



Russell

Autobiography

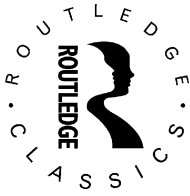


ROUTLEDGE

Autobiography

'Witty, invigorating, marvellously candid and generous in spirit'

Times Literary Supplement



Routledge Classics contains the very best of Routledge publishing over the past century or so, books that have, by popular consent, become established as classics in their field. Drawing on a fantastic heritage of innovative writing published by Routledge and its associated imprints, this series makes available in attractive, affordable form some of the most important works of modern times.

For a complete list of titles visit
www.routledge.com/classics

Bertrand
Russell

Autobiography



London and New York

First published in 1975
by George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London

First published in the Routledge Classics in 2010
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor and Francis Group, an informa business

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2009.

To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's collection of thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk.

© 2009 The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation Ltd

Introduction © 1998 Michael Foot

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-203-86499-9 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN10: 0-415-47373-X

ISBN10: 0-203-86499-9 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-47373-6

ISBN13: 978-0-203-86499-9 (ebk)

To Edith

Through the long years
I sought peace,
I found ecstasy, I found anguish,
I found madness,
I found loneliness,
I found the solitary pain
that gnaws the heart,
But peace I did not find.

Now, old & near my end,
I have known you,
And, knowing you,
I have found both ecstasy & peace,
I know rest,
After so many lonely years.
I know what life & love may be.
Now, if I sleep,
I shall sleep fulfilled.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
INTRODUCTION	x
1872–1914	1
Prologue: What I have Lived for	3
1 Childhood	5
2 Adolescence	27
3 Cambridge	46
4 Engagement	64
5 First Marriage	115
6 ‘Principia Mathematica’	135
7 Cambridge Again	195
1914–1944	221
8 The First War	225
9 Russia	309
10 China	339
11 Second Marriage	366
12 Later Years of Telegraph House	409
13 America. 1938–1944	438

1944–1967	483
Preface	485
14 Return to England	487
15 At Home and Abroad	537
16 Trafalgar Square	574
17 The Foundation	629
POSTSCRIPT	699
NOTES	703
INDEX	710

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements are due to the following for permission to include certain letters. In Part I: the letters from Joseph Conrad are included by permission of J. M. Dent Ltd and the Trustees of the Joseph Conrad Estate. In Part II: Les Amis d'Henri Barbusse; Margaret Cole, for the letters of Beatrice Webb; Joseph Conrad through J. M. Dent Ltd, for the letters of Joseph Conrad; Valerie Eliot, for the letters of T. S. Eliot; the Estate of Albert Einstein; the Executors of the H. G. Wells Estate (© 1968 George Philip Wells and Frank Wells); Pearn, Pollinger & Higham, with the concurrence of William Heinemann Ltd, for passages from the letters of D. H. Lawrence; the Public Trustee and the Society of Authors, for the letters of Bernard Shaw; the Trustees of the Will of Mrs Bernard Shaw; and the Council of Trinity College, Cambridge. Facsimiles of Crown-copyright records in the Public Record Office appear by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office. The above list includes only those who requested formal acknowledgement; many others have kindly granted permission to publish letters.

Acknowledgements are also due to the following for permission to include certain letters and articles in Part III: Baron Cecil Anrep, for the letters of Bernard Berenson; the Estate of Albert Einstein; Valerie Eliot, for the letters of T. S. Eliot; Dorelia John, for the letter of Augustus John; *The New York Times* Company, for 'The Best Answer to Fanaticism-Liberalism' (© 1951); *The Observer*, for 'Pros and Cons of Reaching Ninety'. The above list includes only those who requested formal acknowledgement; many others have kindly granted permission to publish letters.

INTRODUCTION

A particular, persistent reason why Bertrand Russell had such appeal, throughout his ninety odd years, especially to the young, was the trouble he took to write plain English. Considering how complicated or rarified were the subjects he started writing about in his own youth or early manhood, it is all the more instructive to see how he shaped his own style for his own purpose. Was it just a gift from the gods in whom he never believed, or was it not rather a deliberate design to carry forward the tradition of intellectual integrity in which he was reared? The plainer the style, the less likely it could be used to tell lies. He would stake everything to tell the truth. The century he loved best and the language he came to love offered the best exemplars. Jonathan Swift and David Hume aimed to secure an absolute clarity and they seldom failed. Yet they continued to be read thanks to the enduring individual resonance in their writing which they also achieved.

All through his life and increasingly in the later years, as many of us believed, Bertrand Russell was given credit for a comparable combination of qualities. And yet the claim has been challenged, and the point should be disposed of at once. Ray Monk, himself a philosopher, has written a new biography of Russell in which he insists that he is dealing with the philosophical questions overlooked or bowdlerised by previous biographers or by Russell himself. His first volume, subtitled *The Spirit of Solitude*, takes the record from Russell's birth in 1872 until 1921. In the light of his actual text, the title might be regarded as satisfactorily restrained. What he is examining more specifically, as he indicates in an epigraph from Dostoevsky, is how nearly and constantly Russell himself trembled on the edge of despair and madness. It is indeed a very different portrait from the one drawn by the man himself who believed that he derived at least part of his inspiration from the fountain

of eighteenth-century rationalism and who so often, when he was on the 'verge of despair', could still find the honest words to restore his faith in the human race. Mr Monk is a skilful operator, and his assault on Bertrand Russell's reputation responds to all those wretched instincts in the human condition which like to see great men reduced in their status. Devout Christians especially seem to be happier when free-thinkers of one breed or another are exposed as victims of the same fate as the rest of humanity. Such was the kind of venom which Dr Johnson unleashed on Jonathan Swift. Something of the same order Ray Monk has unleashed against Bertrand Russell, and there is still more to come. He himself has many qualities as a writer but not enough to stem the flow of malevolence which poisons the whole book. However, Russell did take the precaution of speaking for himself, and we are especially entitled to note how and why he did it.

Autobiography is the most risky and arduous of all the writer's arts, although the claim may be questioned, judging by the numbers who have not been deterred from the attempt. To tell the whole truth about oneself without inflicting gratuitous injury on the people we love or the causes we espouse looks an impossible task, and yet constantly these objections are set aside. An unwillingness to let others tell the tale, a knowledge that they are certain to get some essential strands of the story wrong, and that these misconceptions will remain inscribed in the public mind for ever, a driving, inner egotism which disperses all these other considerations takes command. All the greatest autobiographers have been egotists – Montaigne, Rousseau, Benvenuto Cellini – but Russell, we may honestly remind ourselves, found good reasons to quarrel with all of these, chiefly on account of their too intrusive egos. For his taste, Montaigne was too placid, Rousseau too hysterical, Cellini a hopeless egotistical case. His own model was Voltaire, and had he not denounced all the Rousseauite outbursts, whether novelettish or autobiographical, as the ravings of a larger lunacy quite foreign to the eighteenth-century enlightenment in which they were both born and bred? If Bertrand Russell had listened only to these ancestral voices, he would never have embarked on his own bravest odyssey.

Russell studied, with a special insight, one other figure sometimes damned for his incorrigible egotism, and he maybe offered the essential spur for Russell to proceed with his own work. In his *History of Western Philosophy*, published in 1945, Russell devoted a whole chapter to someone who was never considered to be a philosopher at all. His chapter on Byron explains the matter with admirable, indisputable assurance. In glaring contrast with the cool eighteenth-century temper which Russell had drunk in with his mother's milk, Byron's expression took the form, in Russell's own words, 'of Titanic cosmic self-assertion or, in those who retain some superstition, of Satanism'. Russell himself of course had taken special precautions to forswear all forms

of superstition, Satanic or otherwise, but this made his understanding of Byron's titanic qualities all the more remarkable. By the end of the chapter he is using Byron's own language to describe the essence of Rousseau's revolutionary message, and much else besides. Man may bleed to death through the truth that he recognises. Byron, says Russell, expressed this in 'immortal lines':

Sorrow is knowledge; they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth.
The tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.

Byron's *Don Juan* indeed was no self-indulgent essay in egotism; it was the revolutionary epic which the whole age cried out for. It had the same spacious qualities which Russell himself sought and found.

Two considerable writers of our century – George Orwell and H. G. Wells – faced the same dilemma in their writing careers and seemingly reached a different conclusion. Each understood the temptations to which autobiographers might be exposed and how little credence should be accorded to anything they said, except in the rare instances where they might be offering damning evidence against themselves. Orwell indeed embraced biographers of all breeds along with autobiographers in his sweeping anathema. He was constantly on guard to subdue his own egotism and indeed to remove all traces of it from his style of writing. No one who read what he wrote could doubt that he was completely honest in these professions; to conclude otherwise would be to convict him of an hypocrisy totally absent from his nature. Yet some of his very best writings were autobiographical – *Homage to Catalonia*, for example – and he wanted to make sure that no blundering biographical hand would be allowed to appear later to wreck his design.

H. G. Wells once wrote a polemical essay attacking both biographers and autobiographers in a manner no less comprehensive than Orwell's. His primary aim had been to extol the novel as the vehicle for truth-telling but the rest of the argument rang with such power that it looked as if he would never wish to escape from it. 'All biography has something of that post-mortem coldness and respect, and, as for autobiography, a man may show his soul in a thousand, half-conscious ways, but to turn on oneself to explain oneself is given to no one. It is the natural resort of liars and braggarts. Your Cellinis and Casanovas, men with the habit of regarding themselves with a kind of objective admiration do best in autobiography.' Thus he argued in his 1911 essay that the task was wellnigh impossible.

Yet, twenty odd years later, he changed his mind or had it changed for him by publishers and friends. He did it only after much heart-searching or head-searching. The volume was called *Experiment in Autobiography*, since he knew

how tentative or incomplete the volume or two volumes were bound to be. Moreover, he sought to complete at the same time a third volume which could not be published while he or his friends and lovers were still alive. He was no Casanova wishing to make a parade of his conquests. He had described all those perils and temptations in his 1911 essay. His 1935 *Experiment* could not do more than tell a part of the story. And yet, even more amazing, was the high proportion of the truth he *did* tell. André Manrois, no mean judge in these matters who could transfer into his English essays the more liberal outlook permitted in France, concluded that 'Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography* was so frank that Rousseau's *Confessions* looks cautious or maidenly by comparison' – and that was the *Experiment* without the much more explicit sequel.

No evidence exists to prove that Wells's *Experiment* paved the way for Russell's even braver one; we would cite it if we could. Often their political paths crossed or recrossed, but sympathy between them remained obstinately imperfect. They were regarded by their contemporaries as the foremost exponents of liberal doctrines in the best sense of the term, yet they often found themselves engaged in furious quarrels. Looking back now, however, we can see that there were three great matters on which they fought together and should share the victor's crown – the fight for women's rights, the fight for democratic socialism, and the fight to forbid world-wide nuclear destruction.

All these seemingly distinct issues were involved in their first encounter in which, however, neither seemed to appreciate to the full the virtues of the other. Russell had just read Wells's *In the Days of the Comet* (published in 1906) and had been more impressed by the hostility which it aroused in some quarters than by its intrinsic virtues. It was the most radical work, using that word in its proper political sense, which Wells had written. He described how the socialist dawn could open a new world for men and women in their sexual relations; how working people, men and women, could experience a new democracy, which they had never even tasted before; how the new awakening in Britain could forbid the plunge into a continental war with Germany. Russell shared all these aspirations or expectations, especially the last. He thought that all other kinds of social advance could be destroyed if the drift to continental war was not stopped, and his sympathies were especially enlisted on Wells's behalf when he noted that he was most viciously denounced for his alleged advocacy of free love. Russell invited Wells and his young wife Jane to Oxford with the kindly intention of offering support in all his campaigns. But each had a different approach, even if they shared the same destination. The upstart Wells informed the aristocratic Russell that he did not as yet possess the independent income which would enable him to advocate free love from the roof-tops. Russell professed himself 'displeased' by this show of reticence. Later, he was displeased by his own displeasure.

In the *Days of the Comet* was one of the first trumpet blasts which prepared the way for the sexual revolution of the century and in which, from first to last, Russell played such an honourable role. He had been taught by the best masters and mistresses, with his own family in the lead and with John Stuart Mill's *Subjection of Women* as his bible. He never ceased to be amazed how slow the world at large had been in recognising women's rights and never lost a chance to help those who were best serving them. His ancestors showed him how to fight this fight, as they did so many others. I pause here to note how absurdly this respect for his ancestors seems to irritate his new biographer, Ray Monk; 'One might have expected Russell, on occasions at least', he writes in a footnote on page 48, 'to have expressed some irritation at being regarded wherever he went as "Lord John's grandson", but, if he did, there is no sign of it either in the surviving correspondence or in any of the vast number of autobiographical writings he produced throughout his life.' But surely it is Mr Monk's irritation which is more remarkable than Russell's lack of it. He was proud of his family but most especially of his ancestor, William Lord Russell executed by Charles II on 21 July 1683: 'He was a warm friend not to liberty merely but to English liberty.' His own special education on the question of women's rights came not directly from Lord John, although it might have done. Who is this fellow Monk descended from?, we may be provoked at last to ask. The only one who achieved real fame was the general who helped to restore the Stuarts who in turn started the wretched practice of persecuting the Russells. But we must not get sidetracked. The new Mr Monk is a philosopher who too frequently parades himself as an expert on Russell's ancestry or his love life.

However, the cause which bound Russell and Wells together most closely in the end was the greatest which ever faced humankind: how to stop the atomic and nuclear discoveries achieving the final result of total extinction; how to develop the world authority which alone could banish the final threat. At some particular moments throughout the century they seemed to be offering sharply contradictory advice, but the appearance was deceptive. They each spoke the truth that was within them, on this subject more forcefully than upon any other, and joined forces to win the final intellectual argument. The climax is reached in the third volume of Russell's *Autobiography*. To complete his presentation of this part of the picture we should also note here what he emphasised in his most important booklet on the subject, *Commonsense and Nuclear War*, published in 1959. He tackles there, quite fairly, the charge that he had once advocated the threat or the use of the atomic weapon against the Soviet Union, to stop them embarking on the race. However, the test which he faced quite fairly and openly, in the 1960s, the last decade of his life, was the challenge where many more countries would soon possess the capacity to destroy the world.

H. G. Wells had been the first to discern these perils in full imaginative detail; he did so in his book *The World Set Free*, published in 1914. He had seized upon some recent highly tentative revelations about the splitting of the atom and transformed them into a full-scale description of what an atom bomb war might entail: first and foremost, a shattering exposure of what would be the scale of the disaster with the addition of such niceties as the warning that, fearful as the explosions might be, the subsequent ineradicable effects of radiation might be even more fearful; and some discussion about whether the debate would become specially dangerous when terrorists could carry their world-destructive potions in suitcases. So remote were these possibilities from the actual terrors which crowded upon one another that few would take him seriously. Moreover, he seemed to add to his own intellectual self-doubt by suggestions that, faced with these realities, these new forms of terror, the world would, at the relevant minute of the last minutes of the eleventh hour, come to its senses. He prophesied a war starting with a German invasion of France by way of Belgium, but then he prophesied also that ‘a wave of sanity’ might take command – ‘the disposition to believe in these spontaneous waves of sanity may be one of my besetting weaknesses’. At which, casual readers may pause to wonder whether the quotations come from Wells or Russell. Each as they tried to grasp the reality of atomic horror might find himself plunged into hope or despair. Without the despair, *Homo sapiens* would not be facing the reality. Without the hope, he would forfeit the fighting spirit and the comradeship of men and women needed for their salvation.

Throughout the century, the paths of political action each man chose with such care crossed and re-crossed. Each might enrage the other when he seemed to be adopting extreme political positions at the very moment when balancing restraints were necessary to preserve humankind’s sanity. The fiercest of all these clashes, one which threatened to forbid any future civilised exchange between them, was the argument about the outbreak of the 1914–1916 war. Russell accused Wells of having deserted their previous common stand about an anti-German war to become the most raucous of the warmongers; Wells insisted that Russell’s brand of pacifism, however justified in some circumstances, would not face the question of the German conquest of Europe. For years thereafter, each furiously rejected the arguments of the other and yet could not fail to be impressed by the persistent passion with which the case was presented. Each knew well enough how such passions could be mobilised for the worst causes; the new curse was threatening humankind. And yet if the good causes were to triumph, they must be no less passionately supported. Here was one letter, appealing for common action, which Wells wrote:

My dear Russell . . . In these days of revolutionary crisis it is incumbent upon all of us who are in any measure influential in left thought to dispel the tendency to waste energy in minor dissensions. . . . I get more & more anarchistic & ultra left as I grow older. . . . We must certainly get together to talk (& perhaps conspire) & that soon.

(see pp. 515–16 below)

The date was 20 May 1945, a few months before the atomic explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A few months later, Wells was dead and had to leave his fresh essays in conspiracy to Russell alone. How much he would have approved the whole autobiographical exertion.

The first volume of Russell's autobiography was published in 1967 and the third in 1970, just before he died at the age of 98 in 1970. It might be thought that such an old man's judgements lose their potency or their relevance. No honest reader of these pages can reach that conclusion. Whatever else it is, it is one of the truly great autobiographies in our language. The poets have stopped writing epics, he himself had written. Well here is an epic, written with all the combined passion and clarity of which he was the master. And if anyone doubts the combination, let him turn to the Prologue – 'What I have Lived for' – at the start of the first volume or the Postscript which concludes the final one. Along with his simplicity he had an eloquence all his own. Both the warnings of calamity and the recoveries of hope may ring across the intervening years. Thanks to his whole life, he had a special right to be heard.

I may be permitted to add a personal postscript, nothing like so eloquent as any of Russell's own, but one which may help to clinch the case for his veracity. My first introduction to him occurred when someone at Oxford gave me a copy of his book *The Conquest of Happiness*. Then, two years later, he turned up in person for a university meeting of some sort, spreading his own special brand of wit and wisdom and beaming with happiness. Who could resist so radiant a practitioner of his own theories?

