A Realm OF ENGLISH B SELECTION

PROSE | POETRY | PLAY

XI and XII

West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education

CLASS-XI

SEMESTER-I

SUBJECT : ENGLISH-B (ENGB)

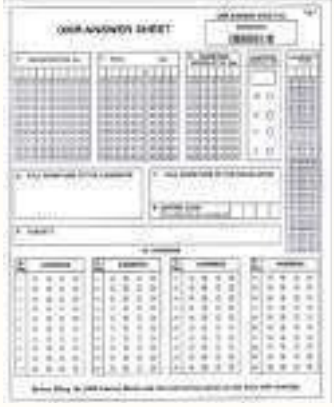
FULL MARKS : 40 CONTACT HOURS : 100 Hours

COURSE CODE: THEORY

(MCQ Type Questions)

Unit	Segment	Marks	Contact Hours
I	Prose	10	15
II	Verse	10	15
III	Rapid Reader	10	20
IV	Textual Grammar	05	25
V	Reading Comprehension	05	25

- The first semester exam will be held in the **home center** of the school (generally like the school final or test exam) in September.
- The school will prepare all the question papers, OMR answer scripts.
- The school teachers will check the first semester exam papers and they will publish the first semester exam results.



Download the **official OMR sheet PDF** and all the rules and regulations for the exam! by scanning the QR

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CLASS XI
SEMESTER I

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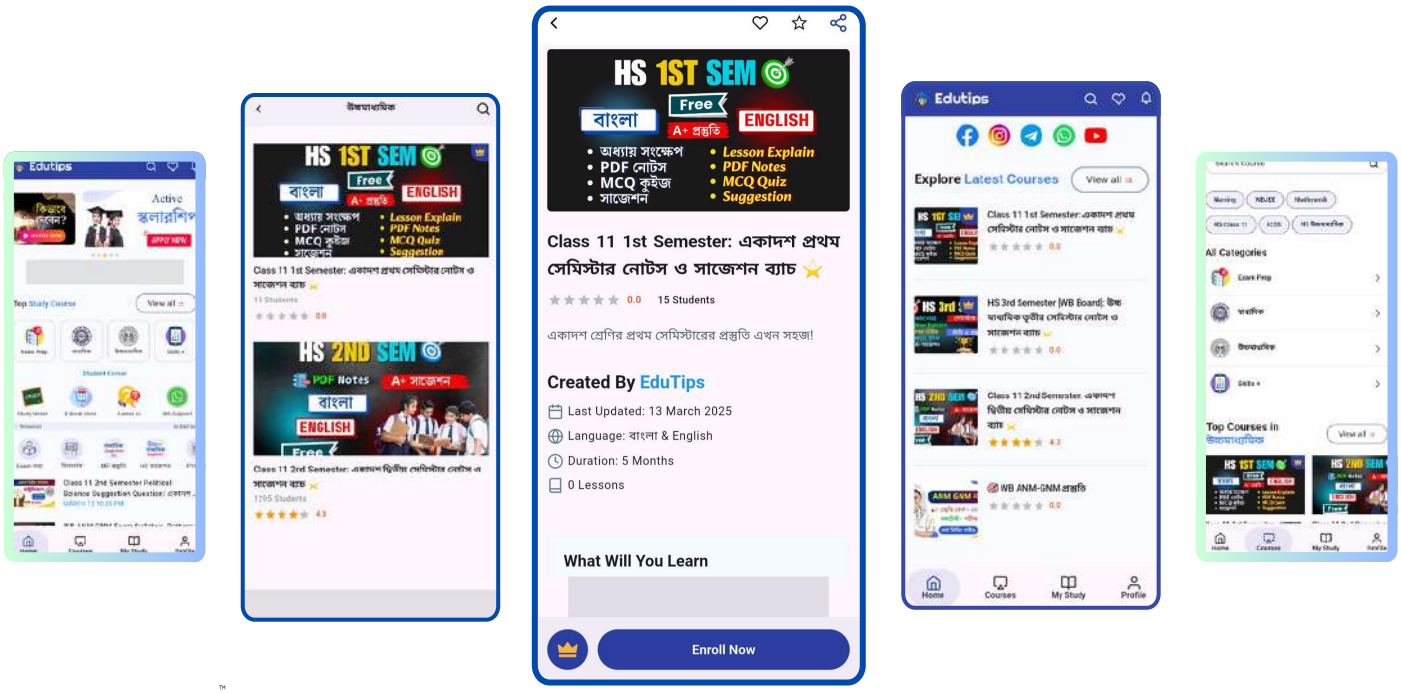

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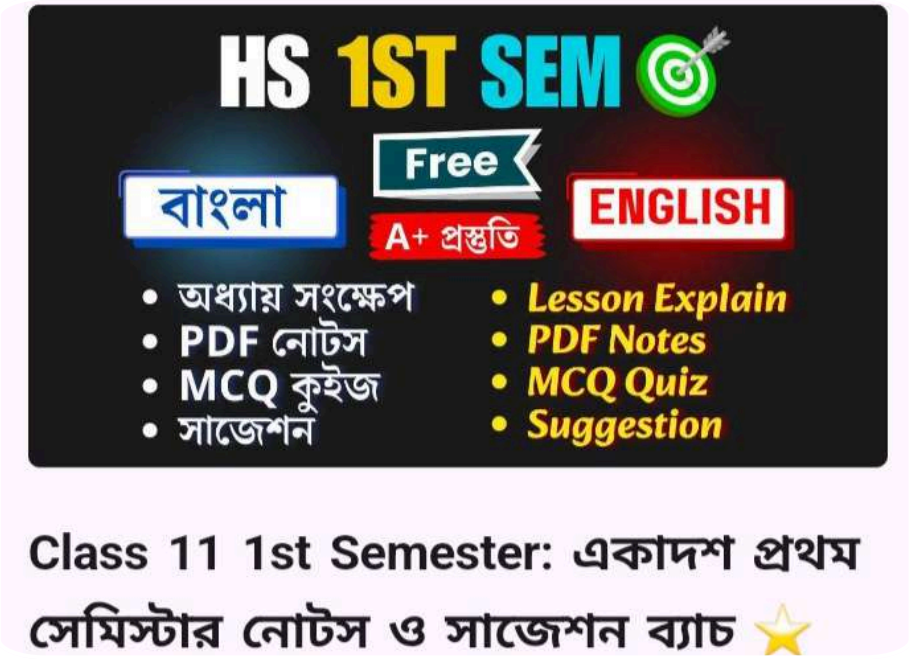

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An Astrologer's Day

R.K. Narayan

Punctually at midday he opened his bag and spread out his professional equipment, which consisted of a dozen cowrie shells, a square piece of cloth with obscure mystic charts on it, a notebook and a bundle of palmyra writing. His forehead was resplendent with sacred ash and vermilion, and his eyes sparkled with a sharp abnormal gleam which was really an outcome of a continual searching look for customers, but which his simple clients took to be a prophetic light and felt comforted.

