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**quotations
for all
occasions**

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**editor:
catherine
frank**

Quotations for All Occasions

Compiled by
Catherine Frank



C O L U M B I A U N I V E R S I T Y P R E S S N E W Y O R K

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Introduction

On the most important occasions of our lives, we often find ourselves at a loss for words. When we most want to console, celebrate, explain, inspire, or thank, we end up repeating phrases like “Words cannot express how I feel” or “I just don’t know what to say.” *Quotations for All Occasions* may just be the book to supply those words or inspire you to come up with some of your own.

Our failure to speak on important occasions sometimes results from a sense that it may be inappropriate to craft a fine turn of phrase in a time of great emotion. Eloquence may be misconstrued when it commemorates the loss of a friend, for example. (Turn to the section on bereavement and you will see that Samuel Johnson had something to say about the incompatibility of grief and “remote allusions and obscure opinions.”) On the other hand, to read or share the comments of Plato, John Donne, or Woody Allen on the subject of death can help to put our own grief into perspective, and enable us to offer words instead of tears to console a friend.

Even on joyful occasions, *le mot juste* may not be a high priority. When you are shopping for turkey and trying to figure out how to fit your entire family around your dinner table, you may not have the energy to compose a moving statement about the meaning of Thanksgiving to set the tone for the feast. *Quotations for All Occasions* may give you the inspiration to impress your guests with a quotation from Sarah Josepha Hale, the founder of the modern celebration of the holiday, or to reassure them with Erma Bombeck’s comment that on this one day everyone should be exonerated from dieting. Why come up with a toast for your child’s wedding when the poet Richard Wilbur has already done the work for you? Why share with your child the intimate details of your first sexual encounter when you can let Moll Flanders, Martina Navratilova, and Holden Caulfield tell all? Why suffer alone when Florence King and Ursula Le Guin can enlighten you about the benefits of menopause, and when Betty Ford can inspire you to battle an addiction? *Quotations for All Occasions* can supply you with quotations to inspire and console you and bail you out when you just don’t

know what to say about death, Thanksgiving, marriage, sex, menopause, recovery, or any of the many occasions that confront us over the course of a year or over the course of a lifetime.

Quotations for All Occasions is a collection of quotations about many of the celebrations and rites of passage in the calendar year and in our personal lives. The collection contains three sections. First, there are quotations, beginning with New Year's Day and ending with New Year's Eve, about the occasions we experience *every year*. Then there are quotations about events that happen *occasionally*; they lack the inevitability of the calendar, but they are by no means unique. Finally, the third section of the collection contains quotations about those occasions that happen *once in a lifetime*, about the milestones by which we measure our development, count our gains and number our losses.

In the first section, "Every Year," there are quotations for all the important festivals and religious celebrations, for all the seasons, all the months, even the days of the week. (You may never again look quite the same way at Monday after you learn what Brenda Spencer did because she hated it, or at Tuesday after you read Elizabeth Taylor's report of how Richard Burton was wont to celebrate it.) Browsing through the quotations in this first section of the book you will notice the diverse views that writers have of these shared experiences, and perhaps come to a better understanding of how our culture and our place condition our sense of the passing year. The Chinese New Year, the Muslim New Year, and the Jewish New Year, for example, fall on days different from the Christian New Year.

The quotations included here reflect the customs associated with these different holidays and also highlight the different perspectives afforded by insiders and outsiders to a given tradition. If you have never celebrated Chinese New Year, you may regret your culture's lack of a "Kitchen God" after you read Amy Tan's description. If you do routinely commemorate this festival, you may still be impressed with the prose poem that Osbert Sitwell creates with his list of the lyrical names for different kinds of noisy fireworks. Even within a given culture, the same holiday may have different tones for different participants. American Christians reading Herman Wouk's quotation on Hanukkah, for example, may come to better appreciate that the American celebration of Christmas makes it difficult to find a niche for another December holiday. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mark Twain, and Stephen Vincent Benét recall the ice cream and patriotic songs, the speeches and the fireworks that many Americans associate with Independence Day. Reformers like Williams Wells Brown, Frederick Douglass, and Frances Wright remind us that, for slaves or for women without the right to vote, this celebration of "liberty and justice for all" was felt as a yearly reminder of their country's hypocrisy. As you survey the quotations on Valentine's Day, note how the customs and lore of the day have changed over time. Chaucer and Shakespeare charm the reader when they recall the traditional lore about the

mating of birds on this date, while modern women like Cathy Guisewhite and Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones* provide a more jaded vision of the obligatory hearts, flowers, sex, and rejection. Even events that occur with regularity and seem to fall on all alike, the changing of seasons or the quicker cycle of days of the week, may look quite different to city and country dwellers (while George Herbert feels one cannot experience May in the city, William Cullen Bryant celebrates the way even a "few bright hours" can bring spring to a city garden in March), to the young and the old (witness the ongoing debate over the relative cruelty of April), and to the English and New Englanders (while Gertrude Jekyll's June is the embodiment of fresh young beauty, Oliver Wendell Holmes sees the month wearing a shawl and suffering from a head cold). The quotations here, which can confirm that even great minds are comforted by the warmth of the hearth in winter, can breathe new life into yearly rituals.

In the second section, "Occasionally," there are quotations for those occasions that do happen but not on a schedule. Indeed, the unpredictability may mark them as occasions in our lives. We don't choose when a disaster, an illness, or a separation will befall us, and the reactions of others may help us to respond. Henry Ward Beecher and C. S. Lewis may provide us with a sense of the purpose of suffering in our lives. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Susan Sontag, and Robert McCrum describe pain and illness with an eloquence that brings dignity to those who are suffering. Other occasions, such as quitting an addiction, require will-power, and the words here may inspire the strength of character necessary to live through recovery. The quotations about quitting drinking, quitting smoking, and quitting overeating reflect both the continuing desire to change and the countervailing temptation to give in to the lure of a vice. It may be reassuring to know that everyone from Huck Finn to Wendy Cope has had trouble resisting the lure of a cigarette. Indeed, listing these attempts to "quit" under the heading "occasionally" underscores our weakness and difficulty in our efforts to overcome our bad habits. We may also regret the necessity to include proposals, weddings, and divorces in this category and to admit that they recur instead of happening "once in a lifetime." On the other hand, the reader may take some comfort or find some humor in the notion that the occasion of divorce has provided a common ground for writers as diverse as John Milton and Ann Landers (Eppie Lederer). We may also regret the regularity with which we must face unpleasant tasks like taking exams, attending meetings, writing reports, and surviving interviews. The reader may, however, gain a sense of the universality of his test anxiety when he reads that Robert Louis Stevenson could, many years out of school, still conjure up the terror of a late-night study session, or that Montaigne and William James found that most exams require the student to stuff the mind without exercising it. One may even start to appreciate some of the occasional burdens of life if they become the occasion to identify with the writers quoted here.

Finally, in “Once in a Lifetime,” there are quotations for those occasions that for most of us occur no oftener than that. Sometimes the occasion is memorable because it is a first experience: first sex, first job, or first home. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s commentary on setting up housekeeping on a scholar’s income has special relevance to first-time homeowners on a budget, while Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s definition of a home may serve as a welcome reminder to any homeowner that it is important to create a refuge for adults and children. Some of the events in this section are, in the chronology of our lives, events that we must experience at set times. We turn twenty, thirty, or forty only once. Our culture does not provide us with any standard ceremonies that shape and direct our reactions to these milestones. We may find some consolation in knowing that someone has survived such milestones before us and either that they have suffered as we are suffering – although you probably do not need a quotations book to encounter the sentiment that the second fifty years of life will never be as good as the first, you will find that sentiment expressed here – or that there are alternative ways to view the event and happy ways to celebrate it. Jimmy Buffett, for example, urges his fellow baby boomers to “reward” themselves instead of handling the “ball of snakes” of “mortality and accountability” that confronts them during their reflections on turning fifty.

In addition to these milestones without ritual, there are once-in-a-lifetime occasions that are surrounded by ceremony. Baptism, first communion, bar and bat mitzvah, graduation, and marriage all involve elaborate rituals that dictate how, as spectators and players, we speak about and participate in these events. But all of these events have also a private component, which may be intense. The ceremonies themselves may even dilute the meaning and the sense of importance that should make them turning points in our emotional lives. You will find here from Charles Lamb and John Keble some loving descriptions of the rite of baptism, while Charles Dickens reminds us that most babies are unimpressed. You will find practical information from Gertrude Stein on choosing appropriate godparents, and from Thomas Hood on the importance of choosing an auspicious name. Whether you are trying to educate yourself about a public ritual or to find insight into a particular milestone you happen to be passing, *Quotations for All Occasions* can provide guidance.

Every Year

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Birthday

- 1 No length of time can make you
quit
Honour and virtue, sense and wit,
Thus you may still be young to me,
While I can better *hear* than *see* ;
Oh, ne'er may fortune show her
spite,
To make me *deaf*, and mend my
sight.

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745), Anglo-Irish author. “Stella’s Birthday (1725).”

- 2 Through a dull tract of woe, of
dread,
The toiling year has pass’d and fled:
And, lo! in sad and pensive strain,
I sing my birth-day date again.

GEORGE CRABBE (1754–1832), English poet. “My Birth-Day.”

- 3 In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper birth-day hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand any thing in it beyond cake and orange.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. “New Year’s Eve,” *London Magazine* (1821) and *Essays of Elia* (1823).

- 4 Good-morrow to the golden Morning!
Good-morrow to the world’s
delight!
I’ve come to bless thy life’s beginning,
That hath made my own so
bright!

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. “Birthday Verses.”

- 5 What different dooms our birth-days bring!

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. “Her Birth,” *Miss Kilmansegg and Her Precious Leg*.

- 6 So mayst thou live, dear! many
years,
In all the bliss that life endears,
Not without smiles, nor yet from
tears
Too strictly kept:
When first thy infant littleness
I folded in my fond caress,
The greatest proof of happiness
Was this—I wept.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. “To My Daughter, On Her Birthday.”

- 7 Maiden, when such a soul as thine
is born,
The morning-stars their ancient
music make.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. Sonnet 7: “To M.W., On Her Birthday.”

- 8 There are three hundred and sixty-four days when you get un-birthday presents— . . . And only *one* for birthday presents, you know.

LEWIS CARROLL (CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON) (1832–1898), English author and mathematician. *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (chapter 6, “Humpty-Dumpty”) (1871).

- 9 To get back my youth I would do
anything in the world, except take
exercise, get up early, or be respectable.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 19) (1891).

- 10 At another year
I would not boggle
Except that when I jog
I joggle.

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet.
“Birthday on the Beach.”

- 11 Because time itself is like a spiral,
something special happens on your
birthday each year: The same en-
ergy that God invested in you at
birth is present once again.

MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON
(1902–1994), U.S. rabbi. *Toward a Meaning-
ful Life: The Wisdom of the Rebbe* (chapter 2,
“Birth: The Mission Begins”) (1995).

- 12 Happy Birthday, Johnny,
Live beyond your income,
Travel for enjoyment,
Follow your own nose.

W. H. AUDEN (1907–1973), Anglo-
American poet. “Many Happy Returns.”

- 13 I have always been intrigued at
what went on in the world on my
birthdays long before I was born.

ALEC GUINNESS (b. 1914), English actor.
*My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring
Actor* (“Monday, 24 April 1995”) (1996).

- 14 I suppose it’s possible that the
Sundance Kid didn’t like to make
much of his birthdays—they may
have struck him as just another re-
minder that his draw was getting
slower by the year—but what if he
truly liked a major celebration?
What if he looked forward every
year to marking the day of his birth
with what they used to call in the
West “a real wingding, with pink
balloons and a few survivors”? I
think Butch Cassidy would have ar-
ranged it.

CALVIN TRILLIN (b. 1935), U.S. author.
Travels with Alice (chapter 15, “Special Occa-
sion”) (1989).

Describing plans for his wife’s fiftieth birthday,
Trillin notes that she loves “major celebra-
tions” and remarks that the relation between

Butch and Sundance is the new model for the
married couple.

- 15 I used to anticipate my childhood
birthday parties as if each were an
annual coronation. Like most kids,
I loved sitting at the head of the ta-
ble with a crown on my head. In
recent years, however, birthdays
have been more like medical check-
ups—no fun at all but necessary if
one intends to stay alive from year
to year.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939),
U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An
Intimate Journey* (part I, “Facing Age”; chapter
3, “Happy Birthday to Me”) (1996).

Pogrebin in this book describes the experience
of turning fifty. She examines “croning” as a
female “coming of age ceremony” that cele-
brates the “positive attributes of age—wisdom,
knowledge, experience, caring.” She describes
a “ceremony” for obtaining an “escort” from
the “sweet, verdant land” of youth to the
“place of uncertainty and fear.”

New Year

- 1 The weary yeare his race now
hauing run,
The new begins his compast course
anew;
with shew of morning mylde he
hath begun,
betokening peace and plenty to en-
sew.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552?–1599), En-
glish poet and courtier. *Amoretti*, sonnet 62
(1595).

- 2 The circling months begin this day,
To run their yearly ring,
And long-breath’d time which ne’er
will stay,
Refits his wings, and shoots away,
It round again to bring.

MATTHEW PRIOR (1664–1721), English
poet. “The New Year’s Gift to Phyllis.”

- 3 The new-year is the season in which custom seems more particularly to authorise civil and harmless lies, under the name of compliments. People reciprocally profess wishes, which they seldom form; and concern which they seldom feel.

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, **FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD** (1694–1773), English statesman and author. Letter, 26 December 1749 OS, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. John Bradshaw, vol. 1 (1929).

- 4 As the vulgar . . . are always very careful to end the old year well, so they are no less solicitous of making a good beginning of the new one. The old one is ended with a hearty computation. The new one is opened with the custom of sending presents, which are termed New Year's Gifts, to friends and acquaintance.

JOHN BRAND (1744–1806), English antiquarian. "New Year's Day," *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain: Chiefly Illustrating the Origin of Our Vulgar and Provincial Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstition* (vol. 1) (1848–49).

- 5 No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "New Year's Eve," *London Magazine* (January 1821) and *Essays of Elia* (1823).

- 6 Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the
snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. In *Memoriam A.H.H.* 106 (1850).

- 7 Now the New Year reviving old Desires
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires.

EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809–1883), English author and translator. *The Rubāiyāt of Omar Khayyām* (section 4) (1859).

- 8 Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. "A Completed Year," *Plymouth Pulpit: Sermons. October 1882–April 1883* (1887).

- 9 Ring out the shame and sorrow
And the misery and sin,
That the dawning of the morrow
May in peace be ushered in.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. "Song of the New Year."

- 10 What can be said in New Year
rhymes,
That's not been said a thousand
times?

The new years come, the old years
go,
We know we dream, we dream we
know.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850–1919), U.S. poet. "The Year."

- 11 New Year's Day;
Nothing good or bad,—
Just human beings.

SHIKI (1869–1902), Japanese poet. In R. H. Blyth, trans., *Haiku*, 4 vols. (1949).

Blyth notes: "On New Year's Day, all things are once more in their original state of harmony. There is no distinction between higher and lower, respectable and criminal, men and animals. All are united in their ceaseless activity of their Buddha nature, without any distinction whatever, all happy today and happy ever after."

- 12 Welcome, New Year, but be more kind

Than thy dead father left behind;
If I may kiss no mouth that's red,
Give me the open mouth instead
Of a black bottle of old wine
To gurgle in its neck and mine.

W. H. DAVIES (1871–1940), Welsh author. "To the New Year."

- 13 The year's doors open
like those of language,
toward the unknown.

ELIZABETH BISHOP (1911–1979), U.S. poet. "January First."

- 14 On New Year's Day when all the
Christmas decorations were taken
down, we felt sad and let down; to
us our house looked drab and naked,
and although the visiting back
and forth would continue until
winter came to an end, Christmas
was over.

EDNA LEWIS (b. 1916), U.S. chef and author of cookbooks. *The Taste of Country Cooking* (1976).

- 15 I never liked New Year's Day anyway;
it has too often felt like a day
of foreboding.

ALEC GUINNESS (b. 1914), English actor. *My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring Actor* ("Sunday, 1 January 1995") (1996).

- 16 I do think New Year's resolutions
can't technically be expected to begin
on New Year's Day, don't you?

Since, because it's an extension of New Year's Eve, smokers are already on a smoking roll and cannot be expected to stop abruptly on the stroke of midnight with so much nicotine in the system. Also dieting on New Year's Day isn't a good idea as you can't eat rationally but really need to be free to consume whatever is necessary, moment by moment, in order to ease your hangover. I think it would be much more sensible if resolutions began generally on January the second.

HELEN FIELDING (b. 1958), English author. *Bridget Jones's Diary* ("Sunday 1 January") (1998).

Martin Luther King Day

- 1 Now listen, white folks!
In line with Reverend King down in
Montgomery—
Also because the Bible says I
must—
I'm gonna love you—yes, *I will!* or
BUST!

LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–1967), U.S. poet. "Brotherly Love: A Little Letter to the White Citizens of the South."

- 2 The assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the occasion for one of those massive outpourings of hypocrisy characteristic of the human race. He stood in that line of saints which goes back from Gandhi to Jesus; his violent end, like theirs, reflects the hostility of mankind to those who annoy it by trying hard to pull it one more painful step further up the ladder from ape to angel. . . . Nothing could be more deceptive than the nationwide mourning. Beneath the

surface nothing has changed, except perhaps for the worst.

I. F. STONE (1907–1989), U.S. journalist and author. “The Fire Has Only Just Begun,” in *I. F. Stone Bi-Weekly* (15 April 1968) and *Polemics and Prophecies 1967–1970* (1989).

- 3 Where in America today do we hear a voice like the voice of the prophets of Israel? Martin Luther King is a sign that God has not forsaken the United States of America. His presence is the hope of America.

ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL (1907–1972), U.S. (Polish-born) rabbi and theologian. Introduction of Dr. Martin Luther King at the 68th Annual Convention of the Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative), 25 March 1968, in *Two Jews, Three Opinions: A Collection of Twentieth-Century American Jewish Quotations*, ed. Sandee Brawarsky and Deborah Mark (1998).

King was assassinated ten days later.

- 4 Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to justice for his fellow human beings, and he died because of that effort.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY (1925–1968), U.S. attorney general and senator. In *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

Speech to an African-American audience in Indianapolis two months before Robert Kennedy himself was assassinated in June 1968.

- 5 Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. (1929–1968), U.S. clergyman and civil-rights leader. “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (16 April 1963).

- 6 Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice; say that I was a drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness. And

all of the other shallow things will not matter.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. (1929–1968), U.S. clergyman and civil-rights leader. 1968.