One particular cause of that happiness for sure was his affair with 'Peter' Spence which was suddenly blossoming into the happiest of his whole lifetime. She already had young Oxford at her feet but when Bertrand Russell appeared and carried her off with such grace and ease, it was truly a conquest to write home about.

Michael Foot
Hampstead, July 1998

1872–1914

Prologue

WHAT I HAVE LIVED FOR

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy – ecstasy so great that I would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy. I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness – that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss. I have sought it, finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and though it might seem too good for human life, this is what – at last – I have found.

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. And I have tried to apprehend the Pythagorean power by which number holds sway above the flux. A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Love and knowledge, so far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a hated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my life. I have found it worth living, and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.

1

CHILDHOOD

My first vivid recollection is my arrival at Pembroke Lodge in February 1876. To be accurate, I do not remember the actual arrival at the house, though I remember the big glass roof of the London terminus, presumably Paddington, at which I arrived on my way and which I thought inconceivably beautiful. What I remember of my first day at Pembroke Lodge is tea in the servants' hall. It was a large, bare room with a long massive table with chairs and a high stool. All the servants had their tea in this room except the house-keeper, the cook, the lady's maid, and the butler, who formed an aristocracy in the house-keeper's room. I was placed upon the high stool for tea, and what I remember most vividly is wondering why the servants took so much interest in me. I did not, at that time, know that I had already been the subject of serious deliberation by the Lord Chancellor, various eminent Queen's Counsel, and other notable persons, nor was it until I was grown-up that I learned to know of the strange events which had preceded my coming to Pembroke Lodge.

My father, Lord Amberley, had recently died after a long period of gradually increasing debility. My mother and my sister had died of diphtheria about a year and a half sooner. My mother, as I came to know her later from her diary and her letters, was vigorous, lively, witty, serious, original, and fearless. Judging by her pictures she must also have been beautiful. My father was philosophical, studious, unworldly, morose, and priggish. Both were ardent theorists of reform and prepared to put into practice whatever theory they believed in. My father was a disciple and friend of John Stuart Mill, from whom both learned to believe in birth-control and votes for women. My father lost his seat in Parliament through advocacy of birth-control. My mother sometimes got into hot water for her radical opinions. At a garden-party given by the parents of Queen Mary, the Duchess of Cambridge

remarked in a loud voice: 'Yes, I know who you are, you are the daughter-in-law. But now I hear you only like dirty Radicals and dirty Americans. All London is full of it; all the clubs are talking of it. I must look at your petticoats to see if they are dirty.'

The following letter from the British Consul in Florence speaks for itself:

Sept. 22, 1870

Dear Lady Amberley

I am not an admirer of M. Mazzini, but have an utter detestation and abhorrence of his character and principles. The public position which I hold, moreover, precludes me from being the channel for his correspondence. Not however wishing to disoblige you in this instance, I have taken the only course which was open to me with the view to his receiving your letter, viz. to put it in the Post to the care of the Procuratore del Re, Gaeta.

I remain,
Yours very faithfully,
A. Paget

Mazzini gave my mother his watch-case, which is now in my possession.

My mother used to address meetings in favour of votes for women, and I found one passage in her diary where she speaks of the Potter Sisterhood, which included Mrs Sidney Webb and Lady Courtenay, as social butterflies. Having in later years come to know Mrs Sidney Webb well, I conceived a considerable respect for my mother's seriousness when I remembered that to her Mrs Webb seemed frivolous. From my mother's letters, however, for example to Henry Crompton, the Positivist, I find that she was on occasion sprightly and coquettish, so that perhaps the face she turned to the world was less alarming than that which she presented to her diary.

My father was a free-thinker, and wrote a large book, posthumously published, called *An Analysis of Religious Belief*. He had a large library containing the Fathers, works on Buddhism, accounts of Confucianism, and so on. He spent a great deal of time in the country in the preparation of his book. He and my mother, however, in the earlier years of their marriage, spent some months of each year in London, where they had a house in Dean's Yard. My mother and her sister, Mrs George Howard (afterwards Lady Carlisle), had rival salons. At Mrs Howard's salon were to be seen all the Pre-Raphaelite painters, and at my mother's all the British philosophers from Mill downwards.

In 1867 my parents went to America, where they made friends with all the Radicals of Boston. They could not foresee that the men and women whose democratic ardour they applauded and whose triumphant opposition to slavery they admired were the grandfathers and grandmothers of those who murdered Sacco and Vanzetti. My parents married in 1864, when they were

both only twenty-two. My brother, as he boasts in his autobiography, was born nine months and four days after the wedding. Shortly before I was born, they went to live in a very lonely house called Ravenscroft (now called Cleiddon Hall) in a wood just above the steep banks of the Wye. From the house, three days after I was born, my mother wrote a description of me to her mother: 'The baby weighed $8\frac{3}{4}$ lb. is 21 inches long and very fat and very ugly very like Frank everyone thinks, blue eyes far apart and not much chin. He is just like Frank was about nursing. I have lots of milk now, but if he does not get it at once or has wind or anything he gets into such a rage and screams and kicks and trembles till he is soothed off. . . . He lifts his head up and looks about in a very energetic way.'

They obtained for my brother a tutor, D. A. Spalding, of considerable scientific ability – so at least I judge from a reference to his work in William James's *Psychology*.¹ He was a Darwinian, and was engaged in studying the instincts of chickens, which, to facilitate his studies, were allowed to work havoc in every room in the house, including the drawing-room. He himself was in an advanced stage of consumption and died not very long after my father. Apparently upon grounds of pure theory, my father and mother decided that although he ought to remain childless on account of his tuberculosis, it was unfair to expect him to be celibate. My mother therefore, allowed him to live with her, though I know of no evidence that she derived any pleasure from doing so. This arrangement subsisted for a very short time, as it began after my birth and I was only two years old when my mother died. My father, however, kept on the tutor after my mother's death, and when my father died it was found that he had left the tutor and Cobden-Sanderson, both atheists, to be guardians of his two sons, whom he wished to protect from the evils of a religious upbringing. My grandparents, however, discovered from his papers what had taken place in relation to my mother. This discovery caused them the utmost Victorian horror. They decided that if necessary they would put the law in motion to rescue innocent children from the clutches of intriguing infidels. The intriguing infidels consulted Sir Horace Davey (afterwards Lord Davey) who assured them that they would have no case, relying, apparently, upon the Shelley precedent. My brother and I were therefore made wards in Chancery, and Cobden-Sanderson delivered me up to my grandparents on the day of which I have already spoken. No doubt this history contributed to the interest which the servants took in me.

Of my mother I remember nothing whatever, though I remember falling out of a pony carriage on an occasion when she must have been present. I know that this recollection is genuine, because I verified it at a much later time, after having kept it to myself for a number of years. Of my father I remember only two things: I remember his giving me a page of red print, the colour of which delighted me, and I remember once seeing him in his

bath. My parents had themselves buried in the garden at Ravenscroft, but were dug up and transferred to the family vault at Chenies. A few days before his death my father wrote the following letter to his mother.

Ravenscroft,
Wednesday at night

My dear Mama

You will be glad to hear that I mean to see Radcliffe as soon as I am able – sorry to hear the cause. This is that I have a nasty attack of bronchitis which is likely to keep me in bed some time. Your pencil letter came to-day, and I was sorry to see that you too were knocked up. Exhausted as I am I may as well write, since I cannot sleep. It would be needless to say that this attack is not dangerous and I do not anticipate danger. But I have had too bitter experience of the rapidity with which illnesses may go to believe in absolute safety, or cry Peace when there is no peace. Both my lungs are inflamed and may grow worse. I beseech you not to telegraph or take any hasty action. We have a nice young Doctor in place of Audland, and for his own sake as just beginning to practise here, he will do all he can for me. I repeat that I expect to recover, but in case of a bad turn I wish to say that I look forward to dying as calmly and unmovedly as ‘One who wraps the drapery of his couch About him and lies down to pleasant dreams’.

For myself, no anxiety nor even shrinking; but I do feel much pain for a few others whom I should leave, especially you. Writing in pain and weakness I can offer you only this most inadequate expression of my deep sense of your constant and immoveable love and goodness to me, even when I may appear not to have deserved it. It is a great matter of regret to me that I was sometimes compelled to appear harsh; I did not wish to show anything but affection. I have done very little of all I should like to have done, but I hope that little has not been of a bad kind. I should die with the sense that one great work of my life was accomplished. For my two darling boys I hope you would see them much, if possible, and that they might look on you as a mother. The burial you know would be here in my beloved wood and at the beautiful spot already prepared for me. I can hardly hope you would be there, but I wish it were possible to think of it.

Perhaps it is very selfish of me to give the pain of this letter; only I fear another day I might be too weak to write. If I can I shall let you know daily. I also have met with nothing but kindness and gentleness from my dear Papa all my life, for which I am deeply grateful. I do earnestly hope that at the end of his long and noble life he may be spared the pain of losing a son. I can only send my best love to Agatha and Rollo and poor Willy if possible.

Your loving son,

A.

Pembroke Lodge, where my grandfather and grandmother lived, is a rambling house of only two storeys in Richmond Park. It was in the gift of the Sovereign, and derives its name from the Lady Pembroke to whom George III was devoted in the days of his lunacy. The Queen had given it to my grandparents for their life-time in the forties, and they had lived there ever since. The famous Cabinet meeting described in Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea*, at which several Cabinet Ministers slept while the Crimean War was decided upon, took place at Pembroke Lodge. Kinglake, in later years, lived at Richmond, and I remember him well. I once asked Sir Spencer Walpole why Kinglake was so bitter against Napoleon III. Sir Spencer replied that they quarrelled about a woman. 'Will you tell me the story?' I naturally asked. 'No, sir,' he replied, 'I shall not tell you the story.' And shortly afterwards he died.

Pembroke Lodge had eleven acres of garden, mostly allowed to run wild. This garden played a very large part in my life up to the age of eighteen. To the west there was an enormous view extending from the Epsom Downs (which I believed to be the 'Ups and Downs') to Windsor Castle, with Hindhead and Leith Hill between. I grew accustomed to wide horizons and to an unimpeded view of the sunset. And I have never since been able to live happily without both. There were many fine trees, oaks, beeches, horse- and Spanish chestnuts, and lime trees, a very beautiful cedar tree, cryptomerias and deodaras presented by Indian princes. There were summer-houses, sweet briar hedges, thickets of laurel, and all kinds of secret places in which it was possible to hide from grown-up people so successfully that there was not the slightest fear of discovery. There were several flower-gardens with box-hedges. Throughout the years during which I lived at Pembroke Lodge, the garden was growing gradually more and more neglected. Big trees fell, shrubs grew over the paths, the grass on the lawns became long and rank, and the box-hedges grew almost into trees. The garden seemed to remember the days of its former splendour, when foreign ambassadors paced its lawns, and princes admired its trim beds of flowers. It lived in the past, and I lived in the past with it. I wove fantasies about my parents and my sister. I imagined the days of my grandfather's vigour. The grown-up conversation to which I listened was mostly of things that had happened long ago; how my grandfather had visited Napoleon in Elba, how my grandmother's great-uncle had defended Gibraltar during the American War of Independence, and how her grandfather had been cut by the County for saying that the world must have been created before 4004 BC because there is so much lava on the slopes of Etna. Sometimes the conversation descended to more recent times, and I should be told how Carlyle had called Herbert Spencer a 'perfect vacuum', or how Darwin had felt it a great honour to be visited by Mr Gladstone. My father and mother were dead, and I used to wonder what sort of people they had been. In solitude I used to wander about the garden, alternately

collecting birds' eggs and meditating on the flight of time. If I may judge by my own recollections, the important and formative impressions of childhood rise to consciousness only in fugitive moments in the midst of childish occupations, and are never mentioned to adults. I think periods of browsing during which no occupation is imposed from without are important in youth because they give time for the formation of these apparently fugitive but really vital impressions.

My grandfather as I remember him was a man well past eighty, being wheeled round the garden in a bath chair, or sitting in his room reading Hansard. I was just six years old when he died. I remember that when on the day of his death I saw my brother (who was at school) drive up in a cab although it was in the middle of term, I shouted 'Hurrah!', and my nurse said: 'Hush! You must not say "Hurrah" today!' It may be inferred from this incident that my grandfather had no great importance to me.

My grandmother, on the contrary, who was twenty-three years younger than he was, was the most important person to me throughout my childhood. She was a Scotch Presbyterian, Liberal in politics and religion (she became a Unitarian at the age of seventy), but extremely strict in all matters of morality. When she married my grandfather she was young and very shy. My grandfather was a widower with two children and four step-children, and a few years after their marriage he became Prime Minister. For her this must have been a severe ordeal. She related how she went once as a girl to one of the famous breakfasts given by the poet Rogers, and how, after observing her shyness, he said: 'Have a little tongue. You need it, my dear!' It was obvious from her conversation that she never came anywhere near to knowing what it feels like to be in love. She told me once how relieved she was on her honeymoon when her mother joined her. On another occasion she lamented that so much poetry should be concerned with so trivial a subject as love. But she made my grandfather a devoted wife, and never, so far as I have been able to discover, failed to perform what her very exacting standards represented as her duty.

As a mother and a grandmother she was deeply, but not always wisely, solicitous. I do not think that she ever understood the claims of animal spirits and exuberant vitality. She demanded that everything should be viewed through a mist of Victorian sentiment. I remember trying to make her see that it was inconsistent to demand at one and the same time that everybody should be well housed, and yet that no new houses should be built because they were an eye-sore. To her each sentiment had its separate rights, and must not be asked to give place to another sentiment on account of anything so cold as mere logic. She was cultivated according to the standards of her time; she could speak French, German and Italian faultlessly, without the slightest trace of accent. She knew Shakespeare, Milton, and the eighteenth-century

poets intimately. She could repeat the signs of the Zodiac and the names of the Nine Muses. She had a minute knowledge of English history according to the Whig tradition. French, German, and Italian classics were familiar to her. Of politics since 1830 she had a close personal knowledge. But everything that involved reasoning had been totally omitted from her education, and was absent from her mental life. She never could understand how locks on rivers worked, although I heard any number of people try to explain it to her. Her morality was that of a Victorian Puritan, and nothing would have persuaded her that a man who swore on occasion might nevertheless have some good qualities. To this, however, there were exceptions. She knew the Miss Berrys who were Horace Walpole's friends, and she told me once without any censure that 'they were old-fashioned, they used to swear a little'. Like many of her type she made an inconsistent exception of Byron, whom she regarded as an unfortunate victim of an unrequited youthful love. She extended no such tolerance to Shelley, whose life she considered wicked and whose poetry she considered mawkish. Of Keats I do not think she had ever heard. While she was well read in Continental classics down to Goethe and Schiller, she knew nothing of the Continental writers of her own time. Turgenev once gave her one of his novels, but she never read it, or regarded him as anything but the cousin of some friends of hers. She was aware that he wrote books, but so did almost everybody else.

Of psychology in the modern sense, she had, of course, no vestige. Certain motives were known to exist: love of country, public spirit, love of one's children, were laudable motives; love of money, love of power, vanity, were bad motives. Good men acted from good motives always; bad men, however, even the worst, had moments when they were not wholly bad. Marriage was a puzzling institution. It was clearly the duty of husbands and wives to love one another, but it was a duty they ought not to perform too easily, for if sex attraction drew them together there must be something not quite nice about them. Not, of course, that she would have phrased the matter in these terms. What she would have said, and in fact did say, was: 'You know, I never think that the affection of husbands and wives is quite such a good thing as the affection of parents for their children, because there is sometimes something a little selfish about it.' That was as near as her thoughts could come to such a topic as sex. Perhaps once I heard her approach a little nearer to the forbidden topic: that was when she said that Lord Palmerston had been peculiar among men through the fact that he was not quite a good man. She disliked wine, abhorred tobacco, and was always on the verge of becoming a vegetarian. Her life was austere. She ate only the plainest food, breakfasted at eight, and until she reached the age of eighty never sat in a comfortable chair until after tea. She was completely unworldly, and despised those who thought anything of worldly honours. I regret to say that her attitude to Queen Victoria was far

from respectful. She used to relate with much amusement how one time when she was at Windsor and feeling rather ill, the Queen had been graciously pleased to say: 'Lady Russell may sit down. Lady So-and-So shall stand in front of her.'

After I reached the age of fourteen, my grandmother's intellectual limitations became trying to me, and her Puritan morality began to seem to me to be excessive; but while I was a child her great affection for me, and her intense care for my welfare, made me love her and gave me that feeling of safety that children need. I remember when I was about four or five years old lying awake thinking how dreadful it would be when my grandmother was dead. When she did in fact die, which was after I was married, I did not mind at all. But in retrospect, as I have grown older, I have realised more and more the importance she had in moulding my outlook on life. Her fearlessness, her public spirit, her contempt for convention, and her indifference to the opinion of the majority have always seemed good to me and have impressed themselves upon me as worthy of imitation. She gave me a Bible with her favourite texts written on the fly-leaf. Among these was 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil'. Her emphasis upon this text led me in later life to be not afraid of belonging to small minorities.