The power of his eyes was considerably enhanced by their position—placed as they were between the painted forehead and the dark whiskers which streamed down his cheeks: even a half-wit's eyes would sparkle in such a setting. To crown the effect he wound a saffron-colored turban around his head. This colour scheme never failed.

People were attracted to him as bees are attracted to cosmos or dahlia stalks. He sat under the boughs of a spreading tamarind tree which flanked a path running through the Town Hall Park. It was a remarkable place in many ways: a surging crowd was always moving up and down this narrow road morning till night. A variety of trades and occupations was represented all along its way: medicine-sellers, sellers of stolen hardware and junk, magicians and, above all, an auctioneer of cheap cloth, who created enough din all day to attract the whole town. Next to him in vociferousness came a vendor of fried groundnuts, who gave his ware a fancy name each day, calling it Bombay Ice-Cream one day, and on the next Delhi Almond, and on the third Raja's Delicacy, and so on and so forth, and people flocked to him. A considerable portion of this crowd dallied before the astrologer too. The astrologer transacted his business by the light of a flare which crackled and smoked up above the groundnut heap nearby.

Half the enchantment of the place was due to the fact that it did not have the benefit of municipal lighting. The place was lit up by shop lights. One or two

had hissing gaslights, some had naked flares stuck on poles, some were lit up by old cycle lamps and one or two, like the astrologer's, managed without lights of their own. It was a bewildering criss-cross of light rays and moving shadows. This suited the astrologer very well, for the simple reason that he had not in the least intended to be an astrologer when he began life; and he knew no more of what was going to happen to others than he knew what was going to happen to himself next minute. He was as much a stranger to the stars as were his innocent customers. Yet he said things which pleased and astonished everyone: that was more a matter of study, practice and shrewd guesswork. All the same, it was as much an honest man's labour as any other, and he deserved the wages he carried home at the end of a day.

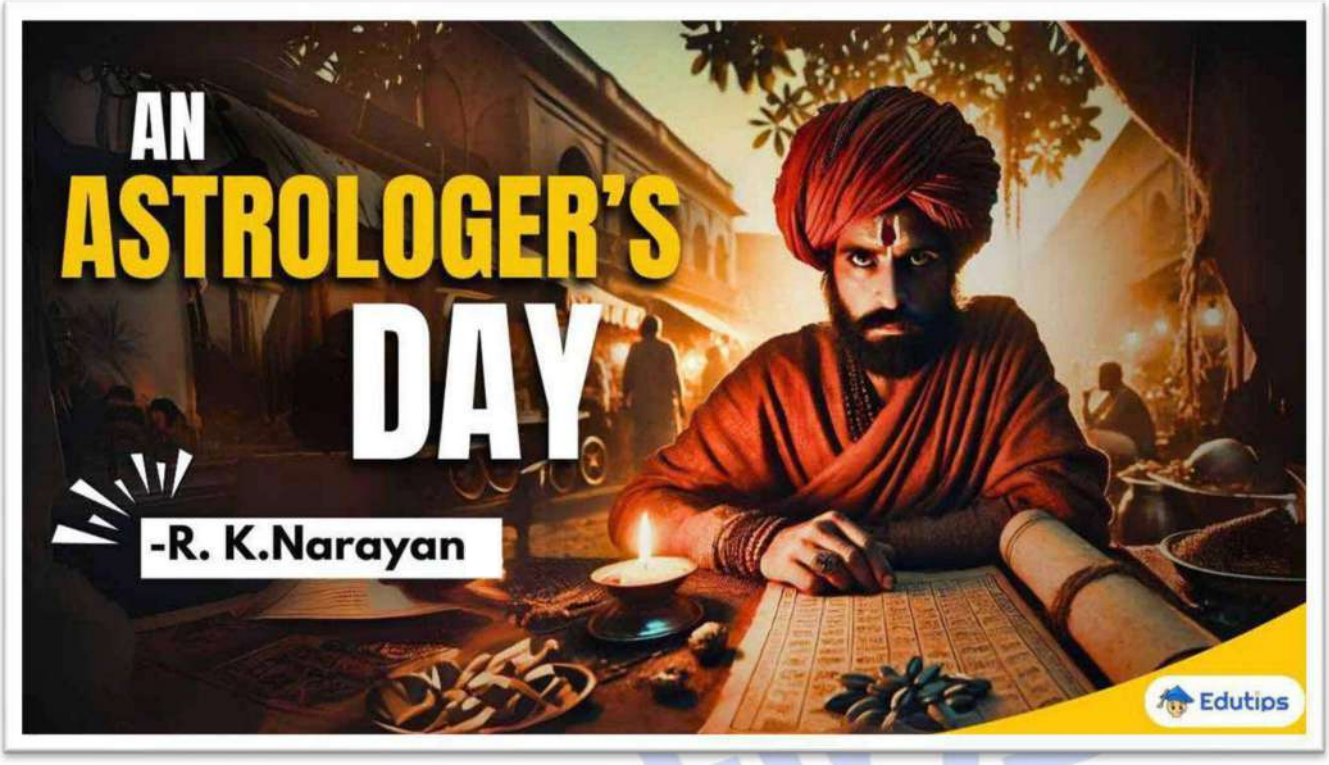
He had left his village without any previous thought or plan. If he had continued there he would have carried on the work of his forefathers—namely, tilling the land, living, marrying and ripening in his cornfield and ancestral home. But that was not to be. He had to leave home without telling anyone, and he could not rest till he left it behind a couple of hundred miles. To a villager it is a great deal, as if an ocean flowed between.

He had a working analysis of mankind's troubles: marriage, money and the tangles of human ties. Long practice had sharpened his perception. Within five minutes he understood what was wrong. He charged three pice per question and never opened his mouth till the other had spoken for at least ten minutes, which provided him enough stuff for a dozen answers and advices. When he told the person before him, gazing at his palm, "In many ways you are not getting the fullest results for your efforts," nine out of ten were disposed to agree with him. Or he questioned: "Is there any woman in your family, maybe even a distant relative, who is not well disposed towards you?" Or he gave an analysis of character: "Most of your troubles are due to your nature. How can you be otherwise with Saturn where he is? You have an impetuous nature and a rough exterior." This endeared him to their hearts immediately, for even the mildest of us loves to think that he has a forbidding exterior.