King here was responding to a question about what he would like to have included in his eulogy.

- 7 We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. (1929–1968), U.S. clergyman and civil-rights leader. “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (16 April 1963).

- 8 There are no more Martins and never will be. . . . There is no black knight in black armor on a black horse waving a black magic wand going to come riding through the ghetto making every Black person healthy, wealthy and wise. So we are going to have to organize and go back to direct action. We have to wage aggressive peace.

JOSEPH LOWERY (b. 1921), U.S. clergyman. Reported in *Ebony*, November 1979.

Lowery is cofounder, and served as president, of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

- 9 Before deciding to back the bill [to create a national holiday], Reagan expressed concern about its cost. Federal offices close on national holidays, as do banks and many other businesses. [Senator Jesse] Helms [of North Carolina] claimed the resulting annual loss could be

12 billion dollars. The Congressional Budget Office put the figure at 18 million.

To those worried about the expense, said Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.), “I suggest they hurry back to their pocket calculators and estimate the cost of 300 years of slavery, followed by a century or more of economic, political and social exclusion and discrimination.”

Reported in *U. S. News and World Report* (17 October 1983).

- 10 The trouble with Martin Luther King, Jr., is that he believed more in America and in America’s God than America did. He actually believed that the nation wished to be a nation under God, that it wished to live up to the moral ambition of its founding documents, that it wished to find a way to do right and to be right.

PETER J. GOMES (b. 1942), U.S. clergyman and theologian. *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Heart and Mind* (chapter 3, “The Bible in America”) (1996).

- 11 I proposed legislation in 1994 making the Martin Luther King holiday a day of community service and action rather than just a day off from work. Dr. King was more than just a teacher or a preacher. He was a man of action, and I suggested that we could honor his memory best by making this a duty of sharing and caring and acting on the principles of community and connection.

JOHN LEWIS (b. 1940), U.S. civil-rights leader and congressman. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (chapter 21, “Onward”) (1998).

- 12 Martin Luther King’s Dream was the American Dream. His quest is

our quest: the ceaseless striving to live out our true creed. Our history has been built upon such dreams and labors. And by our dreams and labors we will redeem the promise of America in the twenty-first century.

BILL CLINTON (b. 1946), U.S. president. Inauguration speech, 20 January 1997.

- 13 I just never understood
How a man who died for good
Could not have a day that would
Be set aside for his recognition.

STEVIE WONDER (BORN STEVELUND JUDKINS) (b. 1950), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Happy Birthday.”

Wonder, instrumental in the creation of Martin Luther King Day, wrote this song before the holiday was established.

Chinese New Year

- 1 No-one, after the twelfth hour has struck, can claim a debt, or even make the slightest allusion to it. You now only hear the words of peace and good-will; everybody fraternizes with everybody. Those who were just before on the point of twisting their neighbor’s neck, now twine their friendly arms about it.

E. R. HUC (1813–1860), French missionary. *Travels in Tartary, Thibet and China, 1844–1846*, trans. William Hazlitt and ed. Paul Pelliot, vol. 2. (1928).

Huc describes the misery and tension as the year winds down and people struggle to clear their accounts. He then notes the abrupt change brought about by the New Year custom of forgiveness.

- 2 The flower-boats, as they are commonly called, are particularly gay at new-year time with flowers of all

hues, and gaudy flags streaming from each mast and stern.

ROBERT FORTUNE (1813–1880), Scottish horticulturist. *Three Years' Wandering in the Northern Provinces of China* (1847).

- 3 And the crackers—the firecrackers—here is a perfect apotheosis of noise. A perfect carnival of uproar and deafening sound is produced, especially at New Year's time, by their almost continuous discharge, for at that joyous season a perfect pandemonium reigns rampant.

J. DYER BALL (1847–1919), British civil servant in Hong Kong. *Things Chinese: Being Notes on Various Subjects Connected with China* (1893).

Ball takes a rather condescending view of the Chinese as a supremely “noisy people” and then uses the firecrackers as an example.

- 4 She spoke of the New Year's gifts she had lately sent us, explaining that the flowers were symbolical of happiness and long life, that the tea had medicinal virtues, and that the bon-bons were a Chinese dainty, of which she herself was very fond.

LADY SUSAN TOWNLEY (1868–?), English author. *My Chinese Note Book* (1904).

The author describes a Chinese New Year interview between the Empress Dowager and the “Ladies of the Corps Diplomatique.”

- 5 At New Year time, solitary dwellers in remote districts leave their homes and seek some follow-creatures with whom to rejoice, and eat boiled pork; while village dwellers often flock into towns on account of the more numerous excitements there available.

J. R. CHITTY. *Things Seen in China* (1918).

- 6 Anyone who is able to do so returns about this time to his home.

New year is the feast of the family. The parents and the children reunite.

RICHARD WILHELM (1873–1930), author. *The Soul of China* (1928).

- 7 Even the sky seems to proclaim the arrival of the New Year, as the old calendar scrolls toward the last page, to say nothing of the villages and towns lying expectantly underneath. Pallid clouds loom overhead, intermittently brightened by flashes of firecrackers set off to bid farewell to the Hearth God.

LU XUN (1881–1936), Chinese author. “The New Year Sacrifice,” translated by and quoted in Carol Stepanchuk and Charles Wong, *Mooncakes and Hungry Ghosts: Festivals of China* (1991).

- 8 [The firecrackers] were ricocheting in every direction, and with many subtle modulations of sound, so that, had I been the possessor of a properly trained ear, I should, in all probability, have been able to differentiate between the bang and hiss of the numerous varieties . . . and to distinguish Small Boxes, Flower Pots, Lanterns of Heaven and Earth, Fire and Smoke Poles, Silver Flowers, Peonies Strung on a Thread, Lotus Sprinkled with Water, Golden Plates, Falling Moons, Grape Arbours, Flags of Fire, Double-Kicking Feet, Ten Explosions Flying to Heaven, Five Devils Noisily Splitting Apart, Eight-Cornered Rockets, and Bombs for Attacking the City of Hsiang Yang, one from another.

OSBERT SITWELL (1892–1969), English author. *Escape with Me!: An Oriental Sketch-Book* (1939).

- 9 I am sorry to say that the New Year customs are gradually dying out. I

cannot but regret it. It may be better to be practical rather than formal, but how few really joyful times one has in one's life! Looking back on the New Year Festivals of my childhood I find them very precious. What a business they were! But what pleasure and good fellowship they gave!

CHIANG YEE (1903–1977), Chinese author, of a series called the *Silent Traveller* books. *A Chinese Childhood* (1952).

- 10 The Chinese New Year, even in communities so thoroughly Americanized as our Chinatowns, is a big event. . . . This is more than just a show for the visitors. New Year's day is the last and strongest link that unites the Chinese-American spiritually with his old home in Kwangtung province (for it is from this one province that the vast majority of Chinese Americans come).

WOLFRAM EBERHARD (1909–1989), German sociologist and folklorist. *Chinese Festivals* (1952).

- 11 Indeed, it is difficult for us Westerners to grasp the full significance of the Chinese New Year. Our Christmas, our Easter, and whatever national holiday we celebrate, all taken together really mean less to us than *the* great festival of their calendar does to the hardworking Chinese. Socially, it signifies re-union. Morally, it represents the idea of resurrection, the re-birth of the year. . . . Materially, it stands for rejuvenation both in the home and in the market place. Personally and commercially, men turn over a new leaf, strive to pay off old debts in money and loyalty, and start with a clean sheet on which they hope to

write better success and greater happiness.

JULIET BREDON and **IGOR MIRRO-PHANOW**. *The Moon Year: A Record of Chinese Customs and Festivals* (1927).

- 12 He is not Santa Claus. More like a spy—FBI agent, CIA, Mafia, worse than IRA, that kind of person! And he does not give *you* gifts, you must give *him* things. All year long you have to show him respect—give him tea and oranges. When Chinese New Year's time comes, you must give him even better things—maybe whiskey to drink, cigarettes to smoke, candy to eat, that kind of thing. You are hoping all the time that his tongue will be sweet, his head a little drunk, so when he has his meeting with the big boss, maybe he reports good things about you. This family has been good, you hope he says. Please give them good luck next year.

AMY TAN (b. 1952), U.S. author. *The Kitchen God's Wife* (1991).

In this passage a Chinese mother explains to her daughter and son-in-law the need to appease the Kitchen God, an integral figure in many Chinese New Year celebrations, and explains some methods of appeasement.

- 13 We weren't to sweep or empty the trash on New Year's, since we might inadvertently throw out our luck. We weren't to cry, because it would bring a sad year. We weren't to wash our luck away by washing our hair. For us children, New Year's meant our parents were not supposed to yell at us lest discord follow throughout the year.

ELLEN BLONDER (b. 1950) and **ANNA-BEL LOW**, authors. *Every Grain of Rice: A Taste of Our Chinese Childhood in America* (1998).

- 14 Chinese New Year is like a combination of Thanksgiving and Easter that celebrates the sacredness of the family and presents a time of renewal.

GRACE YOUNG, U.S. author of cookbooks. *Wisdom of the Chinese Kitchen: Classic Family Recipes* (1995).

Valentine's Day

- 1 For this was on seynt Valentynes day,
Whan every foul cometh there to chese his make,
Of every kynde that men thynke may,
And that so huge a noyse gan they make
That erthe and eyr and tre and every lake
So ful was, that unethe was there space
For me to stonde, so ful was al the place.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (c. 1340–1400), English poet. *The Parlement of Foules*.

- 2 . . . since the solemn time allows
To choose the object of our vows,
Boldly I dare profess my flame,
Proud to be yours by any name.

CHARLES, DUKE OF ORLEANS (1391–1465), French poet and soldier. 1415. In *The Valentine and Its Origins* (1969).

After the Battle of Agincourt (1415), in which he commanded troops, Charles was imprisoned in the Tower of London, from which he sent this poem to his wife Dorinda. The date of the poem is circa 1415. For 25 years Charles lived in England, where he composed courtly poetry in both French and English.

- 3 Win her with gifts, if she respect not words.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* 1.88.

The speaker does not specifically celebrate Valentine's Day, but his advice applies.

- 4 Saint Valentine is past;
Begin these woodbirds but to couple now?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 4.1.139–40.

Birds were supposed to have chosen their mates on St. Valentine's day.

- 5 Good morrow! 'tis Saint Valentine's Day
All in the morning betime.
And I a maid at your window
To be your Valentine.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Hamlet* 4.5.48–55.

The first part of a song sung by Ophelia during her final descent into madness.

- 6 Oft have I heard both Youths and Virgins say,
Birds chuse their Mates, and couple too, this day:
But by their flight I never can divine
When I shall couple with my Valentine.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. "To his Valentine, on S. Valentines Day."

- 7 Yestreen at the valentines' dealing,
My heart to my mou gied a sten,
For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written "Tam Glen!"

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796), Scottish poet. "Tam Glen."

Mou is *mouth*. *Sten* is *leap*. Burns describes a custom whereby young people fill one bag with men's names and another with women's. If one draws the same name three times, one has named his or her future mate—here, Tam Glen.

8 Love darts

Cleave hearts
Through mail shirts.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832), Scottish novelist and poet. *The Fair Maid of Perth, or Saint Valentine's Day* (chapter 3).

An armourer named Henry Smith tries to win the favor of Catharine Glover, the Fair Maid of Perth, by inscribing this message on a "small purse made of links of the finest work in steel." The purse holds a "small ruby cut into the form of a heart, transfix'd with a golden arrow." The armourer is "much satisfied with his composition, because it seemed to imply that his skill could defend all hearts saving his own."

9 Sure, of all days that ever were dated,

Valentine's Day is the fullest of news;

Then ev'ry lass expects to be mated
And Cupid goes round collecting his dues!

And levies a door-rate, like parish or poor-rate,

By getting the Postman to stand in his shoes.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. "Valentine's Day."

10 This is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and inter-cross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forespent two-penny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "Valentine's Day," *The Examiner* (14–15 February 1819) and *Essays of Elia* (1823).

11 Good morrow to my Valentine, sings poor Ophelia; and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends,

but are content to rank themselves humble diocesan of old Bishop Valentine, and his true church.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "Valentine's Day," *The Examiner* (14–15 February 1819) and *Essays of Elia* (1823).

12 On the 14th of February the windows fill with pictures for the most part odious, and meant for some nondescript class of males and females, their allusions having reference to Saint Valentine's Day, the legendary pairing time of the birds. The festival is a sad mockery, for there are no spring birds here to pair, but it reminds us that there is a good time coming.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. "The Seasons," *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881* (1891).

13 Never sign a valentine with your own name.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *The Pickwick Papers* (chapter 33, "Mr. Weller the Elder Delivers Some Critical Sentiments Respecting Literary Composition; and, Assisted by His Son Samuel, Pays a Small Installment of Retaliation to the Account of the Reverend Gentleman with the Red Nose") (1837).

Sam Weller struggles through the composition of a valentine for his sweetheart Mary, as his father warns him against becoming too poetical. He ends up signing with a bit of rhyme: "Your love-sick / Pickwick."

14 More than when first I singled thee,
This only prayer is mine,—
That, in the years I yet shall see,
As, darling, in the past, thou'lt
be
My happy Valentine.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. "A Valentine."

- 15 With kindly lips of welcome, and
with pleased
Propitious eyes benign,
Accept a kiss of homage from your
least
Last Valentine.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894),
English poet. "Valentine to My Mother 1876."

- 16 Since the receipt of the missive in
the morning, Boldwood had felt the
symmetry of his existence to be
slowly getting distorted in the di-
rection of an ideal passion.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English
author. *Far from the Madding Crowd* (chapter
14, "The Effect of the Letter—Sunrise") (1874).

Farmer Boldwood reacts passionately to a val-
entine sent as a joke (and sealed with the
words "Marry Me") by the impulsive Bath-
sheba.

- 17 Somebody's sent a funny little val-
entine to me.
It's a bunch of baby-roses in a vase
of filigree,
And hovering above them—just as
cute as he can be—
Is a fairy cupid tangled in a scarf of
poetry.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–
1916), U.S. poet. "Her Valentine."

- 18 Very fine is my valentine.
Very fine and very mine.

GERTRUDE STEIN (1874–1946), U.S.
author. "A Very Valentine," *A Valentine to
Sherwood Anderson*.

Anderson was an American writer (1876–
1941) and one of the expatriate authors among
Stein's circle in Paris.

- 19 Any valentine that is *written*
Is as the *vendange* to the *vine*.

MARIANNE MOORE (1887–1972), U.S.
poet. "Saint Valentine."

"Vendange" refers to the grape harvest.

- 20 I love you more than a wasp can
sting,
And more than the subway jerks,
I love you as much as a beggar
needs a crutch,
And more than a hangnail irks.

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet.
"To My Valentine."

- 21 Love with his gilded bow and crys-
tal arrows
Has slain us all. . . .

ELIZABETH BISHOP (1911–1979), U.S.
poet. "Three Valentines."

- 22 Poor old Valentine, a third century
priest who was clubbed and be-
headed on February 14th, in the
year 270, would certainly be sur-
prised to find himself a lovers'
saint.

HOWARD V. HARPER (b. 1904), U.S.
author and Episcopal priest. *Days and Customs
of All Faiths* (1957).

- 23 I bought sultry lingerie but I'm too
embarrassed to wear it. I bought a
suggestive card, but I'm too embar-
rassed to give it. I thought of rent-
ing a sexy movie, but I'm too em-
barrassed to go pick one out and
even if I did, I'd be too embar-
rassed to admit I had it. I'm begin-
ning to understand why red is the
color of Valentine's Day.

CATHY GUISEWHITE (b. 1950), U.S.
cartoonist. "Cathy" comic strip, quoted in Jack
Santino, *New Old-Fashioned Ways: Holidays
and Popular Culture* (1996).

- 24 My time and my eternity
My cigarette, my nicotine
My coffee, tea, and whole cuisine
My loaf of bread, my jug of wine
All this and more sweet Valentine!

JOYCE MAYNARD (b. 1953), U.S. author. *At Home in the World: A Memoir* (1998).

Maynard includes a valentine written by her father to her mother.

- 25 Valentine's Day tomorrow. Why? Why? Why is entire world geared to make people not involved in romance feel stupid when everyone knows romance does not work any-way.

HELEN FIELDING (b. 1958), English author. *Bridget Jones's Diary* ("Monday 13 February") (1998).

February 29

- 1 Ther's allus been leap years, but I doubt if any o' us ever knowed a case where any girl ever actually took advantage o' th' privilege an' asked any feller point blank t' marry her. Ther's allus been a lot o' hintin' an' beatin' around th' bush an' hypnotizin' an' vampin', but I don't believe any girl ever blurted out a straight proposal. But now that we've been emancipated, I look fer a lot o' radical changes.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. Speech by Miss Mame Moon to the local (all-women) Shakespeare Club, in *The Best of Kin Hubbard: Abe Martin's Sayings and Wiscracks, Abe's Neighbors, His Almanack, Comic Drawings*, ed. David S. Hawes (1984).

Miss Mame Moon is one of many small-town characters Hubbard created to espouse this kind of rural "wisdom."

- 2 Sweet February Twenty Nine!—
This is our grace-year, as I live!
Quick, now! this foolish heart of mine:
Seize thy prerogative!

WALTER DE LA MARE (1873–1956), English poet. "February 29."

- 3 In Scotland, it was required that a woman who was thinking of taking advantage of the leap year privilege must let her intentions be known by wearing a scarlet flannel petticoat. The edge of the petticoat must be clearly visible in order to give the wary male a sporting chance to get out of the way. This is obviously a man-made rule.

HOWARD V. HARPER (b. 1904), U.S. author and Episcopal priest. *Days and Customs of All Faiths* (1957).

Harper includes this comment after explaining that the origin of the "women's special privilege of doing the proposing in leap years" goes back to an exchange between St. Bridget and St. Patrick. St. Bridget noted that women too often remained single because they could not propose to men. They negotiated the time when women would be allowed to make a request, and St. Bridget immediately proposed to St. Patrick. He had taken a vow of celibacy, so he turned her down. He did, however, offer her a kiss and a silk gown to compensate.

- 4 Well, it has happened again. The Earth has circled four times around the sun, astronomers have designated this a leap year and anxious bachelors won't answer their telephones until midnight.

DAVID O'REILLY, U.S. journalist. *Philadelphia Inquirer* (29 February 1984).

St. Patrick's Day

- 1 The Shamrock is said to be worn by the Irish upon the anniversary of this Saint, for the following reason. When the Saint preached the Gospel to the Pagan Irish, he illustrated the doctrine of the Trinity by showing them a trefoil, or three-leave grass with one stalk, which operating to their conviction, the Shamrock, which is a bundle of this

grass, was ever afterwards worn
upon this Saint's anniversary, to
commemorate the event.

