



Stay Home Reader

Stories for Fun and Skills



VIVA EDUCATION

8

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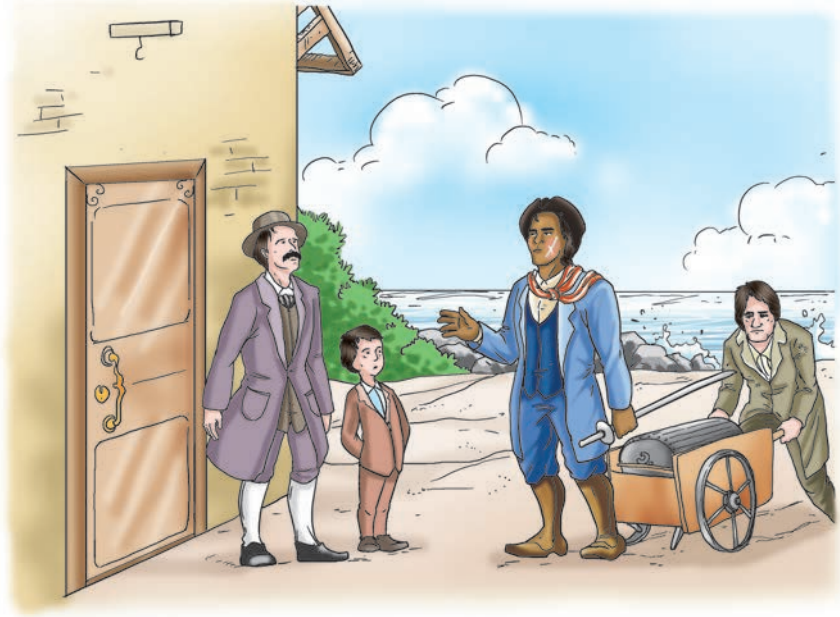
HOW THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU

Staying home and practising social distancing are simple yet decisive ways in which we all contribute to the epic battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. School closure is indeed the heavy price students and teachers have to pay as a result. However, this is no reason for learning to stop. As a committed provider of educational content, Viva Education has taken extraordinary steps to make learning accessible to every student via online means. We have released the vast range of online learning material on VivaDigital.in to learners and educators for unrestricted use.

Continuing this effort, we are proud to present our *Stay Home Readers* for classes 1 to 8, which have been specially compiled for home learning and remote teaching. Engagement is the key to better home learning, and this series adopts the route of stories to effective language-skill building. The content is enjoyable, stimulating and requires hardly any teacher supervision. We wish you safety and good health as you enjoy learning with these readers.

1

The Old Sea-Dog



Treasure Island, by Robert Louis Stevenson, is one of the most popular stories ever written. The tale is related by a boy Jim Hawkins – and it is crammed with exciting adventures – a stolen map, cruel and blood-thirsty pirates, thrilling incidents on board the Hispaniola while in quest of hidden treasure, the discovery of untold wealth and the final victory over the buccaneers.

I take up my pen and go back to the time when my father kept the “Admiral Benbow” Inn, and the brown old seaman with the sabre-cut first took up his lodging under our roof.

I remember him as if it was yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn-door, his sea-chest following behind him in a handbarrow; a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man; his tarry pigtail

falling over the shoulders of his soiled blue coat; his hands ragged and scarred, black, broken nails; and the sabre-cut across one cheek, a dirty livid white.

I remember him looking round the cove and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterwards:

*“Fifteen men on the dead man’s chest –
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum,
Drink and the devil had done for the rest –
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum.”*

He rapped at the door with a bit of stick, and when my father appeared, called roughly for a glass of rum. This, when it was brought to him, he drank slowly, and kept looking about him at the cliffs and up at the signboard.

“This is a handy cove,” says he at length, “and a pleasant grog-shop. Much company, mate?”

My father told him no – very little company, the more was the pity.

“Well, then,” said he, “this is the berth for me. Here you, matey,” he cried to the man who trundled the barrow, “bring up alongside and help up my chest. I’ll stay here a bit,” he continued. “I’m a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and that head up there, for to watch ships off. You may call me Captain. Oh! I see what you’re at – there!” and he threw down three or four gold pieces on the threshold. “You can tell me when I’ve worked through that,” says he, looking as fierce as a commander.

And indeed, bad as his clothes were, and coarsely as he spoke, he had none of the appearance of a man who had sailed before the mast; but seemed like a mate or skipper. The man who came with the barrow told us the mail had set him down the morning before at the “Royal George”, that he had

enquired what inns there were along the coast, and hearing ours well spoken of, I suppose, and described as lonely, had chosen it from the others as his place of residence. And that was all we could learn of our guest.

He was a very silent man by custom. All day he hung around the cove, or upon the cliffs, with a brass telescope; all evening he sat in a corner of the parlour next to the fire, and drank rum and water very strong. Mostly he would not speak when spoken to; only look up sudden and fierce, and blow through his nose like a fog-horn; and we, and the people who came about the house, soon learned to let him be. Every day when he came back from his stroll, he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by along the road.

At first we thought it was the want of company of his own kind that made him ask this question; but at last we began to see he was desirous to avoid them. When a seaman put up at the “Admiral Benbow”, he would look in at him through the curtained door before he entered the parlour; and he was always sure to be as silent as a mouse when any such was present. For me, at least, there was no secret about the matter, for I was, in a way, a sharer in his alarms.

He had taken me aside one day, and promised me a silver fourpenny on the first of every month, if I would only keep my “weather-eye open for a seafaring man with one leg”, and let him know the moment he appeared. Often enough, when the first of the month came round, and I applied to him for my wage, he would only blow through his nose at me, and stare me down; but before the week was out he was sure to think better of it, bring me my fourpenny piece, and repeat his orders to look out for “the seafaring man with one leg”.

How that personage haunted my dreams, I need scarcely tell you. On stormy nights, when the wind shook the four corners



of the house, and the surf roared along the cove and up the cliffs, I would see him in a thousand forms. To see him leap and run and pursue me over hedge and ditch, was the worst of nightmares. And altogether, I paid pretty dear for my monthly fourpenny piece in the shape of these fancies.

But, though I was so terrified by the idea of the seafaring man with one leg, I was far less afraid of the Captain himself, than anybody else who knew him. There were nights when he took a deal more rum and water than his head could carry; and then he would sometimes sit and sing his wicked, old, wild sea-songs, minding nobody; but sometimes, he would force all the trembling company to listen to his stories, or bear a chorus to his singing.

Often I have heard the house shaking with “Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum”; all the neighbours joining in for dear life, with the fear of death upon them, and each singing louder than the other, to avoid remark. People were frightened at the time, but on looking back they rather liked it; it was a fine excitement in

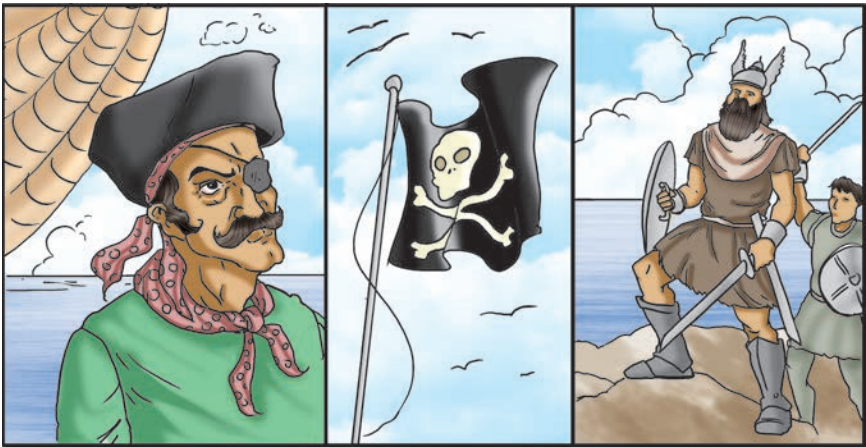
a quiet country life; and there was even a party of the younger men who pretended to admire him; calling him a “true sea-dog” and a “real old-salt”, and such like names, and saying there was the sort of man that made England terrible at sea.

From Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson

Interesting Facts about Pirates



1. **Pirates**, *corsairs*, *filibusters*, *freebooters*, *marauders*, *picaroons*, *privateers*, *raiders*, *rovers* and *sea rovers* were the villains who plundered ships on the high seas. **Buccaneers** were originally hunters of wild cattle (French word – boucaniers) and they turned pirates, in seeking revenge upon the Spaniards. Later, they became a colony of freebooters, calling themselves “**The Brethren of the Coast**”.
2. In the earliest days of piracy, the sea-robbers flew the flag of their own country. Some time afterwards, the “**Jolly Roger**” was introduced, and this dreaded banner consisted of a black flag with a white skull and crossbones in the centre.



3. The old Norse pirates were called **Vikings** and they ravaged and plundered nearly every coast in Europe. These men settled in many of the places which they raided, and formed colonies in countries such as Iceland, Greenland and the British Isles.
4. At one time the richest prizes for pirates were the ships trading in the Mediterranean Sea. The notorious **Barbary Pirates** came from the Berber States – Tunis, Algeria, Morocco – along the north coast of Africa. Prisoners taken by them were held to ransom or sold as slaves.
5. The greatest hunting ground of the pirates was the **Spanish Main**, a name given to the land lying along the north coast of South America. Here, and in other parts of the New World, the Spaniards forced the native Indians to give up all their wealth. The pirate ships lurked among the many islands of the Caribbean Sea, and tried to capture the Spanish galleons laden with treasure.
6. Pirate ships were generally very fast vessels, as they had to pursue and overtake their victims, and be able to

escape from stronger enemies. Apart from the heavy iron and brass cannon on board, a pirate's weapons consisted of the musket, pistol, dirk or dagger, and the cutlass (a heavy curved sword).

7. Pirates inflicted the most dreadful tortures on their prisoners. In **walking the plank**, the victims were drowned by being compelled to walk on a plank, which was put out from the ship's side. In **hanging from the yard-arm**, the prisoners were hanged from the high spars supporting the sails. The punishment of **keel-hauling** meant dragging the captives from one side of the ship to the other under the keel.



8. When a ship was short of the necessary crew, a party was sent ashore to **shanghai** men. They made men insensible by drink, drugs or other methods, and when the victims recovered they found themselves far out at sea. The “**press gang**” was a party of sailors from a warship, who forced men to enlist in the navy.

9. **Davy Jones' Locker** was said to be the final resting-place of all sailors who were drowned at sea. The name **Jack Tar** is derived from the old habit of a sailor tarring his trousers to make them waterproof. The sailor's collar goes back to the days when seafaring men had greasy and tarry pigtails. The collar soon became dirty, but it was easily taken off and cleaned.
10. **Doubloons, pieces of eight, cross-money, moidores and guineas** are often mentioned in pirate stories. A doubloon was a Spanish gold coin. A piece of eight was a Spanish silver coin, and it is interesting to note that the sign for a dollar (\$) was obtained from the figure 8 used on this coin. Pieces of metal, cross-marked by the priests to show that they were genuine pieces of gold, were called cross-money. A moidore was a Portuguese gold coin. A guinea was an English gold coin. It received that name because the first coins were made from gold brought from Guinea, in Africa.

Questions on the Story

1. From which famous story is this lesson taken?
2. Name the author.
3. What was the name of the inn?
4. Who is the chief character in the lesson?
5. Describe in detail his appearance.
6. Where did he keep all his worldly possessions?
7. What other inn is mentioned in the story?
8. Find out as much as you can about the song mentioned in the story.

9. Why did the Captain choose to stay at this particular inn?
10. What advance payment for lodging did he make?
11. How did he pass the time during the day?
12. What did he take with him?
13. What question did he always ask on return from his daily strolls?
14. What happened when a seafarer put up at the inn?
15. For whom was the boy told to keep a sharp look-out?
16. How much did the Captain promise to give the boy?
17. When was the reward to be paid to him?
18. What did the boy see in his nightmares?
19. What would the Captain sometimes force the company to do?
20. How did some of the younger folk describe him?

Questions on the Interesting Facts

1. Give four different words for a pirate.
2. Name and describe the pirate flag.
3. Who were the Vikings?
4. Where did the Barbary Pirates operate?
5. What was the most famous hunting ground of the pirates?
6. With what weapons were pirates usually equipped?
7. Name three tortures inflicted by pirates on their prisoners.
8. What was the press gang?
9. What is meant by Davy Jones' Locker?
10. Name four coins often mentioned in pirate stories.

□ Development Exercises

1. Point out on a map of the world:
 - (a) The home of the Vikings
 - (b) The Barbary Coast
 - (c) The Spanish Main
2. “Fifteen men on the dead man’s chest” was an old sea-song. What is the special name given to a sea-song? Do you know any such songs? When did the sailors sing them?
3. The Captain had his sea-chest trundled along in a handbarrow. Compare methods of modern road transport with those at the time of the story.
4. The Captain’s hands were ragged and scarred and he had a sabre-cut across one cheek. How do you think he came by these marks?
5. Although it is very interesting and exciting to read about pirates, we do not admire them. Why not?
6. Nowadays ships carrying valuable cargoes voyage from one part of the world to another without fear of being plundered. Can you give any reasons for this?
7. Compare a cargo ship of the time of the story with a present-day merchant ship.
8. Why are most sailors very interesting storytellers? What do you understand by the following?
 - (a) a tall story
 - (b) a yarn
 - (c) a cock and bull story

2

A Norse Saga

Thor and Loki, accompanied by their servant Thialfi, set out on a long and dangerous journey from Asgard, the city of the Norse gods to Utgard's kingdom in the far Northlands. First they sailed across a wide stretch of sea and then journeyed through a cold, bleak, dismal land. Thereafter they crossed great ranges of mountains and, in several places, had to make their way among scattered and strangely-shaped rocks which, through the mist, appeared to them to be the ghost-like figures of huge men, and once, for a day, they wandered through a thick tangled forest.

At last, after many days of weary trudging and climbing, the three companions came to the edge of a vast barren plain, in the centre of which stood a great city, whose outer walls were so high and forbidding that Thor knew they had reached the object of their search. Despite the enormous height of



the surrounding wall of the city, the adventurers were quite undaunted and approached the entrance, but found that the gates were closed and barred. This however did not stop their progress, for the spaces between the upright bars were so wide that all three passed through quite easily. They found themselves in a long, wide, deserted street, at the other end

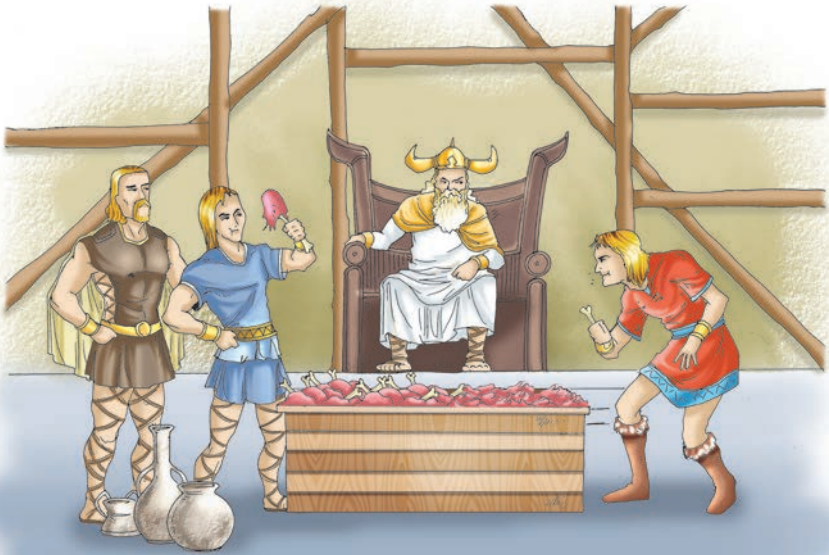
of which was a very imposing building, much higher than the rest. On advancing towards it they saw that its doors were wide open and they could hear the sound of revelry from within.