The nuts-vendor blew out his flare and rose to go home. This was a signal for the astrologer to bundle up too, since it left him in darkness except for a little shaft of green light which strayed in from somewhere and touched the ground before him. He picked up his cowrie shells and paraphernalia and was putting them

An Astrologer's Day

- R. K. Narayan



MCQ Questions

1. What time did the astrologer set up his equipment?
a) Morning **b) Midday** ✅
c) Evening d) Night

2. What did the astrologer use to predict the future?
a) A crystal ball b) Tarot cards
c) Cowrie shells, a cloth with mystic charts, a notebook, and palmyra writing ✅
d) A magic wand

3. How did the astrologer enhance the appearance of his eyes?
a) By wearing contact lenses
b) By using eye makeup
c) By the strategic placement of sacred ash and vermilion ✅
d) By hypnotizing his clients

4. What color was the astrologer's turban?
a) Red b) Green
c) Saffron ✅ d) Blue

5. Where did the astrologer set up his business?
a) A temple b) A riverbank
c) A town square **d) A park** ✅

6. What kind of tree provided shade for the astrologer?
a) Banyan b) Mango
c) Peepal **d) Tamarind** ✅

7. Who was the most noisy vendor near the astrologer?
a) A medicine seller b) A magician
c) An auctioneer d) A groundnut vendor

8. What did the groundnut vendor call his product?
a) Always the same name
b) Different names every day ✅
c) Only regional names
d) No specific name

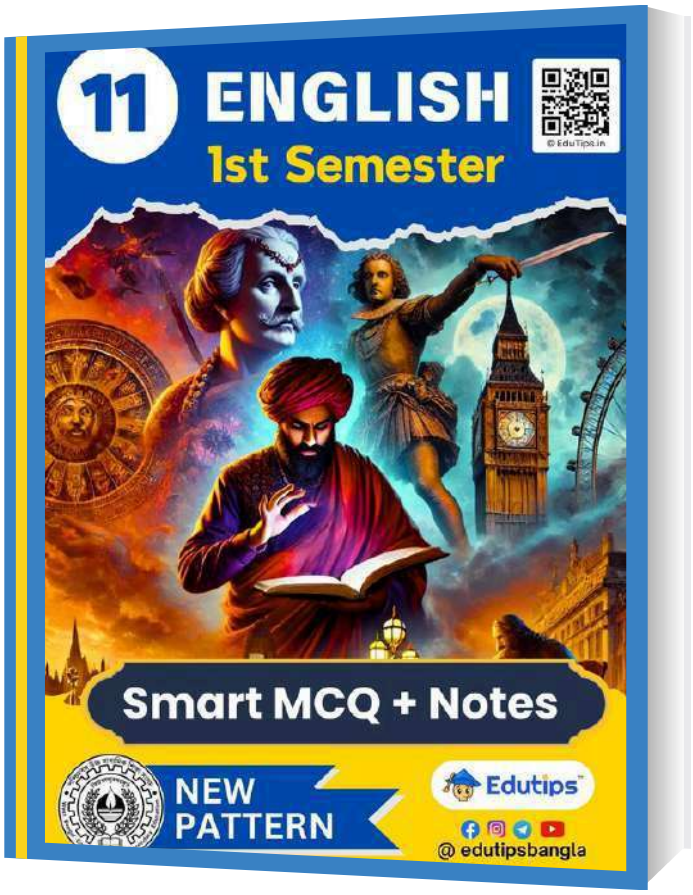
9. How did the astrologer attract customers?
a) By shouting loudly
b) By distributing free horoscopes
c) By his appearance and demeanor ✅
d) By offering discounts

10. What was the primary source of light for the astrologer's workspace?
a) A lamp b) Sunlight
c) A flare ✅ d) A candle

11. What was the astrologer's professional equipment made of?
a) Gold b) Silver
c) Wood **d) Various materials** ✅

একাদশ ENGLISH প্রথম সেমিস্টার

Smart MCQ Notes



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back into his bag when the green shaft of light was blotted out; he looked up and saw a man standing before him. He sensed a possible client and said: "You look so careworn. It will do you good to sit down for a while and chat with me." The other grumbled some vague reply. The astrologer pressed his invitation; whereupon the other thrust his palm under his nose, saying: "You call yourself an astrologer?" The astrologer felt challenged and said, tilting the other's palm towards the green shaft of light: "Yours is a nature ..." "Oh, stop that," the other said. "Tell me something worthwhile. . . ."

Our friend felt piqued. "I charge only three pice per question, and what you get ought to be good enough for your money ..." At this the other withdrew his arm, took out an anna and flung it out to him, saying, "I have some questions to ask. If I prove you are bluffing, you must return that anna to me with interest."

"If you find my answers satisfactory, will you give me five rupees?"

"No."

"Or will you give me eight annas?"

"All right, provided you give me twice as much if you are wrong," said the stranger. This pact was accepted after a little further argument. The astrologer sent up a prayer to heaven as the other lit a cheroot. The astrologer caught a glimpse of his face by the matchlight. There was a pause as cars hooted on the road, jutka drivers swore at their horses and the babble of the crowd agitated the semi-darkness of the park. The other sat down, sucking his cheroot, puffing out, sat there ruthlessly. The astrologer felt very uncomfortable. "Here, take your anna back. I am not used to such challenges. It is late for me today. . . ."

He made preparations to bundle up. The other held his wrist and said, "You can't get out of it now. You dragged me in while I was passing." The astrologer shivered in his grip; and his voice shook and became faint. "Leave me today. I will speak to you tomorrow." The other thrust his palm in his face and said, "Challenge is challenge. Go on." The astrologer proceeded with his throat drying up. "There is a woman . . ."

"Stop," said the other. "I don't want all that. Shall I succeed in my present search or not? Answer this and go. Otherwise I will not let you go till you disgorge all your coins." The astrologer muttered a few incantations and replied, "All right. I will speak. But will you give me a rupee if what I say is convincing? Otherwise I

will not open my mouth, and you may do what you like." After a good deal of haggling the other agreed. The astrologer said, "You were left for dead. Am I right? "

"Ah, tell me more."

"A knife has passed through you once?" said the astrologer.

"Good fellow!" He bared his chest to show the scar. "What else?"

"And then you were pushed into a well nearby in the field. You were left for dead."

"I should have been dead if some passerby had not chanced to peep into the well," exclaimed the other, overwhelmed by enthusiasm. "When shall I get at him?" he asked, clenching his fist.

"In the next world," answered the astrologer. "He died four months ago in a far-off town. You will never see any more of him." The other groaned on hearing it. The astrologer proceeded :

"Guru Nayak—"

"You know my name!" the other said, taken aback.

"As I know all other things. Guru Nayak, listen carefully to what I have to say. Your village is two days' journey due north of this town. Take the next train and be gone. I see once again great danger to your life if you go from home." He took out a pinch of sacred ash and held it out to him. "Rub it on your forehead and go home. Never travel southward again, and you will live to be a hundred."

"Why should I leave home again?" the other said reflectively. "I was only going away now and then to look for him and to choke out his life if I met him." He shook his head regretfully "He has escaped my hands. I hope at least he died as he deserved." "Yes," said the astrologer. "He was crushed under a lorry." The other looked gratified to hear it.

The place was deserted by the time the astrologer picked up his articles and put them into his bag. The green shaft was also gone, leaving the place in darkness and silence. The stranger had gone off into the night, after giving the astrologer a handful of coins.

It was nearly midnight when the astrologer reached home. His wife was waiting for him at the door and demanded an explanation. He flung the coins at her and said, "Count them. One man gave all that."

"Twelve and a half annas," she said, counting. She was overjoyed. "I can buy some jaggery and coconut tomorrow. The child has been asking for sweets for so many days now. I will prepare some nice stuff for her."

"The swine has cheated me! He promised me a rupee," said the astrologer. She looked up at him. "You look worried. What is wrong?"

"Nothing."