JOHN BRAND (1744–1806), English anti-
quarian. "St. Patrick's Day," *Observations on
the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain: The
Origin of Our Vulgar and Provincial Customs,
Ceremonies, and Superstitions* (vol. 1) (1848–
49).

- 2 St. Patrick's day no more we'll keep
his color can't be seen,
For there's a bloody law agin'
the wearin' of the green.

ANONYMOUS, "Wearin' of the Green."

This poem appears in *The Fireside Book of Fa-
vorite American Songs* (1952), edited by Mar-
garet Bradford Boni. She notes: "No one can
place the authorship of this Irish song of 1798.
It is an inspired street ballad born of the sor-
row and the bitterness of the people—an elo-
quent arraignment of England's Irish policy of
the time."

- 3 No wonder that those Irish lads
Should be so gay and frisky,
For sure St. Pat he taught them
that,
As well as making whiskey.

.
So success attend St. Patrick's fist,

For he's a saint so clever;
O, he gave the snakes and toads a
twist
And bothered them forever!

HENRY BENNETT, Irish author and per-
former. In *Famous Single and Fugitive Poems*,
ed. Rossiter Johnson (1890).

According to Rossiter Johnson, this song,
which some regard simply as a traditional bal-
lad, was written by Bennett and a man from
the county of Cork "who sang it in alternate
lines at a masquerade in that city in the winter
of 1814–1815."

- 4 But wherefore lament o'er those
glories departed?

Her star will yet shine with as vivid
a ray!
For ne'er had she children more
brave or true-hearted
Than those she sees on St. Patrick's
Day.

M. J. BARRY (D. 1889), Irish poet. In *The
Well-Known Songs of Ireland* (n.d.).

Barry is said to have composed these words to
be sung to an old tune. "She" is Ireland.

- 5 The Irish people would be willing
to give up a good many things be-
fore they would give up their cele-
bration of St. Patrick's Day.

J. WALKER MCSADDEN (1874–1960),
U.S. author and editor. *The Book of Holidays*
(1917).

- 6 Craving the good saint's forgive-
ness, I ask you to rise and drink, in
uncharitable ice water, to the im-
mortal memory of Saint Patrick.

JOSEPH B. ROGERS, U.S. jurist. Speech on
St. Patrick's day, 17 March 1920, before the
Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Quoted in Jack
Santino, *All Around the Year: Holidays and
Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 3,
"Winter into Spring") (1994).

Rogers, president of the Friendly Sons of St.
Patrick, made his comments during the Prohi-
bition era (1919–33), when federal law pre-
vented the manufacture and distribution of al-
coholic beverages.

- 7 It's a great day for the Shamrock
for the flags in full array.
And as we go a-swinging,
ev'ry Irish heart is singing:
It's a great, great day.

ROGER EDENS (1905–1970), U.S. com-
poser. "It's a Great Day for the Irish," from the
musical *Little Nellie Kelly* (1940).

- 8 The observance of St. Patrick's Day
is almost as old in America as the

Irish themselves. And some say they arrived in the sixth century.

JOHN F. KENNEDY (1917–1963), U.S. president.

This remark was attributed to Kennedy by President Bill Clinton in a speech at a St. Patrick's Day reception, 17 March 1995.

- 9 Patrick found a way of swimming down to the depths of the Irish psyche and warming and transforming Irish imagination—making it more humane and more noble while keeping it Irish.

THOMAS CAHILL (b. 1940), U.S. author and historian. *How the Irish Saved Civilization* (1995).

- 10 Outside Ireland there is a compulsion to “show the flag” and be seen to be celebrating on Saint Patrick's Day which does not exist at home. At home, ironically, it still feels like a new Bank Holiday, held at an awkward time of year, on which, unless you intend to get well and truly plastered, or stay slumped in front of the television absorbing the relentlessly Irish flavour which dominates the day's programming, it is difficult to think of anything much to do.

ALANNAH HOPKIN (b. 1949), Irish journalist and author. *The Living Legend of St. Patrick* (1989).

Hopkins notes that the Irish in America take the celebration of the holiday much more seriously than do the Irish themselves, who celebrate quietly unless they want to put on a show for tourists.

- 11 The St. Patrick's Day parade, once a defiant show of strength against Protestant power, gradually declined into a pointless annual march of aging suburbanites and

drunken collegians staggering along in funny hats.

JOHN LEO, U.S. journalist and commentator. “Of Famine and Green Beer,” *U.S. News and World Report* (24 March 1997).

Leo comments on attempts to reconnect Irish celebrations with the truth of Irish history.

April Fool's Day

- 1 The First of April, some do say,
Is set apart for All Fools' Day,
But why the people call it so,
Nor I nor they themselves do know.

ANONYMOUS, *Poor Robin's Almanac*, quoted in A. R. Wright, *British Calendar Customs: England*, vol. 2 (1938).

- 2 The oldest tradition affirms that such an infatuation attends the first day of April as no foresight can escape, no vigilance can defeat. Deceit is successful on that day out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Grave citizens have been bit upon it: usurers have lent their money on bad security: experienced matrons have married very disappointed young fellows: mathematicians have missed the longitude: alchemists the philosopher's stone: and politicians preferment on that day. What confusion will not follow if the great body of the nation are disappointed of their peculiar holiday! This country was formerly disturbed with very fatal quarrels about the celebration of Easter. . . . If our clergy come to be divided about Folly's anniversary, we may well expect all the mischiefs attendant on religious wars.

JOHN BRAND (1744–1806), English antiquarian. “All Fools' Day,” *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain* (1848–49).

Brand here quotes a "late ingenious writer in the World (No. 10)," whom he believes to be the "late Earl of Oxford"

- 3 *April 1.* This is the day upon which we are reminded of what we are on the other three hundred and sixty-four.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *Pudd'nhead Wilson* ("Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar" at chapter 21) (1894).

- 4 **APRIL FOOL, n.** The March fool with another month added to his folly.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 5 The origin of this custom has been much disputed, and many ludicrous solutions have been suggested, e. g. that it is a farcical commemoration of Christ being sent from Annas to Caiaphas, from Caiaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, from Herod back again to Pilate, the crucifixion having taken place about the 1st of April.

"April Fool's Day," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 1, 11th ed.

- 6 Among the numerous means employed in celebrating the custom, the following may be mentioned: the loose shoe lace; the something out of your pocket; the empty egg-shell inverted in an egg-cup; the envelope enclosing a blank sheet; the pencil with a rubber point; the note for delivery to a false address; the non-existent bus-terminus; . . . the pigeon's milk; the memory powder.

A. R. WRIGHT (1862–1932), *British Calendar Customs: England*, vol. 2 (1938).

- 7 What pleasanter task for All Fools' Day than going over all the things that you have done before

And don't want to do again
never no more, never no more,
never no more?

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet. "Raven, Don't Stay Away from My Door—A Chant for April First."

- 8 A writer in the *London Public Advertiser* for March 13, 1769, advanced the idea that Noah started the whole thing. It was, said this writer, on the first day of the Jewish month that corresponds to April that Noah mistakenly sent out the dove from the ark to find out if the waters had gone down. . . . When the dove returned without having found any dry land, Noah thereupon became the first "April Fool."

HOWARD V. HARPER (b. 1904), U.S. author and Episcopal priest. *Days and Customs of All Faiths* (1957).

- 9 Look out! Behind you there's a rat.
He's hiding now behind the stool.
He's going to jump up on your hat.
Look out! Watch out! Oh dear,
what's THAT!
It's only you, you April fool!

MARNIE POMEROY (b. 1932), U.S. author. "April Fools' Day."

- 10 Generally, . . . April Fools' Day is a day when we can lie to our friends and cause them great anxiety, as long as we justify our actions by exclaiming "April fool!"

JACK SANTINO (b. 1947), U.S. folklorist and sociologist. *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 3, "Winter into Spring: Celebrating Rebirth and Renewal") (1994).

- 11 As occasion rife with artifice and subterfuge, April Fools' Day furnishes an appropriate trope for modern celebrations as tricks of trade.

LEIGH ERIC SCHMIDT (b. 1961), U.S. historian. *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (Epilogue, "April Fools? Trade, Trickery, and Modern Celebration"; chapter titled "Mother's Day Bouquet") (1995).

Schmidt explains: "Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, suspicion and disbelief increasingly shadowed modern rituals: What, critics asked, were 'cunning' stationers and booksellers putting over on people with all those fancy billets-doux for St. Valentine's Day? What were Christmas and Easter but occasions for merchants to sell things, to entice the credulous and to enrich themselves? What were Mother's Day and Father's Day but the most blatant humbug, the respective fantasies of florists and menswear retailers?"

Easter

- 1 Most glorious Lord of lyfe, that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
And having harrowed hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win:
This joyous day, deare Lord, with joy begin.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552?–1599), English poet and courtier. *Amoretti*, sonnet 68 (1595).

- 2 Rise, heart; Thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayst rise;
That, as His death calcinèd thee to dust,
His life make thee gold, and, much more, just.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "Easter."

- 3 Death, and darkness get you packing,
Nothing now to man is lacking,
All your triumphs now are ended,
And what Adam marred, is mended.

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622–1695), Welsh-born English poet. "Easter-Hymn."

- 4 See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

ISAAC WATTS (1674–1748), English clergyman and hymn writer. "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

- 5 Enthronèd in thy sovereign sphere
Thou shedd'st thy light on all the year:
Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter Day in every week:

And week-days, following in their train,
The fulness of thy blessing gain,
Till all, both resting and employ,
Be one Lord's day of holy joy.

JOHN KEBLE (1792–1866), English clergyman and poet. "Easter Day," *The Christian Year* (1827).

- 6 Though dead, not dead;
Not gone, though fled;
Not lost, not vanished.
In the great gospel and true creed,
He is yet risen indeed;
Christ is yet risen.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819–1861),
British poet. “Easter Day II.”

- 7 Spring bursts to-day,
For Christ is risen and all the
earth’s at play.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894),
English poet. “An Easter Carol.”

- 8 . . . how still the Landscape stands!
How nonchalant the Hedge!
As if the “Resurrection”
Were nothing very strange!

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S.
poet. “A Lady red—amid the Hill.”

- 9 . . . all alone, alone, alone,
He rose again behind the stone.

ALICE MEYNELL (1847–1922), English
poet. “Easter Night.”

- 10 . . . there’s the Lenten lily
That has not long to stay
And dies on Easter Day.

A. E. HOUSMAN (1859–1936), English
poet. “The Lent Lily.”

- 11 Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the
bough,
And stands about the woodland
ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

A. E. HOUSMAN (1859–1936), English
poet. “Loveliest of Trees.”

- 12 Well the prophecy was kept;
Christ—“first fruit of them that
slept”—
Rose with vic’try-circled brow;
So, believing one, shalt thou.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–
1906), U.S. poet. “An Easter Ode.”

- 13 I bet any Sunday could be made as
popular at church as Easter is, if

you made ’em fashion shows too.
The audience is so busy looking at
each other that the preacher might
as well recite Gunga Din.

WILL ROGERS (1879–1935), U.S. humor-
ist. 22 April 1935, *Will Rogers Speaks: Over
1,000 Timeless Quotations for Public Speakers
(And Writers, Politicians, Comedians, Browsers
. . .)*, ed. Bryan B. Sterling and Frances N. Ster-
ling (1995).

- 14 Myrtila’s tripping down the street,
In Easter finery.
The Easter blooms are not more
sweet
And radiant-hued than she.

DOROTHY PARKER (1893–1967), U.S.
author. “To Myrtila, On Easter Day.”

- 15 We have lost Christmas through the
commercial interest . . . and I don’t
want to lose Easter. We crucified
the given Christ on His birthday.
Shall we now bury the living Lord
beneath the rabbits, the eggs, satins,
finery and thoughtlessness? We say
no. We want to celebrate Easter in
religion from now on.

C. LLOYD LEE, U.S. clergyman. Quoted in
Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buy-
ing and Selling of American Holidays* (“Rain-
ing on the Easter Parade”) (1995).

Lee was a Methodist clergyman in White
Plains, N.Y. He and his congregation wrote a
report bemoaning the commercialization of
Easter.

- 16 The story of Passion-Tide and Eas-
ter is the story of the winning of
that freedom and of that victory
over the evils of Time. The burden
of the guilt is accepted (“He was
made Sin”), the last agony of alien-
ation from God is passed through
(*Eloi, lama sabachthani*); the tem-
poral Body is broken and remade;
and Time and Eternity are recon-
ciled in a Single Person. There is no

retreat here to the Paradise of primal ignorance; the new Kingdom of God is built upon the foundations of spiritual experience. Time is not denied; it is fulfilled. "I am the food of the full-grown."

DOROTHY L. SAYERS (1893–1957), English author. "Strong Meat," *Creed or Chaos?* (1949).

Sayers argues that Christianity, while stressing the value of innocence and a pure heart, is in fact a religion for "adult minds."

- 17 I can remember the pastors of my youth who on Easter Sunday would let out a year's accumulated bile against the "twicesters," as those who came but twice a year were called. One of them went so far as to welcome them at Easter by wishing them a Happy Memorial Day, a Glorious Fourth of July, a Good Labor Day, a Peaceful Veterans' Day and a Gracious Thanksgiving, and by wishing them as well a Happy Mother's Day, Happy Father's Day, Happy Children's Day, and Happy Birthdays for the year.

PETER J. GOMES (b. 1942), U.S. clergyman and theologian. *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart* (chapter 16, "The Bible and Mystery") (1996).

- 18 The resurrection is God's way of getting our attention.

PETER J. GOMES (b. 1942), U.S. clergyman and theologian. "When Life Begins," *Sermons: Biblical Wisdom for Daily Living* (1998).

Passover

- 1 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever. Seven days

shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this very same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance forever.

Exodus 12.14–17.

- 2 Pesach has come to the Ghetto again.
The lore-laden words of the Seder are said,
And the cup of the Prophet Elijah awaits,
But the Angel of Death has intruded, instead.

BINEM HELLER, "Pesach Has Come to the Ghetto Again (Warsaw, April 19, 1943)," in *"Jewish Life" Anthology, 1946-56*, trans. (from Yiddish) Max Rosenfeld.

Heller observes that the Holocaust transforms the meaning of the Passover holiday.

- 3 Among the many meals of the spiritual year, the evening meal of the Passover at which the father of the household gathers together all his family is the meal of meals. It is the only one that from first to last has the character of worship; hence the Seder (Order) is, from first to last, liturgically regulated. From the very

start the word “freedom” sheds its light upon it.

FRANZ ROSENZWEIG (1886–1929), German philosopher. *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought* (1953).

- 4 Passover dishes are probably the most interesting of any in the Jewish cuisine because of the lack of leaven and the resulting challenge to fine cooks. There are all kinds of torten and almond cakes and puddings, and an infinity of uses for mazzah or matzos: matzo klos, or dumplings, cakes and puddings of the matzo meal. Everything is doubly rich, as if to compensate for the lack of leaven, and clarified goose and chicken fat, and beef drippings, carefully excluding suet, are used most artfully.

M. F. K. FISHER (1908–1992), U.S. food expert and author. “K is for Kosher,” *An Alphabet for Gourmets* (1949).

- 5 The bread of freedom is a hard bread. The contrast between bread and matzo possibly points to the contrast between the lush Nile civilization that the Jews left behind them on the first Passover and the gray rubbled desert in which they came into their identity.

HERMAN WOUK (b. 1915), U.S. author. *This is My God: The Jewish Way of Life* (chapter 5, “The Nature Festivals”) (1988).

- 6 Grandmother Hannah comes to me at Pesach
and when I am lighting the sabbath candles.
The sweet wine in the cup has her breath.
The challah is braided like her long, long hair.

MARGE PIERCY (b. 1936), U.S. poet. “A candle in a glass,” *The Art of Blessing the Day: Poems with a Jewish Theme* (1999).

- 7 The Jewish day is delineated by a schedule of prayers; the Jewish year is freighted with time-bound obligations—six days to fast, eight days to eat unleavened bread on Passover, eight days to light candles on Hanukkah, seven weeks to “count the omer,” enumerating the days between the Israelites’ liberation from slavery in Egypt and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. Counting is a way of noticing and anticipating: it reminds us that a day counts or it doesn’t. Counting imputes meaning; we rarely count what we do not value.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey* (chapter 4, “Time Is All There Is”) (1996).

- 8 Passover remains relevant and contemporary, while at the same time a ritual several thousand years old. The sanction of thousands of years of tradition is retained because the ritual form is retained. The content—at least some of it—is flexible and determined by the participants at specific celebrations. Thus, the holy day is still meaningful to younger generations, because it allows for creative input and participation. It breathes.

JACK SANTINO (b. 1947), U.S. folklorist and sociologist. *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 3, “Winter into Spring: Celebrating Rebirth and Renewal”) (1994).

- 9 Memory insinuated itself into every nook and cranny of the festivities, from the recitation of the Hagg-

dah, a ritualized exercise in collective memory, to the physical appearance of the seder table. Assembled over time and place from a variety of sources—Grandmother’s cupboard, Aunt Sadie’s basement—the items displayed on the table served as tangible, physical embodiments of family history and collective memory. As much an opportunity for the display of family history as of elegance, the seder fostered a unique aesthetic.

JENNA WEISSMAN JOELIT, U.S. author. *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture 1880–1950* (chapter 6, “The Call of the Matzoh”) (1994).

- 10 As for the bitter herbs, it may be that they were instituted in order to remind people of the bitterness of the suffering of the Israelites. . . . when I began to give my own Seders with my husband . . . we instituted cutting up a horseradish root into thin slices and giving everyone a taste, to really get the effect of the strength of the herb. To see everyone with tears coursing down their faces, laughing and gasping at the same time, is fun and also makes the point—bitter herbs must be *really* bitter to experience the suffering at all.

JULIA NEUBERGER (b. 1950), English author and rabbi. *On Being Jewish* (chapter 1) (1995).

- 11 What does spring cleaning and clearing the house of crumbs have to do with freedom and history, anyway? Is it an artificial and self-serving way to attach importance to a housewife’s ritual? Is it investing the everyday with spirituality? Do ceremony, excitement, and special

food simply serve to lock ritual into a child’s mind, securing it for the future? Without the meal and the commotion, the tradition of remembering the Exodus would certainly have died.

ELIZABETH EHRLICH, U.S. author. *Miriam’s Kitchen* (“May: Ironing the Kitchen”) (1997).