Thor and his friends ascended the steps and, on crossing the threshold, beheld an immense banqueting hall, down the middle of which stretched a massive stone table. Huge stone chairs surrounded the table and seated in each was a warrior. Thor quickly glanced round the assembled company and noticed that one among them sat on a raised seat and appeared to be the chief. He approached and paid his greetings.

The chief stared at him, and, without rising, said in a somewhat careless manner: "It is, I think, a foolish custom to trouble tired travellers with inquisitive questions about their journey. I know, without asking, that you are Thor from Asgard. It is the custom here that no one shall sit down to table till he has performed some wonderful feat. Let us hear what you and your friends are famed for, and in what way you choose to prove yourselves worthy to sit in our company."

At this speech, Loki, who had cautiously entered the hall behind Thor, pushed himself forward and said, "The feat for which I am best known is eating, and it is one which I am at this moment inclined to perform with right goodwill. Place food in front of me, and we shall see if any of your followers can dispatch it as quickly as I can."

"The feat of which you speak is by no means to be despised," answered the king, "and Logi will be glad to try his powers against yours." A tall, thin, yellow faced-man then approached and a large trough of meat was brought and placed in the middle of the hall. At a given signal, Loki started eating from one end and Logi from the other. The warriors all turned to watch them and a few moments later the two contestants met at the middle of the trough. At first it looked as though



both had eaten exactly the same amount, but, when the trough was examined, it was discovered that Loki had eaten all the meat in his half and that Logi had not only eaten the meat but the bones as well. The warriors nodded their heads and declared that Loki had been fairly beaten but not disgraced.

Turning next to Thialfi, the king asked him what feat he proposed to show them.

“In my country I was thought very swift of foot,” answered Thialfi, “and I will, if you so desire, try a race with anyone here.”

“You have chosen a noble sport, indeed,” said the king, “but you will be a good runner to beat Hugi.”

After calling to a tall servant at the end of the hall, the whole company went outside and proceeded to a flat, open space nearby. The running distance and winning post were soon decided and both runners prepared themselves for the race. Then, when they were ready, the king gave the signal to start.



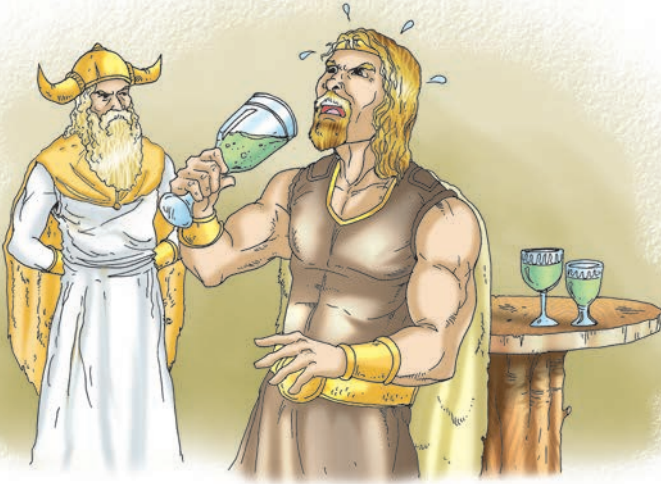
Thialfi ran fast – as fast as the reindeer when he hears the wolves howling behind him – but Hugi ran so much faster that, passing the winning line, he turned round and met Thialfi about halfway on his course.

“Try again,” cried the king, and Thialfi, once more taking his place, flew along the course with his feet scarcely touching the ground – as swiftly as an eagle when he swoops on his prey, but with all his effort he was still a good distance from the winning post when Hugi reached it.

“You are certainly a good runner,” said the king, “but if you mean to win this race, you must do better unless perhaps you want to surprise us this time.”

The third time, however, Thialfi was wearied and though he did his level best, Hugi, after reaching the goal, turned and met him not far from starting point.

It was now Thor’s turn and the king asked him by what feat he chose to distinguish himself.



“I will try a drinking match with any of you,” said Thor.

King Utgard appeared pleased with his choice and when the warriors had returned and resumed their seats in the hall, he ordered one of his servants to bring in his guest’s drinking cup.

“There,” he said, handing the vessel to Thor, “we will say that you have drunk well if you can empty it in three draughts.”

Thor looked into the cup and saw that it contained a green coloured mead. Being very thirsty, he thought to empty it with one gulp, but after a good hearty pull, he saw that he had made very little impression on the amount of liquid in the vessel.

This caused the king to exclaim, “Ha! I do believe that you are reserving your strength for the next two pulls.”

Without answering, Thor lifted the cup and drank again until his breath almost failed; but when he put down the drinking vessel, he noticed that the level of the wine had not sunk much.

“If you mean to drink it all in three gulps,” said Utgard, “you are leaving yourself a very unfair share for your third

and last attempt. I am afraid that if you do not perform better than you have so far, we shall not think much of your prowess here.”

Thor felt extremely angry and seizing the cup again, he drank for the third time, much deeper and longer than before, but when he had finished and set the vessel on the table, he noticed that it was still more than half-full. Wearing and disappointed, he said that he would try no more.

“It is now quite clear,” said the king, looking round at the company, “that the great Thor from Asgard can do nothing out of the ordinary.”

“If you wish,” replied Thor, hurt by this remark, “I am willing to attempt any other feat, which you may set me.”

“Very well,” said the king, “we have a game at which our children play and we are all curious to see how you fare at it. The task is nothing more than to lift my cat from the floor – a childish amusement you will agree.”

As he spoke a large grey cat sprang into the hall, mewing and purring after the fashion of his kind. Thor, stooping forward, put his hand under the creature to lift it, but though he tugged and pulled with all his strength, the utmost he could do was to raise one of the cat’s paws from the ground.



“Just as I thought,” said king Utgard, looking round with a smile.



Thor on hearing this remark, cried, “who is there among you who will dare wrestle with me in my anger?”

“I don’t think there is anyone here who would choose to wrestle with you,” replied the king, “but if wrestle you must, I will call for Elli. She had laid low many a better man than you have proved yourself to be.”

Elli was a withered and toothless old crone, and Thor shrank from the thought of wrestling with her. However, he soon found that he had no choice in the matter, for the old woman advanced towards him and held him almost helpless in her powerful arms. They swayed and struggled for a few minutes and though Thor strove bravely, a strange feeling of weakness and weariness came over him, and he tottered and fell on one knee before her. At this sight, the warriors laughed aloud and Utgard, approaching the contestants, requested the old woman to leave the hall, and proclaimed the trials over.

Despite their lack of success in the tests, the king then invited Thor and his companions to spend the night with

him as his guests. Thor, though feeling somewhat humiliated, accepted the courteous invitation, and showed by his agreeable behaviour during the evening, that he could lose with good grace.

On the following morning, when Thor and his two friends were leaving, the king himself accompanied them outside the city. Before bidding them farewell, Utgard said, "Now, Thor, tell me truly, before you go, how you have enjoyed your visit here?"

"I confess," answered Thor, "that in this place, I have been proved to be a weakling and it will be said that Thor of Asgard is a person of little worth."

"Indeed, no," cried the king heartily, "far from it. If I had known what a mighty man of valour you really are, you would not have been allowed to enter our city. You see, we were deceiving you by our enchantments in the contests in which you and your companions were engaged last night. When Loki and Logi sat to eat what was in the trough, Loki performed remarkably well, but Logi is fire, who, with eager consuming tongue, licked up both meat and bones. Thialfi," he continued, "must certainly be the swiftest of mortal runners. But, the slender lad, Hugi, was my thought; and what speed can ever equal his?"