My grandmother, when I was a boy, had four surviving brothers and two surviving sisters, all of whom used to come to Pembroke Lodge from time to time. The oldest of the brothers was Lord Minto, whom I knew as Uncle William. The second was Sir Henry Elliot, who had had a respectable diplomatic career, but of whom I remember little. The third, my Uncle Charlie, I remember chiefly because of the length of his name on an envelope: he was Admiral the Hon. Sir Charles Elliot, KCB, and he lived at Devonport. I was told that he was Rear Admiral and that there is a grander sort of admiral called Admiral of the Fleet. This rather pained me and I felt he should have done something about it. The youngest, who was a bachelor, was George Elliot, but was known to me as Uncle Doddy. The chief thing that I was asked to notice about him was his close resemblance to his and my grandmother's grandfather, Mr Brydon, who had been led into regrettable heresy by the lava on Etna. Otherwise, Uncle Doddy was undistinguished. Of Uncle William I have a very painful recollection: he came to Pembroke Lodge one June evening at the end of a day of continual sunshine, every moment of which I had enjoyed. When it became time for me to say good-night, he gravely informed me that the human capacity for enjoyment decreases with the years and that I should never again enjoy a summer's day as much as the one that was now ending. I burst into floods of tears and continued to weep long after I was in bed. Subsequent experience has shown me that his remark was as untrue as it was cruel.

The grown-ups with whom I came in contact had a remarkable incapacity

for understanding the intensity of childish emotions. When, at the age of four, I was taken to be photographed in Richmond, the photographer had difficulty in getting me to sit still, and at last promised me a sponge cake if I would remain motionless. I had, until that moment, only had one sponge cake in all my life and it had remained as a high point of ecstasy. I therefore stayed as quiet as a mouse and the photograph was wholly successful. But I never got the sponge cake.

On another occasion I heard one of the grown-ups saying to another 'When is that young Lyon coming?' I pricked up my ears and said 'Is there a lion coming?' 'Yes,' they said, 'he's coming on Sunday. He'll be quite tame and you shall see him in the drawing-room.' I counted the days till Sunday and the hours through Sunday morning. At last I was told the young lion was in the drawing-room and I could come and see him. I came. And he was an ordinary young man named Lyon. I was utterly overwhelmed by the disenchantment and still remember with anguish the depths of my despair.

To return to my grandmother's family, I remember little of her sister Lady Elizabeth Romilly except that she was the first person from whom I heard of Rudyard Kipling, whose *Plain Tales from the Hills* she greatly admired. The other sister, Lady Charlotte Portal, whom I knew as Aunt Lottie, was more colourful. It was said of her that as a child she had tumbled out of bed and without waking up had murmured, 'My head is laid low, my pride has had a fall.' It was also said that having heard the grown-ups talking about somnambulism she had got up during the following night and walked about in what she hoped was a sleep-walking manner. The grown-ups, who saw that she was wide awake, decided to say nothing about it. Their silence next morning so disappointed her that at last she said, 'Did no one see me walking in my sleep last night?' In later life she was apt to express herself unfortunately. On one occasion when she had to order a cab for three people, she thought a hansom would be too small and a four-wheeler too large, so she told the footman to fetch a three-wheeled cab. On another occasion, the footman, whose name was George, was seeing her off at the station when she was on her way to the Continent. Thinking that she might have to write to him about some household matter she suddenly remembered that she did not know his surname. Just after the train had started she put her head out of the window and called out, 'George, George, what's your name?' 'George, My Lady', came the answer. By that time he was out of earshot.

Besides my grandmother there were in the house my Uncle Rollo and my Aunt Agatha, both unmarried. My Uncle Rollo had some importance in my early development, as he frequently talked to me about scientific matters, of which he had considerable knowledge. He suffered all his life from a morbid shyness so intense as to prevent him from achieving anything that involved contact with other human beings. But with me, so long as I was a child, he

was not shy, and he used to display a vein of droll humour of which adults would not have suspected him. I remember asking him once why they had coloured glass in church windows. He informed me very gravely that in former times this had not been so, but that once, just after the clergyman had gone up into the pulpit, he saw a man walking along with a pail of whitewash on his head and the bottom of the pail fell out and the man was covered with whitewash. This caused in the poor clergyman such an uncontrollable fit of laughter that he was unable to proceed with the sermon, and ever since this they had had coloured glass in church windows. He had been in the Foreign Office, but he had trouble with his eyes, and when I first knew him he was unable to read or write. His eyes improved later, but he never again attempted any kind of routine work. He was a meteorologist, and did valuable investigations of the effects of the Krakatoa eruption of 1883, which produced in England strange sunsets and even a blue moon. He used to talk to me about the evidence that Krakatoa had caused the sunsets, and I listened to him with profound attention. His conversation did a great deal to stimulate my scientific interests.

My Aunt Agatha was the youngest of the grown-up people at Pembroke Lodge. She was, in fact, only nineteen years older than I was, so when I came there she was twenty-two. During my first years at Pembroke Lodge, she made various attempts to educate me, but without much success. She had three brightly coloured balls, one red, one yellow, and one blue. She would hold up the red ball and say: 'What colour is that?' and I would say, 'Yellow'. She would then hold it against her canary and say: 'Do you think that it is the same colour as the canary?' I would say, 'No', but as I did not know the canary was yellow it did not help much. I suppose I must have learned the colours in time, but I can only remember not knowing them. Then she tried to teach me to read, but that was quite beyond me. There was only one word that I ever succeeded in reading so long as she taught me, and that was the word 'or'. The other words, though equally short, I could never remember. She must have become discouraged, since shortly before I was five years old I was handed over to a kindergarten, which finally succeeded in teaching me the difficult art of reading. When I was six or seven she took me in hand again and taught me English Constitutional history. This interested me very much indeed, and I remember to this day much of what she taught me.

I still possess the little book in which I wrote down her questions and answers, both dictated. A few samples will illustrate the point of view.

Q. What did Henry II and Thomas Becket quarrel about?

A. Henry wished to put a stop to the evils which had arisen in consequence of the Bishops having courts of their own, so that the church law was separated from the common law of the land. Becket refused to lessen the

power of the Bishops' Courts, but at last he was persuaded to agree to the Constitutions of Clarendon (the provisions of which are then given).

Q. Did Henry II try to improve the government of the country or not?

A. Yes, throughout his busy reign he never forgot his work of reforming the law. The itinerant justices grew in importance, and not only settled money matters in the counties as at first, but heard pleas and judged cases. It is to Henry II's reforms that we owe the first clear beginnings of trial by jury.

The murder of Becket is not mentioned. The execution of Charles I is mentioned, but not blamed.

She remained unmarried, having once become engaged to a curate and suffered from insane delusions during her engagement, which led to its being broken off. She became a miser, living in a large house, but using few of the rooms in order to save coal, and only having a bath once a week for the same reason. She wore thick woollen stockings which were always coming down in rumples over her ankles, and at most times talked sentimentally about the extreme goodness of certain people and the extreme wickedness of certain others, both equally imaginary. Both in my brother's case and in mine, she hated our wives so long as we lived with them, but loved them afterwards. When I first took my second wife to see her, she put a photograph of my first wife on the mantelpiece, and said to my second wife: 'When I see you I cannot help thinking of dear Alys, and wondering what would happen should Bertie desert you, which God forbid.' My brother said to her once: 'Auntie, you are always a wife behind.' This remark, instead of angering her, sent her into fits of laughter, and she repeated it to everybody. Those who thought her sentimental and doddering were liable to be surprised by a sudden outburst of shrewdness and wit. She was a victim of my grandmother's virtue. If she had not been taught that sex is wicked, she might have been happy, successful, and able.

My brother was seven years older than I was, and therefore not much of a companion to me. Except in holiday time he was away at school. I admired him in the way natural to a younger brother, and was always delighted when he returned at the beginning of the holidays, but after a few days I began to wish the holidays were over. He teased me, and bullied me mildly. I remember once when I was six years old he called in a loud voice: 'Baby!' With great dignity I refused to take any notice, considering that this was not my name. He afterwards informed me that he had had a bunch of grapes which he would have given me if I had come. As I was never in any circumstances allowed to eat any fruit at all, this deprivation was rather serious. There was also a certain small bell which I believed to be mine, but which he at each return asserted to be his and took from me, although he was himself too old to derive any pleasure from it. He still had it when he was grown-up, and

I never saw it without angry feelings. My father and mother, as appears from their letters to each other, had considerable trouble with him, but at any rate my mother understood him, as he was in character and appearance a Stanley. The Russells never understood him at all, and regarded him from the first as a limb of Satan.² Not unnaturally, finding himself so viewed, he set out to live up to his reputation. Attempts were made to keep him away from me, which I resented as soon as I became aware of them. His personality was, however, very overpowering, and after I had been with him some time I began to feel as if I could not breathe. I retained throughout his life an attitude towards him consisting of affection mixed with fear. He passionately longed to be loved, but was such a bully that he never could keep the love of anyone. When he lost anyone's love, his heart was wounded and he became cruel and unscrupulous, but all his worst actions sprang from sentimental causes.

During my early years at Pembroke Lodge the servants played a larger part in my life than the family did. There was an old housekeeper named Mrs Cox who had been my grandmother's nurserymaid when my grandmother was a child. She was straight and vigorous and strict and devoted to the family and always nice to me. There was a butler named MacAlpine who was very Scotch. He used to take me on his knee and read me accounts of railway accidents in the newspaper. As soon as I saw him I always climbed up on him and said: 'Tell me about an accident-happen.' Then there was a French cook named Michaud, who was rather terrifying, but in spite of her awe-inspiring qualities I could not resist going to the kitchen to see the roast meat turning on the old-fashioned spit, and to steal lumps of salt, which I liked better than sugar, out of the salt box. She would pursue me with a carving knife, but I always escaped easily. Out-of-doors there was a gardener named MacRobie of whom I remember little as he left when I was five years old, and the lodge-keeper and his wife, Mr and Mrs Singleton, of whom I was very fond, as they gave me baked apples and beer, both of which were strictly forbidden. MacRobie was succeeded by a gardener named Vidler, who informed me that the English are the lost Ten Tribes, though I do not think I quite believed him. When I first came to Pembroke Lodge, I had a German nursery governess named Miss Hetschel, and I already spoke German as fluently as English. She left a few days after my arrival at Pembroke Lodge, and was succeeded by a German nurse named Wilhelmina, or Mina for short. I remember vividly the first evening when she bathed me, when I considered it prudent to make myself stiff, as I did not know what she might be up to. She finally had to call in outside assistance, as I frustrated all her efforts. Very soon, however, I became devoted to her. She taught me to write German letters. I remember, after learning all the German capitals and all the German small letters, saying to her: 'Now it only remains to learn the numbers', and being relieved and surprised to find that they were the same in German. She used to slap me

occasionally, and I can remember crying when she did so, but it never occurred to me to regard her as less of a friend on that account. She was with me until I was six years old. During her time I also had a nursery maid called Ada who used to light the fire in the morning while I lay in bed. She would wait till the sticks were blazing and then put on coal. I always wished she would not put on coal, as I loved the crackle and brightness of the burning wood. The nurse slept in the same room with me, but never, so far as my recollection serves me, either dressed or undressed. Freudians may make what they like of this.

In the matter of food, all through my youth I was treated in a very Spartan manner, much more so, in fact, than is now considered compatible with good health. There was an old French lady living in Richmond, named Madame D'Etchegoyen, a niece of Talleyrand, who used to give me large boxes of the most delicious chocolates. Of these I was allowed only one on Sundays, but Sundays and week-days alike I had to hand them round to the grown-ups. I was very fond of crumbling my bread into my gravy, which I was allowed to do in the nursery, but not in the dining-room. I used often to have a sleep before my dinner, and if I slept late I had dinner in the nursery, but if I woke up in time I had it in the dining-room. I used to pretend to sleep late in order to have dinner in the nursery. At last they suspected that I was pretending, and one day, as I was lying in my bed, they poked me about. I made myself quite stiff, imagining that was how people would be if they were asleep, but to my dismay I heard them saying: 'He is not asleep, because he is making himself stiff.' No one ever discovered why I had pretended to be asleep. I remember an occasion at lunch when all the plates were changed and everybody except me was given an orange. I was not allowed an orange as there was an unalterable conviction that fruit is bad for children. I knew I must not ask for one as that would be impertinent, but as I had been given a plate I did venture to say, 'a plate and nothing on it'. Everybody laughed, but I did not get an orange. I had no fruit, practically no sugar, and an excess of carbohydrates. Nevertheless, I never had a day's illness except a mild attack of measles at the age of eleven. Since I became interested in children, after the birth of my own children, I have never known one nearly as healthy as I was, and yet I am sure that any modern expert on children's diet would think that I ought to have had various deficiency diseases. Perhaps I was saved by the practice of stealing crabapples, which, if it had been known, would have caused the utmost horror and alarm. A similar instinct for self-preservation was the cause of my first lie. My governess left me alone for half an hour with strict instructions to eat no blackberries during her absence. When she returned I was suspiciously near the brambles. 'You have been eating blackberries', she said. 'I have not', I replied. 'Put out your tongue!' she said. Shame overwhelmed me, and I felt utterly wicked.

I was, in fact, unusually prone to a sense of sin. When asked what was my favourite hymn, I answered 'Weary of earth and laden with my sin'. On one occasion when my grandmother read the parable of the Prodigal Son at family prayers, I said to her afterwards: 'I know why you read that – because I broke my jug.' She used to relate the anecdote in after years with amusement, not realising that she was responsible for a morbidness which had produced tragic results in her own children.

Many of my most vivid early memories are of humiliations. In the summer of 1877 my grandparents rented from the Archbishop of Canterbury a house near Broadstairs, called Stone House. The journey by train seemed to me enormously long, and after a time I began to think that we must have reached Scotland, so I said: 'What country are we in now?' They all laughed at me and said: 'Don't you know you cannot get out of England without crossing the sea?' I did not venture to explain, and was left overwhelmed with shame. While we were there I went down to the sea one afternoon with my grandmother and my Aunt Agatha. I had on a new pair of boots, and the last thing my nurse said to me as I went out was: 'Take care not to get your boots wet!' But the in-coming tide caught me on a rock, and my grandmother and Aunt Agatha told me to wade through the water to the shore. I would not do so, and my aunt had to wade through and carry me. They supposed that this was through fear, and I never told them of my nurse's prohibition, but accepted meekly the lecture on cowardice which resulted.

In the main, however, the time that I spent at Stone House was very delightful. I remember the North Foreland, which I believed to be one of the four corners of England, since I imagined at that time that England was a rectangle. I remember the ruins at Richborough which greatly interested me, and the *camera obscura* at Ramsgate, which interested me still more. I remember waving corn-fields which, to my regret, had disappeared when I returned to the neighbourhood thirty years later. I remember, of course, all the usual delights of the seaside – limpets, and sea-anemones, and rocks, and sands, and fishermen's boats, and lighthouses. I was impressed by the fact that limpets stick to the rock when one tries to pull them off, and I said to my Aunt Agatha, 'Aunty, do limpets think?' To which she answered, 'I don't know'. 'Then you must learn', I rejoined. I do not clearly remember the incident which first brought me into contact with my friend Whitehead. I had been told that the earth was round, and had refused to believe it. My people thereupon called in the vicar of the parish to persuade me, and it happened that he was Whitehead's father. Under clerical guidance, I adopted the orthodox view and began to dig a hole to the Antipodes. This incident, however, I know only from hearsay.

While at Broadstairs I was taken to see Sir Moses Montefiore, an old and much revered Jew who lived in the neighbourhood. (According to the

Encyclopaedia, he had retired in 1824.) This was the first time I became aware of the existence of Jews outside the Bible. My people explained to me carefully, before taking me to see the old man, how much he deserved to be admired, and how abominable had been the former disabilities of Jews, which he and my grandfather had done much to remove. On this occasion the impression made by my grandmother's teaching was clear, but on other occasions I was puzzled. She was a fierce Little Englander, and disapproved strongly of Colonial wars. She told me that the Zulu War was very wicked, and that it was largely the fault of Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor of the Cape. Nevertheless, when Sir Bartle Frere came to live at Wimbledon, she took me to see him, and I observed that she did not treat him as a monster. I found this very difficult to understand.

My grandmother used to read aloud to me, chiefly the stories of Maria Edgeworth. There was one story in the book, called *The False Key*, which she said was not a very nice story, and she would therefore not read it to me. I read the whole story, a sentence at a time, in the course of bringing the book from the shelf to my grandmother. Her attempts to prevent me from knowing things were seldom successful. At a somewhat later date, during Sir Charles Dilke's very scandalous divorce case, she took the precaution of burning the newspapers every day, but I used to go to the Park gates to fetch them for her, and read every word of the divorce case before the papers reached her. The case interested me the more because I had once been to church with him, and I kept wondering what his feelings had been when he heard the Seventh Commandment. After I had learnt to read fluently I used to read to her, and I acquired in this way an extensive knowledge of standard English literature. I read with her Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Cowper's *Task*, Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, Jane Austen, and hosts of other books.

There is a good description of the atmosphere of Pembroke Lodge in *A Victorian Childhood* by Annabel Huth Jackson (*née* Grant Duff). Her father was Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, and the family lived in a large house at Twickenham. She and I were friends from the age of four until she died during the second world war. It was from her that I first heard of Verlaine, Dostoevsky, the German Romantics, and many other people of literary eminence. But it is of an earlier period that her reminiscences treat. She says:

My only boy friend was Bertrand Russell, who with his grandmother old Lady Russell, Lord John's widow, lived at Pembroke Lodge, in Richmond Park. Bertie and I were great allies and I had an immense secret admiration for his beautiful and gifted elder brother Frank. Frank, I am sorry to say, sympathised with my brother's point of view about little girls and used to tie me up to trees by my hair. But Bertie, a solemn little boy in a blue velvet suit with an equally solemn governess, was always kind, and I greatly enjoyed going to tea at

Pembroke Lodge. But even as a child I realised what an unsuitable place it was for children to be brought up in. Lady Russell always spoke in hushed tones and Lady Agatha always wore a white shawl and looked down-trodden. Rollo Russell never spoke at all. He gave one a handshake that nearly broke all the bones of one's fingers, but was quite friendly. They all drifted in and out of the rooms like ghosts and no one ever seemed to be hungry. It was a curious bringing up for two young and extraordinarily gifted boys.