Islamic New Year

- 1 In Jewish legend the world was created on New Year’s day. No cosmological significance attaches to the First of Muharram, the official opening of the Muslim year. . . . These contradictory computations of the New Year are an instructive illustration of the sometimes rather casual coexistence of Islamic patterns of behavior. The best the theologians could do was to suggest a tie connecting the pagan survival with an incident of Muslim history or legend.

GUSTAV EDMUND VON GRUNEBaum (1909–1972), Austrian author and Orientalist. *Muhammadan Festivals* (chapter 3, “Ramadan”) (1951).

Von Grunenbaum notes the variety of dates and customs for celebrating Islamic New Year. He says that in “India and Indonesia the day is set aside for the dead,” and that in Egypt “it is believed that on New Year, the Lotus-Tree at the Boundary of Paradise is shaken so that the leaves inscribed with the names of those who will die during the year will fall.” Persians, and Muslims in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt celebrate in the spring and commemorate it with a sprinkling of water which signifies the good omen of rain and purification.

- 2 Muharram was designated as the first month in the Islamic year by Umar, the second Caliph. At the beginning of a new year, Muslims set aside the sins of the past and determine to make a new start. . . .

Awwal Muharram is the Islamic New Year celebration. . . . The day commemorates the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 622 C.E. Muhammad's journey, called the Hijrah, came about as a result of hostility toward his teachings and the sparsity of converts in Mecca. In Medina, Muhammad was welcomed, and Islam gained a solid following.

In *Religious Holidays and Calendars*, 2d ed., ed. Karen Bellenir (1998).

- 3 According to the Qur'an, Allah created the universe with an exact number of days, months, and years so mankind might be able to calculate time conveniently. However, because the Muslim calendar is totally lunar, and is not adjusted to the sun, it moves backwards through the years, making a complete retrograde cycle about once every thirty-two and a half years. . . . The Islamic New Year is a religious event, occurring on the first day of the first lunar month, Muharram, with prayers for peace and prosperity, but its secular traditions include the exchange of good wishes and coins, which are supposed to bring good luck.

In *The Folklore of American Holidays*, 2d ed., ed. Hennig Cohen and Tristram Potter Coffin (1991).

Ramadan

- 1 The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is

sick or on a journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days. Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you; and (He desireth) that ye should complete the period, and that ye should magnify Allah for having guided you, and that peradventure ye may be thankful.

Qur'an 2.185; *The Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation* by Marmaduke Pickthall (1930; reprint 1992).

- 2 Eat and drink until the white thread becometh distinct to you from the black thread of the dawn.
- Qur'an 2.187; *The Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation* by Marmaduke Pickthall (1930; reprint 1992).
- 3 Thirty days make up the month, and yet, as God's Qur'an doth tell, In degree the *Night of Merit* doth a thousand months excel.

ASADÍ ABÚ NASR AHMED (fl. 11th cent.), Persian poet. "Asad's Strife-Poem Between Night and Day," *A Literary History of Persia*, ed. Edward G. Browne, vol. 2 (1928).

The "Night of Merit" is the night when the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad and is the most sacred night in this very holy month. All prayers are to be answered on this night.

- 4 It is affirmed [in the 97th chapter of the Qur'an] to be "better than a thousand months"; and the angels are believed to descend, and to be occupied in conveying blessings to the faithful from the commencement of it until daybreak. Moreover, the gates of heaven being then opened, prayer is held to be certain of success. Salt water, it is said, suddenly becomes sweet on this night.

EDWARD WILLIAM LANE (1801–1876), English explorer and Arabic scholar. *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1860).

Lane describes the "Leylet-el-Kadr," the "Night of Power," or of the Divine decree. It is the night Muhammad is said to have received the Qur'an, usually the twenty-seventh day of the month of fasting.

- 5 As Queequeg's Ramadan or Fasting and Humiliation, was to continue all day, I did not choose to disturb him till towards night-fall: for I cherish the greatest respect towards everybody's religious obligations, never mind how comical, and could not find it in my heart to under-value even a congregation of ants worshipping a toad-stool.

HERMAN MELVILLE (1819–1891), U.S. author. *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (chapter 17, "The Ramadan") (1851).

Ishmael's condescending attitude toward this holiday is characteristic of many Western writers on the subject of Islamic customs.

- 6 Like the Italian, the Anglo-Catholic, and the Greek fasts, the chief effect of the "blessed month" upon True Believers is to darken their tempers into positive gloom. . . . The mosques are crowded with a sulky, grumbling population, making themselves offensive to one another on earth whilst working their way to heaven.

RICHARD F. BURTON (1821–1890), English explorer, linguist, and author. *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to al'Madineh and Meccah*, vol. 1 (1893).

- 7 Ramathán, the fasting month, was nearly in, which kindles in Moslem spirits, even of the wild Arab, a new solemnity of religion; the Beduins, aping the town guise, which they had seen at Medina, now stood out from the byût at the hours, and making ranks, they rehearsed the formal prayer, bowing the empty

foreheads and falling upon the petticoated knees together.

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY (1843–1926), English author. *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, vol. 1 (1923).

The "byût" is the Arab home, in this case the tent of the Nomads with whom Doughty traveled. He writes of the hardships of trying to carry out the strict fasts while navigating through the desert heat and notes that the Qur'an does not require those who are traveling to follow the injunctions of the prophet. While he describes the hardships these people suffer for their faith, this quotation indicates that he is not wholly sympathetic with nor understanding of the complexity of their religious practices.

- 8 When the new moon has been seen, the news passes like wild fire through the town, and soon it seems as though all the noise suppressed for a whole month has concentrated itself within one night.

C. SNOUCK HURGRONJE (1857–1936), Dutch scholar of Arabic culture. *Mekka in the Later Part of the 19th Century*, trans. J. H. Manahan (1931).

The fast of Ramadan is broken when the new moon is seen.

- 9 A person walking in the lanes of Mecca on a Ramadan morning hears voices chanting the Koran in nearly every house. Many do their chanting in the cloisters of the Haram. Thus, with sleeping, reading and praying, the Muslims spend the long slow hours until sunset.

E. RUTTER, English travel writer. *The Holy Cities of Arabia*, vol. 2 (1928).

During the month of Ramadan, in which the prophet Muhammad is supposed to have received the Qur'an, many people try to read the scriptures in their entirety in order to bring themselves closer to the religious ideal. The Haram is the large mosque in Mecca.

- 10 There is clearly an ascetic aspect in the multiple dimensions of the

practice of the Ramadan fast; to savour the poverty of the poor, their hunger, to fast, to share with them, to expiate one's own sins, to forgive others theirs, to renew contact with one's nearest and dearest, to tame one's passions, to counter Satan at every turn.

ABDELHAI DIOURI, anthropologist. "Of Leaven Foods: Ramadan in Morocco," in *Culinary Cultures of the Middle East*, ed. Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper (1994).

Mother's Day

- 1 She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Proverbs 31.26–30.

This is the portrait of a virtuous woman taught to King Lemuel by his mother.

- 2 My heart had fully transferred to her person the homage that it gave to her beauty at first, and whatever change she underwent, as long as she always remained herself, my feelings could not change. . . . I loved her neither out of duty nor out of interest nor out of convenience; I loved her because I was born to love her.

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712–1778), French author. *Confessions* (book 4) (1781); trans. Christopher Kelly (1990).

- 3 A fond mother, though, in pursuit of praise for her children the most rapacious of human beings, is likewise the most credulous; her de-

mands are exorbitant; but she will swallow anything.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Sense and Sensibility* (chapter 21) (1811).

Said of Lady Middleton, who cheerfully accepts the false praise of the flattering Miss Steele.

- 4 All-Gracious! grant, to those that bear

A mother's charge, the strength and light

To lead the steps that own their care

In ways of Love, and Truth, and Right.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT (1794–1878), U.S. poet and editor. "The Mother's Hymn."

- 5 Men are what their mothers made them.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Fate," *The Conduct of Life* (1860).

- 6 Youth fades; love droops; the leaves of friendship fall;
A mother's secret hope outlives them all.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. "The Mother's Secret," in *Over the Tea Cups* (1891).

- 7 The angels, whispering to one another

Can find, among their burning terms of love,

None so devotional as that of "Mother"

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809–1849), U.S. author. "To My Mother."

Poe writes here to Maria Clemm, his mother-in-law, shortly after the death of his wife Virginia. Because Virginia was 14 years younger than Poe and only 13 when he married her, there has been much speculation about the nature of the relationship among the three. Poe

frequently addressed Maria as "my own darling mother" or "my dear dear Muddy."

- 8 Mother is the name for God in the lips and hearts of little children.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811–1863), English novelist. *Vanity Fair* (chapter 37) (1847).

This quotation ends: "and here was one who was worshipping a stone!" It is in reference to Rebecca Sharp Crawley, the least maternal of women.

- 9 She loves me when I'm glad er sad;
She loves me when I'm good er bad;
An', what's a funniest thing, she says
She loves me when she punishes.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. "A Boy's Mother."

- 10 It was easy to know them, fluttering about with extended, protecting wings when any harm, real or imaginary, threatened their precious brood. They were women who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it to be a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels.

KATE O'FLAHERTY CHOPIN (1851–1904), U.S. author. *The Awakening* (chapter 4) (1899).

These are the reflections of Edna Pontellier, a woman in rebellion, contrasting herself with the perfect "mother-women" who surround her in the resort of Grand Island.

- 11 The souls of little children are marvellously delicate and tender things, and keep for ever the shadow that first falls on them, and that is the mother's or at best a woman's. There was never a great man who had not a great mother—it is hardly an exaggeration.

OLIVE SCHREINER (1855–1920), South African author. *The Story of An African Farm* (part 2, chapter 4) (1883).

- 12 No ordinary work done by a man is either as hard or as responsible as the work of a woman who is bringing up a family of small children; for upon her time and strength demands are made not only every hour of the day but often every hour of the night.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT (1858–1919), U.S. president. "The American Woman as a Mother," *The Mother's Anthology: In Tribute to Mothers*, ed. William Lyon Phelps (1976).

- 13 It is the nightly custom of every good mother after her children are asleep to rummage in their minds and put things straight for next morning, repacking into their proper places the many articles that have wandered during the day.

J. M. BARRIE (1860–1937), English author. *Peter Pan* (chapter 1, "Peter Breaks Through") (1911).

- 14 If I were damned of body and soul,
I know whose prayers would make me whole,
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865–1936), English author. "Mother o' Mine."

- 15 Washington's Birthday is for the "Father of our Country"; Memorial Day for our "Heroic Fathers"; 4th of July for "Patriot Fathers"; Labor Day for "Laboring Fathers"; Thanksgiving Day for "Pilgrim Father[s]"; and even New Year's Day is for "Old Father Time."

ANNA JARVIS (1864–1948), founder of the Mother's Day movement. Quoted in Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (section 1, "Anna Jarvis and the Churches: Sources of a New

Celebration"; chapter 5, "Mother's Day Bouquet") (1995).

Schmidt notes that this examination of the "patriarchy of the American calendar" was one of Anna Jarvis's "favorite devices . . . in defense of Mother's Day." He notes that churches found the celebration of Mother's Day reassuring even as early as the 1910s and 1920s because it affirmed traditional women's roles of "self-sacrificing domesticity and sentimental piety." Jarvis herself would have been excluded from the honors of the day because she "remained unmarried and childless."

- 16 Mother's Day, it's a beautiful thought, but it's somebody's hurtin' conscience that thought of the idea. It was someone who had neglected their mother for years, and then they figured out: I got to do something about Momma. And knowing Momma was that easy, they figured, "we'll give her a day, and it will be all right with Momma." Give her a day, and then in return Momma gives you the other 364. See?

WILL ROGERS (1879–1935), U.S. humorist. 12 May 1935, *Will Rogers Speaks: Over 1,000 Timeless Quotations for Public Speakers (And Writers, Politicians, Comedians, Browsers . . .)*, ed. Bryan B. Sterling and Frances N. Sterling (1995).

- 17 Oh, my dark children, may my dreams and my prayers
Impel you forever up the great stairs—
For I will be with you till no white brother
Dares keep down the children of the Negro mother.

LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–1967), U.S. poet. "The Negro Mother."

- 18 From the dawn of civilization mothers, as a class, were held in reasonably high regard until Mother's Day was established, with the purpose of compelling every

man, under pain of social ostracism, to declare that his mother was the greatest woman who ever lived, and to give proof, in consumer goods, of his tremulous adoration of her. In consequence a lot of men,—just to show that their souls are their own and without any ill-will toward the authors of their being—kick and buffet their mothers all over the house on Mother's Day, although during the other 364 days of the year they take them to the movies, buy them bags of nut fudge, and provide them with lacy shawls and crime-story magazines.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "Of Compulsory Affection," *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 19 It is . . . Mothering Sunday, the florists' commercial delight—a far cry from the ancient practice of visiting a cathedral or the mother church of the diocese.

ALEC GUINNESS (b. 1914), English actor. *My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring Actor* ("Sunday, 17 March 1996") (1996).

Nothing Sunday is a different date in England, but many people in this country share Guinness's cynicism about the involvement of the florists in engineering this tribute.

- 20 A person can choose his friends and select a wife, but he has only one mother, I always say. The trouble with many of us is that we don't appreciate our mothers. I think that a certain day should be set aside each year and dedicated to mothers. It could be called "Mother's Day."

MAX SHULMAN (b. 1919), U.S. author. *Barefoot Boy With Cheek* (chapter 1) (1943).

Asa Hearthrug, a bombastic young man preparing to go off to college, celebrates his

mother and reveals his ignorance about the yearly commemoration.

- 21 Certainly the mother serves the interests of patriarchy: she exemplifies in one person religion, social conscience, and nationalism. Institutional motherhood revives and renews all other institutions.

ADRIENNE RICH (b. 1929), U.S. author. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (chapter 2, "The Sacred Calling") (1976).

Memorial Day

- 1 Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh
and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised
not a stone,
But we left him alone with his
glory.

CHARLES WOLFE (1791–1823), Irish poet and curate. "The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna."

Wolfe's poem implies the importance of remembering soldiers who died in the field without a proper memorial.

- 2 Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children
free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and
thee.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Concord Hymn: Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument, July 4, 1837."

- 3 Your silent tents of green
We deck with fragrant flowers;
Yours has the suffering been,
The memory shall be ours.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807–1882), U.S. poet. "Decoration Day."

- 4 Hushed are their battle-fields,
ended their marches,
Deaf are their ears to the drumbeat
of morn,—
Rise from the sod, ye fair columns
and arches!
Tell their bright deeds to the ages
unborn!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. "Hymn For the Celebration at the Laying of the Corner-Stone of Harvard Memorial Hall, Cambridge, October 6, 1870."

- 5 It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865), U.S. president. Gettysburg Address (19 November 1863).

- 6 In the beauty of the lilies Christ
was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that
transfigures you and me;
As he died to make men holy, let us
die to make men free.

JULIA WARD HOWE (1819–1910), U.S. social reformer and author. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (stanza 5) (1861).

- 7 No more shall the war-cry sever
Or the winding rivers be red;
They banish our anger for ever,
When they laurel the graves of
our dead!
Under the sod and the dew

Waiting the judgment day;—
Love and tears for the Blue,
Tears and love for the Gray.

FRANCIS MILES FINCH (1827–1907),
U.S. lawyer and poet. “The Blue and the
Gray.”

Some editions of the poem carry this headnote:
“The women of Columbus, Mississippi, had
shown themselves impartial in the offerings
made to the memory of the dead. They
strewn flowers alike on the graves of the Con-
federate and of the National soldiers.”

8 A monument for the Soldiers!

Built of a people's love,
And blazoned and decked and pan-
oplied

With the hearts ye build it of!
And see that ye build it stately,
In pillar and niche and gate,
And high in pose as the souls of
those

It would commemorate!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–
1916), U.S. poet. “A Monument for the Sol-
diers.”

9 So, with the singing of paeans and
chorals,

And with the flag flashing high
in the sun,

Place on the graves of our heroes
the laurels

Which their unfaltering valor has
won!

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–
1906), U.S. poet. “Ode for Memorial Day.”

10 One sure certainty about our Me-
morial Days is that as fast as the
ranks from one war thin out, the
ranks from another take their place.
Prominent men may run out of
Decoration Day speeches, but the
world never runs out of wars. Peo-
ple talk peace, but men give up
their life's work to war.

WILL ROGERS (1879–1935), U.S. humor-
ist. 31 May 1929, *Will Rogers Speaks: Over
1,000 Timeless Quotations for Public Speakers
(And Writers, Politicians, Comedians, Browsers
. . .)*, ed. Bryan B. Sterling and Frances N. Ster-
ling (1995).

11 Now we spread roses
Over your tomb—
We who sent you
To your doom.

LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–1967), U.S.
poet. “Poem to a Dead Soldier.”

12 The stone statues of the abstract
Union Soldier
grow slimmer and younger each
year—.

ROBERT LOWELL (1917–1977), U.S.
poet. “For the Union Dead.”

13 I am so sorry about all them lying
dead on the hill, the trooper from
the First Minnesota and all the old
women and the farmers . . . and I
wish my speech had been great, just
as I wish I could bring them all
back to life, but it's over and now
summer can begin. School can let
out. Baseball gets going and the
sweet corn begins to get serious.

GARRISON KEILLOR (b. 1942), U.S. au-
thor and radio personality. “How I Came to
Give the Memorial Day Address at the Lake
Wobegon Cemetery This Year,” *We Are Still
Married* (1989).

Father's Day

1 A wise son maketh a glad father;
but a foolish son is the heaviness of
his mother.

Proverbs 10.1.

2 The glory of a man is from the
honour of his father.

Ecclesiasticus 1.7.

- 3 The father's obligations to his son are: he must circumcise him, redeem him, teach him Torah, teach him a trade, and help him secure a wife.—some also say, teach him to swim.

Tosefta Kiddushin 1.11, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 4 Why, 'tis a happy thing
To be the father unto many sons.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Henry VI, Part III* 3.2.104–105.

Spoken by King Edward.

- 5 It is a wise father that knows his own child.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Merchant of Venice* 2.2.70.

- 6 Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind,
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *King Lear* 2.4.47–50.

Spoken by the Fool, these lines expose the truth of Lear's mistreatment by his daughters, who ignore his needs now that they possess his wealth.

- 7 Greatness of name in the father oft-times helps not forth but overwhelms the son; they stand too near one another, the shadow kills the growth. So much, that we see the grandchild come more and oftener to be heir.

BEN JONSON (1573–1637), English poet and dramatist. *Timber; or, Discoveries Made upon Men and Matter* (1641).

- 8 One father is enough to governe one hundred sons, but not a hundred sons one father.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 404 (1640).

- 9 One father is more than a hundred Schoolemasters.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 686 (1640).