After dinner, sitting on the pyol, he told her, "Do you know a great load is gone from me today? I thought I had the blood of a man on my hands all these years. That was the reason why I ran away from home, settled here and married you. He is alive."

She gasped, "You tried to kill!"

"Yes, in our village, when I was a silly youngster. We drank, gambled and quarrelled badly one day—why think of it now? Time to sleep," he said, yawning, and stretched himself on the pyol.

EXERCISE

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives given :

1. How does the astrologer make his living?
   a) By accurately predicting the future of his clients
   b) By selling fake horoscopes to unsuspecting customers
   c) By performing elaborate rituals to appease the Gods
   d) By offering advice on various life matters to his clients
2. What is the turning point of the story that leads to the astrologer's realisation?
   a) He finds a valuable gem stone while strolling through the market place
   b) He encounters a man from the past whom he had tried to kill
   c) He discovers that his wife has been cheating on him
   d) He meets a wealthy client who offers him a large sum of money

The Swami and Mother-Worship

SISTER NIVEDITA

The story of the glimpses which I caught of this part of the Swami's life would be singularly incomplete, if it contained no mention of his worship of the Mother. Spiritually speaking, I have always felt that there were two elements in his consciousness. Undoubtedly he was born a *Brahmajnani*, as Ramakrishna Paramahamsa so frequently insisted. When he was only eight years old, sitting at his play, he had developed the power of entering *Samadhi*. The religious ideas towards which he naturally gravitated, were highly abstract and philosophical, the very reverse of those which are commonly referred to as 'idolatrous.' In his youth, and presumably when he had already been some time under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna, he became a formal member of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. In England and America he was never known to preach anything that depended on a special form. The realisation of Brahman was his only imperative, the Advaita philosophy his only system of doctrine, the Vedas and Upanishads his sole scriptural authority.

And yet, side by side with this, it is also true that in India the word "Mother" was forever on his lips. He spoke of Her, as we of one deeply familiar in the household life. He was constantly preoccupied with Her. Like other children, he was not always good. Sometimes he would be naughty and rebellious. But always to Her. Never did he attribute to any other, the good or evil that befell. On a certain solemn occasion, he entrusted to a disciple a prayer to Her that in his own life had acted as a veritable charm. "And mind!" he added suddenly, turning with what was almost fierceness upon the receiver, "*make* Her listen to you, when you say it! *None of that cringing* to Mother! Remember!" Every now and then he would break out with some new fragment of description. The right hand raised in blessing, the left holding the sword,— "Her curse is blessing!" would be the sudden exclamation that ended a long reverie. Or becoming half-lyric in the intensity of his feeling, "Deep in the heart of hearts of Her own, flashes the blood-

red knife of Kali. Worshippers of the Mother are they from their birth, in Her incarnation of the sword!" From him was gathered, in such moments as these, almost every line and syllable of a certain short psalm, called the 'Voice of the Mother,' which I wrote and published about this time. "I worship the Terrible!" he was continually saying,— and once, "It is a mistake to hold that with all men pleasure is the motive. Quite as many are born to seek after pain. Let us worship the Terror for Its own sake."

He had a whole-hearted contempt for what he regarded as squeamishness or mawkishness. He wasted few words on me, when I came to him with my difficulties about animal sacrifice in the temple. He made no reference, as he might have done, to the fact that most of us, loudly as we may attack this, have no hesitation in offering animal sacrifice to ourselves. He offered no argument, as he easily might have done, regarding the degradation of the butcher and the slaughter-house, under the modern system. "Why not a little blood, to complete the picture?" was his only direct reply to my objections. And it was with considerable difficulty that I elicited from him, and from another disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, sitting near, the actual facts of the more austere side of Kali-worship, that side which has transcended the sacrifice of others. He told me however that he had never tolerated the blood-offering commonly made to the "demons who attend on Kali." This was simple devil-worship, and he had no place for it. His own effort being constantly to banish fear and weakness from his own consciousness and to learn to recognise THE MOTHER as instinctively in evil, terror, sorrow, and annihilation, as in that which makes for sweetness and joy, it followed that the one thing he could not away with was any sort of watering-down of the great conception. "Fools!" he exclaimed once,-as he dwelt in quiet talk on "the worship of the Terrible", on "becoming one with the Terrible"— "Fools! they put a garland of flowers round Thy neck, and then start back in terror, and call Thee 'the Merciful'!" And as he spoke, the underlying egoism of worship that is devoted to the *kind* God, to Providence, the consoling Divinity, without a heart for God in the earthquake, or God in the volcano, overwhelmed the listener. One saw that such worship was at bottom, as the Hindu calls it, merely 'shop- keeping,' and one realised the infinitely greater boldness and truth of the teaching that God manifests through evil as well as through good. One saw that the true attitude for the mind and will that are not to be baffled by the personal self, was in fact the determination, in the stern

words of the Swami Vivekananda, 'to seek death not life, to hurl oneself upon the sword's point, to become one with the Terrible for evermore!'

It would have been altogether inconsistent with the Swami's idea of freedom, to have sought to impose his own conceptions on a disciple. But everything in my past life as an educationist had contributed to impress on me now the necessity of taking on the Indian consciousness, and the personal perplexity associated with the memory of the pilgrimage to Amarnath was a witness not to be forgotten to the strong place which Indian systems of worship held in that consciousness. I set myself therefore to enter into Kali worship, as one would set oneself to learn a new language, or take birth deliberately, perhaps, in a new race. To this fact I owe it that I was able to understand as much as I did of our Master's life and thought. Step by step, glimpse after glimpse, I began to comprehend a little. And in matters religious, he was, without knowing it, a born educator. He never checked a struggling thought. Being with him one day when an image of Kali was brought in, and noticing some passing expression, I suddenly said "Perhaps, Swamiji, Kali is the Vision of Siva! Is She?" He looked at me for a moment. "Well! Well! Express it in your own way," he said gently, "Express it in your own way!"

Another day he was going with me to visit the old Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, in the seclusion of his home in Jorasanko, and before we started, he questioned me about a death-scene at which I had been present the night before. I told him eagerly of the sudden realisation that had come to me, that religions were only languages, and we must speak to a man in his own language. His whole face lighted up at the thought. "Yes!" he exclaimed, "And Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was the only man who taught that! He was the only man who ever had the courage to say that we must speak to all men in their own language!"

Yet there came a day when he found it necessary to lay down with unmistakeable clearness his own position in the matter of Mother- worship. I was about to lecture at the Kalighat, and he came to instruct me that if any foreign friends should wish to be present, they were to remove their shoes, and sit on the floor, like the rest of the audience. In that Presence no exceptions were to be made. I was myself to be responsible for this.[1]

[1] In no temple anywhere, ought there to be any exception. No one has any respect for a man who cannot stand for the dignity and sacredness of his own place of worship. — Nivedita.

After saying all this, however, he lingered before going, and then, making a shy reference to Colonel Hay's poem of the 'Guardian Angels', he said, "That is precisely my position about Brahman and the gods! I believe in Brahman and the gods, and not in anything else!"