Throughout the greater part of my childhood, the most important hours of my day were those that I spent alone in the garden, and the most vivid part of my existence was solitary. I seldom mentioned my more serious thoughts to others, and when I did I regretted it. I knew each corner of the garden, and looked year by year for the white primroses in one place, the redstart's nest in another, the blossom of the acacia emerging from a tangle of ivy. I knew where the earliest blue-bells were to be found, and which of the oaks came into leaf soonest. I remember that in the year 1878 a certain oak tree was in leaf as early as the fourteenth of April. My window looked out upon two Lombardy poplars, each about a hundred feet high, and I used to watch the shadow of the house creeping up them as the sun set. In the morning I woke very early and sometimes saw Venus rise. On one occasion I mistook the planet for a lantern in the wood. I saw the sunrise on most mornings, and on bright April days I would sometimes slip out of the house for a long walk before breakfast. I watched the sunset turn the earth red and the clouds golden; I listened to the wind, and exulted in the lightning. Throughout my childhood I had an increasing sense of loneliness, and of despair of ever meeting anyone with whom I could talk. Nature and books and (later) mathematics saved me from complete despondency.

The early years of my childhood, however, were happy and it was only as adolescence approached that loneliness became oppressive. I had governesses, German and Swiss, whom I liked, and my intelligence was not yet sufficiently developed to suffer from the deficiency of my people in this respect. I must, however, have felt some kind of unhappiness, as I remember wishing that my parents had lived. Once, when I was six years old, I expressed this feeling to my grandmother, and she proceeded to tell me that it was very fortunate for me that they had died. At the time her remarks made a disagreeable impression upon me and I attributed them to jealousy. I did not, of course, know that from a Victorian point of view there was ample ground for them. My grandmother's face was very expressive, and in spite of all her experience of the great world she never learned the art of concealing her emotions. I noticed that any allusion to insanity caused her a spasm of anguish, and I speculated much as to the reason. It was only many years later that I discovered she had a son in an asylum. He was in a smart regiment, and

went mad after a few years of it. The story that I have been told, though I cannot vouch for its complete accuracy, is that his brother officers teased him because he was chaste. They kept a bear as a regimental pet, and one day, for sport, set the bear at him. He fled, lost his memory, and being found wandering about the country was put in a workhouse infirmary, his identity being unknown. In the middle of the night, he jumped up shouting 'the bear! – the bear!' and strangled a tramp in the next bed. He never recovered his memory, but lived till over eighty.

When I try to recall as much as I can of early childhood, I find that the first thing I remember after my arrival at Pembroke Lodge is walking in melting snow, in warm sunshine, on an occasion which must have been about a month later, and noticing a large fallen beech tree which was being sawn into logs. The next thing I remember is my fourth birthday, on which I was given a trumpet which I blew all day long, and had tea with a birthday cake in a summer-house. The next thing that I remember is my aunt's lessons on colours and reading, and then, very vividly, the kindergarten class which began just before I was five and continued for about a year and a half. That gave me very intense delight. The shop from which the apparatus came was stated on the lids to be in Berners Street, Oxford Street, and to this day, unless I pull myself together, I think of Berners Street as a sort of Aladdin's Palace. At the kindergarten class I got to know other children, most of whom I have lost sight of. But I met one of them, Jimmie Baillie, in 1929 at Vancouver as I stepped out of the train. I realise now that the good lady who taught us had had an orthodox Froebel training, and was at that time amazingly up-to-date. I can still remember almost all the lessons in detail, but I think what thrilled me most was the discovery that yellow and blue paints made green.

When I was just six my grandfather died, and shortly afterwards we went to St Fillans in Perthshire for the summer. I remember the funny old inn with knobbly wooden door-posts, the wooden bridge over the river, the rocky bays on the lake, and the mountain opposite. My recollection is that the time there was one of great happiness. My next recollection is less pleasant. It is that of a room in London at No. 8, Chesham Place, where my governess stormed at me while I endeavoured to learn the multiplication table but was continually impeded by tears. My grandmother took a house in London for some months when I was seven years old, and it was then that I began to see more of my mother's family. My mother's father was dead, but my mother's mother, Lady Stanley of Alderley, lived in a large house, No 40, Dover Street,³ with her daughter Maude. I was frequently taken to lunch with her, and though the food was delicious, the pleasure was doubtful, as she had a caustic tongue, and spared neither age nor sex. I was always consumed with shyness while in her presence, and as none of the Stanleys were shy, this irritated her. I used to make desperate endeavours to produce a good impression, but they

would fail in ways that I could not have foreseen. I remember telling her that I had grown $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in the last seven months, and that at that rate I should grow $4\frac{7}{8}$ inches in a year. 'Don't you know', she said, 'that you should never talk about any fractions except halves and quarters? – it is pedantic!' 'I know it now', I replied. 'How like his father!' she said, turning to my Aunt Maude. Somehow or other, as in this incident, my best efforts always went astray. Once when I was about twelve years old, she had me before a roomful of visitors, and asked me whether I had read a whole string of books on popular science which she enumerated. I had read none of them. At the end she sighed, and turning to the visitors, said: 'I have no intelligent grandchildren.' She was an eighteenth-century type, rationalistic and unimaginative, keen on enlightenment, and contemptuous of Victorian goody-goody priggery. She was one of the principal people concerned in the foundation of Girton College, and her portrait hangs in Girton Hall, but her policies were abandoned at her death. 'So long as I live', she used to say, 'there shall be no chapel at Girton.' The present chapel began to be built the day she died. As soon as I reached adolescence she began to try to counteract what she considered namby-pamby in my upbringing. She would say: 'Nobody can say anything against me, but I always say that it is not so bad to break the Seventh Commandment as the Sixth, because at any rate it requires the consent of the other party.' I pleased her greatly on one occasion by asking for *Tristram Shandy* as a birthday present. She said: 'I won't write in it, because people will say what an odd grandmother you have!' Nevertheless she did write in it. It was an autographed first edition. This is the only occasion I can remember on which I succeeded in pleasing her.

She had a considerable contempt for everything that she regarded as silly. On her birthday she always had a dinner-party of thirteen, and made the most superstitious member of the party go out first. I remember once an affected granddaughter of hers came to see her, bringing a lap dog which annoyed my grandmother by barking. Her granddaughter protested that the dog was an angel. 'Angel? – angel?' said my grandmother indignantly. 'What nonsense! Do you think he has a soul?' 'Yes, grandmama', replied the young woman pluckily. Throughout the rest of the afternoon, during which her granddaughter remained with her, she informed each visitor in turn: 'What do you think that silly girl Grisel says? She says dogs have souls.' It was her practice to sit in her large drawing-room every afternoon while streams of visitors, including the most eminent writers of the time, came to tea. When any of them left the room, she would turn to the others with a sigh and say: 'Fools are so fatigued.' She had been brought up as a Jacobite, her family being Irish Dillons, who fled to France after the Battle of the Boyne and had a private regiment of their own in the French army. The French Revolution reconciled them to Ireland, but my grandmother was brought up in Florence,

where her father was Minister. In Florence she used to go once a week to visit the widow of the Young Pretender. She used to say that the only thing she regarded as stupid about her ancestors was their having been Jacobites. I never knew my maternal grandfather, but I heard it said that he used to brow-beat my grandmother, and felt that, if so, he must have been a very remarkable man.⁴ She had an enormous family of sons and daughters, most of whom came to lunch with her every Sunday. Her eldest son was a Mohammedan, and almost stone deaf. Her second son, Lyulph, was a free-thinker, and spent his time fighting the Church on the London School Board. Her third son, Algernon, was a Roman Catholic priest, a Papal Chamberlain and Bishop of Emmaus. Lyulph was witty, encyclopaedic, and caustic. Algernon was witty, fat, and greedy. Henry, the Mohammedan, was devoid of all the family merits, and was, I think, the greatest bore I have ever known. In spite of his deafness, he insisted upon hearing everything said to him. At the Sunday luncheons there would be vehement arguments, for among the daughters and sons-in-law there were representatives of the Church of England, Unitarianism, and Positivism, to be added to the religions represented by the sons. When the argument reached a certain pitch of ferocity, Henry would become aware that there was a noise, and would ask what it was about. His nearest neighbour would shout a biased version of the argument into his ear, whereupon all the others would shout 'No, no, Henry, it isn't that!' At this point the din became truly terrific. A favourite trick of my Uncle Lyulph at Sunday luncheons was to ask: 'Who is there here who believes in the literal truth of the story of Adam and Eve?' His object in asking the question was to compel the Mohammedan and the priest to agree with each other, which they hated doing. I used to go to these luncheons in fear and trembling, since I never knew but what the whole pack would turn upon me. I had only one friend whom I could count on among them, and she was not a Stanley by birth. She was my Uncle Lyulph's wife, sister of Sir Hugh Bell. My grandmother always considered herself very broad-minded because she had not objected to Lyulph marrying into what she called 'trade', but as Sir Hugh was a multi-millionaire I was not very much impressed.

Formidable as my grandmother was, she had her limits. Once when Mr Gladstone was expected to tea, she told us all beforehand how she was going to explain to him exactly in what respects his Home Rule policy was mistaken. I was present throughout his visit, but not one word of criticism did she utter. His hawk's eye could quell even her. Her son-in-law, Lord Carlisle, told me of an even more humiliating episode which occurred at Naworth Castle on one occasion when she was staying there. Burne-Jones, who was also staying there, had a tobacco pouch which was made to look like a tortoise. There was also a real tortoise, which strayed one day by mistake into the library. This suggested a prank to the younger generation. During

dinner, Burne-Jones's tobacco pouch was placed near the drawing-room fire, and when the ladies returned from dinner it was dramatically discovered that this time the tortoise had got into the drawing-room. On its being picked up, somebody exclaimed with astonishment that its back had grown soft. Lord Carlisle fetched from the library the appropriate volume of the Encyclopaedia, and read out a pretended passage saying that great heat sometimes had this effect. My grandmother expressed the greatest interest in this fact of natural history, and frequently alluded to it on subsequent occasions. Many years later, when she was quarrelling with Lady Carlisle about Home Rule, her daughter maliciously told her the truth of this incident. My grandmother retorted: 'I may be many things, but I am not a fool, and I refuse to believe you.'

My brother, who had the Stanley temperament, loved the Stanleys and hated the Russells. I loved the Russells and feared the Stanleys. As I have grown older, however, my feelings have changed. I owe to the Russells shyness, sensitiveness, and metaphysics; to the Stanleys vigour, good health, and good spirits. On the whole, the latter seems a better inheritance than the former.

Reverting to what I can remember of childhood, the next thing that is vivid in my memory is the winter of 1880–81, which we spent at Bournemouth. It was there that I first learned the name of Thomas Hardy, whose book *The Trumpet Major*, in three volumes, was lying on the drawing-room table. I think the only reason I remember it is that I wondered what a trumpet major might be, and that it was by the author of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and I did not know either what a madding crowd was. While we were there, my German governess told me that one got no Christmas presents unless one believed in Father Christmas. This caused me to burst into tears, as I could not believe in such a personage. My only other recollections of the place are that there was an unprecedented snow-storm, and that I learned to skate – an amusement of which I was passionately fond throughout my boyhood. I never missed an opportunity of skating, even when the ice was unsafe. Once when I was staying in Dover Street I went skating in St James's Park and fell in. I had a feeling of disgrace in having to run through the streets dripping wet, but I nevertheless persisted in the practice of skating on thin ice. Of the following year I remember nothing whatever, but my tenth birthday is still as vivid to me as if it were yesterday. The weather was bright and warm, and I sat in a blossoming laburnum tree, but presently a Swiss lady, who had come to be interviewed, and subsequently became my governess, was sent out to play ball with me. She said she had 'caught' the ball, and I corrected her. When I had to cut my own birthday cake, I was much ashamed because I could not get the first slice to come out. But what stays most in my mind is the impression of sunshine.

At the age of eleven, I began Euclid, with my brother as my tutor. This was one of the great events of my life, as dazzling as first love. I had not imagined that there was anything so delicious in the world. After I had learned the fifth proposition, my brother told me that it was generally considered difficult, but I had found no difficulty whatever. This was the first time it had dawned upon me that I might have some intelligence. From that moment until Whitehead and I finished *Principia Mathematica*, when I was thirty-eight, mathematics was my chief interest, and my chief source of happiness. Like all happiness, however, it was not unalloyed. I had been told that Euclid proved things, and was much disappointed that he started with axioms. At first I refused to accept them unless my brother could offer me some reason for doing so, but he said: 'If you don't accept them we cannot go on', and as I wished to go on, I reluctantly admitted them *pro tem*. The doubt as to the premisses of mathematics which I felt at that moment remained with me, and determined the course of my subsequent work.

The beginnings of Algebra I found far more difficult, perhaps as a result of bad teaching. I was made to learn by heart: 'The square of the sum of two numbers is equal to the sum of their squares increased by twice their product.' I had not the vaguest idea what this meant, and when I could not remember the words, my tutor threw the book at my head, which did not stimulate my intellect in any way. After the first beginnings of Algebra, however, everything else went smoothly. I used to enjoy impressing a new tutor with my knowledge. Once, at the age of thirteen, when I had a new tutor, I spun a penny, and he said to me: 'Why does that penny spin?' and I replied: 'Because I make a couple with my fingers.' 'What do you know about couples?' he said. 'Oh, I know all about couples', I replied airily. My grandmother was always afraid that I should overwork, and kept my hours of lessons very short. The result was that I used to work in my bedroom on the sly with one candle, sitting at my desk in a night-shirt on cold evenings, ready to blow out the candle and pop into bed at the slightest sound. I hated Latin and Greek, and thought it merely foolish to learn a language that nobody speaks. I liked mathematics best, and next to mathematics I liked history. Having no one with whom to compare myself, I did not know for a long time whether I was better or worse than other boys, but I remember once hearing my Uncle Rollo saying goodbye to Jowett, the Master of Balliol, at the front door, and remarking: 'Yes, he's getting on very well indeed', and I knew, though how I cannot tell, that he was speaking of my work. As soon as I realised that I was intelligent, I determined to achieve something of intellectual importance if it should be at all possible, and throughout my youth I let nothing whatever stand in the way of this ambition.

It would be completely misleading to suggest that my childhood was all solemnity and seriousness. I got just as much fun out of life as I could, some

of it I am afraid of a somewhat mischievous kind. The family doctor, an old Scotchman with mutton-chop whiskers, used to come in his brougham which waited at the front door while the man of healing spoke his piece. His coachman had an exquisite top-hat, calculated to advertise the excellence of the practice. I used to get on the roof above this splendid head-piece and drop rotten rosebuds out of the gutter on to its flat top. They spread all over with a delicious squish and I withdrew my head quickly enough for the coachman to suppose that they had fallen from heaven. Sometimes I did even worse. I threw snowballs at him when he was driving, thereby endangering the valuable lives of him and his employer. I had another amusement which I much enjoyed. On a Sunday, when the Park was crowded, I would climb to the very top of a large beech tree on the edge of our grounds. There I would hang upside down and scream and watch the crowd gravely discussing how a rescue should be effected. When I saw them nearing a decision I would get the right way up and quietly come down. During the time when Jimmie Baillie stayed with me I was led into even more desperate courses. The bath chair in which I remembered my grandfather being wheeled about had been lodged in a lumber room. We found it there and raced it down whatever hills we could find. When this was discovered it was considered blasphemy and we were reproached with melancholy gravity. Some of our doings, however, never came to the ears of the grown-ups. We tied a rope to a branch of a tree and learnt by long practice to swing in a complete circle and return to our starting point. It was only by great skill that one could avoid stopping half-way and bumping one's back painfully into the rough bark of the tree. When other boys came to visit us, we used to carry out the correct performance ourselves and when the others attempted to imitate us we maliciously exulted in their painful failure. My Uncle Rollo, with whom for a while we used to spend three months each year, had three cows and a donkey. The donkey was more intelligent than the cows and learnt to open the gates between the fields with his nose, but he was said to be unruly and useless. I did not believe this and, after some unsuccessful attempts, I learnt to ride him without saddle or bridle. He would kick and buck but he never got me off except when I had tied a can full of rattling stones to his tail. I used to ride him all round the country, even when I went to visit the daughter of Lord Wolseley who lived about three miles from my uncle's house.

2

ADOLESCENCE

My childhood was, on the whole, happy and straightforward, and I felt affection for most of the grown-ups with whom I was brought in contact. I remember a very definite change when I reached what in modern child psychology is called the 'latency period'. At this stage, I began to enjoy using slang, pretending to have no feelings, and being generally 'manly'. I began to despise my people, chiefly because of their extreme horror of slang and their absurd notion that it was dangerous to climb trees. So many things were forbidden me that I acquired the habit of deceit, in which I persisted up to the age of twenty-one. It became second nature to me to think that whatever I was doing had better be kept to myself, and I have never quite overcome the impulse to concealment which was thus generated. I still have an impulse to hide what I am reading when anybody comes into the room, and to hold my tongue generally as to where I have been, and what I have done. It is only by a certain effort of will that I can overcome this impulse, which was generated by the years during which I had to find my way among a set of foolish prohibitions.