"Lastly, in your own trials, you little knew what wonderful feats you were performing. The other end of that drinking horn stretched to the ocean and when you reach the shore, you will see how much the deep sea itself has been diminished by your draughts. Hereafter, men watching the going out of the tide will call it the ebb or draught of Thor. Scarcely less wonderful was the prowess you displayed in the second trial. What appeared to you to be an old grey cat, was in reality, the serpent which encircles the earth. When we saw that you had

succeeded in moving it, we were afraid that the foundations of the world would be shaken by your tremendous strength. Nor need you be ashamed of having been overthrown by the old crone Elli, for she is old age, and there never has, and never will be, anyone whom she cannot lay low. Well, we must part now and I hope you will not come here again or attempt anything against our city, for we shall defend it with even greater enchantments.”

At these words, Thor raised his famous hammer, Mjölmir, and was about to challenge the king to a fresh trial of strength, but, before he could say a word, the king of the Northlands vanished from his sight. Turning round to look for the city, he found that it too, had disappeared, and that he, Loki and Thialfi, were alone again on the great, barren plain.

Adapted from The Heroes of Asgard by A. and E. Keary

Interesting Facts about Norway



1. Before the coming of Christianity, the people of Northern Europe worshipped gods and heroes in the same manner as the Indians, Greeks and Romans, and many of their legends are alike in praising wisdom and bravery. The chief of the northern gods was **Odin** or

Woden and our Wednesday means “Woden’s day”. **Thor**, the god of thunder, who gave his name to Thursday (“Thor’s day”) and **Loki**, the mischief-maker, are next in prominence. The gods sat in council in the beautiful city of **Asgard**, which was situated on the top of a lofty mountain.

2. The Northmen or **Norsemen** lived in **Scandinavia**, a name given to the peninsula which includes Norway and Sweden. For a long time the Danes were overlords of the North, but in 1814, Norway regained its freedom. In the same year however, Norway was forced into union with Sweden under **Bernadotte**, one of Napoleon’s generals. The bonds between the two countries were severed in 1905, and since then Norway had been a kingdom by itself. In Oslo, the capital formerly called Christiania, are situated the “**Storting**” or Parliament buildings and the famous **National Museum**.
3. Norway (“The Northern Way”) is a very mountainous country and deep, long, narrow arms of the sea, called **fjords** or viks, wind their way into the steep, rocky coast. **Sognefjord** is the longest, stretching 106 miles from the sea. **The Gulf Stream**, a warm current in the Atlantic Ocean, washes its shores and consequently the climate of Norway is not so bitterly cold as other regions so far north. This warm Atlantic drift keeps the northern ports free from ice. The “**maelstrom**” is a dreaded whirlpool that lies at the southern tip of the **Lofoten Islands**; it is dangerous for small craft to approach its waters. The mountains cause roads and railways to turn and twist, so that travel in winter is difficult unless by sea.

4. The **Vikings** or “Men of the Viks” were the old sea rovers, who, for centuries, plundered the coasts of Europe. They were striking warriors in their ox-horned helmets and short coats of mail; they were



- armed with such weapons as shields, spears, axes and swords. They journeyed to many far-off lands, some settling in **Normandy**, the isles of **Scotland**, **Iceland** and **Greenland**. A famous Viking, **Leif Eriksson** is credited with landing on the shores of Canada and even sailing as far south as the Hudson River, where his people settled for a time at the end of the tenth century.
5. In the green patches of the deep valleys of Norway may be snug little villages consisting of brightly painted, wooden farmhouses, known as “**gaards**”. In summer, the cattle are sent to graze on the high pastures far up the mountain sides while the guardians of the herds, usually girls, live in huts called “**saeters**”. The girls use a long horn called a “**lur**” to call from one mountain-pasture to another. The lur is made of birchbark wound round a hollow wooden stick. The animals wear bells round their necks so that they can be easily found when wanted. In autumn, hay and moss are gathered, dried on racks and placed in huge barns for winter food.



6. Norway has many forests of pine and fir trees, and from these a valuable supply of **timber** is obtained. Great progress has been made in the wood industries, for besides paper-mills, factories have been built which manufacture window-frames, doors and gates and ship them to other countries. The swift-flowing mountain streams provide abundant **electric power** for factories, homes and electric railways.
7. The Norwegians, largely because of Norway's geographical position, have always been great seafarers, and fishing remains a major occupation of the people. The Lofoten Islands serve as base for the boats engaged in **herring** and **cod** fishing. The **liver oil** extracted from the cod is a valuable product. Around **Stavanger**, **brisling sardines** are caught and thousands of cans are exported each year. The headquarters of the great fishing fleets is at **Bergen**, the chief fish marketing port of Norway. In the market, some fish are kept in tanks so that buyers can choose their fish alive.
8. Norway is sometimes called "**The Land of the Midnight Sun**" and many people visit the country to witness this remarkable sight. For a period in summer the sun does not set, thus giving continuous daylight for some weeks. In winter, however, the opposite process takes place and there are weeks of continuous darkness.

Another amazing sight is the “**aurora borealis**” or Northern Lights. Bright rays of blue, green, violet and orange appear in all parts of the night sky creating a strange and beautiful spectacle. The most northerly point of the country is **North Cape**, which rises a thousand feet almost sheer out of the sea; it is the home of thousands of seabirds.

9. Norwegian parents love to recount tales of the Vikings to their children, and nothing pleases the boys and girls more than to hear exciting stories of their adventurous ancestors. At meal-times, a table in the centre of the room holds a great many dishes of meat, fish and vegetables, from which one helps oneself. This is called “**smorgasbord**” and it is often the first course of a meal. Snow sports are a feature of winter life and skiing and sledging are very popular. The children are experts at these sports, and an unusual sledge like a chair on runners, called a “**sparks totting**” is used by elder brothers and sisters to convey the younger members of the family to school over the snow.



10. In the far north of Norway lives a small hardy race known as the “**Sami people**”. They are a nomadic people, dwelling in tents and wandering about from place to place. **Reindeer** provide them with food, milk and clothing but are useful also as beasts of burden. So useful and necessary are these animals that a Sami’s wealth is judged by the number of reindeers he possesses. The Norwegian **elkhound** is a friendly animal although it is a fearless hunter. As its name suggest, this dog was originally used for hunting the elk of northern Europe.

Questions on the Story

1. Name the three companions in the story.
2. From what city did they set out?
3. What was their destination?
4. Explain why the closed gates did not stop their progress.
5. Describe the banqueting hall.
6. What was the custom before sitting at the table?
7. What feat did Loki wish to perform?
8. Describe the contest in detail.
9. By what feat did Thialfi attempt to show his prowess?
10. Describe the manner in which he was defeated.
11. By what feat did Thor choose to distinguish himself?
12. What happened when the mead was brought?
13. What was the king’s name?
14. What trial did the king set Thor?
15. Describe what happened in this test.
16. What was Thor’s challenge to the warriors?

17. Who opposed him and what was the outcome?
18. What was represented by (a) Logi (b) Hugi?
19. What did the following enchantments mean:
(a) the green coloured mead (b) the old crone Elli?
20. What was the name of Thor's famous hammer?

Questions on the Interesting Facts

1. (a) Name two famous Norse gods and how are their names still kept alive?
(b) Where did the gods sit in council?
2. (a) What name is given to the peninsula which includes Norway and Sweden?
(b) Who were overlords of the North for a long time?
(c) What is the name of the Norwegian Houses of Parliament?
3. (a) What name is given to the deep, long, narrow arms of the sea?
(b) What warm current washes against the shores of Norway?
(c) What is the “maelstrom”?
4. (a) Describe a Viking warrior.
(b) Name the Viking who is credited with landing in Canada.
5. (a) What happens to the cattle in summer?
(b) Why do the animals have bells on their necks?
6. (a) Name some of the things made from Norwegian timber.