He was evidently afraid that my intellectual difficulty would lie where his own must have done, in the incompatibility of the exaltation of one definite scheme of worship with the highest Vedantic theory of Brahman. He did not understand that to us who stood about him, he was himself the reconciliation of these opposites, and the witness to the truth of each. Following up this train of thought, therefore, he dropped into a mood of half-soliloquy, and sat for a while talking disjointedly, answering questions, trying to make himself clear, yet always half-absorbed in something within, as if held by some spell he could not break.

"How I used to hate Kali!" he said, "And all Her ways! That was the ground of my six years' fight,-that I would not accept Her. But I had to accept Her at last! Ramakrishna Paramahamsa dedicated me to Her, and now I believe that She guides me in every little thing I do, and does with me what She will! Yet I fought so long! I loved him, you see, and that was what held me. I saw his marvellous purity I felt his wonderful love His greatness had not dawned on me then. All that came afterwards, when I had given in. At that time I thought him a brain-sick baby, always seeing visions and the rest. I hated it. And then I too had to accept Her!"

"No, the thing that made me do it is a secret that will die with me. I had great misfortunes at that time. It was an opportunity She made a slave of me. Those were the very words- 'a slave of you.' And Ramakrishna Paramahamsa made me over to Her...Strange! He lived only two years after doing that, and most of the time he was suffering. Not more than six months did he keep his own health and brightness.

"Guru Nanak was like that, you know, looking for the one disciple to whom he would give his power. And he passed over all his own family,—his children were as nothing to him,—till he came upon the boy to whom he gave it, and then he could die.

"The future, you say, will call Ramakrishna Paramahamsa an Incarnation of Kali? Yes, I think there's no doubt that She worked up the body of Ramakrishna for Her own ends.

"*You see, I cannot but believe that there is somewhere a great Power That thinks of Herself as feminine, and called Kali, and Mother*..... And I believe in Brahman too..... But is it not always like that? Is it not the multitude of cells in the body that make up the personality, the many brain-centres, not the one, that produce consciousness? .....Unity in complexity! Just so! And why should it be different with Brahman? It is Brahman. It is the One. And yet — and yet — it is the gods too!"

Similarly, he had returned from a pilgrimage in Kashmir saying "These gods are not merely symbols! They are the forms that the *bhaktas* have seen!" And it is told of Sri Ramakrishna that he would sometimes speak, coming out of *samadhi*, of the past experience of that soul that dwelt within him, — "He who came as Rama, as Krishna, as Jesus dwells here"—and then would add playfully, turning to his chief disciple, "But not in your Vedanta sense, Noren!"

Thus we are admitted to a glimpse of the struggle that goes on in great souls, for the correlation and mutual adjustment of the different realisations of different times. On the one side the Mother, on the other side Brahman. We are reminded of the Swami's own words, heard long ago, "The impersonal God, seen through the mists of sense, is personal." In truth it might well be that the two ideas could not be reconciled. Both conceptions could not be equally true at the same time. It is clear enough that in the end, as a subjective realisation, either the Mother must become Brahman, or Brahman the Mother. One of the two must melt into the other, the question of which, in any particular case, depending on the destiny and the past of the worshipping soul.

For my own part, the conversation I have related marked an epoch. Ever since it took place, I have thought I saw in my Master's attitude a certain element of one who carried for another a trust confided to him. He would always, when asked to explain the image of Kali, speak of it as the book of experience, in which the soul turns page after page, only to find that there is nothing in it, after all. And this, to my own mind, is the final explanation. Kali the Mother is to be the worship of the Indian future. In Her name will her sons find it possible to sound many experiences to their depths. And yet, in the end, their hearts will return to the ancient wisdom, and each man will know, when his hour comes, that all his life was but as a dream.

Who does not remember the Veda-like words of the Gita?— "Not, verily, by avoiding action, can a man rise to this inaction!" May we not, similarly, know for a certainty that not without going through this experience can we reach the realisation at the end? Through the Mother to Brahman, through new life and knowledge, and many changes, through the struggles, the victories, and the defeats of the immediate future, to that safe heaven of the soul where all is One, and all is peace? As I look more and more closely into the life of that great Teacher whom I have followed, I see each day with growing-clearness, how he himself was turning the pages of the book of experience, and that it was only when he had come to the last word that he could lie back like a weary child, in the arms of his Mother, to be wrapped away at last into the Supreme Revelation, knowing that 'all this was but a dream!'

EXERCISE

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives given :

1. **What is the Swami's attitude towards Mother worship, according to Sister Nivedita?**
   a) He advocates for the worship of all deities equally
   b) He emphasises the importance of Mother worship in spiritual life
   c) He considers it a primitive form of religious expression
   d) He discourages devotees from practicing Mother worship
2. **How does Mother worship play the role in Hinduism, as mentioned in the text?**
   a) It is an outdated tradition that the modern Hindus no longer follow.
   b) It's a superstitious practice rooted in ancient mythology
   c) It's a means of seeking material blessings and prosperity
   d) It serves a bridge between the individual Soul and the individual Spirit

Amarnath

Sister Nivedita

It was in the course of an open-air meal in the Mogul Gardens at Achhabal, that the Swami suddenly announced that he would go to Amarnath with the pilgrims, and take his daughter with him. Within our little party, there was too much feeling of delighted congratulation, for any obstacle to be put in the way of the fortunate member. And aided thus, as well as by the State officer, in charge of the journey, preparations went forward for this unique experience.

Kashmir seemed, in those weeks, to be full of pilgrims. We left Achhabal, and returned to our boats at Islamabad, for final arrangements, and everywhere we saw the march of gathering hosts. It was all very quiet and orderly and picturesque. Two or three thousand people would encamp in a field, and leave it before dawn, with no trace of their occupation, save the ashes of their cooking-fires. They carried a bazaar with them, and at each halting place, the pitching of tents, and opening of shops, took place with incredible rapidity. Organisation appeared to be instinctive. A broad street would run through the middle of one part of the camp, and here one could buy dried fruits, milk, dahls, and rice. The tent of the Tehsildar,-with that of the Swami on one side, and my own on the other,-was generally placed near some advantageous spot for the lighting of the evening fire, and thus his neighbourhood tended to form a social centre.

There were hundreds of monks, of all the orders, with their *Gerrua* tents, some no larger than a good-sized umbrella, and amongst these, the Swami's influence appeared to be magnetic. The more learned of them swarmed about him at every halting place, filling his tent, and remaining absorbed in conversation, throughout the hours of day light. The talk on their side, he told us afterwards,

had been all of Siva, and they had remonstrated with him seriously, when he had insisted, occasionally, on drawing their attention to the world about them. Even foreigners, they urged, were men. Why make such distinctions between *Swadesh* and *bidesh*? Nor could many of them understand the warmth of his love and sympathy for Mohammedanism. The same other-world-liness that made *Swadesh* and *bidesh* indistinguishable, also prevented these simple souls from formally conceiving of a unity, in which Hindu and Mohammedan were but rival elements. The soil of the Punjaub, they argued, was drenched with the blood of those who had died for the faith. Here, at least, let him practise a narrow orthodoxy! In answer to this, as became one who was, in fact 'an anachronism of the future', the Swami made those practical concessions of the moment that were expressive of his love for the brethren, and drove his principles home to their minds with the greater force and vehemence. But, as he told the tale of his warm discussions, the foreign mind could not help, with some amusement, noting the paradox that the Tehsildar himself, and many officers and servants of the pilgrimage, had been Mussulmans, and that no one had dreamt of objecting to their entering the Cave with the Hindu worshippers, on the ultimate arrival at the shrine. The Tehsildar came afterwards, indeed, with a group of friends, begging formal acceptance by the Swami as disciples; and in this, no one seemed to find anything incongruous or surprising.