The years of adolescence were to me very lonely and very unhappy. Both in the life of the emotions and in the life of the intellect, I was obliged to preserve an impenetrable secrecy towards my people. My interests were divided between sex, religion, and mathematics. I find the recollection of my sexual preoccupation in adolescence unpleasant. I do not like to remember how I felt in those years, but I will do my best to relate things as they were and not as I could wish them to have been. The facts of sex first became known to me when I was twelve years old, through a boy named Ernest Logan who had been one of my kindergarten companions at an earlier age. He and I slept in the same room one night, and he explained the nature of

copulation and its part in the generation of children, illustrating his remarks by funny stories. I found what he said extremely interesting, although I had as yet no physical response. It appeared to me at the time self-evident that free love was the only rational system, and that marriage was bound up with Christian superstition. (I am sure this reflection occurred to me only a very short time after I first knew the facts.) When I was fourteen, my tutor mentioned to me that I should shortly undergo an important physical change. By this time I was more or less able to understand what he meant. I had at that time another boy, Jimmie Baillie, staying with me, the same whom I met at Vancouver in 1929, and he and I used to talk things over, not only with each other, but with the page-boy, who was about our own age or perhaps a year older, and rather more knowing than we were. When it was discovered that we had spent a certain afternoon in doubtful conversation with the page-boy, we were spoken to in tones of deep sorrow, sent to bed, and kept on bread and water. Strange to say, this treatment did not destroy my interest in sex. We spent a great deal of time in the sort of conversation that is considered improper, and in endeavouring to find out things of which we were ignorant. For this purpose I found the medical dictionary very useful. At fifteen, I began to have sexual passions, of almost intolerable intensity. While I was sitting at work, endeavouring to concentrate, I would be continually distracted by erections, and I fell into the practice of masturbating, in which, however, I always remained moderate. I was much ashamed of this practice, and endeavoured to discontinue it. I persisted in it, nevertheless, until the age of twenty, when I dropped it suddenly because I was in love.

The same tutor who told me of the approach of puberty mentioned, some months later, that one speaks of a man's breast, but of a woman's breasts. This remark caused me such an intolerable intensity of feeling that I appeared to be shocked, and he rallied me on my prudery. Many hours every day were spent in desiring to see the female body, and I used to try to get glimpses through windows when the maids were dressing, always unsuccessfully, however. My friend and I spent a winter making an underground house, which consisted of a long tunnel, through which one crawled on hands and knees, and then of a room 6 foot cube. There was a housemaid whom I used to induce to accompany me to this underground house, where I kissed her and hugged her. Once I asked her whether she would like to spend a night with me, and she said she would die rather, which I believed. She also expressed surprise, saying that she had thought I was good. Consequently this affair proceeded no further. I had by this time quite lost the rationalist outlook on sex which I had had before puberty, and accepted entirely the conventional views as quite sound. I became morbid, and regarded myself as very wicked. At the same time, I took a considerable interest in my own psychology, which I studied carefully and not unintelligently, but I was told

that all introspection is morbid, so that I regarded this interest in my own thoughts and feelings as another proof of mental aberration. After two or three years of introspection, however, I suddenly realised that, as it is the only method of obtaining a great deal of important knowledge, it ought not to be condemned as morbid. This relieved my feelings on this point.

Concurrently with this physical preoccupation with sex, went a great intensity of idealistic feeling, which I did not at that time recognise as sexual in origin. I became intensely interested in the beauty of sunsets and clouds, and trees in spring and autumn, but my interest was of a very sentimental kind, owing to the fact that it was an unconscious sublimation of sex, and an attempt to escape from reality. I read poetry widely, beginning with very bad poetry such as *In Memoriam*. While I was sixteen and seventeen, I read, as far as I can remember, the whole of Milton's poetry, most of Byron, a great deal of Shakespeare, large parts of Tennyson, and finally Shelley. I came upon Shelley by accident. One day I was waiting for my Aunt Maude in her sitting-room at Dover Street. I opened it at *Alastor*, which seemed to me the most beautiful poem I had ever read. Its unreality was, of course, the great element in my admiration for it. I had got about half-way through when my Aunt arrived, and I had to put the volume back in the shelf. I asked the grown-ups whether Shelley was not considered a great poet, but found that they thought ill of him. This, however, did not deter me, and I spent all my spare time reading him, and learning him by heart. Knowing no one to whom I could speak of what I thought or felt, I used to reflect how wonderful it would have been to know Shelley, and to wonder whether I should ever meet any live human being with whom I should feel so much in sympathy.

Alongside with my interest in poetry, went an intense interest in religion and philosophy. My grandfather was Anglican, my grandmother was a Scotch Presbyterian, but gradually became a Unitarian. I was taken on alternate Sundays to the (Episcopalian) Parish Church at Petersham and to the Presbyterian Church at Richmond, while at home I was taught the doctrines of Unitarianism. It was these last that I believed until about the age of fifteen. At this age I began a systematic investigation of the supposed rational arguments in favour of fundamental Christian beliefs. I spent endless hours in meditation upon this subject; I could not speak to anybody about it for fear of giving pain. I suffered acutely both from the gradual loss of faith and from the need of silence. I thought that if I ceased to believe in God, freedom and immortality, I should be very unhappy. I found, however, that the reasons given in favour of these dogmas were very unconvincing. I considered them one at a time with great seriousness. The first to go was free will. At the age of fifteen, I became convinced that the motions of matter, whether living or dead, proceeded entirely in accordance with the laws of dynamics, and

therefore the will can have no influence upon the body. I used at this time to write down my reflections in English written in Greek letters in a book headed 'Greek Exercises'.¹ I did this for fear lest someone should find out what I was thinking. In this book I recorded my conviction that the human body is a machine. I should have found intellectual satisfaction in becoming a materialist, but on grounds almost identical with those of Descartes (who was unknown to me except as the inventor of Cartesian co-ordinates), I came to the conclusion that consciousness is an undeniable datum, and therefore pure materialism is impossible. This was at the age of fifteen. About two years later, I became convinced that there is no life after death, but I still believed in God, because the 'First Cause' argument appeared to be irrefutable. At the age of eighteen, however, shortly before I went to Cambridge, I read Mill's *Autobiography*, where I found a sentence to the effect that his father taught him that the question 'Who made me?' cannot be answered, since it immediately suggests the further question 'Who made God?'. This led me to abandon the 'First Cause' argument, and to become an atheist. Throughout the long period of religious doubt, I had been rendered very unhappy by the gradual loss of belief, but when the process was completed, I found to my surprise that I was quite glad to be done with the whole subject.

Throughout this time, I read omnivorously. I taught myself enough Italian to read Dante and Machiavelli. I read Comte, of whom, however, I did not think much. I read Mill's *Political Economy and Logic*, and made elaborate abstracts of them. I read Carlyle with a good deal of interest, but with a complete repudiation of his purely sentimental arguments in favour of religion. For I took the view then, which I have taken ever since, that a theological proposition should not be accepted unless there is the same kind of evidence for it that would be required for a proposition in science. I read Gibbon, and Milman's *History of Christianity*, and *Gulliver's Travels* unexpurgated. The account of the Yahoos had a profound effect upon me, and I began to see human beings in that light.

It must be understood that the whole of this mental life was deeply buried; not a sign of it showed in my intercourse with other people. Socially I was shy, childish, awkward, well behaved, and good-natured. I used to watch with envy people who could manage social intercourse without anguished awkwardness. There was a young man called Cattermole who, I suppose, must have been a bit of a bounder; but I watched him walking with a smart young woman with easy familiarity and evidently pleasing her. And I would think that never, never, never should I learn to behave in a manner that could possibly please any woman in whom I might be interested. Until just before my sixteenth birthday, I was sometimes able to speak of some things to my tutors. Until that date I was educated at home, but my tutors seldom stayed more than three months. I did not know why this was, but I think it was

because whenever a new tutor arrived, I used to induce him to enter into a conspiracy with me to deceive my people wherever their demands were absurd. One tutor I had was an agnostic, and used to allow me to discuss religion with him. I imagine that he was dismissed because this was discovered. The tutor whom my people liked best and who stayed the longest with me was a man dying of consumption whose breath stank intolerably. It never occurred to them that it was unwise, from a health point of view, to have me perpetually in his neighbourhood.

Just before my sixteenth birthday, I was sent to an Army crammer at Old Southgate, which was then in the country. I was not sent to him in order to cram for the Army, but in order to be prepared for the scholarship examination at Trinity College, Cambridge. Almost all of the other people there, however, were going into the Army, with the exception of one or two reprobates who were going to take Orders. Everybody, except myself, was seventeen or eighteen, or nineteen, so that I was much the youngest. They were all of an age to have just begun frequenting prostitutes, and this was their main topic of conversation. The most admired among them was a young man who asserted that he had had syphilis and got cured, which gave him great kudos. They would sit round telling bawdy stories. Every incident gave them opportunities for improper remarks. Once the crammer sent one of them with a note to a neighbouring house. On returning, he related to the others that he had rung the bell and a maid had appeared to whom he had said: 'I have brought a letter' (meaning a French letter) to which she replied: 'I am glad you have brought a letter.' When one day in church a hymn was sung containing the line: 'Here I'll raise my Ebenezer', they remarked: 'I never heard it called that before!'

In spite of my previous silent preoccupation with sex, contact with it in this brutal form deeply shocked me. I became very Puritanical in my views, and decided that sex without deep love is beastly. I retired into myself, and had as little to do with the others as possible. The others, however, found me suitable for teasing. They used to make me sit on a chair on a table and sing the only song I knew, which was:

Old Abraham is dead and gone,
 We ne'er shall see him more,
 He used to wear an old great coat,
 All buttoned down before.

He also had another coat,
 Which was of a different kind,
 Instead of buttoning down before,
 It buttoned up behind.

I soon realised that my only chance of escape from their attentions was to remain imperturbably good-humoured. After a term or two, another teasing boy arrived, who had the added merit of losing his temper. This caused them to let me alone. Gradually, also, I got used to their conversation and ceased to be shocked by it. I remained, however, profoundly unhappy. There was a footpath leading across fields to New Southgate, and I used to go there alone to watch the sunset and contemplate suicide. I did not, however, commit suicide, because I wished to know more of mathematics. My people would, of course, have been horrified if they had known of the sort of conversation that was habitual, but as I was getting on well with mathematics I wished on the whole to stay, and never told them a word as to the sort of place it was. At the end of the year and a half at the crammer's I was examined for scholarships in December 1889, and obtained a minor scholarship. During the ten months that intervened before my going to Cambridge, I lived at home, and coached with the man whom the crammer had hired to teach me.

For a time at the crammer's I had one friend – a man named Edward FitzGerald. His mother was American, and his father Canadian, and he became well known in later years as a great mountain climber, performing many exploits in the New Zealand Alps and the Andes. His people were very rich, and lived in a large house, No. 19 Rutland Gate.² He had a sister who wrote poetry and was a great friend of Robert Browning whom I frequently met at Rutland Gate.³ She afterwards became first Lady Edmond Fitzmaurice, and then Signora de Philippi. His sister was considerably older than he was, and an accomplished classical scholar. I conceived a romantic admiration for her, though when I met her later she seemed an unmitigated bore. He had been brought up in America, and was exceedingly sophisticated. He was lazy and lackadaisical, but had remarkable ability in a great many directions, notably in mathematics. He could tell the year of any reputable wine or cigar. He could eat a spoonful of mixed mustard and Cayenne pepper. He was intimate with Continental brothels. His knowledge of literature was extensive, and while an undergraduate at Cambridge, he acquired a fine library of first editions. When he first came to the crammer's, I took to him at once, because he was at any rate a civilised being, which none of the others were. (Robert Browning died while I was there, and none of the others had ever heard of him.) We used both to go home for the weekend, and on the way he would always take me first to lunch with his people and then to a *matinée*. My people made inquiries about the family, but were reassured by a testimonial from Robert Browning. Having been lonely so long, I devoted a somewhat absurd amount of affection to FitzGerald. To my great delight, I was invited to go abroad with him and his people in August. This was the first time I had been abroad since the age of two, and the prospect of seeing foreign countries excited me greatly. We went first to Paris, where the Exhibition of 1889

was in progress, and we went to the top of the Eiffel Tower, which was new that year. We then went to Switzerland, where we drove from place to place for about a week, ending up in the Engadine. He and I climbed two mountains, Piz Corvach, and Piz Palü. On both occasions there was a snow-storm. On the first I had mountain sickness, and on the second he did. The second occasion was quite exciting, as one of our guides fell over a precipice, and had to be hauled up by the rope. I was impressed by his *sang froid*, as he swore as he fell over.

Unfortunately, however, FitzGerald and I had a somewhat serious disagreement during this time. He spoke with what I thought unpardonable rudeness to his mother, and being young I reproached him for doing so. He was exceedingly angry, with a cold anger which lasted for months. When we returned to the crammer's, we shared lodgings, and he devoted himself to saying disagreeable things, in which he displayed great skill. I came to hate him with a violence which, in retrospect, I can hardly understand. On one occasion, in an access of fury, I got my hands on his throat and started to strangle him. I intended to kill him, but when he began to grow livid, I relented. I do not think he knew that I had intended murder. After this, we remained fairly good friends throughout his time at Cambridge, which, however, ended with his marriage at the end of his second year.

Throughout this time, I had been getting more and more out of sympathy with my people. I continued to agree with them in politics, but in nothing else. At first I sometimes tried to talk to them about things that I was considering, but they always laughed at me, and this caused me to hold my tongue. It appeared to me obvious that the happiness of mankind should be the aim of all action, and I discovered to my surprise that there were those who thought otherwise. Belief in happiness, I found, was called Utilitarianism, and was merely one among a number of ethical theories. I adhered to it after this discovery, and was rash enough to tell grandmother that I was a utilitarian. She covered me with ridicule, and ever after submitted ethical conundrums to me, telling me to solve them on utilitarian principles. I perceived that she had no good grounds for rejecting utilitarianism, and that her opposition to it was not intellectually respectable. When she discovered that I was interested in metaphysics, she told me that the whole subject could be summed up in the saying: 'What is mind? no matter; what is matter? never mind.' At the fifteenth or sixteenth repetition of this remark, it ceased to amuse me, but my grandmother's animus against metaphysics continued to the end of her life. Her attitude is expressed in the following verses:

O Science metaphysical
 And very very quizzical,
 You only make this maze of life the mazier;

For boasting to illuminate
 Such riddles dark as Will and Fate
 You muddle them to hazier and hazier.

The cause of every action,
 You expound with satisfaction;
 Through the mind in all its corners and recesses
 You say that you have travelled,
 And all problems unravelled
 And axioms you call your learned guesses.

Right and wrong you've so dissected,
 And their fragments so connected,
 That which we follow doesn't seem to matter;
 But the cobwebs you have wrought,
 And the silly flies they have caught,
 It needs no broom miraculous to shatter.

You know no more than I,
 What is laughter, tear, or sigh,
 Or love, or hate, or anger, or compassion;
 Metaphysics, then, adieu,
 Without you I can do,
 And I think you'll very soon be out of fashion.

I remember her saying to me once after I was grown-up: 'I hear you are writing *another* book', in the tone of voice in which one might say: 'I hear you have another illegitimate child!' Mathematics she did not positively object to, though it was difficult for her to believe that it could serve any useful purpose. Her hope for me was that I should become a Unitarian minister. I held my tongue as to my religious opinions until I was twenty-one. Indeed, after the age of fourteen I found living at home only endurable at the cost of complete silence about everything that interested me. She practised a form of humour, which, though nominally amusing, was really full of animus. I did not at that time know how to reply in kind, and merely felt hurt and miserable. My Aunt Agatha was equally bad, and my Uncle Rollo at the time had withdrawn into himself through sorrow at his first wife's death. My brother, who was at Balliol, had become a Buddhist, and used to tell me that the soul could be contained in the smallest envelope. I remember thinking of all the smallest envelopes that I had seen, and I imagined the soul beating against them like a heart, but from what I could tell of esoteric Buddhism from my brother's conversation, it did not offer me anything that I found of service. After he came of age, I saw very little of him, as the family considered him

wicked, and he therefore kept away from home. I was upheld by the determination to do something of importance in mathematics when I grew up, but I did not suppose that I should ever meet anybody with whom I could make friends, or to whom I could express any of my thoughts freely, nor did I expect that any part of my life would be free from great unhappiness.

Throughout my time at Southgate I was very much concerned with politics and economics. I read Mill's *Political Economy*, which I was inclined to accept completely; also Herbert Spencer, who seemed to me too doctrinaire in *The Man Versus The State*, although I was in broad agreement with his bias.

My Aunt Agatha introduced me to the books of Henry George, which she greatly admired. I became convinced that land nationalisation would secure all the benefits that Socialists hoped to obtain from Socialism, and continued to hold this view until the war of 1914–18.

My grandmother Russell and my Aunt Agatha were passionate supporters of Gladstone's Home Rule policy, and many Irish M.P.s used to visit Pembroke Lodge. This was at a time when *The Times* professed to have documentary proof that Parnell was an accomplice in murder. Almost the whole upper class, including the great majority of those who had supported Gladstone till 1886, accepted this view, until, in 1889, it was dramatically disproved by the forger Piggot's inability to spell 'hesitancy'. My grandmother and aunt always vehemently rejected the view that Parnell's followers were in alliance with terrorists. They admired Parnell, with whom I once shook hands. But when he became involved in scandal, they agreed with Gladstone in repudiating him.

Twice I went with my Aunt Agatha to Ireland. I used to go for walks with Michael Davitt, the Irish patriot, and also by myself. The beauty of the scenery made a profound impression on me. I remember especially a small lake in County Wicklow, called Lugala. I have associated it ever since, though for no good reason, with the lines:

Like as the waves make toward the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end.

Fifty years later, when visiting my friend Crompton Davies in Dublin, I induced him to take me to Lugala. But he took me to a wood high above the lake, not to the 'pebbled shore' that I had remembered, and I went away convinced that one should not attempt to renew old memories.