- (b) Why are the swift mountain streams important to Norway?
7. (a) Name the places in Norway that are noted for fishing.
- (b) Why are some fish kept in tanks?
8. (a) Name two remarkable sights to be seen in Norway.
- (b) What is the most northerly tip of the country?
9. (a) What stories do Norwegian boys and girls like to hear?
- (b) Name two winter sports in Norway.
10. (a) What is the name of the people who inhabit Northern Norway?
- (b) On what is their wealth usually judged?
- (c) Name a Norwegian dog.

Development Exercises

1. Point out on the map of Norway:
- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| (a) Oslo | (b) North Cape |
| (c) Bergen | (d) Lofoten Islands |
| (e) Stavanger | (f) Bouvet Island |
2. Give a short account of a feat performed by one of the companions and its meaning.
3. This story is called a saga, which is an old Norse folk tale. Write a sentence to illustrate the meaning of each of the following:
- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| (a) novel | (b) diary |
| (c) epistle | (d) biography |
| (e) essay | (f) ballad |

4. Cats figure prominently in folklore. Explain the meaning of the following sentences:
 - (a) When the cat is away, the mice will play.
 - (b) Those two people are leading a cat-and-dog life.
 - (c) The deserter was given the cat-o'-nine tails as punishment.
 - (d) She was such a gossip that she let the cat out of the bag.
 - (e) Yesterday it rained cats and dogs.
5. Give a short description of the “Land of the Midnight Sun”.
6. “Smorgasbord” is usually the first course of a meal in Norway. If you were dining in a restaurant, what would the following terms signify?
 - (a) hors d’oeuvre
 - (b) dessert
 - (c) consommé
 - (d) à la carte
 - (e) entrée
7. What do each of the following Norse words mean?
 - (a) gaard
 - (b) vik
 - (c) saeter
 - (d) lur
 - (e) sparks totting
8. Make full list of winter sports.

3

The Virtuous One



The *Small Woman* by Alan Burgess recounts the true story of Gladys Aylward, the London parlourmaid, who overcame all obstacles to become a missionary in North China. After many hardships, she met Mrs Jeannie Lawson, a Scottish missionary, and together they started a Christian settlement which they called “The Inn of Eight Happinesses”. The following is an adaptation of an event which took place shortly after Mrs Lawson’s death, when Gladys was in sole charge of the Inn.

There arrived during her second year at Yangcheng, a pleasant young man called Lu-Yung-Cheng. He and Gladys were standing in the courtyard when a messenger from the Mandarin rushed in waving a piece of scarlet paper. He gabbled at such a rate that Gladys found it difficult to understand him.

“What’s the paper for, anyway?” she asked Lu-Yung-Cheng.

“It’s an official summons from the Mandarin,” said Lu-Yung-Cheng nervously. “A riot has broken out in the men’s prison.”

“You must come at once,” said the messenger urgently. “It is most important!”

Gladys stared at him. “But what’s the riot in the prison got to do with us?”

“You must come at once!” repeated the messenger loudly. “It is an official order.” He hopped from one foot to the other in impatience.

Lu-Yung-Cheng looked at her doubtfully. “When that piece of red paper arrives from the Mandarin, you must go.” There was a nervous tremor in his voice.

“All right, you go and see what it’s all about,” said Gladys. “It’s obviously a man’s job. I know nothing about prisons. I’ve never been in one in my life . . . though I really don’t see what you’re supposed to do.”

She could see from Lu-Yung-Cheng’s face that the prospect did not appeal to him.

“Hurry, please hurry!” cried the messenger.

Reluctantly Lu-Yung-Cheng trailed after him to the door. Gladys watched him reach the opening, take a quick look behind at her, then dodge swiftly to the left as the messenger turned to the right. She could hear the sound of his running feet as he tore down the road.

Within two seconds the messenger discovered his loss. He stormed back through the doorway crying “Ai-ee-ee!” and shaking his fist in rage. He raced across the courtyard, a little fat man without dignity, towards Gladys.

“Now, you must come,” he shouted. “This is an official paper. You are ordered to come. You must come. Now! With me! If you refuse you will get into trouble!”



“All right,” she said mildly. “I’ll come. I really don’t know what’s the matter with Lu-Yung-Cheng. He must feel ill or something. But I certainly don’t see what a riot in the prison has to do with me . . .”

They hurried up the road and in through the East Gate. A few yards inside the gate the blank outside wall of the prison flanked the main street. From the other side came screams, shouts, yells the most horrible noises.

“My goodness!” said Gladys. “It certainly is a riot, isn’t it?”

The Governor of the prison, small, pale-faced, his mouth set in a worried line, met her at the entrance. Behind were grouped half a dozen of his staff.

“We are glad you have come,” he said quickly. “There is a riot in the prison; the convicts are killing each other.”

“So I can hear,” she said. “But what am I here for? I’m only the missionary woman. Why don’t you send the soldiers in to stop it?”

“The convicts are murderers, bandits, thieves,” said the Governor, his voice trembling. “The soldiers are frightened. There are not enough of them.”

“I’m sorry to hear that,” said Gladys. “But what do you expect me to do about it? I don’t even know why you asked me to come . . .”

The Governor stepped forward. “You must go in and stop the fighting.”

“I must go in . . .!” Gladys’s mouth dropped open; her eyes rounded in utter amazement. “Me! Me go in there! Are you mad? If I went it they’d kill me!”

The Governor’s eyes were fixed on her. “But how can they kill you? You tell everybody that you have come here because you have the living God inside you . . .”

“The living God?” she stammered.

“You preach it everywhere – in the streets and villages. If you preach the truth, if your God protects you from harm, then you can stop this riot.”

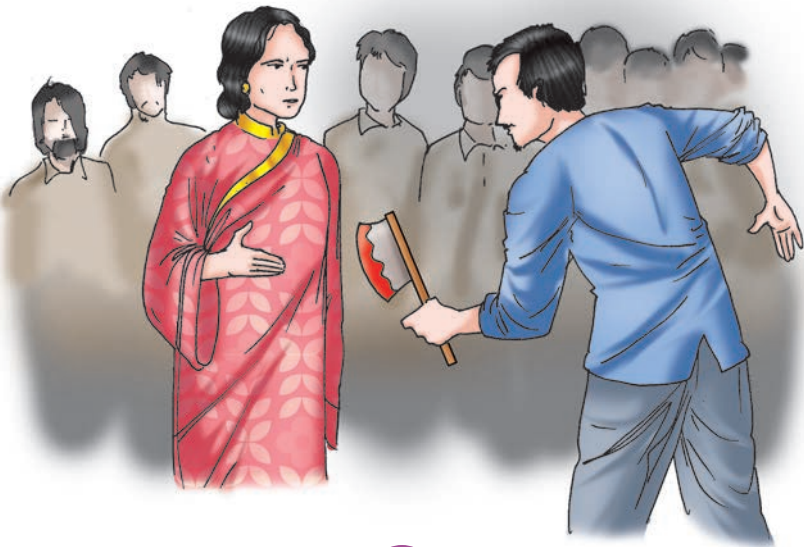
Gladys started at him. Her mind raced round in bewilderment, searching for some fact that would explain her beliefs to this simple, deluded man. A little cell in her mind kept blinking on and off with an urgent semaphore message; “It’s true! You have been preaching that your Christian God protects you from harm. Fail now, and you are finished in Yangcheng. Discard your faith now, and you discard it forever!” It was a desperate challenge. But how could she go into the prison? Those men – murderers, thieves, bandits, rioting and killing each other inside those walls! How could she . . .? “I must try,” she said to herself. “I must try. O God give me strength.”

She looked up at the Governor’s pale face, knowing that now hers was the same colour. “All right,” she said. “Open the door. “I’ll go in to them.” She did not trust her voice to say any more.

“The key!” snapped the Governor. “The key, quickly.”

One of his orderlies came forward with a huge iron key; soon the immense iron-barred door swung open. The door closed behind her. She heard the great key turn. She was locked in the prison with a horde of raving criminals, who sounded by their din as if they had all gone completely insane. With faltering footsteps she walked forward and came to an abrupt standstill, rooted in horror.