Leaving Islamabad, we caught up somewhere with the pilgrimage, and camped with it, for that night, at Pawan, a place famous for its holy springs. I can remember yet the brilliance of the lights reflected in the clear black waters of the tank that evening, and throngs of pilgrims proceeding in little groups from shrine to shrine.

At Pahlgam—the village of the shepherds–the camp halted for a day, to keep *ekadasi*. It was a beautiful little ravine floored, for the most part with sandy islands in the pebble-worn bed of a mountain stream. The slopes about it were dark with pine-trees, and over the mountain at its head was seen, at sunset, the moon,

not yet full. It was the scenery of Switzerland or Norway, at their gentlest and loveliest. Here we saw the last of human dwellings, a bridge, a farm house, with its ploughed fields, and a few saeter-huts. And here, on a grassy knoll, when the final march began, we left the rest of our party encamped.

Through scenes of indescribable beauty, three thousand of us ascended the valleys that opened before us as we went. The first day we camped in a pine-wood; the next, we had passed the snow-line, and pitched our tents beside a frozen river. That night, the great camp-fire was made of juniper, and the next evening, at still greater heights, the servants had to wander many miles, in search of this scanty fuel. At last the regular pathway came to an end, and we had to scramble up and down, along goat-paths, on the face of steep declivities, till we reached the boulder-strewn gorge, in which the Cave of Amarnath was situated. As we ascended this, we had before us the snow-peaks covered with a white veil, newly-fallen; and in the Cave itself, in a niche never reached by sunlight, shone the great ice-lingam, that must have seemed, to the awestruck peasants who first came upon it, like the waiting Presence of God.

The Swami had observed every rite of the pilgrimage, as he came along. He had told his beads, kept fasts, and bathed in the ice-cold waters of five streams in succession, crossing the river-gravels on our second day. And now, as he entered the Cave, it seemed to him, as if he saw Siva made visible before him. Amidst the buzzing, swarming noise of the pilgrim-crowd, and the overhead fluttering of the pigeons, he knelt and prostrated two or three times, unnoticed; and then, afraid lest emotion might overcome him, he rose and silently withdrew. He said afterwards that in these brief moments he had received from Siva the gift of *Amar*, —not to die, until he himself had willed it. In this way, possibly, was defeated or fulfilled that presentiment which had haunted him from childhood, that he would meet with death, in a Siva temple amongst the mountains.

Outside the Cave, there was no Brahminic exploitation of the helpless people. Amarnath is remarkable for its simplicity and closeness to nature. But the

pilgrimage culminates—on the great day of *Rakhibandhan*, and our wrists were tied with the red and yellow threads of that sacrament. Afterwards, we rested and had a meal, on some high boulders beside the stream, before returning to our tents.

The Swami was full of the place. He felt that he had never been to anything so beautiful. He sat long silent. Then he said dreamily, "I can well imagine how this Cave was first discovered. A party of shepherds, one summer day, must have lost their flocks, and wandered in here in search of them. Then, when they came home to the valleys, they told how they had suddenly come upon Mahadev!"

Of my Master himself, in any case, a like story was true. The purity and whiteness of the ice-pillar had startled and enwrapt him. The cavern had revealed itself to him as the secret of Kailas. And for the rest of his life, he cherished the memory of how he had entered a mountain-cave, and come face to face there with the Lord Himself.

EXERCISE

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives given :

1. **The soil of Punjab was flooded with the blood of the people who died for**
   a) Love
   b) The land
   c) The faith
   d) Other people
2. **The word " other worldliness " means**
   a) Animal world
   b) An other world
   c) Relating to a world other than the actual world
   d) A new world

Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Earth has not any thing to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

EXERCISE

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives given :

1. **At what time of the day did Wordsworth observe the beauty of the city of London?**

   a) At dawn b) At noon
   c) In the evening d) At night

2. **What literary device is used in the line, " The river glideth at his own sweet will"**

   a) Simile b) Metaphor
   c) Hyperbole d) Personification

The Bangle Sellers

SAROJINI NAIDU

Bangle sellers are we who bear
Our shining loads to the temple fair...
Who will buy these delicate, bright
Rainbow-tinted circles of light?
Lustrous tokens of radiant lives,
For happy daughters and happy wives.

Some are meet for a maiden's wrist,
Silver and blue as the mountain mist,
Some are flushed like the buds that dream
On the tranquil brow of a woodland stream,
Some are aglow wth the bloom that cleaves
To the limpid glory of new born leaves

Some are like fields of sunlit corn,
Meet for a bride on her bridal morn,
Some, like the flame of her marriage fire,
Or, rich with the hue of her heart's desire,
Tinkling, luminous, tender, and clear,
Like her bridal laughter and bridal tear.

Some are purple and gold flecked grey
For she who has journeyed through life midway,
Whose hands have cherished, whose love has blest,
And cradled fair sons on her faithful breast,
And serves her household in fruitful pride,
And worships the gods at her husband's side.

EXERCISE

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives given :

1. **What is the mood of the poem "The Bangle Sellers"?**

   a) Critical and questioning

   b) Romantic and passionate

   c) Happy and carefree

   d) Melancholy and reflective

2. **What is the significance of the bangles in the poem "The Bangle Sellers"?**

   a) They represent wealth

   b) They symbolise Love and Marriage

   c) They are a source of income for the sellers

   d) They represent freedom

The Second Coming

William Butler Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

EXERCISE

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives given :

1. **What is the symbol of the " rough beast" as mentioned in the poem?**
   a) A monster
   b) A saviour
   c) A revolution
   d) An apocalypse

2. **"Things fall apart"... This suggests**
   a) All things are centralized
   b) Everything is defused
   c) All things are bound together
   d) All things are shattered on the ground