In the year 1883 my Uncle Rollo bought a house on the slopes of Hindhead, where, for a long time, we all visited him for three months in every year. At that time there were no houses on Hindhead except two derelict coaching inns, the 'Royal Huts' and the 'Seven Thorns'. (They are not now derelict.) Tyndall's house, which started the fashion, was being built. I was frequently taken to see Tyndall, and he gave me one of his books, *The*

Forms of Water. I admired him as an eminent Man of Science, and strongly desired to make some impression upon him. Twice I had some success. The first time was while he was talking to my Uncle Rollo, and I balanced on one finger two walking sticks with crooks. Tyndall asked me what I was doing, and I said I was thinking of a practical method of determining the centre of gravity. The second time, some years later, was when I told him that I had climbed the Piz Palü. He had been a pioneer Alpinist. I found inexpressible delight in walks through the heather, over Blackdown, down the Punchbowl, and as far as the Devil's Jumps at Churt. I particularly remember exploring a small road called 'Mother Bunch's Lane' (it is now full of houses, and has a sign saying 'Bunch Lane'). It continually diminished, and at last became a mere path leading to the crest of Hurt Hill. Quite suddenly, when I expected nothing, I came upon an enormous view, embracing half of Sussex and almost all of Surrey. Moments of this sort have been important in my life. In general, I find that things that have happened to me out of doors have made a deeper impression than things that have happened indoors.

APPENDIX: 'GREEK EXERCISES'

1888. March 3. I shall write about some subjects which now interest me. I have in consequence of a variety of circumstances come to look into the very foundations of the religion in which I have been brought up. On some points my conclusions have been to confirm my former creed, while on others I have been irresistibly led to such conclusions as would not only shock my people, but have given me much pain. I have arrived at certainty in few things, but my opinions, even where not convictions, are on some things nearly such. I have not the courage to tell my people that I scarcely believe in immortality. I used to speak freely to Mr Ewen on such matters, but now I cannot let out my thoughts to any one, and this is the only means I have of letting off steam. I intend to discuss some of my problems here.

19th. I mean today to put down my grounds for belief in God. I may say to begin with that I do believe in God and that I should call myself a theist if I had to give my creed a name. Now in finding reasons for believing in God I shall only take account of scientific arguments. This is a vow I have made which costs me much to keep, and to reject all sentiment. To find then scientific grounds for a belief in God we must go back to the beginning of all things. We know that the present laws of nature have always been in force. The exact quantity of matter and energy now in the universe must always have been in existence, but the nebular hypothesis points to no distant date for the time when the whole universe was filled with undifferentiated nebulous matter. Hence it is quite possible that the matter and force

now in existence may have had a creation, which clearly could be only by divine power. But even granting that they have always been in existence, yet whence came the laws which regulate the action of force on matter? I think they are only attributable to a divine controlling power, which I accordingly call God.

March 22. Now let us look into the reasonableness of the reasoning. Let us suppose that the universe we now see has, as some suppose, grown by mere chance. Should we then expect every atom to act in any given conditions precisely similarly to another atom? I think if atoms be lifeless there is no reason to expect them to do anything without a controlling power. If on the other hand they be endowed with free will we are forced to the conclusion that all atoms in the universe have combined in the commonwealth and have made laws which none of them ever break. This is clearly an absurd hypothesis and therefore we are forced to believe in God. But this way of proving his existence at the same time disproves miracles and other supposed manifestations of divine power. It does not however disprove their possibility, for of course the maker of laws can also unmake them. We may arrive in another way at a disbelief in miracles. For if God is the maker of the laws, surely it would imply an imperfection in the law if it had to be altered occasionally, and such imperfection we can never impute to the divine nature, as in the Bible, God repented him of the work.

April 2. I now come to the subject which personally interests us poor mortals more perhaps than any other. I mean the question of immortality. This is the one in which I have been most disappointed and pained by thought. There are two ways of looking at it, first by evolution and comparing men to animals, second, by comparing men with God. The first is the more scientific, for we know all about the animals but not about God. Well, I hold that, taking free will first, to consider there is no clear dividing line between man and the protozoan, therefore if we give free will to men we must give it also the protozoan; this is rather hard to do. Therefore, unless we are willing to give free will to the protozoan we cannot give it to man. This however is possible but it is difficult to imagine, if, as seems to me probable, protoplasm only came together in the ordinary course of nature without any special providence from God; then we and all living things are simply kept going by chemical forces and are nothing more wonderful than a tree, which no one pretends has free will, and even if we had a good enough knowledge of the forces acting on anyone at any time, the motives pro and con, the constitution of his brain at any time, then we could tell exactly what he will do. Again from the religious point of view free will is a very arrogant thing for us to claim, for of course it is an interruption of God's laws, for by his

ordinary laws all our actions would be fixed as the stars. I think we must leave to God the primary establishment of laws which are never broken and determine everybody's doings. And not having free will we cannot have immortality.

Monday, April 6. I do wish I believed in the life eternal, for it makes me quite miserable to think man is merely a kind of machine endowed, unhappily for himself, with consciousness. But no other theory is consistent with the complete omnipotence of God of which science, I think, gives ample manifestations. Thus I must either be an atheist or disbelieve in immortality. Finding the first impossible I adopt the second and let no one know. I think, however disappointing may be this view of men, it does give us a wonderful idea of God's greatness to think that He can in the beginning create laws which by acting on a mere mass of nebulous matter, perhaps merely ether diffused through this part of the universe, will produce creatures like ourselves, conscious not only of our existence but even able to fathom to a certain extent God's mysteries. All this with no more intervention on his part. Now let us think whether this doctrine of want of free will is so absurd. If we talk about it to anyone they kick their legs or something of that sort. But perhaps they cannot help it for they have something to prove and therefore that supplies a motive to them to do it. Thus in anything we do we always have motives which determine us. Also there is no line of demarcation between Shakespeare or Herbert Spencer and a Papuan. But between them and a Papuan there seems as much difference as between a Papuan and a monkey.

April 14th. Yet there are great difficulties in the way of this doctrine that man has not immortality nor free will nor a soul, in short that he is nothing more than a species of ingenious machine endowed with consciousness. For consciousness in itself is a quality quite distinguishing men from dead matter and if they have one thing different from dead matter why not have another, free will? By free will I mean that they do not for example obey the first law of motion, or at least that the direction in which the energy they contain is employed depends not entirely on external circumstances. Moreover it seems impossible to imagine that man, the Great Man, with his reason, his knowledge of the universe, and his ideas of right and wrong, Man with his emotions, his love and hate and his religion, that this Man should be a mere perishable chemical compound whose character and his influence for good or for evil depend solely and entirely on the particular motions of the molecules of his brain and that all the greatest men have been great by reason of some one molecule hitting up against some other a little oftener than in other men. Does not this seem utterly incredible and must not any one be mad who

believes in such absurdity? But what is the alternative? That, accepting the evolution theory which is practically proved, apes having gradually increased in intelligence, God suddenly by a miracle endowed one with that wonderful reason which it is a mystery how we possess. Then is man, truly called the most glorious work of God, is man destined to perish utterly after he has been so many ages evolving? We cannot say, but I prefer that idea to God's having needed a miracle to produce man and now leaving him free to do as he likes.

April 18th. Accepting then the theory that man is mortal and destitute of free will, which is as much as ever a mere theory, as of course all these kinds of things are mere speculation, what idea can we form of right and wrong? Many say if you make any mention of such an absurd doctrine as predestination, which comes to much the same thing, though parsons don't think so, why what becomes of conscience, etc., which they think has been directly implanted in man by God. Now my idea is that our conscience is in the first place due to evolution, which would of course form instincts of self-preservation, and in the second place to education and civilisation, which introduces great refinements of the idea of self-preservation. Let us take for example the ten commandments as illustrative of primitive morality. Many of them are conducive to quiet living of the community which is best for the preservation of the species. Thus what is always considered the worst possible crime and the one for which most remorse is felt is murder, which is direct annihilation of the species. Again, as we know, among the Hebrews it was thought a mark of God's favour to have many children, while the childless were considered as cursed of God. Among the Romans also widows were hated and I believe forbidden to remain unmarried in Rome more than a year. Now why these peculiar ideas? Were they not simply because these objects of pity or dislike did not bring forth fresh human beings? We can well understand how such ideas might grow up when men became rather sensible, for if murder and suicide were common in a tribe that tribe would die out and hence one which held such acts in abhorrence would have a great advantage. Of course among more educated societies these ideas are rather modified. My own I mean to give next time.

April 20th. Thus I think that primitive morality always originates in the idea of the preservation of the species. But is this a rule which a civilised community ought to follow? I think not. My rule of life, which I guide my conduct by, and a departure from which I consider as a sin, is to act in the manner which I believe to be most likely to produce the greatest happiness, considering both the intensity of the happiness and the number of people made happy. I know that Granny considers this an impractical rule of life and

says that since you can never know the thing which will produce the greatest happiness you do much better in following the inner voice. The conscience, however, can easily be seen to depend mostly upon education, as for example common Irishmen do not consider lying wrong, which fact alone seems to me quite sufficient to disprove the divine value of conscience. And since, as I believe, conscience is merely the combined product of evolution and education, then obviously it is an absurdity to follow that rather than reason. And my reason tells me that it is better to act so as to produce maximum happiness than in any other way. For I have tried to see what other object I could set before me and I have failed. Not my own individual happiness in particular, but everybody's equally, making no distinction between myself, relations, friends, or perfect strangers. In real life it makes very little difference to me as long as others are not of my opinion, for obviously where there is any chance of being found out it is better to do what one's people consider right. My reason for this view: first that I can find no other, having been forced, as everybody must who seriously thinks about evolution, to give up the old idea of asking one's conscience, next that it seems to me that happiness is the great thing to seek after. As an application of the theory to practical life, I will say that in a case where nobody but myself was concerned, if indeed such a case exist, I should of course act entirely selfishly to please myself. Suppose for another instance that I had the chance of saving a man who would be better out of the world. Obviously I should consult my own happiness best by plunging in after him. For if I lost my life, that would be a very neat way of managing it, and if I saved him I should have the pleasure of no end of praise. But if I let him drown I should have lost an opportunity of death and should have the misery of much blame, but the world would be better for his loss and, as I have some slight hope, for my life.

April 29th. In all things I have made the vow to follow reason, not the instincts inherited partly from my ancestors and gained gradually by them, owing to a process of natural selection, and partly due to my education. How absurd it would be to follow these in the questions of right and wrong. For as I observed before, the inherited part can only be principles leading to the preservation of the species to which I belong, the part due to education is good or bad according to the individual education. Yet this inner voice, this God-given conscience which made Bloody Mary burn the Protestants, this is what we reasonable beings are to follow. I think this idea mad and I endeavour to go by reason as far as possible. What I take as my ideal is that which ultimately produces greatest happiness of greatest number. Then I can apply reason to find out the course most conducive to this end. In my individual case, however, I can also go more or less by conscience owing to the excellence of my education. But it is curious how people

dislike the abandonment of brutish impulses for reason. I remember poor Ewen getting a whole dinner of argument, owing to his running down impulse. Today again at tea Miss Buhler and I had a long discussion because I said that I followed reason not conscience in matters of right and wrong. I do hate having such peculiar opinions because either I must keep them bottled up or else people are horrified at my scepticism, which is as bad with people one cares for as remaining bottled up. I shall be sorry when Miss Buhler goes because I can open my heart easier to her than to my own people, strange to say.

May 3rd. Miss Buhler is gone and I am left again to loneliness and reserve. Happily, however, it seems all but settled that I am going to Southgate and probably within the week. That will save me I feel sure from those morose cogitations during the week, owing to the amount of activity of my life, and novelty at first. I do not expect that I shall enjoy myself at first, but after a time I hope I shall. Certainly it will be good for my work, for my games and my manners, and my future happiness I expect. . . .

May 8th. What a much happier life mine would be but for these wretched ideas of mine about theology. Tomorrow I go, and tonight Granny prayed a beautiful prayer for me in my new life, in which among other things she said: May he especially be taught to know God's infinite love for him. Well that is a prayer to which I can heartily say Amen, and moreover it is one of which I stand in the greatest need. For according to my ideas of God we have no particular reason to suppose he loves us. For he only set the machine in working order to begin with and then left it to work out its own necessary consequences. Now you may say his laws are such as afford the greatest possible happiness to us mortals, but that is a statement of which there can be no proof. Hence I see no reason to believe in God's kindness towards me, and even the whole prayer was more or less a solemn farce to me, though I was truly affected by the simple beauty of prayer and her earnest way in saying it. What a thing it is to have such people! What might I be had I been worse brought up!

By the way, to change to a more cheerful subject: Marshall⁴ and I had an awfully fine day of it. We went down to the river, marched into Broom Hall,⁵ bagged a boat of Frank's we found there, and rowed up the river beyond Kingston Bridge without anybody at Broom Hall having seen us except one old man who was lame. Who the dickens he was I haven't the faintest idea. Marshall was awfully anxious to have some tea and we came to an nth rate inn which he thought would do. Having however like idiots left our jackets in the boat-house at Teddington we had to march in without coats and were served by the cheekiest of maids ever I saw who said she thought we were the

carpenters come to mend the house. Then we rowed back as hard as possible and got home perspiring fearfully and twenty minutes late which produced a small row.

May 20th. Here I am home again for the first time from Southgate. It seems a pleasant place but it is sad really to see the kind of boys that are common everywhere. No mind, no independent thought, no love of good books nor of the higher refinements of morality. It is really sad that the upper classes of a civilised and (supposed to be) moral country can produce nothing better. I am glad I didn't go away from home sooner as I should never have come to my present state had I done so, but should have been merely like one of them. (By the way, how terribly pharisaical I am getting.) I think the six months since Baillie went have made a great alteration in me. I have become of a calmer, thoughtfuller, poeticaler nature than I was. One little thing I think illustrates this well. I never before thought much of the views in spring, whereas this year I was so simply carried away by their beauty that I asked Granny if they were not more beautiful than usual, but she said not. I like poetry much better than I did and have read all Shakespeare's historical plays with great delight, and long to read *In Memoriam*.

May 27th. As I said last time, I attempt to work according to my principles without the smallest expectations of reward, and even without using the light of conscience blindly as an infallible guide . . . It is very difficult for anyone to work aright with no aid from religion, by his own internal guidance merely. I have tried and I may say failed. But the sad thing is that I have no other resource. I have no helpful religion. My doctrines, such as they are, help my daily life no more than a formula in Algebra. But the great inducement to a good life with me is Granny's love and the immense pain I know it gives her when I go wrong. But she must I suppose die some day and where then will be my stay? I have the very greatest fear that my life hereafter be ruined by my having lost the support of religion. I desire of all things that my religion should not spread, for I of all people ought, owing to my education and the care taken of my moral well-being, to be of all people the most moral. So I believe I might be were it not for these unhappy ideas of mine, for how easy it is when one is much tempted to convince oneself that only happiness will be produced by yielding to temptation, when according to my ideas the course one has been taught to abhor immediately becomes virtuous. If ever I shall become an utter wreck of what I hope to be I think I shall bring forward this book as an explanation. We stand in want of a new Luther to renew faith and invigorate Christianity and to do what the Unitarians would do if only they had a really great man such as Luther to lead them. For religions grow old like trees unless reformed from time to time. Christianity of the existing kinds has had its

day. We want a new form in accordance with science and yet helpful to a good life.

June 3rd. It is extraordinary how few principles or dogmas I have been able to become convinced of. One after another I find my former undoubted beliefs slipping from me into the region of doubt. For example, I used never for a moment to doubt that truth was a good thing to get hold of. But now I have the very greatest doubt and uncertainty. For the search for truth has led me to these results I have put in this book, whereas had I been content to accept the teachings of my youth I should have remained comfortable. The search for truth has shattered most of my old beliefs and has made me commit what are probably sins where otherwise I should have kept clear of them. I do not think it has in any way made me happier. Of course it has given me a deeper character, a contempt for trifles or mockery, but at the same time it has taken away cheerfulness and made it much harder to make bosom friends, and worst of all it has debarred me from free intercourse with my people, and thus made them strangers to some of my deepest thoughts, which, if by any mischance I do let them out, immediately become the subject for mockery, which is inexpressibly bitter to me though not unkindly meant. Thus in my individual case I should say the effects of a search for truth have been more bad than good. But the truth which I accept as such may be said not to be truth and I may be told that if I get at real truth I shall be made happier by it, but this is a very doubtful proposition. Hence I have great doubt of the unmixed advantage of truth. Certainly truth in biology lowers one's idea of man which must be painful. Moreover, truth estranges former friends and prevents the making of new ones, which is also a bad thing. One ought perhaps to look upon all these things as a martyrdom, since very often truth attained by one man may lead to the increase in the happiness of many others though not to his own. On the whole I am inclined to continue to pursue truth, though truth of the kind in this book, if that indeed be truth, I have no desire to spread but rather to prevent from spreading.

July 15th. My holidays have begun about a week now and I am getting used to home and beginning to regard Southgate as an evil dream of the past. For although I tell people I like it very much, yet really, though better than I expected, life there has great trials and hardships. I don't suppose anybody hates disturbance as I do or can so ill stand mockery, though to outward appearance I keep my temper all right. Being made to sing, to climb on chairs, to get up for a sponging in the middle of the night, is to me fifty times more detestable than to others. I always have to go through in a moment a long train of reasoning as to the best thing to say or do, for I have sufficient self-control to do what I think best, and the excitement, which to others

might seem small, leaves me trembling and exhausted. However, I think it is an excellent thing for me, as it increases my capacity for enjoyment and strengthens me morally to a very considerable extent. I shan't forget in a hurry their amazement that I had never said a 'damn', which with things like it goes near to making me a *fanfaron de crimes*. This, however, is a bad thing to be, when only too many real crimes are committed. . . . I am glad I didn't go to school before. I should have wanted strength and have had no time for the original thought, which though it has caused me much pain, is yet my chief stay and support in troubles. I am always kept up by a feeling of contempt, erroneous though it may be, for all who despitefully use me and persecute me. I don't think contempt is misplaced when a chap's habitual language is about something like 'who put me on my cold, cold pot whether I would or not? My mother,' sung to the tune of 'Thy will be done'. Had my education, however, been the least bit less perfect than it is I should probably have been the same. But I feel I must enjoy myself at home much better than ever before, which with an imaginary feeling of heroism reconciles me to a great deal of unhappiness at Southgate.