- 10 It is impossible to please all the world and one's father.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE (1621–1695), French author. *Fables* (book 3, Fable 1) (1668).

- 11 As for myself, I know what trouble I've given you at various times through my peculiarities, and as my own boys grow up, I shall learn more and more of the kind of trial you had to overcome in superintending the development of a creature different from yourself, for whom you felt responsible.

WILLIAM JAMES (1842–1910), U.S. philosopher and psychologist. Letter to his father, 14 December 1882, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Henry James Sr. died before he received his son's farewell letter. It was read at the funeral by Henry James Jr.

- 12 Only a dad but he gives his all
To smooth the way for his children small,
Doing with courage stern and grim,
The deeds that his father did for him,
This is the line that for him I pen,
Only a dad, *but the best of men*.

EDGAR A. GUEST (1881–1959), U.S. author. "Only a Dad."

- 13 A Father's Day would call attention to such constructive teachings from the pulpit as would naturally point out: The father's place in the home. The training of children. The safeguarding of the marriage tie. The protection of womanhood and childhood. The meaning of this, whether in the light of religion or of patriotism is so apparent as to need no argument in behalf of such a day.

Mrs. J. B. DODD. In *Father: An Anthology of Verse*, ed. Margery Doud and Cleo M. Parsley (1931).

Mrs. Dodd, of Spokane, Wash., wanted to create a tribute for her father, William J. Smart, who had reared his children without the help of a mother. In 1910, Mrs. Dodd asked for and got the support of the Spokane Ministerial Association to publish this statement. Local YMCAs and newspapers also supported the idea, and before long the holiday was celebrated nationwide.

- 14 For the great heart of him hurries
At the call of help from you.
He will help us mend the broken
Heart of ours or hope or toy,
And the tale may bide unspoken—
For he used to be a boy.

JAMES W. FOLEY. "Daddy Knows" (1913), in *Father: An Anthology of Verse*, ed. Margery Doud and Cleo M. Parsley (1931).

- 15 Father's Day was comical in part because fathers seemed so out of place or uncomfortable in this holiday world of sentimental gifts and domestic flattery. The "little remembrances" of flowers, cards, and novelties became funny when showed on Father; they opened up a line of humor that played on the gendered incongruities of holiday gift giving. As one editorial writer on the holiday put the matter in 1925, fathers have "no talent for the

fribbles and frabbles and furbelows with which Mother signalizes well-being."

LEIGH ERIC SCHMIDT (b. 1961), U.S. historian. *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays* (section 4, "The Invention of Father's Day: The Humbug of Modern Ritual"; chapter 5, "Mother's Day Bouquet") (1995).

Schmidt notes that the founder of Mother's Day, Anna Jarvis, saw Father's Day as a "poorly disguised plot of 'some necktie, tobacco, whiskey and lottery promoters.'" Schmidt further comments: "The snide perception that the holiday was an inane hoax and that merchants were responsible for putting it over on people found ample expression. Father's Day, more than any other celebration up to that time, demonstrated the corrosive cynicism that had come to hedge in modern rituals in a world of advertising and promotion."

- 16 What Mother's Day did for the florist industry, Father's Day did for the necktie industry. Along with tobacco, shirts, and other typically masculine gifts, neckties appeared on the earliest Father's Day greeting cards, and retailers wasted no time in turning the holiday to their advantage.

Holiday Symbols, ed. Sue Ellen Thompson (1998).

Independence Day

- 1 The new Governments we are assuming in every Part will require a Purification from our Vices, and an Augmentation of our Virtues, or they will have no Blessings. The people will have unbounded Power. And the people are extremely addicted to Corruption and Venality, as well as the Great.

JOHN ADAMS (1735–1826), U.S. president. Letter to his wife Abigail Adams, 3 July 1776, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

2 The Fourth of July has been celebrated in Philadelphia in the manner I expected. The military men, and particularly one of them, ran away with all the glory of the day. Scarcely a word was said of the solicitude and labors and fears and sorrows and sleepless nights of the men who projected, proposed, defended and subscribed the Declaration of Independence.

BENJAMIN RUSH (1746–1813), U.S. statesman, delegate to the Continental Congress, and signer of the Declaration of Independence. Letter to John Adams, 20 July 1811, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997.)

The “particular” military man Rush refers to is George Washington, considered by Rush to be a kind of tyrant over the American people.

3 Dating, as we justly may, a new era in the history of man from the Fourth of July, 1776, it would be well—that is it would be useful—if on each anniversary we examined the progress made by our species in just knowledge and just practice. Each Fourth of July would then stand as a tidemark in the flood of time by which to ascertain the advance of the human intellect, by which to note the rise and fall of each successive error, the discovery of each important truth, the gradual melioration in our public institutions, social arrangements, and, above all, in our moral feelings and mental views.

FRANCES (FANNY) WRIGHT (1795–1852), U.S. (Scottish-born) reformer. Speech, New Harmony, Ind., 4 July 1828, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

4 Yet America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the

imagination, and it will not wait long for metres.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “The Poet,” *Essays, Second Series* (1844).

5 We grant no dukedoms to the few,
We hold like rights and shall;—
Equal on Sunday in the pew,
On Monday in the mall.
For what avail the plough or
sail,
Or land or life, if freedom fail?

The noble craftsman we promote,
Disown the knave and fool
Each honest man shall have his
vote,
Each child shall have his
school.
A union then of honest men,
Or union nevermore again.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Boston, *sicut patribus, sit Deus nobis*. Read in Faneuil Hall, on December 16, 1873, on the Centennial Anniversary of the Destruction of the Tea in Boston Harbor.”

While Emerson was not delivering an Independence Day speech and was speaking specifically of Boston, his sentiments express the ideal vision of American life.

6 We give thy natal day to hope,
O Country of our love and
prayer!
Thy way is down no fatal slope,
But up to freer sun and air.
.
A refuge for the wronged and poor,
Thy generous heart has borne
the blame
That, with them, through thy open
door,
The old world’s evil outcasts
came.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. “Our Country (Read at Woodstock, Conn., July 4, 1883).”

- 7 I know that upon 4th of July, our 4th of July orators talk of Liberty, while three million of their own country men are groaning in abject Slavery. This is called “the land of the free and the home of the brave”; it is called the “asylum of the oppressed”; and some have been foolish enough to call it the “Cradle of Liberty.” If it is the “cradle of liberty,” they have rocked the child to death. It is dead long since, and yet we talk about democracy and republicanism, while one-sixth of our countrymen are clanking their chains upon the very soil which our fathers moistened with their blood.

WILLIAM WELLS BROWN (1815?–1884), U.S. abolitionist. “A Lecture Delivered Before the Female Antislavery Society Of Salem, Massachusetts, [14 November] 1847,” in *The Narrative of William Wells Brown, a Fugitive Slave* (1969).

- 8 The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth of July is *yours*, not *mine*. *You* may rejoice, *I* must mourn.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS (c.1817–1895), U.S. abolitionist. “The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro,” 5 July 1852, in *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, ed. Philip S. Foner, vol. 2 (1950–75).

- 9 It is the fourth of Seventh-month, (what salutes of cannon and small-arms!)

WALT WHITMAN (1819–1892), U.S. poet. *Song of Myself*, section 15.

- 10 The President, throned behind a cable locker with a national flag

spread over it, announced the “Reader,” who rose up and read that same old Declaration of Independence which we have all listened to so often without paying any attention to what it said; and after that the President piped the Orator of the Day to quarters and he made the same old speech about our national greatness which we so religiously believe and so fervently applaud. Now came the choir into court again, with the complaining instruments, and assaulted “Hail Columbia”; and when victory hung wavering in the scale, George returned with his dreadful wild-goose stop turned on and the choir won, of course. A minister pronounced the benediction, and the patriotic little gathering disbanded. The Fourth of July was safe, as far as the Mediterranean was concerned.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *The Innocents Abroad* (chapter 10) (1869).

The narrator here describes a group of American tourists creating a taste of home in the midst of foreign surroundings.

- 11 *July 4.* Statistics show that we lose more fools on this day than in all the other days of the year put together. This proves, by the number left in stock, that one Fourth of July per year is now inadequate, the country has grown so.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *Pudd’head Wilson* (“Pudd’head Wilson’s Calendar” at chapter 17) (1894).

- 12 We [Americans] are the lavishest and showiest and most luxury-loving people on the earth; and at our masthead we fly one true and hon-

est symbol, the gaudiest flag the world has ever seen.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. “Diplomatic Pay and Clothes” (1899).

- 13 The business of the Fourth of July is not perfect as it stands. See what it costs us every year with loss of life, the crippling of thousands with its fireworks and the burning down of property. It is not only sacred to patriotism and universal freedom but to the surgeon, the undertaker, the insurance offices—and they are working it for all it is worth.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. Speech, London, at a dinner of the American Society, 4 July 1899, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 14 Sing in the tones of prayer,
Sing till the soaring soul
Shall float above the world’s control
In Freedom everywhere!
Sing for the good that is to be,
Sing for the eyes that are to see
The land where man at last is free,
O sing for Liberty!
- JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY** (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “Liberty: New Castle, July 4, 1878.”

- 15 There’ll be ice-cream and fireworks
and a speech
By Somebody the Honorable Who,
The lovers will pair off in the kind
dark
And Tessie Jones, our honor-graduate,
Will read the Declaration.
That’s how it is. It’s always been
that way.
That’s our Fourth of July, through
war and peace,
That’s our Fourth of July.

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT (1898–1943), U.S. author. “Listen to the People: Independence Day, 1941.”

- 16 That rugged individualism that is the personification of our American sense of freedom, and which we celebrate on the Fourth of July and in our popular myths and heroes, also contributes to the breakdown of the social fabric that has always provided a secure context for our freedoms. Freedom “from” has not yet yielded to an appropriate freedom “for.”

PETER J. GOMES (b. 1942), U.S. clergyman and theologian. *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Heart and Mind* (chapter 3, “The Bible in America”) (1994).

Labor Day

- 1 Who first invented work, and
bound the free
And holyday-rejoicing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business in the green fields, and
the town—
To plough, loom, anvil, spade—and
oh! most sad,
To that dry drudgery at the desk’s
dead wood?

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. “Work” (1819).

Lamb did not have the opportunity to celebrate Labor Day, but he expresses the weariness of many different types of workers. This poem originally appeared in the *Examiner* on 29 August 1819.

- 2 Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something
done,
Has earned a night’s repose.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807–1882), U.S. poet. “The Village Blacksmith.”

- 3 In spite of oppressors, in spite of false leaders, in spite of labor’s own lack of understanding of its needs, the cause of the worker continues onward. Slowly his hours are shortened, giving him leisure to read and to think. Slowly his standard of living rises to include some of the good and beautiful things of the world. Slowly the cause of his children becomes the cause of all. His boy is taken from the breaker, his girl from the mill. Slowly those who create the wealth of the world are permitted to share it. The future is in labor’s strong, rough hands.

MOTHER JONES (MARY HARRIS) (1830–1930), U.S. labor organizer. *The Autobiography* (concluding passage) (1925).

- 4 Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest,
Eight hours for what we will.

I. G. BLANCHARD (b. 1835), U.S. author. “Eight Hours” (c. 1868).

These lyrics appear in *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs* (1952), edited by Margaret Bradford Boni. She notes: “The campaign for an eight-hour work day, begun in earnest after the Civil War, resulted in the passage of an eight-hour law by Congress on June 25, 1868. It proved ineffectual. Blanchard’s song, written during the original campaign, was revived in the 80’s, when labor worked for a more effective law. It became the official song of the movement.” The music for the song was composed by Rev. Jesse H. Jones.

- 5 Two important features of Labor Day are, first, that the various unions shall lay aside any differences that they may have; and second, that employers are asked to meet with the workers to discuss matters

relating to the welfare of the laboring classes.

J. WALKER MCSPADDEN (1874–1960), author and editor. *The Book of Holidays* (1917).

McSpadden carefully traces the work of labor unions in creating this holiday.

- 6 Master, I’ve filled my contract,
wrought in Thy many lands;
Not by my sins wilt Thou judge
me, but by the work of my hands.
Master, I’ve done Thy bidding, and
the light is low in the west,
And the long, long shift is over . . .
Master, I’ve earned it—
Rest.

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian poet. “The Song of the Wage-Slave.”

- 7 You load 16 tons and what do you
get?
Another day older and deeper in
debt.
.
St. Peter, don’t you call me ’cause I
can’t go
I owe my soul to the company
store.

MERLE TRAVIS (1917–1983), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Sixteen Tons,” *Rise Up Singing: The Group-Singing Song Book*, ed. Peter Blood Patterson (1988).

- 8 Workin’ nine to five
what a way to make a livin’,
barely gettin’ by
It’s all takin’ and no givin’

DOLLY PARTON (b. 1946), U.S. singer and songwriter. “9 to 5,” in Peter Seeger and Bob Reiser, *Carry It On: A History in Song and Picture of the Working Men and Women of America* (1985).

- 9 Americans were supposed to pause
yesterday to praise working men
and women and contemplate the

role of labor unions in the nation's history. . . . But just as Memorial Day has largely become a time to gather 'round the barbecue and welcome the beginning of summer, so Labor Day has largely become a day to give the season a good send-off.

SAM HOWE VERHOVEK, journalist.
"Holiday for the Workers?" in the *New York Times* (6 September 1988).

- 10 Frankly, I don't believe people think of their office as a workplace anyway. I think they think of it as a stationery store with Danish. You want to get your pastry, your envelopes, your supplies, your toilet paper, six cups of coffee, and you go home.

JERRY SEINFELD (b. 1954), U.S. comic.
SeinLanguage (1993).

Rosh Hashanah

- 1 And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

Leviticus 23.23–25.

- 2 Sing aloud unto God, our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for

Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.

Psalms 81.1–4.

- 3 R. Judah says: "Man is judged on New Year and his doom is sealed on the Day of Atonement."

Tractate Rosh Hashanah 16a (Talmud), in *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1973).

- 4 All good things come to Israel through the Shofar. They received the Torah with the sound of the Shofar. They conquered in battle through the blast of the Shofar. They are summoned to repent by the Shofar, and they will be made aware of the Redeemer's advent through the Great Shofar.

Elijah Zuta 22, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 5 On New Year Sarah, Rachel and Hannah were remembered on high [and they conceived]; on New Year Joseph went forth from prison; on New Year the bondage of our ancestors in Egypt ceased.

Tractate Rosh Hashanah 10b-11a (Talmud), in *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1973).

- 6 Rabbi Johanan said: "The fate of men of perfection is sealed on Rosh ha-Shanah; they are either to be aided in accumulating more Mitzvot; or they are to enjoy Paradise.

"The fate of men of complete wickedness is also sealed on Rosh ha-Shanah; they are either to receive opportunity to add to their wickedness, or they are to depart for Purgatory.

“The fate of the rank and file of men is left open, however, until Yom Kippur. If they repent they receive another chance to do good.”

Rosh ha-Shanah 16b (amplified), in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 7 It has been said that omens are of significance; therefore, a man should make a regular habit of eating, at the beginning of the year, pumpkin, fenugreek, leek, beet, and dates [as these grow in profusion and are symbolic of prosperity].

Horayot 12a, in *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1973).

- 8 Three books are opened [in heaven] on New Year, one for the thoroughly righteous, and one for the intermediate. The thoroughly righteous are forthwith inscribed definitively in the book of life; the thoroughly wicked are forthwith inscribed definitively in the book of death; the doom of the intermediate is suspended from New Year till the Day of Atonement; if they deserve well, they are inscribed in the book of life; if they do not deserve well, they are inscribed in the book of death.

Tractate Rosh Hashanah 16b (Talmud), in *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1973).

- 9 “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year” or “May your name be inscribed in the book of life.”

Traditional Rosh Hashanah greeting, first mentioned in the work of Rabbi Jacob Milin, also known as Maharil (1360–1427), in *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1973).

- 10 Some of the townspeople stood on the wooden bridge reciting the *Tashlikh*; others lined the river’s banks. Young women took out their handkerchiefs [sic] and shook out their sins. Boys playfully emptied their pockets to be sure that no transgression remained. The village wits made the traditional *Tashlikh* jokes. “Girls, shake as hard as you want, but a few sins will remain.” “The fish will get fat feeding on so many errors.”

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER (1904–1992), U.S. (Polish-born) author. “Tashlikh” (1962), trans. Singer and Cecil Hemley, in *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1973).

Singer describes a scene from his Polish boyhood and the custom of *Tashlikh*. Following the afternoon Rosh Hashanah services, sins are symbolically cast into running water and witnessed by fish, whose eyes, like God’s, are always open.

- 11 The blowing of the shofar, the ram’s horn, is an alarm, as it was for the tribes of Israel in the desert when the enemy approached, and for the armies of David and Solomon in the Holy Land; an alarm waking the soul to Judgment. The enigmatic words, “a day of remembrance,” with which the Torah describes the first of Tishri, become clear; God reviews the deeds of the year, and men recall with dread that all acts come at last to an accounting.

HERMAN WOULF (b. 1915), U.S. author. *This is My God: The Jewish Way of Life* (chapter 6, “The High Holy Days”) (1988).

- 12 On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the last day of that accursed year, the whole camp [Buna] was electric with the tension which was in all our hearts. In spite of everything,

this day was different from any other. The last day of the year. The word “last” rang very strangely. What if it were indeed the last day? . . .

Once, New Year’s Day had dominated my life. I knew that my sins grieved the Eternal; I implored his forgiveness. Once, I had believed profoundly that upon one solitary deed of mine, one solitary prayer, depended the salvation of the world.

This day I had ceased to plead. I was no longer capable of lamentation. On the contrary, I felt very strong. I was the accuser, God the accused. My eyes were open and I was alone—terribly alone in a world without God and without man.

ELIE WIESEL (b. 1928), U.S. (Romanian-born) author and Holocaust survivor. *Night* (fifth section), trans. (from French) Stella Rodway (1960).

- 13 Every *Rosh Hashannah*, the Jewish New Year, Jews say a prayer that I have been saying to myself more and more as I grow older. . . . “Blessed art thou O Lord our God, King of the universe,” the prayer begins, “who has given us life and kept us safe and allowed us to reach this season.” It is the right prayer for a new century, a blessing for a new “season.”

ELI N. EVANS, U.S. historian and foundation president. *The Provincials* (chapter 26, “Looking Ahead”) (1997).

Evans is president of the Charles H. Revson Foundation.

- 14 The High Holy Days of my childhood . . . embodied the very essence of new beginnings; for au-

tumn, not spring, was when everything was new: my clothes, my classroom, books, pencil box, teachers—and Jewish chronology, which decreed a fresh start, a clean slate, a chance to improve on the past.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. “The High Holy Days,” chapter 5 in *Deborah, Golda, and Me: Being Female and Jewish in America* (1991).