একাদশ ENGLISH প্রথম সেমিস্টার

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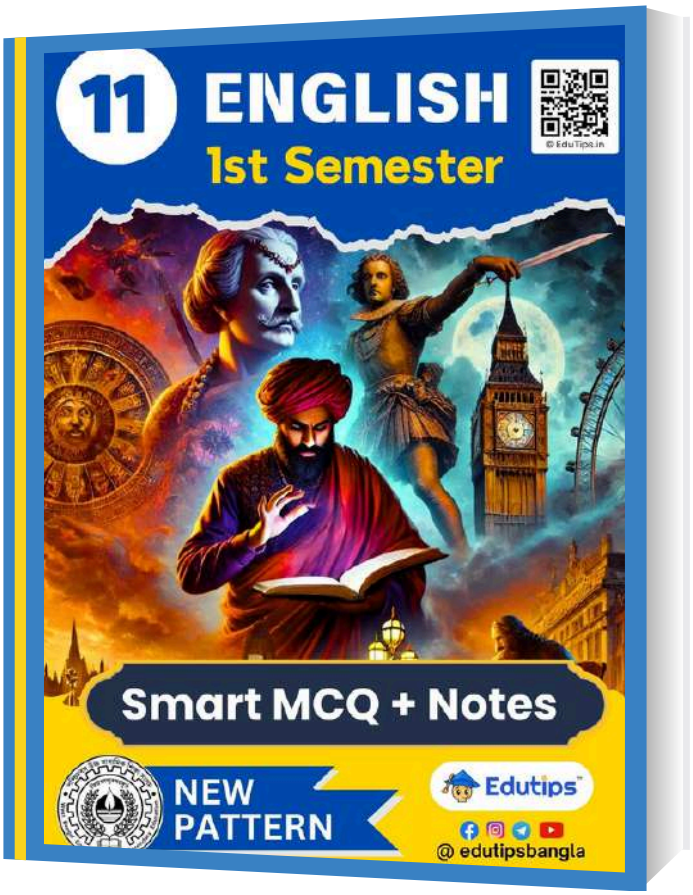

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The Model Millionaire

Oscar Wilde

Unless one is wealthy there is no use in being a charming fellow. Romance is the privilege of the rich, not the profession of the unemployed. The poor should be practical and prosaic. It is better to have a permanent income than to be fascinating. These are the great truths of modern life which Hughie Erskine never realised. Poor Hughie! Intellectually, we must admit, he was not of much importance. He never said a brilliant or even an ill-natured thing in his life. But then he was wonderfully good-looking, with his crisp brown hair, his clear-cut profile, and his grey eyes. He was as popular with men as he was with women and he had every accomplishment except that of making money. His father had bequeathed him his cavalry sword and a History of the Peninsular War in fifteen volumes. Hughie hung the first over his looking-glass, put the second on a shelf between Ruff's Guide and Bailey's Magazine, and lived on two hundred a year that an old aunt allowed him. He had tried everything. He had gone on the Stock Exchange for six months; but what was a butterfly to do among bulls and bears? He had been a tea-merchant for a little longer, but had soon tired of pekoe and souchong. Then he had tried selling dry sherry. That did not answer; the sherry was a little too dry. Ultimately he became nothing, a delightful, ineffectual young man with a perfect profile and no profession.

To make matters worse, he was in love. The girl he loved was Laura Merton, the daughter of a retired Colonel who had lost his temper and his digestion in India, and had never found either of them again. Laura adored him, and he was ready to kiss her shoe-strings. They were the handsomest couple in London, and had not a penny-piece between them. The Colonel was very fond of Hughie, but would not hear of any engagement.

'Come to me, my boy, when you have got ten thousand pounds of your own, and we will see about it,' he used to say; and Hughie looked very glum in those days, and had to go to Laura for consolation.

One morning, as he was on his way to Holland Park, where the Mertons lived, he dropped in to see a great friend of his, Alan Trevor. Trevor was a painter. Indeed, few people escape that nowadays. But he was also an artist, and artists are rather rare. Personally he was a strange rough fellow, with a freckled face and a red ragged beard. However, when he took up the brush he was a real master, and his pictures were eagerly sought after. He had been very much attracted by Hughie at first, it must be acknowledged, entirely on account of his personal charm. 'The only

people a painter should know,' he used to say, 'are people who are bête and beautiful, people who are an artistic pleasure to look at and an intellectual repose to talk to. Men who are dandies and women who are darlings rule the world, at least they should do so.' However, after he got to know Hughie better, he liked him quite as much for his bright, buoyant spirits and his generous, reckless nature, and had given him the permanent entrée to his studio.

When Hughie came in he found Trevor putting the finishing touches to a wonderful life-size picture of a beggar-man. The beggar himself was standing on a raised platform in a corner of the studio. He was a wizened old man, with a face like wrinkled parchment, and a most piteous expression.

Over his shoulders was flung a coarse brown cloak, all tears and tatters; his thick boots were patched and cobbled, and with one hand he leant on a rough stick, while with the other he held out his battered hat for alms.

'What an amazing model!' whispered Hughie, as he shook hands with his friend.

'An amazing model?' shouted Trevor at the top of his voice; 'I should think so! Such beggars as he are not to be met with every day. A trouvaille, mon cher; a living Velasquez! My stars! what an etching Rembrandt would have made of him!'

'Poor old chap!' said Hughie, 'how miserable he looks! But I suppose, to you painters, his face is his fortune?'

'Certainly,' replied Trevor, 'you don't want a beggar to look happy, do you?'

'How much does a model get for sitting?' asked Hughie, as he found himself a comfortable seat on a divan.

'A shilling an hour.'

'And how much do you get for your picture, Alan?'

'Oh, for this I get two thousand!'

'Pounds?'

'Guineas. Painters, poets, and physicians always get guineas.'

'Well, I think the model should have a percentage,' cried Hughie, laughing; 'they work quite as hard as you do.'

'Nonsense, nonsense! Why, look at the trouble of laying on the paint alone, and standing all day long at one's easel! It's all very well, Hughie, for you to talk, but I assure you that there are moments when Art almost attains to the dignity of

manual labour. But you mustn't chatter; I'm very busy. Smoke a cigarette, and keep quiet.'

After some time the servant came in, and told Trevor that the framemaker wanted to speak to him.

'Don't run away, Hughie,' he said, as he went out, 'I will be back in a moment.'

The old beggar-man took advantage of Trevor's absence to rest for a moment on a wooden bench that was behind him. He looked so forlorn and wretched that Hughie could not help pitying him, and felt in his pockets to see what money he had. All he could find was a sovereign and some coppers. 'Poor old fellow,' he thought to himself, 'he wants it more than I do, but it means no hansoms for a fortnight'; and he walked across the studio and slipped the sovereign into the beggar's hand. The old man started, and a faint smile flitted across his withered lips. 'Thank you, sir,' he said,

'thank you.'

Then Trevor arrived, and Hughie took his leave, blushing a little at what he had done. He spent the day with Laura, got a charming scolding for his extravagance, and had to walk home.

That night he strolled into the Palette Club about eleven o'clock, and found Trevor sitting by himself in the smoking-room drinking hock and seltzer.

'Well, Alan, did you get the picture finished all right?' he said, as he lit his cigarette.

'Finished and framed, my boy!' answered Trevor; 'and, by the bye, you have made a conquest.

That old model you saw is quite devoted to you. I had to tell him all about you - who you are, where you live, what your income is, what prospects you have - '

'My dear Alan,' cried Hughie, 'I shall probably find him waiting for me when I go home. But of course you are only joking. Poor old wretch! I wish I could do something for him. I think it is dreadful that any one should be so miserable. I have got heaps of old clothes at home - do you think he would care for any of them? Why, his rags were falling to bits.'

