könyveket rakni. Ez külön igen fontos fejezet. A könyv-probléma kell hogy az utazás idejét hetekkel megelőzze. Ha nyáron utazom, akkor már karácsony táján készítek feljegyzéseket. Ilyesmit: Cowper, Oxford, nyár. Annyit jelent: William Cowpert az Oxford középső kiadásában megszerezni, és nyáron olvasni. A feljegyzések persze mindig túlméretezettek. A könyvek felét sem vihetem el, mert nincs értelme, hogy négy hétre többet vigyek, mint öt-hat kötetet. S ez újabb kemény feladat. Cowpert vigyem, vagy a metafizikus költőket? Gyakran a könyv alakja segítségemre siet: oly

should drink mineral water only and a shot of quality spirit early in the morning.

Roll your toiletries into a towel and place them in your bag where you can easily reach it on board a train or a ship, when you head for the washroom in the morning. Cologne water is a must. After washing it will prove indispensable. Some people recommend rubbing in alcohol; having tried it I prefer the brand with high alcohol content to any mentholated product.

Packing is rarely perfect at the first attempt. Perhaps there are talented travellers who can set everything right straight away, I have never succeeded. No problem. I'll unpack and start from scratch. A methodical, rational approach will be supplemented by intuition. If you are lacking inspiration, postpone packing because relying merely on a system is insufficient, in fact, it may lead to greater faults.

On the clothes put at the bottom of our bag it is wise to place books. The question of books is a crucial topic. Pondering which books to take with us on a trip should precede the holiday by many weeks. When I have a summer vacation, I'll start making notes after Christmas such as: Cowper, Oxford, summer. which means: get William Cowper's book in the Oxford edition, to read in the summer. Naturally, my notes are always exaggerated. Often I cannot take half the titles on my list because it is not reasonable to bring more than five or six books to a four-week holiday. And

szép, kellemes és alkalmas, hogy javára választok.

Magyar könyvet a legritkább esetben viszek. Az ok egyszerűen az, hogy amit szívesen vinnék, az papírban, kötésben, kiállításban, betűben olyan ízléstelen, hogy visszariadok. Egyetlen nagy költőnk sincs meg olyan kiadásban, hogy útra lehetne vinni. A többi meg? Hagyjuk. Az Oxford, különösen a kis World Classics, az Insel, a Pléiade útra született. Éppen ezért az antik szerzőket is kénytelen vagyok mindig angol vagy francia kiadásban magammal vinni.

A könyveket az ember a gondosan megválasztott jegyzetpapirossal, esetleg naplóval és írószerrel a táska belsejében helyezi el, és csak egy művet hagy kint, amit felülre rak, s egyet, amit zsebre tesz. Zsebre a legalkalmasabb valami abszolút szórakoztató, mint amilyen az Eckermann-beszélgetések, vagy a Boswell féle Johnson élete. A legjobb kinyitni, a tájat nézni, és tízpercenként elolvasni egy-egy mondatot. Láttam embert, aki nyári útra könyvtári könyvet vitt. Az ilyen embert, szerintem, semmi sem választja el a gonosztevőtől. A könyv szeret utazni, az út szellemét magába szívja, barátommá válik, és olyan meghittségben van része, amit a köztulajdonban levő könyvre pazarolni bűntény. A könyvtári könyvek egyébként is a könyvek hetérái, akiket mindenki megkaphat. A könyv, amelylyel utazom, a házastársam.

Húsz-huszonnégy óránál tovább tartó útra élelmiszert vinni legalábbis ajánlatos. Az étkező-kocsi ugyan

then, truncating my list is another difficulty: shall I take Cowper or metaphysical poets? Sometimes the shape of a book comes to my assistance: I pick it for its satisfying beauty.

I hardly ever take Hungarian books on a journey. Simply because what I would like to read is so disappointing in font, in layout, in paper quality, in binding that I abhor it. None of our great poets is published in an edition that would suit the road. And the rest? Leave them alone. An Oxford, especially the little World Classics, an Insel, a Pléiade was born to travel. This is why I have no choice but to read classical authors in English or French.

All the books together with the stationery, a carefully chosen notepad and one's diary should be stowed away in the bag with the exception of a book that goes on the top and another in your pocket. As for the latter, the most appropriate would be something light and entertaining such as Eckermann's *Conversations* or Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. While enjoying the scenery, you can look into your book every ten minutes and read a few sentences. I have seen people taking library books on a summer holiday. Such a person, in my view, is no better than a rogue. Books love to travel, they inhale the spirit of the road, they become my friend and they enjoy an intimacy which to waste on a publicly owned property is a crime. Library books are concubines that everyone can lay a hand on. The book

a civilizáció legmagasabb teljesítménye, s nincs érzés, amely ahhoz hasonlít, hogy az ember ebédel, s mellette egy arasszal a táj száz kilométerrel rohan. Egy darab sonka, keksz, csokoládé s valami gyümölcs mégis kell. Vannak, akik rövidebb utakat sem tudnak megtenni citrom nélkül. A citrompárt ízlését méltányolom, de nem ragaszkodom hozzá. Ha azt kérdeznék, hogy mi az, ami nélkül nem szívesen indulok, különösen éjszakai útra, azt válaszolnám: a termoszban a forró tea.

Nem hiszek azoknak, akik az utazás aszkézisét tanítják, és azt mondják, hogy úton sok mindenről le kell mondani. Nem igaz. Az utazótáskába minden belefér, s nem is kell, hogy a táska nagy legyen. Legjobb, ha olyan, amit az ember akár egy órahosszat maga is elvihet. Egyébként se jó másra szorulni, úton meg éppen nem. A táskát felkapom, karomra dobom a felöltőt és a plédet, és mindenemet magammal viszem. ♦

I travel with becomes my spouse.

Even though dining-cars are one of the greatest achievements of our civilisation and no feeling can compare to the joy when, as you are having lunch, the landscape speeds by at a stretch at seventy miles an hour, on a full day trip I recommend packing something to eat. One needs a rasher of ham, biscuits, a bar of chocolate and some fruit. Some people will not venture even short distances without a lemon. I appreciate the faith of lemon advocates but I don't find it essential. If you asked me what it is I never set forth without, particularly at night, I would answer it is a vacuum-flask of hot tea.

I don't share the view of people who preach the ascetism of travelling, who claim that one has to sacrifice many conveniences on the road. On the contrary. A holdall will accommodate much that you need and it doesn't have to be a large one either. In fact, it has to be light enough for you to carry for an hour. It is unwise to depend on others, especially abroad. I'll grab my portmanteau, throw my overcoat and a light blanket over my arm and I'll have with me everything I need. ♦