- 15 These year’s-end holidays have in them the quality of transition that we find in other festivals of the new year, no matter when they are celebrated. Yom Kippur marks the end of the solemn days and the beginning of the regular days of the new year. The Ten Days, during which the gates of heaven are open, are a time out of time, a period of liminality during which people can shape their destinies, retract vows and right wrongs. In short one can make oneself over for the new year, in a way that recalls, however dimly, the custom of New Year’s resolutions.

JACK SANTINO (b. 1947), U.S. folklorist and sociologist. *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 5, “Autumn into Winter: Celebrating Death and Life”) (1994).

- 16 The Jewish New Year, . . . like all New Year celebrations, projects and tries to satisfy the human need for periodic regeneration. That’s why the New Year is followed by a day of atonement, Yom Kippur, a day on which we purify ourselves of sin, cast out the accumulated imperfections of the past so as morally to make ourselves as new, as pure, as the coming year itself.

ALAN SHAPIRO (b. 1952), U.S. poet. *The Last Happy Occasion* (“In Awkward Reverence”) (1996).

Yom Kippur

- 1 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

Leviticus 25.8–9.

- 2 And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation, and ye shall afflict your souls; ye shall not do any work therein; But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord for a sweet savor: one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish.

Numbers 29.7–8.

- 3 On the Day of Atonement, eating, drinking, washing, anointing, putting on sandals, and marital intercourse are forbidden. A king or a bride may wash their faces and a woman after childbirth may put on sandals.

Tractate Yoma 8.1 (Mishnah), trans. Herbert Danby, in *The Yom Kippur Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1971).

- 4 Just as if a nut falls into some dirt you can take it up and wipe it and rinse it and wash it and it is restored to its former condition and is fit for eating, so however much Israel may be defiled with iniquities all the rest of the year, when the Day of Atonement comes it makes

atonement for them, as it is written, *For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you* (Leviticus 16.30).

Song of Songs Rabbah 6.11, in *The Yom Kippur Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1971).

- 5 Things between thee and God are forgiven in Yom Kippur. Things between thee and thy fellowman are not forgiven thee, until he has forgiven thee.

Sifra to Ahare, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 6 Next year in Jerusalem!

Traditional answer given by the congregation at the blowing of the shofar, which ends the Yom Kippur liturgy at sunset.

- 7 And may atonement be granted to the whole congregation of Israel and to the stranger who lives among them, for all have transgressed unwittingly.

The High Holyday Prayer Book: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, trans. and ed. Ben Zion Bokser (1959).

From the Kol Nidre, a prayer chanted three times as a prelude to Yom Kippur services.

- 8 O my God, before I was created I was nothing, and now that I have been created, what am I? In life I am dust, and more so when I fall prey to death. When I measure my life in Thy presence, I am confused and I am ashamed. Help me, O God and God of my fathers, to steer clear of sin. And as for my past sins, purge me of them in Thy great mercy, but, I pray, not through severe and painful disease.

The High Holyday Prayer Book: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, trans. and ed. Ben Zion Bokser (1959).

Part of confession recited ten times in the course of the Yom Kippur liturgy.

- 9 Accept Thou with favor my prayer for forgiveness, my confession which I make before Thee. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before Thee, my Rock and my Redeemer. Amen.

The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship (1962).

Concluding sentences of a Reform prayer for Yom Kippur.

- 10 It was meet and right when everything has shown abundance as they would have it, and they enjoy a full and perfect measure of goodness, that amid this prosperity and lavish supply of boons, they should by abstaining from food and drink remind themselves of what it is to want, and offer prayers and supplications, on the one hand to ask that they may never really experience the lack of necessities, on the other to express their thankfulness because in such wealth of blessings they remember the ills they have been spared.

PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA (c. 20 B.C.—A.D. 45), Jewish philosopher. *The Special Laws* 2.20, in *Philo* (Loeb Classical Library), vol. 7, trans. F. H. Colson (1937).

- 11 It is the day on which the master of the prophets descended [from Mt. Sinai] with the second set of tablets of the Law and communicated to the people forgiveness for their great sin. This day became forever a day of repentance and true worship. On it are forbidden all corporeal pleasure; every burden and care of the body; that is to say, work is

not done. Only confessions are permitted so that one will confess his sins and repent of them.

MAIMONIDES (MOSES BEN MAIMON) (1135–1204), Jewish (Spanish-born) philosopher, rabbi, jurist, and physician. *Guide for the Perplexed* 3.43.

- 12 I . . . do not know what to do, and how much to do, and how to achieve the purpose of the holy men who first uttered these prayers. That is why I take the book of our blessed Master Luria and keep it open before me while I pray, that I may offer it to God with all its fervor, ecstasy, and secret meaning.

MARTIN BUBER (1878–1965), Austrian philosopher. "The Prayer Book," a short story trans. Simon Chasen, in *The Yom Kippur Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1971).

A rabbi explains why, though he doesn't look at the words, he keeps a prayer book open during the Day of Atonement.

- 13 With all its pleasures, Passover was only nice. Yom Kippur was weird, monumental. Imagine not eating for a whole day to prove something or other to God, or yelling at God in the synagogue as the bearded old men did in their white shawls, their heads thrown back, their Adam's apples tearing at their skinny throats.

KATE SIMON (1912–1990), U.S. travel writer. "Battles and Celebrations," in *Bronx Primitive* (1982).

- 14 Since the fall of Jerusalem any gaiety that was in Yom Kippur has faded. Our Atonement Day is a time of mordant grieving melodies, of bowed heads and wrung hearts. No one who has heard the *Kol Nidre* chanted at sunset when the holy

day begins can doubt that the worshippers are carrying out literally a law many thousands of years old, and afflicting their souls.

HERMAN WOUK (b. 1915), U.S. author. *This Is My God: The Jewish Way of Life* (chapter 6, "The High Holy Days") (1988).

- 15 Yom Kippur. The Day of Atonement.

Should we fast? The question was hotly debated. To fast would mean a surer, swifter death. We fasted here the whole year round. The whole year was Yom Kippur. But others said that we should fast simply because it was dangerous to do so. We should show God that even here, in this enclosed hell, we were capable of singing His praises.

ELIE WIESEL (b. 1928), U.S. (Romanian-born) author and Holocaust survivor. *Night* (fifth section), trans. Stella Rodway (1960).

Wiesel describes how existence in a Nazi prison camp challenged his understanding of Jewish religious practices.

- 16 In moments of weakness
We do not remember
Promises of Atonement Day.
Look past forgetfulness,
Take only from our hearts;
Forgive us, pardon us.

ZEEV FALK, "Kol Nidre," trans. Stanley Schachter, in *The Yom Kippur Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1971).

- 17 The New Year is a great door
that stands across the evening and
Yom
Kippur is the second door. Between
them
are song and silence, stone and clay
pot
to be filled from within by myself.

MARGE PIERCY (b. 1936), U.S. poet. "Coming Up on September," *The Art of Blessing the Day: Poems with a Jewish Theme* (1999).

- 18 Flawed humans though we are,
come Yom Kippur we have a moment to turn God's mirror on ourselves, if there is a God. Or it is a moment to think about something larger than everyday life, to contemplate obligations to other people, to regret our failures, to renounce our shallowness. . . . Within all the nattering activity, this day is a silent space.

ELIZABETH EHRLICH, U.S. author. *Miriam's Kitchen: A Memoir* ("September: Longing") (1997).

Halloween

- 1 From Ghoulies and ghosties and
long-leggety beasties
And things that go bump in the
night,
Good Lord, deliver us.

Cornish prayer.

- 2 Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 5.1.379–82.

Puck is not specifically referring to Halloween, but the sentiment conjures up the imagery of the holiday.

- 3 The Hag is astride,
This night for to ride;
The Devill and shee together:
Through thick, and through
thin,
Now out, and then in,

Though ne'r so foule be the
weather.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. "The Hag."

- 4 I believe that men are generally still a little afraid of the dark, though the witches are all hung, and Christianity and candles have been introduced.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817–1862), U.S. author. *Walden* ("Solitude"), vol. 2 (1854).

- 5 There was . . . a serious and weird feeling, on Hallow E'en night, not felt so much on any other night; witches and evil spirits were believed to be more numerous than usual; fairies were believed to be unusually active; ghosts were supposed to make their appearance on this night; and a full-dress performance of the watch in the church-porch on that night was capable of teaching the watchers that the Angel of Death is sometimes nearer than they imagine.

A. R. WRIGHT (1862–1932), *British Calendar Customs, England*, vol. 3 (1940).

- 6 Midnight has come, and the great
Christ Church Bell
And many a lesser bell sound
through the room;
And it is All Souls' Night,
And two long glasses brimmed with
muscatel
Bubble upon the table. A ghost may
come;
For it is a ghost's right,
His element is so fine
Being sharpened by his death,
To drink from the wine-breath
While our gross palates drink from
the whole wine.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865–1939), Irish poet. "All Souls' Night: Epilogue to 'A Vision.'"

- 7 The evening of October thirty-one is Hallowe'en or Nut Crack Night. It is clearly a relic of pagan times but it is still very popular. It is a night set apart for walking about and playing harmless pranks, such as placing the hotel omnibus on top of the Baptist church or plugging the milkman's pump.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. *The Best of Kin Hubbard: Abe Martin's Sayings and Wisecracks, Abe's Neighbors, His Almanack, Comic Drawings*, David S. Hawes (1984).

- 8 At the very glimpse of a Jack-o'-lantern
I've got one foot on the bus to
Scranton.
When Halloween next delivers the
goods,
You may duck for apples—I'll duck
for the woods.

ODGEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet. "Trick or Trek."

- 9 This Hallowe'en you come one
week.
You masquerade
as a vermilion, sleek,
fat, crosseyed fox in the parade
or, where grim jackolanterns leer,

go with your bag from door to
door
foraging for treats.

W. D. SNODGRASS (b. 1926), U.S. poet. *Heart's Needle* (section 8) (1959).

- 10 It was Halloween that did me in,
that single day when your children
turn to you for imagination and

creativity, the one day of the year when you must transcend fantasy.

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. “Halloween Challenges ‘No Talent’ Mother” (30 October 1979), in *Forever, Erma: Best Loved Writing from America’s Favorite Humorist* (1996).

Bombeck comments on the “shame” of being a mother who sends her children out with costumes that consist of grocery bags over their heads, while every other mother in the neighborhood dresses her children in elaborate costumes “right out of the wax museum.”

- 11 I’m always in town for Halloween. Even if I didn’t happen to enjoy walking in the Village Halloween parade in my ax murderer’s mask, I would feel it my duty to be there because of the long-established role of a father in passing on important cultural traditions to the next generation.

CALVIN TRILLIN (b. 1935), U.S. author. *Third Helpings* (“Spaghetti Carbonara Day”) (1983).

- 12 Halloween was a time of candy corn, jack-o’-lanterns, candy kisses, peanut-butter cups, bubble gum, Fig Newtons, soapy windows. I tried to tell about Halloween and what it represented to me—a great ritual of childhood when the world for a single night opened its doors and its coffers of candy and fun and happiness.

PAT CONROY (b. 1945), U.S. author. *Conrack* (1972).

Conroy, a young white teacher on the South Carolina sea island of Yamacraw, tries to persuade his class of isolated African-American students to get permission to celebrate Halloween on the mainland in Beaufort, S.C.

- 13 There was mystery here; there was mystery in the black cats and walking skeletons and living scarecrows that we saw decorating school win-

dows, mystery in the grinning gargoyles and jack-o-lanterns on all the porches. I loved Halloween.

JACK SANTINO (b. 1947), U.S. folklorist and sociologist. *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 5, “Autumn into Winter: Celebrating Death and Life”) (1994).

- 14 Altho’ outside it teems and pours
The boys about sixteen
Are busy runnin’ rappin’ doors
With turf—at Halloween.

B. M. TEGGART. Quoted in Jack Santino, *The Hallowed Eve: Dimensions of Culture in a Calendar Festival in Northern Ireland* (1998).

Santino notes that this is one of many “local poems” for Halloween, and that the genre “indexes Halloween food, pranks, and belief customs.” He comments that such rhyming was part of the Irish Halloween tradition.

- 15 Those seemingly interminable dark walks between houses, long before street-lit safety became an issue, were more adrenalizing than the mountains of candy filling the sack. Sadly Halloween, with our good-natured attempts to protect the little ones, from the increasingly dangerous traffic and increasingly sick adults, has become an utter bore.

LAUREN SPRINGER, U.S. journalist. In *The Undaunted Garden* (“The Arrival of Fall”) (1994), and reprinted in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garney (1999).

- 16 I think there’s a magic in Halloween that allows people to suspend things and allow certain fantasies and let their own wishes come true. So I don’t know if that would work on a Tuesday afternoon in the middle of “reality.”

FRED. Quoted in Jack Kugelmass, *Feasts and Celebrations in North American Ethnic Communities* (“Imagining Culture: New York City’s Village Halloween Parade”) (1995).

Fred is a man who had dressed as a good fairy in the Greenwich Village Halloween parade and felt that in the touch of his magic wand there was a healing power. He was interviewed by Jack Kugelmass.

Veterans Day

- 1 God bless the Flag and its loyal defenders,
While its broad folds o'er the
battle-field wave,
Till the dim star-wealth rekindle its
splendors,
Washed from its stains in the
blood of the brave!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. “God Save the Flag.”

- 2 [The American soldier] is not only brave but he is generous; and when he has fought for a principle and won, he has no desire to crush his foe, but is eager to abide by the old Latin maxim of “live and let live;” and he forgets and forgives, and lends a helping hand when a disposition to do the right thing is shown.

CLARA BARTON (1821–1912), U.S. nurse and philanthropist. Letter to Jessie L. Gladden, 7 November 1898, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Barton founded the American Red Cross.

- 3 Soldiers and saviors of the homes
we love;
Heroes and patriots who marched
away,
And who marched back, and who
marched on above—
All—all are here to-day!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “Soldiers Here To-Day.”

- 4 Underneath the autumn sky,
Haltingly, the lines go by.
Ah, would steps were blithe and
gay,
As when first they marched away,
Smile on lip and curl on brow, —
Only white-faced gray beards now
Standing on life's outer verge,
E'en the marches sound a dirge.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. “The Veteran.”

- 5 Ay, War, they say, is hell; it's
heaven, too.
It lets a man discover what he's
worth.
It takes his measure, shows what he
can do,
Gives him a joy like nothing else on
earth.
It fans in him a flame that other-
wise
Would flicker out, these drab, dis-
cordant days;
It teaches him in pain and sacrifice
Faith, fortitude, grim courage past
all praise.

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian poet. “Wounded.”

- 6 The soldier above all other people
prays for peace, for he must suffer
and bear the deepest wounds and
scars of war.

DOUGLAS MACARTHUR (1880–1964), U.S. general. Speech to West Point Cadets, 12 May 1962, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 7 War demands real toughness of fi-
ber—not only in the soldiers that
must endure, but in the homes that
must sacrifice their best.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (1890–1969), U.S. general and president. Letter, 16

April 1944, *Letters to Mamie*, ed. John S. D. Eisenhower (1978).

- 8 Men who have offered their lives for their country know that patriotism is not the *fear* of something; it is the *love* of something. Patriotism with us is not the hatred of Russia; it is the love of this republic and of the ideal of liberty of man and mind in which it was born, and to which this Republic is dedicated.

ADLAI STEVENSON (1900–1965), U.S. politician. Speech to an American Legion convention, Madison Square Garden, New York City, 27 August 1952, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

Stevenson was governor of Illinois and the Democratic nominee for president in 1952 and 1956.

- 9 If your names on this wall make it harder to send guys half way around the world to die, then maybe it wasn't a total waste.

JOHN "SOUP" CAMPBELL, Vietnam War veteran. Letter to Eddie Van Every, 8 June 1985, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Van Every was a soldier who served in Campbell's company in Vietnam and was killed. Campbell left his letter at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial ("The Wall") in Washington, D.C.

Thanksgiving

- 1 Thou that hast giv'n so much to me,
Give one thing more, a gratefull heart.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "Gratefulnesse."

- 2 Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday, the twenty-sixth of November next, to be devoted to the service of that great

and glorious Being . . . for the kind care and protection of the people of this country, previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, in the course and conclusion of the late war . . . for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish Constitutions of Government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (1732–1799), U.S. general and president. Proclamation of 1789, in Jack Santino, *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 5, "Autumn into Winter: Celebrating Death and Life") (1994).

- 3 Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "Grace Before Meat," in *London Magazine* (November 1821) and *Essays of Elia* (1823).

- 4 We should love our native land were it a sterile rock; but we love it better when to our cultivation it yields an ample increase; and the farmer, instead of sighing for foreign dainties, looks up to heaven, and depends on his own labours; and when they are crowned with a blessing, he thanks God, as tens of thousands throughout our State are doing this day. Let us join our voices with theirs.

SARAH JOSEPHA HALE (1788–1879), U.S. author and editor. *Northwood, or Life North and South* (chapter 8, "Thanksgiving Dinner") (1852).

Hale persuaded President Lincoln to set aside a national day of thanksgiving. In her novel, she describes a feast that includes roasted turkey, a sirloin of beef, goose, ducklings, and chicken pie, in addition to "the celebrated pumpkin pie, an indispensable part of a good

and true Yankee Thanksgiving; the size of the pie usually denoting the gratitude of the party who prepares the feast." In this quotation, an American defends the Thanksgiving custom as a celebration of the bounty of American agriculture, which does not value or require the introduction of foreign delicacies.

- 5 Our Thanksgiving Day, becoming the focus, as it were, of the private life and virtues of the people, should be hallowed and exalted, and made the day of generous deeds and innocent enjoyments, of noble aspirations and heavenly hopes.

SARAH JOSEPHA HALE (1788–1879), U.S. author and editor. Editorial, *Godey's Lady's Book* (1865), and reprinted in Jack Santino, *All Around the Year: Holidays and Celebrations in American Life* (chapter 5, "Autumn into Winter: Celebrating Death and Life") (1994).

Since 1827, Hale had worked to establish Thanksgiving Day. She was instrumental in getting Lincoln to create the national celebration.

- 6 I awoke this morning with a devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new. Shall I not call God the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself to me in his gifts?

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Friendship," *Essays, First Series* (1841).

- 7 Ah! on Thanksgiving day, when from East and from West, From North and from South come the pilgrim and guest, When the gray-haired New Englander sees round his board The old broken links of affection restored, When the care-wearied man seeks his mother once more, And the worn matron smiles where the girl smiled before, What moistens the lip and what brightens the eye?