July 20th. There are about three different, though converging ways of looking at this question of free will, first, from the omnipotence of God, second from the reign of law, and third, from the fact that all our actions, if looked into, show themselves as caused by motives. These three ways we see at once to be really identical, for God's omnipotence is the same thing as the reign of law, and the determination of actions by motives is the particular form which the reign of law takes in man. Let us now examine closely each of these ways.

First, from the omnipotence of God. What do we mean, in the first place, by free will? We mean that, where several courses are open to us, we can choose any one. But according to this definition, we are not ruled by God, and alone of created things, we are independent of him. That appears unlikely, but is by no means impossible, since his omnipotence is only an inference. Let us then pass on to the second, from the reign of law. Of all things we know, except perhaps the higher animals, it is obvious that law is completely the master. That man is also under its dominion appears from a fact such as Grimm's Law, and again from the fact that it is possible sometimes to predict human actions. If man, then, be subject to law, does not this mean, that his actions are predetermined, just as much as the motions of a planet or the growth of a plant? The Duke of Argyll, indeed, speaks of freedom within the bounds of law, but to me that's an unmeaning phrase, for subjection to law must mean a certain consequence always following in given conditions. No doubt different people in the same circumstances act differently, but that is only owing to difference of character, just as two comets in

the same position move differently, because of differences in their eccentricities. The third, from the consideration of motives, is about the strongest. For if we examine any action whatsoever, we find always motives, over which we have no more control than matter over the forces acting on it, which produce our actions. The Duke of Argyll says we can present motives to ourselves, but is not that an action, determined by our character, and other unavoidable things? The argument for free will from the fact that we feel it, is worthless, for we do not feel motives which we find really exist, nor that mind depends on brain, etc. But I am not prepared dogmatically to deny free will, for I have often found that good arguments don't present themselves on one side of a question till they are told one. My nature may incline me to disbelieve free will, and there may be very excellent arguments for free will which either I have never thought of, or else have not had their full weight with me. . . . It is difficult not to become reckless and commit suicide, which I believe I should do but for my people.

3

CAMBRIDGE

My father had been at Cambridge, but my brother was at Oxford. I went to Cambridge because of my interest in mathematics. My first experience of the place was in December 1889 when I was examined for entrance scholarships. I stayed in rooms in the New Court, and I was too shy to enquire the way to the lavatory, so that I walked every morning to the station before the examination began. I saw the Backs through the gate of the New Court, but did not venture to go into them, feeling that they might be private. I was invited to dine with the Master, who had been Headmaster of Harrow in my father's time. I there, for the first time, met Charles and Bob Trevelyan. Bob characteristically had borrowed Charles's second best dress suit, and fainted during dinner because somebody mentioned a surgical operation. I was alarmed by so formidable a social occasion, but less alarmed than I had been a few months earlier when I was left tête-à-tête with Mr Gladstone. He came to stay at Pembroke Lodge, and nobody was asked to meet him. As I was the only male in the household, he and I were left alone together at the dinner table after the ladies retired. He made only one remark: 'This is very good port they have given me, but why have they given it me in a claret glass?' I did not know the answer, and wished the earth would swallow me up. Since then I have never again felt the full agony of terror.

I was very anxious to do well in the scholarship examination, and nervousness somewhat interfered with my work. Nevertheless, I got a minor scholarship, which gave me extreme happiness, as it was the first time I had been able to compare myself with able contemporaries.

From the moment that I went up to Cambridge at the beginning of October 1890 everything went well with me. All the people then in residence who subsequently became my intimate friends called on me during the first

week of term. At the time I did not know why they did so, but I discovered afterwards that Whitehead, who had examined for scholarships, had told people to look out for Sanger and me. Sanger was a freshman like myself, also doing mathematics, and also a minor scholar. He and I both had rooms in Whewell's Court. Webb, our coach, had a practice of circulating MSS among his classes, and it fell to my lot to deliver a MS to Sanger after I had done with it. I had not seen him before, but I was struck by the books on his shelves. I said: 'I see you have Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe* which I think a very good book.' He said: 'You are the first person I have ever met who has heard of it!' From this point the conversation proceeded, and at the end of half an hour we were lifelong friends. We compared notes as to how much mathematics we had done. We agreed upon theology and metaphysics. We disagreed upon politics (he was at the time a Conservative, though in later life he belonged to the Labour Party). He spoke of Shaw, whose name was until then unknown to me. We used to work on mathematics together. He was incredibly quick, and would be half-way through solving a problem before I had understood the question. We both devoted our fourth year to moral science, but he did economics, and I did philosophy. We got our Fellowships at the same moment. He was one of the kindest men that ever lived, and in the last years of his life my children loved him as much as I have done. I have never known anyone else with such a perfect combination of penetrating intellect and warm affection. He became a Chancery barrister, and was known in legal circles for his highly erudite edition of Jarman *On Wills*. He used to lament that Jarman's relatives had forbidden him to mention in the preface that Jarman died intestate. He was also a very good economist, and he could read an incredible number of languages, including such out-of-the-way items as Magyar and Finnish. I used to go walking tours with him in Italy, and he always made me do all the conversation with inn-keepers, but when I was reading Italian, I found that his knowledge of the language was vastly greater than mine. His death in the year 1930 was a great sorrow to me.

The other friends whom I acquired during my first term I owed chiefly to Whitehead's recommendation. I learned afterwards that in the scholarship examination another man had obtained more marks than I had, but Whitehead had the impression that I was the abler of the two. He therefore burned the marks before the examiners' meeting, and recommended me in preference to the other man. Two of my closest friends were Crompton and Theodore Llewelyn Davies. Their father was vicar of Kirkby Lonsdale, and translator of Plato's *Republic* in the Golden Treasury edition, a distinguished scholar and a Broad Churchman whose views were derived from F. D. Maurice. He had a family of six sons and one daughter. It was said, and I believe with truth, that throughout their education the six sons, of whom Crompton and Theodore were the youngest, managed, by means of scholarships, to go

through school and university without expense to their father. Most of them were also strikingly good-looking, including Crompton, who had very fine blue eyes, which sometimes sparkled with fun and at other times had a steady gaze that was deeply serious. The ablest and one of the best loved of the family was the youngest, Theodore, with whom, when I first knew them, Crompton shared rooms in College. They both in due course became Fellows, but neither of them became resident. Afterwards the two lived together in a small house near Westminster Abbey, in a quiet out-of-the-way street. Both of them were able, high-minded and passionate, and shared, on the whole, the same ideals and opinions. Theodore had a somewhat more practical outlook on life than Crompton. He became Private Secretary to a series of Conservative Chancellors of the Exchequer, each of whom in turn he converted to Free Trade at a time when the rest of the Government wished them to think otherwise. He worked incredibly hard and yet always found time to give presents to the children of all his friends, and the presents were always exactly appropriate. He inspired the deepest affection in almost everybody who knew him. I never knew but one woman who would not have been delighted to marry him. She, of course, was the only woman he wished to marry. In the spring of 1905, when he was thirty-four, his dead body was found in a pool near Kirkby Lonsdale, where he had evidently bathed on his way to the station. It was supposed that he must have hit his head on a rock in diving. Crompton, who loved his brother above everyone, suffered almost unendurably. I spent the weeks after Theodore's death with him, but it was difficult to find anything to say.¹ The sight of his unhappiness was agonising. Ever since, the sound of Westminster chimes has brought back to me the nights I lay awake in misery at this time. On the Sunday after the accident, I was in church when his father, with determined stoicism, took the service as usual, and just succeeded in not breaking down. Gradually Crompton recovered, but not fully until his marriage. After that, for no reason that I could understand, I saw nothing of him for many years, until one evening, when I was living in Chelsea, I heard the front door bell, and found Crompton on the doorstep. He behaved as if we had met the day before, was as charming as ever, and insisted on seeing my children asleep. I think I had become so much associated with his suffering after Theodore's death, that for a long time he found my presence painful.

One of my earliest memories of Crompton is of meeting him in the darkest part of a winding College staircase and his suddenly quoting, without any previous word, the whole of 'Tyger, Tyger, burning bright'. I had never, till that moment, heard of Blake, and the poem affected me so much that I became dizzy and had to lean against the wall. Hardly a day passed without my remembering some incident connected with Crompton – sometimes a joke, sometimes a grimace of disgust at meanness or hypocrisy, most often

his warm and generous affection. If I were tempted at any time to any failure of honesty, the thought of his disapproval would still restrain me. He combined wit, passion, wisdom, scorn, gentleness, and integrity, in a degree that I have never known equalled. In addition to all these, his intense and unalterable affection gave to me and others, in later years, an anchor of stability in a disintegrating world.

His loyalties were usually peculiar to himself. He was incapable of following a multitude, either for good or evil. He would profess contempt and amusement for all the causes in which his friends excited themselves, laughing to scorn 'The Society for this' or 'The World League for Promoting that', while all the time he was a crusade in himself, for Ireland against England, for small business against big, for the have-nots against the haves, for competition against monopoly. His chief enthusiasm was for the taxation of land values.

Henry George is now an almost forgotten prophet, but in 1890, when I first knew Crompton, his doctrine that all rent should be paid to the State rather than to private landowners was still an active competitor with Socialism among those who were not satisfied with the economic status quo. Crompton, at this time, was already a fanatical adherent of Henry George. He had, as was to be expected, a strong dislike of Socialism, and a strong devotion to the principle of freedom for private enterprise. He had no dislike of the capitalist who made his money in industry, but regarded as a mere incubus the man who is able to levy toll on the industry of others because he owns the land that they need. I do not think he ever asked himself how the State could fail to become immensely powerful if it enjoyed all the revenue to be derived from landownership. In his mind, as in Henry George's, the reform was to be the completion of individualistic liberalism, setting free energies now throttled by monopoly power. In 1909, he believed that Henry George's principles were being carried out by Lloyd George, whose famous budget he helped to perfect.

At the beginning of the 1914–18 War he was solicitor to the Post Office, but his ardent agreement with the opinions of his wife, who was an Irish Nationalist and imprisoned as a Sinn Feiner, made his position untenable. He was dismissed at a moment's notice. In spite of the prejudice of the time he was almost immediately taken in as a partner by Messrs Coward, Chance & Co, one of the leading firms of City solicitors. In 1921, it was he who drafted the treaty of peace that established Irish self-government, though this was never publicly known. His unselfishness made any important worldly success impossible, since he never stood in the way of others acquiring credit for his work; and he did not care for public recognition and honours. But his ability, though it was not this that made him unforgettable, was very great.

What made Crompton at the same time so admirable and so delightful, was not his ability, but his strong loves and hates, his fantastic humour, and his rock-like honesty. He was one of the wittiest men that I have ever known,

with a great love of mankind combined with a contemptuous hatred for most individual men. He had by no means the ways of a saint. Once, when we were both young, I was walking with him in the country, and we trespassed over a corner of a farmer's land. The farmer came running out after us, shouting and red with fury. Crompton held his hand to his ear, and said with the utmost mildness: 'Would you mind speaking a little louder? I'm rather hard of hearing.' The farmer was reduced to speechlessness in the endeavour to make more noise than he was already making. Not long before his death I heard him tell this story, with great detail and exaggeration, attributing his part in it to me, while I interrupted, saying, 'Don't believe a word of it. It wasn't me, it was all Crompton,' until finally he dissolved in affectionate chuckles.

He was addicted to extreme shabbiness in his clothes, to such a degree that some of his friends expostulated. This had an unexpected result. When Western Australia attempted by litigation to secede from the Commonwealth of Australia, his law firm was employed, and it was decided that the case should be heard in the King's Robing Room. Crompton was overheard ringing up the King's Chamberlain and saying: 'The unsatisfactory state of my trousers has lately been brought to my notice. I understand that the case is to be heard in the King's Robing Room. Perhaps the King has left an old pair of trousers there that might be useful to me.'

His distastes – which were numerous and intense – were always expressed in a manner that made one laugh. Once, when he and I were staying with his father, a Bishop was also a guest – the mildest and most inoffensive type of cleric, the kind of whom it would be natural to say that he would not hurt a fly. Unfortunately his politics were somewhat reactionary. When at last we were alone, Crompton put on a manner that would have been appropriate to a fellow-captive on a pirate ship, and growled out: 'Seems a *desperate* character.'

When the Liberal Government came into office at the end of 1905, and Lord Haldane, fat, comfortable, and soothing, was put at the War Office, Crompton, very gravely, said he had been chosen to prevent the Generals from having apoplexy when Army reforms were suggested.

Motor traffic annoyed him by its imperiousness. He would cross London streets without paying attention to it, and when cars hooted indignantly he would look round with an air of fastidious vexation, and say, 'Don't make that noise!' Although he wandered about with an air of dreamy abstraction, wearing his hat on the back of his head, motorists became convinced that he must be someone of enormous importance, and waited patiently while he went his way.

He loved London as much as Lamb or Dr Johnson did. Once, when he was inveighing against Wordsworth for writing about the lesser celandine, I said, 'Do you like him better on Westminster Bridge?' 'Ah, yes,' he answered, 'if only he had treated it on the same scale.' In his last years we often walked

together in London after dinner, he and my wife and I. Crompton would take our arms, if he were not holding them already, as we passed Wren's church of St Clement Danes, to remind us to look up at one of his favourite sights, the spire standing out dimly against the glowing blue of the evening sky. On these walks he would sometimes get into conversation with people that we met. I remember him engaging a park-keeper in an earnest discussion, perhaps of land values. The park-keeper was at first determined to remember both his class and his official position, and treated Crompton with respectful disapproval. Strangers ought not to be so ready to talk to strangers, gentlemen should not be so easy with workingmen, and no one should talk to officials on duty. But this stiffness soon melted. Crompton was truly democratic. He always spoke to his clerks or his servants with the same tone that he would have used to an important person such as one of the Indian Rajahs whose affairs he handled, and his manner in a two-roomed Irish cabin was exactly the same as in a party of celebrities. I remember with what grave courtesy he rose to bow and shake hands with our parlourmaid, on hearing that she came from the same district as his family.

By temperament he was inclined to anarchism; he hated system and organisation and uniformity. Once, when I was with him on Westminster Bridge, he pointed with delight to a tiny donkey-cart in the middle of the heavy traffic. 'That's what I like,' he said, 'freedom for all sorts.'

On another occasion, when I was walking with him in Ireland, we went to a bus station, where I, without thinking, made for the largest and most comfortable bus. His expression was quite shocked as he took me by the arm and hurried me away to a shabby little 'jalopie' of a bus, explaining gravely that it was pluckily defying the big combines.

His opinions were often somewhat wayward, and he had no objection to giving his prejudices free rein. He admired rebels rather more, perhaps, than was wholly rational. He had a horror of anything that seemed calculating, and I once shocked him deeply by saying that a war could not be justified unless there was a likelihood of victory. To him, heroic and almost hopeless defiance appeared splendid. Many of his prejudices were so consonant to my feelings that I never had the heart to argue with them – which in any case would have been a hopeless task.

With his temperament and opinions, it was natural that he should hate the Sidney Webbs. When they took up Poor Law Reform, he would say that, since everyone else rejected their attempts at regulation, they had at last been driven to organise the defenceless paupers. He would allege, as one of their triumphs of organisation, that they employed a pauper with a peg leg to drill holes for the potatoes.

He was my lawyer for many years – a somewhat thankless task which he undertook out of friendship. Most of his practice consisted of affairs of great

importance, concerning Indian Princes, Dominion Governments, or leading Banks. He showed, in legal matters, unbending straightforwardness, combined with skill and patience – this last truly astonishing, since nature had made him one of the most impatient of men. By these methods, which inspired confidence even in opponents, he achieved results which ingenious trickery could never have achieved. I remember the stony expression which came over his face during the course of a legal consultation when someone suggested a course that was not entirely straightforward.

With all his underlying seriousness, he was almost invariably gay. At the end of a long day of exhausting and responsible work he would arrive at a dinner party as jolly as if he had already enjoyed a good dose of champagne, and would keep everybody laughing. It was in the middle of a dinner party that he died, quite suddenly, of heart failure. Probably he had known that this was liable to happen, but he had kept the knowledge to himself. Afterwards, his friends remembered slight indications that he had not expected to live long, but they had not been sufficient to cause active anxiety among those who valued him.

In his last years he spent much of his leisure in writing a book on philosophy, which he referred to disparagingly as his 'pie-dish' in allusion to an old man in a play who had only one talent, the making of pie-dishes, and only one ambition, to make a really good pie-dish before he died. After Greek poetry, philosophy had been, when he was young, his main intellectual preoccupation; when I first knew him, we spent much time arguing about ethics and metaphysics. A busy professional life had kept him, throughout his middle years, engaged in practical affairs, but at last he was able to spare some time for purely theoretical thinking, to which he returned with wholehearted joy. When the book was nearly finished he lost it, as people do sometimes lose the things they value most. He left it in a train. It was never recovered. Someone must have picked it up in the hope that it had financial value. He mentioned the loss, sadly but briefly, said that there was nothing for it but to begin all over again from the few notes he had, and then changed the subject. We saw less of him during the few months that were left before his death, though when we did see him he was as gay and affectionate as ever. He was spending most of his spare energy on trying to make up the work that was lost; but the pie-dish was never finished.