The courtyard was about sixty feet square, with queer cage-like structures round all four sides. Within its confines a writhing; fiendish battle was going on. Several bodies were stretched out on the flagstones. One man, obviously dead, lay only a few feet away from her. The main group of men, however, were watching one convict who brandished a large, blood-stained chopper. As she stared, he suddenly rushed at them and they scattered wildly to every part of the square. No one took any notice whatsoever of Gladys as she stood motionless. The man rushed again; the group parted; he singled one man out and chased him. The man ran towards Gladys, then ducked



away. The madman with the axe halted only a few feet from her. Without any instinctive plan, hardly realising what she was doing, she took two angry steps towards him.

“Give me that chopper,” she said furiously. “Give it to me at once!”

The man turned to look at her. For three long seconds the wild dark pupils staring from bloodshot eyes glared at her. He took two paces forward. Suddenly, meekly, he held out the axe. Gladys snatched the weapon from his hand and held it rigidly down by her side. The other convicts – there must have been fifty or sixty cowering there – stared from every corner of the courtyard. All action was frozen and Gladys knew she must clinch her advantages.

“All of you!” she shouted. “Come over here. Come on, form into a line! You, over there! Come on, form up in front of me!”

Obediently the convicts shambled across, forming into a ragged group before her. She regarded them stormily. There was silence. Then suddenly her fear had gone. They were so wretched. They were so hopeless. She could have wept openly that human creatures could be so wretched. With an effort, she tightened her lips and took command again. The fear had gone, yes; but she knew that she must cow them with her authority.

“You should be ashamed of yourselves,” she said, berating them like an irate mother scolding a crowd of naughty children. “All this noise and all this mess! The governor sent me in here to find out what it was all about. Now if you clean up this courtyard and promise to behave in future, I’ll ask him to deal leniently with you this time. Now, what is your grievance? Why did you start fighting like this?”

There was no answer. Several hung their heads in shame.



“I want you to appoint a spokesman, then,” she went on. “He can tell me what the trouble is, and then you can start cleaning up the courtyard at once. Now go over in that corner and appoint your spokesman. I’ll wait here.”

The convicts trooped over into the corner she indicated and talked among themselves. A few moments later, one of the taller men of slightly better physique approached. Like the others, he was dressed in rags.

“My name is Feng,” he said. “I am their spokesman.”

Gladys listened to his story. Later she learned that he had once been a Buddhist priest; he had been convicted of theft from the other priests in the temple and sentenced to eight years in gaol. He explained that no one really knew why, or how, the riot had started. They were allowed the chopper for an hour each day to cut up their food. Someone had quarrelled over its possession and someone else had joined in. He could

not explain this strange occurrence. Perhaps it was that many of the men had been there for many years, he said. As she knew, unless their friends or relatives sent in food, they starved. It was hard to sit up against a wall and starve to death while other men ate. He could not explain the outbreak, but the walls were high and the doors were strong; they never saw the outside world, women or the mountains, a tree in blossom or a friendly face; sometimes the spirit grew so oppressed that it burst out in a wild tumult of violence. That, he thought, is what had occurred. They were all very sorry.

“What do you do all day in here?” asked Gladys seriously.

“Do? There is nothing to do.”

“No occupation of any sort?”

“None!”

“But a man must have work, something to do. I shall see the Governor about it.”

It was at this moment she became conscious that the Governor and his retinue were behind her. The noise of the riot had died, and they had now thought it safe to enter and take an official part in the peace treaty.

The Governor bowed to Gladys. “You have done well. We must thank you,” he said gratefully.

“It’s disgraceful,” she said bitterly. “These men are locked up here week after week, year after year, with nothing to do. Of course you have riots if they’ve nothing to occupy their time. They must have work to do. We must get looms so they can weave cloth; we must find them all sorts of jobs so that they can earn a little money and buy food, and get back a little self-respect.”

The Governor nodded. Whether he agreed or not she could not tell.

“We will discuss it later,” he said amiably.

“I have promised them there will be no reprisals,” she said.

The Governor nodded again. A few corpses were rarely the subject of an official inquiry in the Chinese penal system. “As long as there is no recurrence,” he said, “we shall forget all about it.”

“That is good,” said Gladys. She turned to Feng. “I’m going now, but I shall come back. I promise I will do all I can to help you.”

She saw upon her the dark eyes of the priest who was a thief. “Thank you,” he said. “Thank you, Ai-weh-deh.”

She did not know at the time what the word “Ai-weh-deh” meant. That evening she asked Lu-Yung-Cheng when he returned from the long walk he had so suddenly decided to take.

“Ai-weh-deh?” he said curiously. “It means the virtuous one.”

She was known as Ai-weh-deh for all her remaining years in China.

(Adapted)



❑ Questions on the Story

1. From what story is the extract taken?
2. What was Gladys Aylward before she became a missionary?
3. What was the name of the inn?
4. How long had she been at Yangcheng?
5. From whom did the messenger come?
6. What did the messenger say?
7. Why did Lu-Yung-Cheng dodge the messenger?
8. Who was waiting for Gladys at the prison?
9. What did he ask her to do?
10. Why did he ask her to do this?
11. Describe the scene in the prison courtyard.
12. From whom were the prisoners running?
13. Tell how Gladys brought him under control.
14. What did she make the prisoners do?
15. What did she promise them?
16. Why was Feng in prison?
17. What was his explanation of the riot?
18. What did Gladys ask the governor to do for the prisoners?
19. What condition did the governor make for the promise of no reprisals?
20. What name did Feng give to Gladys?

❑ Development Exercises

1. Describe the route from your country to North China
(a) by sea (b) by land.

2. You have just read the story of a riot. Find out information on some famous riots and their causes.
3. People in a prison are called convicts. What do we call the people:
 - (a) in a hospital
 - (b) in a church
 - (c) at a concert
 - (d) in a play
 - (e) at a football match
4. A person who weaves cloth is a weaver. What name do we give to each of the following?
 - (a) one who mends shoes
 - (b) a woman who tends the sick
 - (c) one who fixes our teeth
 - (d) a man who makes clothes
 - (e) a woman who sews cloth
5. A mandarin was an important official in China. Find out what the following titles signify and in what countries they may be found:
 - (a) commissar
 - (b) begum
 - (c) khedive
 - (d) sultana
 - (e) shogun
 - (f) diwan
6. The Inn of the Eight Happinesses was set up to attend to the needs of travellers. Give some names for present-day places of rest and refreshment.
7. Ai-weh-deh was the Chinese nickname for Gladys Aylward. Find out the Chinese words for the following:
 - (a) Hello
 - (b) Goodbye
 - (c) Thank you
 - (d) Welcome
 - (e) Goodnight
 - (f) Good morning
 - (g) Good luck

4

The Conquest of Everest



This account is adapted from The Ascent of Everest by Colonel John Hunt, the leader of the British expedition which conquered Mount Everest.

This is the story of how, on 29th May, 1953, two men reached the top of Everest, the highest mountain in the world.

The height of Everest is 29,035 feet and until 1953, no one had been able to climb much above 28,000 feet, either from the north through Tibet or from the south through Nepal. Indeed, only on about six occasions had it been possible to get within 1,000 feet of the summit. Time after time men had reached this point only to be forced back by bad weather, either by misfortune or when they were too weak to tackle those last few hundred feet. Everest, it had been made clear, would not yield its crown easily.

No one can control the weather, and this, together with the lack of oxygen in the air, is the most important obstacle facing climbers on Everest. To counter the ill-effects of the rarefied air, supplies of oxygen can be inhaled by the climber from cylinders carried on his back. When this is breathed in, the climber can move faster and more confidently, though of course, the weight of the equipment itself is a further strain on the climber's strength.

The chance to climb Everest is limited to May or June or the early part of October, that is, before the monsoon sets in or after it dies away, for all through the winter, a fierce wind, strong and desperately cold, blows from the north-east and no human being could withstand its onslaught.