What calls back the past, like the rich Pumpkin pie?

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. "The Pumpkin."

- 8 I . . . invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865), U.S. president. National Thanksgiving Proclamation (3 October 1863), in Ralph and Adelin Linton, *We Gather Together: The Story of Thanksgiving* (1949).

Lincoln issued this proclamation at the suggestion of Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*. She had started a national campaign for a Thanksgiving holiday. Lincoln's initiative superseded Washington's 1789 proclamation and was undertaken as the Civil War was being fought. Lincoln noted that there had been "blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies" despite "needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense." Franklin Roosevelt later changed the date from the last to the third Thursday in November because merchants wanted a longer Christmas shopping season.

- 9 Our honest Puritan festival is spreading, not as formerly, as a kind of opposition Christmas, but as a welcome prelude and adjunct, a brief interval of good cheer and social rejoicing, heralding the longer season of feasting and rest from labor in the month that follows.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. "The Seasons," *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881* (1891).

- 10 *Thanksgiving Day.* Let us all give humble, hearty, and sincere thanks,

now, but the turkeys. In the island of Fiji they do not use turkeys; they use plumbers. It does not become you and me to sneer at Fiji.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *Pudd'nhead Wilson* ("Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar" at chapter 18) (1894).

- 11 [Thanksgiving] as founded by th'
Puritans to give thanks f'r bein'
presarved fr'm th' Ind'yans, an' we
keep it to give thanks we are pre-
sarved fr'm th' Puritans.

PHILIP DUNNE (1867–1936), U.S. humorist. "Thanksgiving," *Mr. Dooley's Opinions* (1901).

- 12 Folks is go'gin' me wid goodies,
an' dey's treatin' me wid caih,
An' I's fat in spite of all dat I kin
do.
I's mistrus'ful of de kin'ness dat's
erroun' me evahwhaih,
Fu' it's jest' too good, an' frequent,
to be true.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. "Soliloquy of a Turkey."

- 13 From pestilence, fire, flood, and
sword
We have been spared by thy decree,
And now with humble hearts, O
Lord,
We come to pay our thanks to thee.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. "A Thanksgiving Poem."

- 14 Thanksgiving Day! In the days of
our founders, they were willing to
give thanks for mighty little, for
mighty little was all they expected.
. . . Those old boys in the Fall of
the year, if they could gather a few
pumpkins, potatoes and some corn
for the Winter, they was in a thank-
ing mood.

But if we can't gather in a new
car, a new radio, a new tuxedo and
some Government relief, we feel
like the world is agin us.

WILL ROGERS (1879–1935), U.S. humorist. 28 November 1934, *Will Rogers Speaks: Over 1,000 Timeless Quotations for Public Speakers (and Writers, Politicians, Comedians, Browsers . . .)*, ed. Bryan B. Sterling and Frances N. Sterling (1995).

- 15 When the gales of coming winter
outside your window howl,
When the air is sharp and cheery so
it drives away your scowl,
When one's appetite craves turkey
and will have no other fowl,
It's Thanksgiving time!

LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–1967), U.S. poet. "Thanksgiving Time."

- 16 What we're really talking about is a
wonderful day set aside on the
fourth Thursday of November
when no one diets. I mean, why
else would they call it Thanksgiv-
ing?

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. "No One Diets on Thanksgiving" (26 November 1981), in *Forever, Erma: America's Best-Loved Writing from America's Favorite Humorist* (1996).

- 17 Thanksgiving, if there is to be any
at all, must begin and end with
God. Once we have been able to
liberate Thanksgiving from the
clutches of the Pilgrim mystique as
well as from the countercultural
clutches of the protesters, and once
we have been liberated from the
"count-your-many-blessings-name-
them-one-by-one" routine, we will
have made a significant step in that
process of redeeming the familiar.

PETER J. GOMES (b. 1942), U.S. clergyman and theologian. "Redeeming the Familiar," *Sermons: Biblical Wisdom for Daily Living* (1998).

The protesters Gomes refers to were protesting against the displacement of American Indians by European settlers.

- 18 On Thanksgiving at our house we like variety, so we don't have turkey every year. Last year we had a swan. It was nice; everyone got some neck.

GEORGE CARLIN (b. 1937), U.S. comic. "Gobble This," *Brain Droppings* (1997).

- 19 I happen to be on record with an explanation of why we can't have our Thanksgiving Day that much earlier: Americans all begin their Christmas shopping on the day after Thanksgiving, and if they started their Christmas shopping in the middle of October they'd run out of money sometime in November. The people who are hard to shop for wouldn't get any presents at all.

CALVIN TRILLIN (b. 1935), U.S. author. *Family Man* (chapter 8, "Thanksgiving Wanderings") (1998).

This comment appears in an essay about Trillin's distaste for Thanksgiving and particularly for turkey, which he would like to replace with spaghetti carbonara. He notes that he has proposed a switch to the Canadian Thanksgiving date in October, and offers the explanation above for general resistance to the idea.

Hanukkah

- 1 The commandment to light the Hanukkah lamp is an exceedingly precious one, and one should be particularly careful to fulfill it, in order to make known the miracle, and to offer additional praise . . . to God for the wonders which He has wrought for us. Even if one has no food to eat except what he receives from charity, he should beg—or sell

his garment to buy—oil and lamps, and light them.

MAIMONIDES (MOSES BEN MAIMON) (1135–1204), Jewish (Spanish-born) rabbi, philosopher, jurist, and physician. Megillah and Hanukkah (Mishneh Torah), in *The Hanukkah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1976).

- 2 Mighty, praised beyond compare,
Rock of my salvation,
Build again my house of prayer,
For thy habitation!

"Maoz Tzur" ("Rock of Ages"), trans. Solomon Solis Cohen, in *The Hanukkah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1976).

One of the most popular hymns of the Ashkenazic Jews and a traditional part of Hanukkah celebrations, it is attributed to the 13th-century writer Mordecai.

- 3 I have a little dreidel,
I made it out of clay;
And when it's dry and ready
Then dreidel I shall play.

Traditional song, arranged by Samuel S. Grossman and Samuel E. Goldfarb, in *The Hanukkah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1976).

- 4 You don't go to *heder* for eight days in a row, you eat pancakes every day, spin your dreidel to your heart's content, and from all sides Hanukkah money comes pouring in. What holiday could be better than that?

SHOLOM ALEICHEM (BORN SOLOMON J. RABINOWITZ) (1859–1916), Russian author writing in Yiddish. "Hannukah Money," *The Old Country*, trans. Julius and Frances Butwin (1946).

The author explains here why Hannukah is the best holiday for children.

- 5 When we light the Hanukkah candles
let us remember the grave choices
freedom illuminates for us.

RUTH F. BRIN (b. 1921), U.S. poet, fiction writer, and interpreter of Jewish liturgy. "An Interpretation of Hannukah," *Interpretations for the Weekly Torah Reading* (1965).

- 6 One must never forget. . . . Hanukkah is the celebration of our war, the celebration of the war of God. In the present war we have forgotten the war of the living God, we have forgotten Matthias, the high priest.

AVIGDOR HAMEIRI, Israeli author. "The Living Menorah" (*The Jewish Spectator*, December 1946), trans. Shlomo Katz; in *The Hanukkah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (1976).

These are the words of a soldier who during the Second World War was made into a "living menorah" by having his hands dipped in hot tar by a sadistic superior.
- 7 Hanukkah commemorates and celebrates the first serious attempt in history to proclaim and champion the principle of religio-cultural diversity in the nation. The primary aim of the Maccabees was to preserve their own Jewish identity and to safeguard for Israel the possibility of continuing its traditional mission.

THEODOR HERZL GASTER (1906–1992.), Anglo-American folklorist and religion scholar. *Festivals of the Jewish Year: A Modern Interpretation and Guide* (1976).
- 8 Hannukkah is the Festival of Lights. It commemorates an ancient Jewish rebellion against oppression, during which the Temple in Jerusalem was miraculously recaptured from pagan hellenizers and rededicated to the worship of God. The candles of Hanukkah celebrate that rededication. They also help brighten the long winter nights. . . . I also want another miracle. But if it does not

come, we will make a human miracle. We will give the world the special gift of our Jewishness. We will not let the world burn out our souls.

CHAIM POTOK (BORN HERMAN HAROLD) (b. 1929), U.S. author. "Miracles for a Broken Planet," *McCalls* (December 1972).

Potok quotes his father on the eighth night of Hanukkah 1938. The father tries to console the son, who wishes that God would stop the Nazi persecution of the Jews just as he allowed the Maccabees to recapture the Temple of Jerusalem from pagan hellenizers.

- 9 A lack of clear and satisfying religious identity hurts American Jews most in December. . . . It is a good thing that Hanuka is then at hand. . . . The tale of the Feast of Lights, with its all-too-sharp comment on our life nowadays, is very colorful. It is of the greatest use in giving the young a quick grasp of the Jewish historic situation. The gifts win their attention. The little candles stimulate their questions. The observance seems tooled to the needs of self-discovery.

HERMAN WOUK (b. 1915), U.S. author. *This Is My God: The Jewish Way of Life* (chapter 7, "The Minor Holy Days") (1988).
- 10 "Jewish Christmas"—that's what my gentile friends called Chanukah when I was growing up in Michigan in the thirties and forties. Anachronistic, yes, but they had a point. Observing the dietary laws of separating milk and meat dishes was far easier for the handful of Jewish families in our little town than getting through December without mixing the two holidays.

FAYE MOSKOWITZ, U.S. essayist and teacher. *And the Bridge Is Love: Life Stories* (1991).

- 11 Those candles were laid out,
friends invited, ingredients bought
for latkes and apple pancakes,
that holiday for liberation
and the winter solstice

when tops turn like little planets.

MARGE PIERCY (b. 1936), U.S. poet.
"My mother's body," *The Art of Blessing the Day: Poems with a Jewish Theme* (1999).

- 12 Millions of kids before me had
spun the dreidl on this holiday and
millions more would do so in many
years to come. I saw myself as a
passing bridge, a peon, a crucial
component in an infinite chain.
The accident of my Hispanic birth
had only added a different cultural
flavor to the already plentiful gal-
lery of childhood smiles. I was, all
Jewish children are, time-travelling
Maccabees reenacting a cosmic fes-
tival of self-definition. This thought
made me stronger, a superhero of
sorts, a freedom-fighter with a mis-
sion: to smile was to remember, to
insert myself in history.

ILAN STAVANS (b. 1960), U.S. (Mexican-born) author and teacher. *The Riddle of Catin-flas: Essays on Hispanic Popular Culture* (1988).

Kwanzaa

- 1 The fact is that there is nowhere on
the African continent a holiday
named Kwanzaa. . . . Kwanzaa is an
Afro-American holiday which by its
very definition reflects the dual
character of the identity and experi-
ence of the Afro-American people.

MAULANA KARENGA (b. 1941), U.S.
professor of African-American studies. *The Af-
rican American Holiday of Kwanzaa: A Cele-*

bration of Family, Community, and Culture
(1988).

Karenga is the creator of Kwanzaa, which was
first celebrated in 1966.

- 2 It's an African holiday created by
African people. It speaks to me in a
way it can't speak to people outside
our culture. We honor and affirm
our family, community, and cul-
ture.

MAULANA KARENGA (b. 1941), U.S.
professor of African-American studies. Quoted
in Aldore Collier, "The Man Who Invented
Kwanzaa," *Ebony* (January 1988).

- 3 To be sure, celebrating Kwanzaa is
not an end in itself. Neither is hav-
ing an Africa medallion swinging
from your neck, wearing a kente
cloth hat, or giving your children
African names. Medallions, clothes,
and newly created rites should re-
mind us of our collective strength,
and of the fact that this strength is
manifest only through individual
effort. What we are doing with
Kwanzaa and "Afrocentricity" in
general is using our culture as an
ideal that each of us tries to live up
to.

ERIC V. COPAGE, U.S. author and editor.
*Kwanzaa: An African-American Celebration of
Culture and Cooking* (1991).

- 4 Every day of the year we must ap-
ply and practice the Nguzo Saba
sincerely and faithfully to harvest
success. If you wanted to sing like
Whitney Houston, would you think
of your music only once a week?
. . . If you wanted to be a cham-
pion athlete like Michael Jordan,
would you abuse your body, neglect
your meals, and skip routine prac-
tice?

DOROTHY WINBUSH RILEY (b. 1946), U.S. educator. *The Complete Kwanzaa: Celebrating Our Cultural Harvest* (1995).

- 5 Like Christians at Christmas, African-Americans now have a choice. They can ignore the inevitable commercialization of Kwanzaa and keep the home candles burning. Or they can celebrate Kwanzaa in the old-fashioned American way—by commodifying it.

KENNETH L. WOODWARD and **PA-TRICE JOHNSON**, U.S. journalists. "The Advent of Kwanzaa: Will Success Spoil an African-American Fest?" *Newsweek* (11 December 1995).

The authors include this comment as part of a story about the trend whereby businesses, such as McDonald's fast-food restaurants and Hall-mark greeting cards, now market Kwanzaa.

- 6 The seven principles of Kwanzaa—unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith—teach us that when we come together to strengthen our families and communities and honor the lessons of the past, we can face the future with joy and optimism.

BILL CLINTON (b. 1946), U.S. president. "Kwanzaa Greetings," *Jet* (30 December 1996).

- 7 We ask you to imagine a world where African people all sing the same songs, all dance to the same music, all dream the same dreams, and all work for the same goals. This is the true purpose of Kwanzaa: to put us all on one accord. There will always be diversity in our songs, but we should strive to always make beautiful music.

DAVID HALL (b. 1950), U.S. educator. Quoted in Barbara Eklof, *For Every Season*:

The Complete Guide to African American Celebrations, Traditional to Contemporary (1997).

From Hall's greeting to the first National Kwanzaa Celebration, held on Jekyll Island, Ga., 27 December 1990.

- 8 Kwanzaa's success depends on exacerbating consciously or unconsciously, black people's sense of alienation from Christmas. With its fat white man who delivers toys and gifts to children, Christmas simply confirms many African Americans' perception that everything in American society reinforces the idea of white supremacy.

GERALD EARLY (b. 1952), U.S. professor of African and African-American studies. Quoted in "Dreaming of a Black Christmas," *Harper's* (January 1997).

Christmas

- 1 I sing the birth was born tonight,
The Author both of life and light,
The angels so did sound it;
And like the ravished shepherds
said,
Who saw the light, and were afraid,
Yet searched, and true they
found it.

BEN JONSON (1572–1637), English poet and dramatist. "A Hymn on the Nativity of My Saviour."

- 2 Kindle the Christmas Brand, and
then
Till Sunne-set let it burne;
Which quencht, then lay it up agen,
Till Christmas next returne.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. "The Ceremonies for Candlemasse day."

- 3 What sweeter musick can we bring,
Then a Caroll, for to sing

The Birth of this our heavenly
King?

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. "A Christmas Caroll, sung to the King in the Presence at White-Hall."

- 4 The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?

My God, no hymne for thee?
My soul's a shepherd too; a flock it feeds

Of thoughts, and words, and deeds.

The pasture is thy word; the streams, thy grace
Enriching all the place.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "Christmas."

- 5 They talke of Christmas so long,
that it comes.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 840 (1640).

- 6 How shall we celebrate the day,
When God appear'd in mortal clay:
The mark of worldly scorn:
When the Archangels heavenly
Lays,
Attempted the Redeemer's Praise
And hail'd Salvation's Morn.

THOMAS CHATTERTON (1752–1770), English poet. "A Hymn for Christmas Day."

- 7 Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer

.
And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite

Gave honour to the holy night;
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;

On Christmas eve the mass was sung;

That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832), Scottish novelist and poet. *Marmion* (introduction to canto 6).

- 8 He who can turn churlishly away
from contemplating the felicity of
his fellow-beings and can sit down
darkling and repining in his loneliness
when all around is joyful may
have his moments of strong excitement
and selfish gratification, but
he wants the genial and social sympathies
which constitute the charm
of a Merry Christmas.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "Christmas," *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

- 9 Now Christmas is come,
Let us beat up the drum,
And call all our neighbors together,
And when they appear,
Let us make them such cheer,
As will keep out the wind and the weather.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "Christmas Eve," *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

Cited as a "good old Christmas song" sung by Simon Bracebridge.

- 10 But it is a cold, lifeless business
when you go to the shops to buy
something, which does not represent
your life and talent, but a
goldsmith's.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Gifts," *Essays, Second Series* (1844).

- 11 Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn;
 Draw forth the cheerful day from
 night;
 O Father, touch the east, and
 light
 The light that shone when Hope
 was born.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892),
 English poet. *In Memoriam A.H.H.* 30 (1850).

- 12 Happy, happy Christmas, that can
 win us back to the delusions of our
 childish days; that can recall to the
 old man the pleasures of his youth;
 that can transport the sailor and
 the traveller, thousands of miles
 away, back to his own fire-side and
 his quiet home!

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), En-
 glish author. *The Pickwick Papers* (chapter 28,
 “A Good-Humoured Christmas Chapter, Con-
 taining an Account of a Wedding and Some
 Other Sports Beside: Which Although in Their
 Way, Even as Good Customs as Marriage Itself,
 Are Not Quite so Religiously Kept Up in These
 Degenerate Times”) (1836–37).

- 13 Christmas was close at hand, in all
 his bluff and hearty honesty; it was
 the season of hospitality, merri-
 ment, and open-heartedness; the
 old year was preparing, like an an-
 cient philosopher, to call his friends
 around him, and amidst the sound
 of feasting and revelry to pass
 gently and calmly away.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), En-
 glish author. *The Pickwick Papers* (chapter 28,
 “A Good-Humoured Christmas Chapter, Con-
 taining an Account of a Wedding, and Some
 Other Sports Beside: Which Although in Their
 Way, Even as Good Customs as Marriage Itself,
 Are Not Quite so Religiously Kept Up in These
 Degenerate Times”) (1836–37).

- 14 It was deemed a disgrace not to get
 drunk at Christmas; and he was re-
 garded as lazy indeed, who had not
 provided himself with the necessary

means, during the year, to get
 whisky enough to last him through
 Christmas.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS (c. 1817–
 1895), U.S. abolitionist. *Narrative of the Life
 of an American Slave* (chapter 10) (1845).

In this part of his narrative, Douglass describes
 the way slaveholders used holidays as “safety-
 valves, to carry off the rebellious spirit of en-
 slaved humanity.”

- 15 What can I give Him
 Poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd
 I would bring a lamb;
 If I were a wise man,
 I would do my part,—
 Yet what I can give Him
 Give my heart.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894),
 English poet. “A Christmas Carol.”