Another friend of my Cambridge years was McTaggart, the philosopher, who was even shyer than I was. I heard a knock on my door one day – a very gentle knock. I said: 'Come in', but nothing happened. I said, 'Come in', louder. The door opened, and I saw McTaggart standing on the mat. He was already President of The Union, and about to become a Fellow, and inspired me with awe on account of his metaphysical reputation, but he was too shy to come in, and I was too shy to ask him to come in. I cannot remember how

many minutes this situation lasted, but somehow or other he was at last in the room. After that I used frequently to go to his breakfasts, which were famous for their lack of food; in fact, anybody who had been once, brought an egg with him on every subsequent occasion. McTaggart was a Hegelian, and at that time still young and enthusiastic. He had a great intellectual influence upon my generation, though in retrospect I do not think it was a very good one. For two or three years, under his influence, I was a Hegelian. I remember the exact moment during my fourth year when I became one. I had gone out to buy a tin of tobacco, and was going back with it along Trinity Lane, when suddenly I threw it up in the air and exclaimed: 'Great God in boots! – the ontological argument is sound!' Although after 1898 I no longer accepted McTaggart's philosophy, I remained fond of him until an occasion during the first war, when he asked me no longer to come and see him because he could not bear my opinions. He followed this up by taking a leading part in having me turned out of my lectureship.

Two other friends whom I met in my early days in Cambridge and retained ever since, were Lowes Dickinson and Roger Fry. Dickinson was a man who inspired affection by his gentleness and pathos. When he was a Fellow and I was still an undergraduate, I became aware that I was liable to hurt him by my somewhat brutal statement of unpleasant truths, or what I thought to be such. States of the world which made me caustic only made him sad, and to the end of his days whenever I met him, I was afraid of increasing his unhappiness by too stark a realism. But perhaps realism is not quite the right word. What I really mean is the practice of describing things which one finds almost unendurable in such a repulsive manner as to cause others to share one's fury. He told me once that I resembled Cordelia, but it cannot be said that he resembled King Lear.

From my first moment at Cambridge, in spite of shyness, I was exceedingly sociable, and I never found that my having been educated at home was any impediment. Gradually, under the influence of congenial society, I became less and less solemn. At first the discovery that I could say things that I thought, and be answered with neither horror nor derision but as if I had said something quite sensible, was intoxicating. For a long time I supposed that somewhere in the university there were really clever people whom I had not yet met, and whom I should at once recognise as my intellectual superiors, but during my second year, I discovered that I already knew all the cleverest people in the university. This was a disappointment to me, but at the same time gave me increased self-confidence. In my third year, however, I met G. E. Moore, who was then a freshman, and for some years he fulfilled my ideal of genius. He was in those days beautiful and slim, with a look almost of inspiration, and with an intellect as deeply passionate as Spinoza's. He had a kind of exquisite purity. I have never but once succeeded in making him tell a

lie, that was by a subterfuge, 'Moore,' I said, 'do you *always* speak the truth?' 'No', he replied. I believe this to be the only lie he had ever told. His people lived in Dulwich, where I once went to see them. His father was a retired medical man, his mother wore a large china brooch with a picture of the Colosseum on it. He had sisters and brothers in large numbers, of whom the most interesting was the poet, Sturge Moore. In the world of intellect, he was fearless and adventurous, but in the everyday world he was a child. During my fourth year I spent some days walking with him on the coast of Norfolk. We fell in by accident with a husky fellow, who began talking about Petronius with intense relish for his indecencies. I rather encouraged the man, who amused me as a type. Moore remained completely silent until the man was gone, and then turned upon me, saying: 'That man was horrible.' I do not believe that he has ever in all his life derived the faintest pleasure from improper stories or conversation. Moore, like me, was influenced by McTaggart, and was for a short time a Hegelian. But he emerged more quickly than I did, and it was largely his conversation that led me to abandon both Kant and Hegel. In spite of his being two years younger than me, he greatly influenced my philosophical outlook. One of the pet amusements of all Moore's friends was to watch him trying to light a pipe. He would light a match, and then begin to argue, and continue until the match burnt his fingers. Then he would light another, and so on, until the box was finished. This was no doubt fortunate for his health, as it provided moments during which he was not smoking.

Then there were the three brothers Trevelyan. Charles, the eldest, was considered the least able of the three by all of us. Bob, the second, was my special friend. He became a very scholarly, but not very inspired, poet, but when he was young he had a delicious whimsical humour. Once, when we were on a reading party in the Lakes, Eddie Marsh, having overslept himself, came down in his night-shirt to see if breakfast was ready, looking frozen and miserable. Bob christened him 'cold white shape', and this name stuck to him for a long time. George Trevelyan was considerably younger than Bob, but I got to know him well later on. He and Charles were terrific walkers. Once when I went a walking tour with George in Devonshire, I made him promise to be content with twenty-five miles a day. He kept his promise until the last day. Then he left me, saying that now he must have a little walking. On another occasion, when I was walking alone, I arrived at the Lizard one evening and asked if they could give me a bed. 'Is your name Mr Trevelyan?' they answered. 'No,' I said, 'are you expecting him?' 'Yes,' they said, 'and his wife is here already.' This surprised me, as I knew that it was his wedding day. I found her languishing alone, as he had left her at Truro, saying that he could not face the whole day without a little walk. He arrived about ten o'clock at night, completely exhausted, having accomplished the forty miles in record time, but it seemed to me a somewhat curious beginning for a

honeymoon. On August 4, 1914, he and I walked together down the Strand quarrelling. Since then I saw him only once, until I returned to Trinity in 1944, after he had become Master. When he was still an undergraduate he explained to me once that the Trevelyans never make matrimonial mistakes. 'They wait', he said, 'until they are thirty, and then marry a girl who has both sense and money.' In spite of occasional bad times, I have never wished that I had followed this prescription.

Bob Trevelyan was, I think, the most bookish person that I have ever known. What is in books appeared to him interesting, whereas what is only real life was negligible. Like all the family, he had a minute knowledge of the strategy and tactics concerned in all the great battles of the world, so far as these appear in reputable books of history. But I was staying with him during the crisis of the battle of the Marne, and as it was Sunday we could only get a newspaper by walking two miles. He did not think the battle sufficiently interesting to be worth it, because battles in mere newspapers are vulgar. I once devised a test question which I put to many people to discover whether they were pessimists. The question was: 'If you had the power to destroy the world, would you do so?' I put the question to him in the presence of his wife and child, and he replied: 'What? Destroy my library? – Never!' He was always discovering new poets and reading their poems out aloud, but he always began deprecatingly: 'This is not one of his best poems.' Once when he mentioned a new poet to me, and said he would like to read me some of his things, I said: 'Yes, but don't read me a poem which is not one of his best.' This stumped him completely, and he put the volume away.

The dons contributed little to my enjoyment of Cambridge. The Master came straight out of Thackeray's *Book of Snobs*. He generally began his remarks with 'Just thirty years ago today . . .' or with, 'Do you by any chance remember what Mr Pitt was doing one hundred years ago today?', and he would then proceed to relate some very tedious historical anecdote to show how great and good were all the statesmen mentioned in history. His epistolary style is illustrated by the letter that he wrote me after the mathematical tripos in which I was bracketed seventh wrangler:

Trinity Lodge,
Cambridge,
June 13th 1893

My dear B. Russell

I cannot tell you how happy this grand victory has made us. Just 33 years have passed since I placed the Fifth Form Prize for Latin Prose in the hands of your dear Father at Harrow, and now I am permitted to congratulate his son and his own Mother on a remarkable Mathematical success which will be much appreciated in the College.

We knew your Mathematical ability but we knew also that you had not given your whole mind to Mathematics but had bestowed large parts of it on other, possibly even greater, subjects. If this had seriously spoiled your Mathematical position I should of course have regretted it, but I should have understood that there were solid compensations.

Now there is happily nothing but congratulation, and you will look forward quietly to the Moral Science Tripos and the Fellowship without any misgiving that you have left behind you a Mathematical waste.

I must give myself the pleasure of writing just a few lines to Lady Russell and Lady Stanley. This will be a happy day for both of them.

*Believe me to be,
Most truly yours,
H. Montagu Butler
(Master of Trinity)*

I remember once going to breakfast at the Lodge, and it happened that the day was his sister-in-law's birthday. After wishing her many happy returns, he continued: 'Now, my dear, you have lasted just as long as the Peloponnesian War.' She did not know how long this might be, but feared it was longer than she could wish. His wife took to Christian Science, which had the effect of prolonging his life for some twenty years beyond what might otherwise have been expected. This happened through her lack of sympathy with his ailments. When he was ill, she would send word to the Council Meeting that the Master was in bed and refused to get up. It must be said, however, that the Vice-Master, Aldous Wright, and the Senior Fellow, Joey Prior, lasted almost equally long without the help of Christian Science. I remember when I was an undergraduate watching the three of them standing bare-headed at the Great Gate to receive the Empress Frederick. They were already very old men, but fifteen years later they seemed no older. Aldous Wright was a very dignified figure, standing always as straight as a ramrod, and never appearing out-of-doors without a top hat. Even once when he was roused from sleep at three in the morning by a fire the top hat was duly on his head. He stuck to the English pronunciation of Latin, while the Master adopted the Continental pronunciation. When they read grace in alternate verses, the effect was curious, especially as the Vice-Master gabbled it while the Master mouthed it with unction. While I was an undergraduate, I had regarded all these men merely as figures of fun, but when I became a Fellow and attended College meetings, I began to find that they were serious forces of evil. When the Junior Dean, a clergyman who raped his little daughter and became paralysed with syphilis, had to be got rid of in consequence, the Master went out of his way to state at College Meeting that those of us who did not attend chapel regularly had no idea how excellent this worthy's sermons had been. Next to

these three the most important person in the College was the Senior Porter, a magnificent figure of a man, with such royal dignity that he was supposed by undergraduates to be a natural son of the future Edward the Seventh. After I was a Fellow I found that on one occasion the Council met on five successive days with the utmost secrecy. With great difficulty I discovered what their business had been. They had been engaged in establishing the painful fact that the Senior Porter had had improper relations with five bedmakers, in spite of the fact that all of them, by Statute, were '*nec juvenis, nec pulchra*'.

As an undergraduate I was persuaded that the Dons were a wholly unnecessary part of the university. I derived no benefits from lectures, and I made a vow to myself that when in due course I became a lecturer I would not suppose that lecturing did any good. I have kept this vow.

I had already been interested in philosophy before I went to Cambridge, but I had not read much except Mill. What I most desired was to find some reason for supposing mathematics true. The arguments in Mill's *Logic* on this subject already struck me as very inadequate. I read them at the age of eighteen. My mathematical tutors had never shown me any reason to suppose the Calculus anything but a tissue of fallacies. I had therefore two questions to trouble me, one philosophical, and one mathematical. The mathematical question had already in the main been solved on the Continent, though in England the Continental work was little known. It was only after I left Cambridge and began to live abroad that I discovered what I ought to have been taught during my three years as an undergraduate. Philosophy, however, was another matter. I knew in the country Harold Joachim, who taught philosophy at Merton, and was a friend of F. H. Bradley. Joachim's sister had married my Uncle Rollo, and I used to meet him occasionally at tennis-parties and such occasions. I got him to give me a long list of philosophical books that I ought to read, and while I was still working at mathematics I embarked upon them. As soon as I was free to do so, I devoted myself to philosophy with great ardour. During my fourth year I read most of the great philosophers as well as masses of books on the philosophy of mathematics. James Ward was always giving me fresh books on this subject, and each time I returned them, saying that they were very bad books. I remember his disappointment, and his painstaking endeavours to find some book that would satisfy me. In the end, but after I had become a Fellow, I got from him two small books, neither of which he had read or supposed of any value. They were George Cantor's *Mannichfaltigkeitslehre*, and Frege's *Begriffsschrift*. These two books at last gave me the gist of what I wanted, but in the case of Frege I possessed the book for years before I could make out what it meant. Indeed, I did not understand it until I had myself independently discovered most of what it contained.

By this time, I had quite ceased to be the shy prig that I was when I first

went to Cambridge. I remember a few months before I came into residence, going to see my tutor about rooms, and while I waited in the ante-room I turned over the pages of the *Granta* (the undergraduate newspaper). It was May Week, and I was shocked to read in the paper that during this week people's thoughts were not devoted to work. But by my fourth year I had become gay and flippant. Having been reading pantheism, I announced to my friends that I was God. They placed candles on each side of me and proceeded to acts of mock worship. Philosophy altogether seemed to me great fun, and I enjoyed the curious ways of conceiving the world that the great philosophers offer to the imagination.

The greatest happiness of my time at Cambridge was connected with a body whom its members knew as 'The Society', but which outsiders, if they knew of it, called 'The Apostles'. This was a small discussion society, containing one or two people from each year on the average, which met every Saturday night. It has existed since 1820, and has had as members most of the people of any intellectual eminence who have been at Cambridge since then. It is by way of being secret, in order that those who are being considered for election may be unaware of the fact. It was owing to the existence of The Society that I so soon got to know the people best worth knowing, for Whitehead was a member, and told the younger members to investigate Sanger and me on account of our scholarship papers. With rare exceptions, all the members at any one time were close personal friends. It was a principle in discussion that there were to be no *taboos*, no limitations, nothing considered shocking, no barriers to absolute freedom of speculation. We discussed all manner of things, no doubt with a certain immaturity, but with a detachment and interest scarcely possible in later life. The meetings would generally end about one o'clock at night, and after that I would pace up and down the cloisters of Nevile's Court for hours with one or two other members. We took ourselves perhaps rather seriously, for we considered that the virtue of intellectual honesty was in our keeping. Undoubtedly, we achieved more of this than is common in the world, and I am inclined to think that the best intelligence of Cambridge has been notable in this respect. I was elected in the middle of my second year, not having previously known that such a society existed, though the members were all intimately known to me already.

I was elected to The Society early in 1892. The following letters of congratulation require an explanation of some phrases which were adopted in The Society by way of making fun of German metaphysics. The Society was supposed to be The World of Reality; everything else was Appearance. People who were not members of The Society were called 'phenomena'. Since the metaphysicians maintained that Space and Time are unreal, it was assumed that those who were in The Society were exempted from bondage to Space and Time.

c/ Hon. Sir Charles Elliott, KCSI,
Lieut. Gov. of Bengal, India

Weds. March 9, 1892

Dear Russell

I have just heard by this morning's mail that you have joined us – Hurrah. It is good news indeed. I mustn't let the mail go off this afternoon without a few words to say how glad I am, and how sorry not to be at Cambridge now to give you a fraternal handshake. You will of course get your own impressions, but it was certainly a true new life to me, and a revelation of what Cambridge really was.

It is just time for letters to go, so I'm afraid I can't write just now to tell you of my experiences. Theodore will tell you how I am getting on. I was very sorry to hear that you had not been well. Get all right quick. Don't let Webb² kill you.

Excuse these hurried lines. Confound those absurd humbugs, space and time, which have the impudence to pretend that they are now separating us. Whereas we know that they have nothing to do with that true existence in the bonds of which I was in the beginning am now and ever shall be

fraternally and affectionately
yours
Crompton Ll. D.

I haven't time to write to Sanger a proper letter, so would you mind handing him the enclosed scrawl?

Do write to me if you have time.

Devon St., New Plymouth,
Taranaki, New Zealand.

17th May, 1892

Dear Russell

Many congratulations on the delightful news of last February, which – with a bondage to space and time perfectly inexplicable in apostolic matters – has only just reached me via India.

I am most awfully glad. I hope you have been told of our brother Whitehead's penetration, who detected the apostolic nature of yourself and Sanger by your entrance scholarship essays, and put us on the watch for you.

I wish I could get back for a Saturday night or so, and have it out with Theodore about Xtianity being the religion of love – just the one thing which it isn't I should say. I don't see how the ideas of a personal God and real love can coexist with any vigour.

How about the Embryos?³ I hear that the younger Trevelyan (Bob) is very promising, and Green of Kings.

I have innumerable more letters for the mail. I hope to see you in the middle of next January.

Yours fraternally,
(Sgd.) Ellis McTaggart

Some things became considerably different in The Society shortly after my time.

The tone of the generation some ten years junior to my own was set mainly by Lytton Strachey and Keynes. It is surprising how great a change in mental climate those ten years had brought. We were still Victorian; they were Edwardian. We believed in ordered progress by means of politics and free discussion. The more self-confident among us may have hoped to be leaders of the multitude, but none of us wished to be divorced from it. The generation of Keynes and Lytton did not seek to preserve any kinship with the Philistine. They aimed rather at a life of retirement among fine shades and nice feelings, and conceived of the good as consisting in the passionate mutual admirations of a clique of the élite. This doctrine, quite unfairly, they fathered upon G. E. Moore, whose disciples they professed to be. Keynes, in his memoir 'Early Beliefs' has told of their admiration for Moore, and, also, of their practice of ignoring large parts of Moore's doctrine. Moore gave due weight to morals and by his doctrine of organic unities avoided the view that the good consists of a series of isolated passionate moments, but those who considered themselves his disciples ignored this aspect of his teaching and degraded his ethics into advocacy of a stuffy girls-school sentimentalising.

From this atmosphere Keynes escaped into the great world, but Strachey never escaped. Keynes's escape, however, was not complete. He went about the world carrying with him everywhere a feeling of the bishop in *partibus*. True salvation was elsewhere, among the faithful at Cambridge. When he concerned himself with politics and economics he left his soul at home. This is the reason for a certain hard, glittering, inhuman quality in most of his writing. There was one great exception, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, of which I shall have more to say in a moment.

I first knew Keynes through his father, and Lytton Strachey through his mother. When I was young, Keynes's father taught old-fashioned formal logic in Cambridge. I do not know how far the new developments in that subject altered his teaching. He was an earnest Nonconformist who put morality first and logic second. Something of the Nonconformist spirit remained in his son, but it was overlaid by the realisation that facts and arguments may lead to conclusions somewhat shocking to many people, and a strain of