The approach to Everest is made by way of a valley known as the Western Cwm, which leads to the very foot of the mountain; but to get this far, it is by no means straightforward climbing. Two or three miles ahead, rising 4,000 feet above the valley lie the icy slopes named the Lhotse Face, which must be scaled in order to reach the feature known as the South Col, midway between the top of Everest and its nearest neighbour, Lhotse. Between the South Col and the summit of Everest another 3,000 feet remain to be climbed on slopes exposed to the wind and in an atmosphere in which the climber must rely increasingly on his oxygen equipment for strength and



stamina. In preparing for their attack on Everest, members of the 1953 expedition had the advantage of knowing in advance the nature of the perils and hardships that would face their new challenge.

One of the most important tasks was the selection of a party of climbers and in this matter four qualifications were necessary: age, temperament, experience and physique. The chosen party, consisting mainly of well-trying British climbers with two from New Zealand, arrived in India by air, sea, rail and ultimately on foot to meet at Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, a small kingdom in the Himalayan mountains. Twenty of the best Sherpas were engaged, for these sturdy hill-men from eastern Nepal have all the qualities of born mountaineers. Among them was the renowned “Tiger” Tenzing, who was making his sixth attempt at Everest and who, with the Swiss guide Lambert, had reached the South-East ridge in 1952, only about 1,000 feet from the top.

Thyangboche, which was our base camp, must be one of the most beautiful places in the world. The height is well over 12,000 feet. The monastery buildings stand upon a knoll at the end of a big spur. Surrounded by satellite dwellings, all quaintly constructed and oddly medieval in appearance, it provides a grandstand beyond comparison for the finest mountain scenery in the world.

Beyond a foreground of dark firs, lichen-draped birch and rhododendrons, now dwarfed by altitude to bush size, tower immense ice peaks in every quarter, while the Everest group bars the head of the valley. Standing spellbound by this wonderful scenery upon an open grassy alp where yaks grazed peacefully, the party deemed life very good.

From the base camp, rehearsals and practices were carried out and these helped the climbers to get accustomed to their

equipment, to become used to the increased heights and to become acquainted with each other. By setting up camps at various levels, the party was able to explore the way ahead and bring up loads of provisions and climbing equipment, thus giving the final assault on the summit a greater chance of success. After overcoming the difficulties and hazards of the Icefall, the Western Cwm and the Lhotse face, the advance base was set up at the South Col, from which the assault parties were sent out.

Though the first summit attempt by Charles Evans and Tom Bourdillon failed, the second assault team consisting of Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing set out with full confidence. The conquest of the summit of Everest is told in Hillary's own words:

“The weather for Everest seemed practically perfect. Insulated as we were in all our down clothing and wind proofs, we suffered no discomfort for cold or wind. However, on one occasion I removed my sun-glasses to examine more closely a difficult section of the ridge but was very soon blinded by the fine snow driven by the bitter wind and hastily replaced them. I went on cutting steps. To my surprise, I was enjoying the climb as much as I had ever enjoyed a fine ridge in my own New Zealand Alps.

“After an hour's steady going we reached the foot of the most formidable-looking problem on the ridge – a rock step some forty feet high. We had known of the existence of this step from aerial photographs and had also seen it through our binoculars from Thyangboche. We realised that at this altitude it might well spell the difference between success and failure.

“The rock itself, smooth and almost holdless, might have been an interesting afternoon problem to a group of expert rock climbers in the Lake District, but here it was a barrier

beyond our feeble strength to overcome. I could see no way of turning it on the steep rock bluff on the west, but fortunately another possibility of tackling it remained.

“On its east was another great cornice, and running up the full forty feet of the step was a narrow crack between the cornice and the rock. Leaving Tenzing to belay me as best he could, I jammed my way into this crack; then, kicking backwards with my crampons, I sank their spikes deep into the frozen snow behind me and levered myself off the ground.



“Taking advantage of every little rockhold and all the force of knee, shoulder and arms I could muster, I literally cramponed backwards up the crack, with a fervent prayer that the cornice would remain attached to the rock. Despite the considerable effort involved, my progress although slow was steady, and as Tenzing paid out the rope, I inched my way upwards until I could finally reach over the top of the rock and drag myself out of the crack on to a wide ledge.

“For a few moments I lay regaining my breath and for the first time really felt the fierce determination that nothing now could stop us reaching the top. I took a firm stance on the ledge and signalled to Tenzing to come on up. As I heaved hard on the rope, Tenzing wriggled his way up the crack and

finally collapsed exhausted at the top, like a giant fish, when it has just been hauled from the sea after a terrible struggle.

“I checked both our oxygen sets and roughly calculated our flow rates. Everything seemed to be going well. Probably owing to the strain imposed on him by the trouble with his oxygen set, Tenzing had been moving rather slowly; but he was climbing safely and this was the major consideration. His only comment on my enquiring of his condition was to smile and wave along the ridge.

“The ridge continued as before. Giant cornices on the right, steep rock slopes on the left. I went on cutting steps on the narrow strip of snow. The ridge curved away to the right and we had no idea where the top was. As I cut around the back of one hump, another higher one would swing into view. Time was passing and the ridge seemed never-ending.

“In one place where the angle of the ridge had eased off. I tried cramponing without cutting steps, hoping this would save time. But I quickly realised that our margin of safety on these steep slopes at this altitude was too small, so I went step-cutting.

“I was beginning to tire a little now. I had been cutting steps continuously for two hours, and Tenzing, too, was moving very slowly. As I chipped steps around still another corner, I wondered rather dully just how long we could keep it up.

“Our original zest had now quite gone and it was turning more into a grim struggle. I then realised that the ridge ahead, instead of still monotonously rising, now dropped, sharply away, and far below, I could see the North Col and the Rongbuk Glacier. I looked upwards to see a narrow snowy ridge running up to a snow summit. *A few more whacks of the ice-axe in the firm snow and we stood on top.*

“My initial feelings were of relief – relief that there were no more steps to cut – no more ridges to traverse – no more humps to tantalise us with hopes of success. I looked at Tenzing and in spite of the balaclava, goggles and oxygen mask, all encrusted with long icicles that concealed his face, there was no disguising his infectious grin of pure delight as he looked all around him. We shook hands and then Tenzing threw his arms around my shoulders and we thumped each other on the back until we were almost breathless. It was 11.30 a.m. The ridge had taken us two and a half hours, but it seemed like a lifetime.

“I turned off the oxygen and removed my set. I had carried my camera, loaded with colour film, inside my shirt to keep it warm, so I now produced it and got Tenzing to pose on top for me, waving his axe on which was a string of flags – British, Nepalese, United Nations, and Indian. Then I turned my attention to the great stretch of country lying below us in every direction.



“To the east was our giant neighbour Makalu, unexplored and unclimbed. Far away across the clouds, the great bulk of Kangchenjunga loomed on the horizon. To the west, Cho Oyu, our old adversary of 1952, dominated the scene and we could see the great unexplored ranges of Nepal stretching off into the distance.

“Meanwhile, Tenzing had made a little hole in the snow and in it he placed various small articles of food – a bar of chocolate, a packet of biscuits and a handful of lollies. Small offerings, indeed, but at least a token gift to the Gods that all devout Buddhists believe have their home in this lofty summit. On the South Col, two days before, Hunt had given me a small crucifix which he asked me to take to the top. I too, made a hole in the snow and placed the crucifix beside Tenzing’s gifts.”

(Adapted)

Interesting Facts on Famous Achievements

1. What makes men want to climb mountains, risk their lives or suffer voluntary hardships? Rarely is it for personal gain. In the majority of cases, it is to satisfy man’s spirit of adventure. Recognition of success is often given and the climbers **Colonel Hunt** and **Edmund Hillary** were knighted for their brilliant conquest of Everest. This mountain belongs to the loftiest range of mountains in the world, the **Himalayas**, a word which means “the abode of snow”.
2. Success does not always bring its rewards. **Captain Robert Scott** and his band of courageous men battled their way to the **South Pole** in January 1912, only to

find that the Norwegian **Roald Amundsen** had reached the Pole first, just one month before him. While Amundsen's triumph was a truly great one, the epic story of Captain Scott's last expedition is not one of failure, but of dogged heroism and self-sacrifice which was an example to the world.