'But he looks splendid in them,' said Trevor. 'I wouldn't paint him in a frock coat for anything.

What you call rags I call romance. What seems poverty to you is picturesqueness to me.

However, I'll tell him of your offer.'

'Alan,' said Hughie seriously, 'you painters are a heartless lot.'

'An artist's heart is his head,' replied Trevor; 'and besides, our business is to realise the world as we see it, not to reform it as we know it. À chacun son métier. And now tell me how Laura is.

The old model was quite interested in her.'

'You don't mean to say you talked to him about her?' said Hughie.

'Certainly I did. He knows all about the relentless colonel, the lovely Laura, and the £10,000.'

'You told that old beggar all my private affairs?' cried Hughie, looking very red and angry.

'My dear boy,' said Trevor, smiling, 'that old beggar, as you call him, is one of the richest men

in Europe. He could buy all London to-morrow without overdrawing his account. He has a house

in every capital, dines off gold plate, and can prevent Russia going to war when he chooses.'

'What on earth do you mean?' exclaimed Hughie.

'What I say,' said Trevor. 'The old man you saw to-day in the studio was Baron Hausberg. He is a great friend of mine, buys all my pictures and that sort of thing, and gave me a commission a month ago to paint him as a beggar. Que voulez-vous? La fantaisie d'un millionnaire! And I must say he made a magnificent figure in his rags, or perhaps I should say in my rags; they are an old suit I got in Spain.'

'Baron Hausberg!' cried Hughie. 'Good heavens! I gave him a sovereign!' and he sank into an armchair the picture of dismay.

'Gave him a sovereign!' shouted Trevor, and he burst into a roar of laughter. 'My dear boy, you'll never see it again. Son affaire c'est l'argent des autres.'

'I think you might have told me, Alan,' said Hughie sulkily, 'and not have let me make such a fool of myself.'

'Well, to begin with, Hughie,' said Trevor, 'it never entered my mind that you went about distributing alms in that reckless way. I can understand your kissing a pretty model, but your giving a sovereign to an ugly one - by Jove, no! Besides, the fact is that I really was not at home-day to any one; and when you came in I

didn't know whether Hausberg would like his name mentioned. You know he wasn't in full dress.'

'What a duffer he must think me!' said Hughie.

'Not at all. He was in the highest spirits after you left; kept chuckling to himself and rubbing his old wrinkled hands together. I couldn't make out why he was so interested to know all about you; but I see it all now. He'll invest your sovereign for you, Hughie, pay you the interest every six months, and have a capital story to tell after dinner.'

'I am an unlucky devil,' growled Hughie. 'The best thing I can do is to go to bed; and, my dear

Alan, you mustn't tell any one. I shouldn't dare show my face in the Row.'

'Nonsense! It reflects the highest credit on your philanthropic spirit, Hughie. And don't run away. Have another cigarette, and you can talk about Laura as much as you like.'

However, Hughie wouldn't stop, but walked home, feeling very unhappy, and leaving Alan Trevor in fits of laughter.

The next morning, as he was at breakfast, the servant brought him up a card on which was written, 'Monsieur Gustave Naudin, de la part de M. le Baron Hausberg.

'I suppose he has come for an apology,' said Hughie to himself; and he told the servant to show the visitor up.

An old gentleman with gold spectacles and grey hair came into the room, and said, in a slight

French accent, 'Have I the honour of addressing Monsieur Erskine?'

Hughie bowed.

'I have come from Baron Hausberg,' he continued. 'The Baron - '

'I beg, sir, that you will offer him my sincerest apologies,' stammered Hughie.

'The Baron,' said the old gentleman with a smile, 'has commissioned me to bring you this letter'; and he extended a sealed envelope.

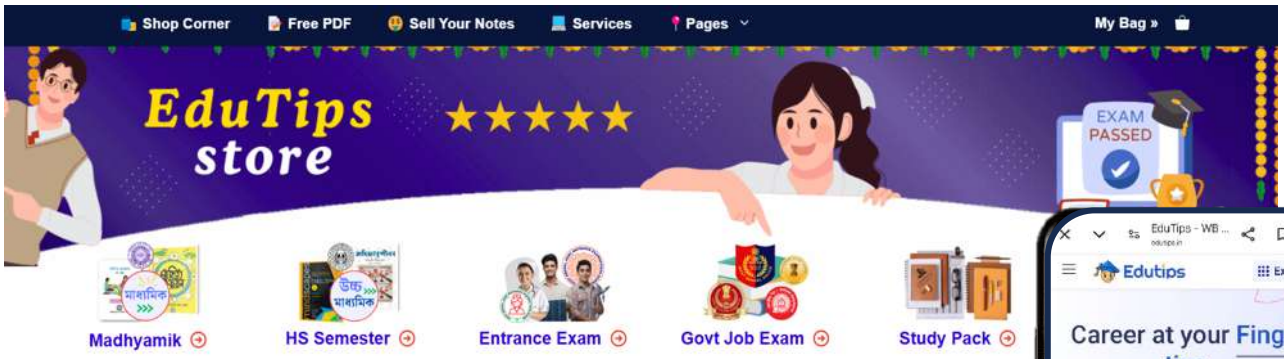
On the outside was written, 'A wedding present to Hugh Erskine and Laura Merton, from an old

beggar,' and inside was a cheque for £10,000.

When they were married Alan Trevor was the best man, and the Baron made a speech at the wedding breakfast.

'Millionaire models,' remarked Alan, 'are rare enough; but, by Jove, model millionaires are rarer still!'

The End



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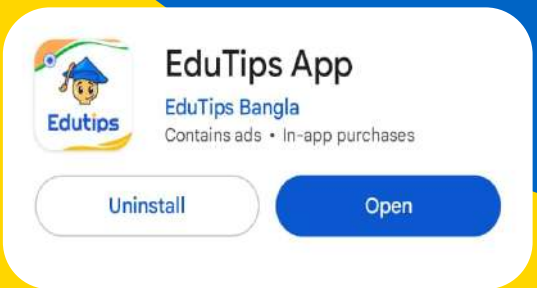

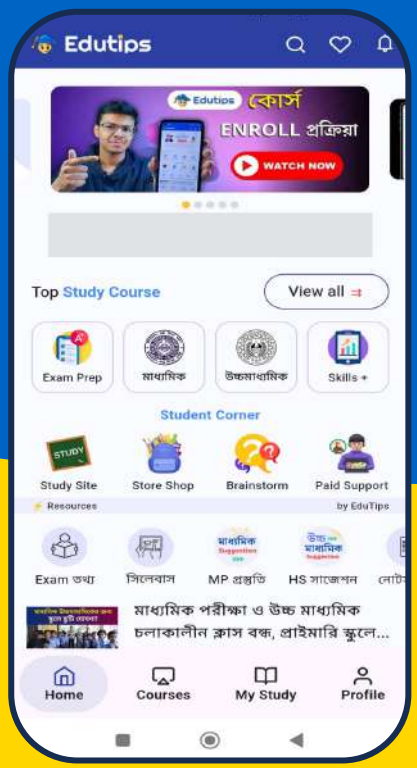

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