3. Another “near miss” was Norwegian **Fridtjof Nansen’s** attempt to reach the **North Pole**. By his famous and hazardous voyage in the *Fram*, in which he came to a distance 190 miles short of the Pole, he discovered that instead of it being on land, the North Pole is an ice-covered sea. The *Fram* has been preserved in the national museum in Oslo. The first person to reach the North Pole was an American **Robert Peary**, who led a successful expedition in 1909.
4. It was however personal gain that, in the thirteenth century, made the Venetian brothers, **Nicolo** and **Maffeo Polo**, extend their trading posts until they reached **Cathay**, the ancient name for China. These daring merchants wandered across the Mongolian deserts, climbed the mountains of Tibet and found their way to the court of the Emperor of China. They returned with their treasures, and **Marco Polo**, Nicolo's son, gained everlasting fame by writing down his wonderful stories and adventures in the Far East.
5. In the making of great discoveries, sailors have played a large part. Ever since **Columbus** discovered the sea



Vasco da Gama



Ferdinand Magellan

route to America the quest for new worlds to conquer has inspired many sailors to explore unknown seas. **Vasco da Gama**, a Portuguese sailor, made a sea voyage by the Cape of Good Hope to India and **Ferdinand Magellan**, a fellow countryman, had the distinction of being the first man to sail round the world. English sailors, like **Sir Francis Drake**, **Henry Hudson** and **Captain James Cook**, followed their example, and made dangerous voyages and interesting discoveries in uncharted seas.

6. The desire to be free to worship God as they pleased inspired the **Pilgrim Fathers** to seek a home in the New World. Despite the perils of a voyage across the Atlantic, and the hardships of colonising unexplored territory, they settled and prospered in what is now known as the New England States. Two centuries later, a similar pioneering spirit drove the first **covered wagons** to the west and so opened up for development the great resources of the United States. Among the settlers in South Africa are the **Huguenots** who were driven out of France because of their Protestant religion.

7. The cause of spreading Christianity took Europeans to many lands unknown to them until then. The journeys of **Saint Paul**, described in the Bible, lent inspiration to many missionaries who carried the gospel to the non-Christian peoples. Scotsman **David Livingstone** spent a life-time exploring the unknown territories of Africa and converting Africans. He brought to the Europeans' attention the **Victoria Falls** and the country now known as Republic of Malawi. He died in Africa. Another famous Scottish explorer, **Mungo Park**, penetrated the dense jungles of West Africa and, followed the unknown course of the river Niger for over a thousand miles.
8. The qualities of bravery and courage are not confined to any single nation, for each country has its own list of heroes and daring adventures. **Jacques Cartier** and later **Samuel Champlain** were two famous Frenchmen, who succeeded in exploring the great **St Lawrence** estuary of Canada, and in establishing a French colony there. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, amid the dangers of the pathless Rocky Mountains, the Scotsman **Alexander Mackenzie** and the American **Simon Fraser** showed great powers of endurance in tracing from source to mouth the famous rivers that bear their names.
9. Among those who blazed the trail of modern progress were two intrepid English airmen, **John Alcock** and **Arthur Brown**, who flew the Atlantic for the first time in 1919. They took off in a biplane from St Johns, Newfoundland, and after a flight in which they encountered heavy gales and storms, they landed in Ireland, having completed in 16 hours the first



trans-Atlantic air crossing at an average speed of 118 miles per hour.

10. Sir Edmund Hillary is also associated with the 1957–58 Commonwealth expedition of **crossing the Antarctic continent by land**. From Scott Base in MacMurdo Sound, he travelled over the snow-bound country to the South Pole, where he was joined by the English scientific explorer **Dr Vivien Fuchs**, who had come from Shackleton Base in Vahsel Bay on the opposite side of the continent. Hillary flew back to his base, but Dr Fuchs continued his land journey and successfully completed the two thousand mile crossing of this south polar region.

❑ Questions on the Story

1. Give the date when Mt Everest was first conquered.
2. What had prevented previous climbers from reaching the top?
3. How did the climbers overcome the thin air which exists at such heights?
4. In what way did this equipment help the climbers?
5. Name three difficult places that had to be scaled before the attack on the summit could be made.

6. What qualities were necessary in the men chosen for this expedition?
7. How did the party arrive at Kathmandu?
8. How many Sherpas were in the party? Name one of them.
9. What kind of buildings were at the base camp at Thyangboche?
10. Name any animal that can be found there.
11. Why were camps set up at various levels on the mountain?
12. From what place was the assault on the summit to be made?
13. Who made the first attempt to reach the top?
14. Tell how Hillary managed to overcome the difficulty of the forty-foot rock step.
15. In what way did they manage to climb the topmost ridge?
16. When did Hillary realise that they had reached the summit?
17. What did the climbers do when they reached the top?
18. What flags had Tenzing on his ice-axes, when he was photographed on the summit of Everest?
19. What did the climbers leave on the summit?
20. Why did they leave them?

Questions on the Interesting Facts

1. (a) What does “Himalaya” mean?
(b) What award did Hunt and Hillary receive?

2. (a) Who first reached the South Pole?
(b) Name another explorer who reached it shortly afterwards.
3. (a) What did Nansen discover about the North Pole?
(b) What has happened to Nansen's ship?
(c) Who reached the North Pole first?
4. (a) What was the ancient name for China?
(b) Why was Marco Polo famous?
5. (a) Name two Portuguese sailors who discovered new sea routes.
(b) Name two famous English navigators.
6. (a) Why did the Pilgrim Fathers go to the New World?
(b) What mode of travel was used by the first travellers across America?
7. (a) Name the colony founded by David Livingstone.
(b) What journey of exploration was made by Mungo Park?
8. (a) Who were the first explorers of the St Lawrence river?
(b) Name two other Canadian explorers.
9. (a) How long did the first trans-Atlantic flight take?
(b) Where did the fliers take off and where did they land?
10. (a) How did Sir Edmund Hillary and Dr Fuchs tackle the crossing of the south polar continent?
(b) What distance approximately was covered by each explorer?

□ Development Exercises

1. Point out on the map of the world.
 - (a) Norway, the Himalayas, Everest, Tibet, Nepal
 - (b) Africa, Cape of Good Hope, Victoria Falls, Malawi, River Niger
 - (c) Canada, Rocky Mountains, St Lawrence River, Fraser River, Mackenzie River
2.
 - (a) Write a short account of any great achievement in the twentieth century.
 - (b) If you could have been a famous explorer, which one would you have been? Give your reasons.
3. The conquest of Everest is regarded as an epic story of endurance. Give an example of each of the following:
 - (a) a romantic story
 - (b) a sea story
 - (c) a war story
 - (d) a detective story
 - (e) a ghost story
 - (f) a science-fiction story
4. Everest is in Nepal. In what countries are the following?
 - (a) Ben Nevis
 - (b) Fujiyama
 - (c) Popocatepetl
 - (d) Kilimanjaro
 - (e) the Matterhorn
 - (f) Anamudi
5. Many people are killed each year in climbing accidents. Give a few safety hints you would recommend for climbers.

6. Nansen's famous ship was the *Fram*. With whom are the following ships connected?
- (a) *Discovery*
 - (b) *Golden Hind*
 - (c) *Mayflower*
 - (d) *Santa Maria*
 - (e) *Victory*
7. Everest is the highest mountain in the world. Name the following:
- (a) the highest building
 - (b) the largest city
 - (c) the longest river
 - (d) the biggest ship
 - (e) the largest ocean
 - (f) the smallest continent
8. Make a list of explorers, giving name, native country and achievements.

For example: Amundsen – Norway – he was the first man to reach the South Pole.