- 16 There was a good deal of laughing
 and kissing and explaining, in the
 simple, loving fashion which makes
 these home-festivals so pleasant at
 the time, so sweet to remember
 long afterward, and then all fell to
 work.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT (1832–1888),
 U.S. author. *Little Women* (1868–69).

Alcott describes a Christmas celebration during
 hard times, when members of the March fam-
 ily give homemade gifts whose value is in the
 loving labor they invested in them.

- 17 Now 'tis Christmas morn;
 Here's to our women old and
 young,
 And to John Barleycorn!

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English
 author. “The Dead Quire.”

- 18 The magi, as you know, were wise
 men—wonderfully wise men—who
 brought gifts to the Babe in the
 manger. They invented the art of

giving Christmas gifts. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication.

O. HENRY (WILLIAM SYDNEY PORTER) (1862–1910), U.S. short-story writer. “Gifts of the Magi.”

- 19 Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Editorial, *New York Sun* (21 September 1897).

Part of the response to 8-year-old Virginia O’Hanlon, who had asked, “Is there a Santa Claus?” She was confidently answered by the editors of *The Sun*: “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.”

- 20 Home shall men come,
To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome.
To the end of the way of the wandering star,
To the things that cannot be and that are,
To the place where God was homeless
And all men are at home.

G. K. CHESTERTON (1874–1936), English author. “The House of Christmas.”

- 21 This is the good news of Christmas. He who stands by you and helps you is alive and present! It is he who was born that Christmas Day! Open your eyes, open your ears, open your heart! You may truly see, hear, and experience that he is here,

and stands by you as no one else can do!

KARL BARTH (1886–1968), Swiss theologian. “He Stands By Us,” sermon before Christmas Communion service, 1958, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 22 The Dickensian Christmas-at-Home receives only perfunctory lip-service from a press which draws a steady income from the catering and amusement trades. Home-made fun is gratuitous, and gratuitousness is something which an industrialized world cannot afford to tolerate.

ALDOUS HUXLEY (1894–1963), English author. “New Fashioned Christmas,” *The Olive Tree and Other Essays* (1936).

- 23 To perceive Christmas through its wrapping becomes more difficult with every year.

E. B. WHITE (1899–1985), U.S. author. “The Distant Music of the Hounds,” *The Second Tree from the Corner* (1954).

White in this essay comments that, despite all the distractions and commercialization of the modern observance of Christmas, the holiday remains a miracle because it has “an essential simplicity that is everlasting and triumphant, at the end of confusion.”

- 24 No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare—
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives to-day in Bread and Wine.

JOHN BETJEMAN (1906–1984), English poet. “Christmas.”

- 25 Santa Claus, this psychiatrist says, is a dangerous sentimental father-figure, who is expected to satisfy “unreasonable wants,” and who by that

very expectation delays the “necessary adjustment of the preadolescent child to the world of reality.”

ALISTAIR COOKE (b. 1908), English journalist. “Christmas Eve” (no. 3) (1952).

Originally broadcast in Britain as part of Cooke’s “Letter from America” program.

- 26 A barn with cattle and horses is the place to begin Christmas; after all, that’s where the original event happened, and that same smell was the first air that the Christ Child breathed.

PAUL ENGLE (1908–1991), U.S. author. *Prairie Christmas* (“An Iowa Christmas”) (1960).

- 27 It’s comin’ on Christmas
They’re cutting down trees
They’re putting up reindeer and
singing songs of joy and peace
Oh, I wish I had a river I could
skate away on.
- JONI MITCHELL**, singer and songwriter. “River” (1971), in Jack Santino, *New Old-Fashioned Ways: Holidays and Popular Culture* (1976).
- 28 The true Christmas bathes every little thing in light and makes one cookie a token, one candle, one simple pageant more wonderful than anything seen on stage or screen.

GARRISON KEILLOR (b. 1942), U.S. author and radio personality. *Lake Wobegon Days* (“Winter”) (1985).

- 29 Christmas is a conspiracy to make single people feel lonely.
- ARMISTEAD MAUPIN** (b. 1944), U.S. author. *Tales of the City* (1978).
- 30 I have been investigating the science of Christmas for more than a decade. When I first began to take an

interest in the subject, I was unprepared for the breadth and depth of the insights that would eventually emerge. Take those flying reindeer, Santa’s red and white color scheme, and his jolly disposition, for example. They are all probably linked to the use of a hallucinogenic toadstool in ancient rituals.

ROGER HIGHFIELD (b. 1958), U.S. author. *The Physics of Christmas: From the Aerodynamics of Reindeer to the Thermodynamics of Turkey* (chapter 1, “Christmas and the Scientist: An Introduction”) (1988).

New Year’s Eve

- 1 For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We’ll tak a cup o’ kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796), Scottish poet. “Auld Lang Syne.”

- 2 And ye, who have met with Adversity’s blast,
And been bow’d to the earth by its fury;
To whom the Twelve Months, that have recently pass’d,
Were as harsh as a prejudiced jury,—
Still, fill to the Future! and join in our chime,
The regrets of remembrance to cozen,
And having obtained a New Trial of Time,
Shout in hopes of a kindlier dozen!

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. “Anacreontic: For the New Year.”

- 3 The year
Has gone, and, with it, many a glorious throng

Of happy dreams. Its mark is on
each brow,
Its shadow in each heart. In its
swift course,
It waved its sceptre o'er the beauti-
ful,—
And they are not.

GEORGE DENISON PRENTICE (1802–
1870), U.S. poet. "The Closing Year."

- 4 Good-by, Old Year!
Good-by!
We have seen sorrow—you and I—
Such hopeless sorrow, grief and
care
That now, that you have come to
die,
Remembering our old despair,
'Tis sweet to say, "Good-by—
Good-by, Old Year!
Good-by!"

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–
1916), U.S. poet. "Good-By, Old Year."

- 5 My pipe is out, my glass is dry;
My fire is almost ashes too;
But once again, before you go,
And I prepare to meet the New:
Old Year! a parting word that's
true,
For we've been comrades, you
and I—
I thank God for each day of you;
There! bless you now! Old Year,
good-bye!

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Ca-
nadian poet. "The Passing of the Year."

Saturday's child has to work for its
living,
But a child that's born on the Sab-
bath day
Is fair and wise and good and gay.

In *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*,
ed. Iona Opie and Peter Opie (1952).

- 2 Solomon Grundy,
Born on a Monday,
Christened on Tuesday,
Married on Wednesday,
Took ill on Thursday,
Worse on Friday,
Died on Saturday,
Buried on Sunday:
This is the end
Of Solomon Grundy.

In *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*,
ed. Iona Opie and Peter Opie (1952).

- 3 You know that Munday is Sundayes
brother;
Tuesday is such another;
Wednesday you must go to church
and pray;
Thursday is half-holiday;
On Friday it is too late to begin to
spin;
The *Saturday* is half-holiday agen.

"Divers Crab-Tree Lectures" (1639). Quoted in
John Brand, *Observations on the Popular An-
tiquities of Great Britain*, vol. 2 (1848–49).

- 4 That all those that marry on Tues-
days and Thursdays, shall be happy.
. . . Those that begin journies upon
a *Wednesday* shall run through
much danger.

"Rare tract called the Animal Parliament,
1707," quoted in John Brand. *Observations on
the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, vol. 2
(1848–49).

Days of the Week

- 1 Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,

- 5 When through the Town, with slow
and solemn Air,

Led by the Nostril, walks the mu-
zled Bear;
Behind him moves majestically dull,
The Pride of *Hockley-hole*, the surly
Bull;
Learn hence the Periods of the
Week to name,
Mondays and *Thursdays* are the
Days of Game.

JOHN GAY (1685–1732), English dramatist and poet. *Trivia; Or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London* (book 2) (1716).

- 6 When fishy Stalls with double Store
are laid;
.....
Wednesdays and *Fridays* you'll ob-
serve from hence,
Days, when our Sires were doom'd
to Abstinence.

JOHN GAY (1685–1732), English dramatist and poet. *Trivia; Or, The Art of Walking The Streets of London* (book 2) (1716).

- 7 And if I loved you Wednesday,
Well, what is that to you?
I do not love you Thursday—
So much is true.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892–1950), U.S. poet. "Thursday."

- 8 Last Monday nite
I saw a fight
Between Wednesday and Thursday
Over Saturday nite
Tuesday asked me what was going
on
I said "Sunday's in the meadow
And Friday's in the corn."

JOHN PRINE, U.S. singer and songwriter. "Quiet Man" (1971).

and do all thy work; But the sev-
enth day is the sabbath of the Lord
thy God; in it thou shalt not do any
work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy
daughter, thy manservant, nor thy
maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy
stranger that is within thy gates: For
in six days the LORD made heaven
and earth, the sea, and all that in
them is, and rested the seventh day;
wherefore, the LORD blessed the
sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Exodus 20.8–11.

- 2 O day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the next worlds
bud,
Th'indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a friend, and with his
bloud;
The couch of time; cares balm and
bay:
The week were dark, but for thy
light.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "Sunday."

- 3 The Country Parson, as soon as he
awakes on Sunday morning, pres-
ently falls to work, and seems to
himself so as a Market-man is,
when the Market day comes, or a
shopkeeper, when customers use to
come in. His thoughts are full of
making the best of the day, and
contriving it to his best gaines.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "The Parson on Sun-
days," *A Priest to the Temple, or The Country
Parson* (1632).

- 4 Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes be-
twixt
A Saturday and Monday;

Sunday

- 1 Remember the sabbath day, to keep
it holy. Six days shalt thou labor

For then I'm dressed all in my best
 To walk abroad with Sally;
 She is the darling of my heart,
 And she lives in our alley.

HENRY CAREY (c.1687–1743), English poet and musician. "Sally in Our Alley."

- 5 [Sunday] should be different from another day. People may walk, but not throw stones at birds. There may be relaxation, but there should be no levity.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. Quoted in James Boswell, *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, 20 August 1773 (1785).

- 6 There is something delightful in beholding the poor prisoner of the crowded and dusty city enabled thus to come forth once a week and throw himself upon the green bosom of nature. He is like a child restored to the mother's breast; and they who first spread out these noble parks and magnificent pleasure grounds which surround this huge metropolis have done at least as much for its health and morality as if they had expended the amount of cost in hospitals, prisons, and penitentiaries.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "A Sunday in London," *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

Irving opens up his description by calling the city on Sunday a "gigantic monster . . . charmed into repose" when the "intolerable din and struggle of the week are at an end."

- 7 He goes on Sunday to the church,
 And sits among his boys;
 He hears the parson pray and preach,
 He hears his daughter's voice,
 Singing in the village choir,
 And it makes his heart rejoice.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807–1882), U.S. poet. "The Village Blacksmith."

- 8 In calm and cool and silence, once again
 I find my old accustomed place among
 My brethren, where, perchance, no human tongue
 Shall utter words; where never hymn is sung,
 Nor deep-toned organ blown, nor censer swung,
 Nor dim light falling through the pictured pane!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. "First Day Thoughts."

The use of the term "First Day" and the description of the meeting reflect Whittier's Quaker background.

- 9 My father and mother were both of the old-fashioned orthodox school, with minds formed on Jeremy Taylor, Blair, South, and Secker, who thought it their duty to go diligently to church twice on Sunday, communicate four times a year (their only opportunities), after grave and serious preparation, read a sermon to their household on Sunday evenings, and watch over their children's religious instruction, though in a reserved, unemonstrative manner.

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE (1823–1901), English novelist. *Chantry House* (chapter 2, "Schoolroom Days") (1889).

Taylor, Blair, South, and Secker were all royalists and theologians with a distaste for Puritanism.

- 10 Some keep the Sabbath going to Church—
 I keep it, staying at Home—
 With a Bobolink for a Chorister—
 And an Orchard, for a Dome—

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S. poet. “Some keep the Sabbath going to Church.”

- 11 They have three Sundays a week in
Tangier. The Muhammadans’
comes on Friday, the Jews’ on Sat-
urday, and that of the Christian
Consuls on Sunday.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS)
(1835–1910), U.S. author. *The Innocents
Abroad, or The New Pilgrims Progress* (chapter
9) (1869).

- 12 . . . The laziest of all days—
To git up any time—er sleep—
Er jes’ lay round and watch the
haze
A-dancin’ crost the wheat, and keep
My pipe a-goern laisurely.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–
1916), U.S. poet. “Uncle Dan’l In Town Over
Sunday.”

The speaker here, a country man, complains of
“city ways,” which create a lot of noise and
activity but nothing of substance to do.

- 13 Lie still and rest, in that serene re-
pose
That on this holy morning comes
to those
Who have been burdened with the
cares which make
The sad heart weary and the tired
heart ache.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850–1919),
U.S. poet. “Poems of the Week.”

- 14 Cease from unnecessary labours,
Saunter into the green world
stretching far,
Light a long cigar,
Come, enjoy your Sunday
While yet you may!

ROBERT GRAVES (1895–1985), English
author. “Come, Enjoy Your Sunday.”

- 15 But Sunday was a gala day
When, in their best attire,
They’d listen, with rejoicing hearts,
To Sermons on Hell Fire,
Demons I’ve Met, Grim Satan’s
Prey,
And other topics just as gay.

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT (1898–
1943), U.S. author. “Pilgrims and Puritans.”

- 16 Eternity resembles
One long Sunday afternoon.

DONALD JUSTICE (b. 1925), U.S. poet.
“Nostalgia and Complaint of the Grandpar-
ents.”

- 17 Hate Sunday night. Feels like
homework night.

HELEN FIELDING (b. 1958), English au-
thor. *Bridget Jones’s Diary* (“Sunday 14 May”)
(1998).

Monday

- 1 It is a custom in Ireland, among
shoemakers, if they intoxicate
themselves on Sunday, to do no
work on Monday; and this they call
making a Saint Monday or keeping
Saint Crispin’s day. Many here
adopted this good custom from the
example of the shoemakers.

MARIA EDGEWORTH (1767–1849),
Irish author. “Tomorrow,” *Popular Tales* (chap-
ter 6; footnote dated August 1803) (1837).

“Tomorrow” is the story of Basil, a young man
who longs for genius but ruins his life with
procrastination. Presumably the shoemakers
indicate the institutional popularity of his bad
habits.

- 2 MONDAY, n. In Christian coun-
tries, the day after the baseball
game.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S.
author. *The Devil’s Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 3 Poverty compels me
To face the snow and sleet,—
For pore wife and children
Must have a crust to eat.—
The sad wail of hunger
It would drive me insane,
If it wasn't for Blue-Monday
When I git to work againe!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “‘Blue Monday’ at the Shoe Shop (In the Early Seventies).”

- 4 “As Monday goes, so goes the
week,” dames say.
Refreshed, renewed, use well the
initial day.
And see! thy neighbour
Already seeks his labour.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850–1919), U.S. poet. “Poems of the Week.”

- 5 Blue Monday, how I hate blue
Monday
Have to work like a slave all day

DAVE BARTHOLOMEW (b. 1920), U.S. trumpeter, bandleader, and songwriter, and **ANTOINE (FATS) DOMINO** (b. 1928), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Blue Monday” (1957), in *The World's Greatest Fake Book*, ed. Chuck Sher (1983).

- 6 Red beans were traditionally cooked
while the Monday wash was drying
on the line, and since New Orleans
humidity made that an all-day job,
the beans cooked for many hours.

RIMA COLLIN and **RICHARD COLLIN**, U.S. food writers and professors. *The New Orleans Cookbook* (1992).

- 7 Hangin' around
Nothing to do but frown
Rainy days and Mondays always get
me down.

ROGER NICHOLLS and **PAUL WILLIAMS** (b. 1940), U.S. songwriters. “Rainy Days and Mondays” (1971).

The song was a hit for the brother-and-sister act The Carpenters.

- 8 Tell me why I don't like Mondays,
I wanna shoo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oot
The whole day down.

BOB GELDOF (b. 1954), Irish singer and songwriter. “I Don't Like Mondays” (1980).

Geldof and his group The Boomtown Rats based this refrain for their song on a news story about a 16-year-old high school student, Brenda Spencer, who used her father's gun to shoot into a crowd at her high school. She injured eight students and killed the school principal and custodian. When asked what had prompted her, she replied, “I don't like Mondays.”

- 9 It's just another manic Monday
I wish it was Sunday
'Cause that's my fun day
My I don't have to run day.

PRINCE NELSON (CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER, THE ARTIST FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE) (b. 1958), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Manic Monday” (1986).

The song was a hit for the female singing group The Bangles.

Tuesday

- 1 Richard doesn't like to give presents
when you're supposed to give presents.
Christmas and birthdays go
right by. But when he goes out and
buys something, say, because it's a
Tuesday, he's terribly excited.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR (b. 1932), American (English-born) actress. *Elizabeth Taylor: An Informal Memoir* (chapter 7) (1965).

The recipient of one of Richard Burton's gifts might also be terribly excited—he was famous for lavishing Taylor with expensive gems.

- 2 Tuesday had always been our day
together. Most of my courses with
Morrie were on Tuesday, he had of-
fice hours on Tuesdays, and when I

wrote my senior thesis . . . it was on Tuesdays that we sat together. . . . We're Tuesday people.

MITCH ALBOM (b. 1958), U.S. memoirist. *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man and Life's Greatest Lesson* (1997).

Wednesday

- 1 My Wednesday nights came regularly round, our quartette parties came regularly off, my violincello was in good tune, and there was nothing wrong in my world—or if anything not much—or little or much, it was no affair of mine.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Dombey and Son* (chapter 53, “More Intelligence”) (1848).

Mr. Morfin here comments on his ability and desire to take care of his duties for Mr. Dombey, an exacting businessman—to “let everything about me go on, day by day, unquestioned, like a great machine,” and to “take it for granted and consider it all right.”

- 2 Half-way unto the end—the week's high noon.

The morning hours do speed away so soon!

And, when the noon is reached, however bright,

Instinctively we look toward the night.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850–1919), U.S. poet. “Poems of the Week.”

- 3 Why don't you come up and see me sometime? Come up on Wednesday, that's amateur night.

MAE WEST (1892–1980), U.S. actress. In *The Penguin Book of Women's Humor*, ed. Regina Barreca (1996).

and good will, for it is a great privilege accorded to her. It brings her the merit of holy sons, who will be Lights of the World in Torah, and who will increase peace on earth. It also merits her to give long life unto her husband. Therefore she should be careful in the observance of this Mitzwah.

Zohar 1.48b, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 Some days . . . are commonly deemed unlucky; among others, Friday labours under that opprobrium; and it is pretty generally held that no new work or enterprise should commence on that day. . . . A respectable merchant of the city of London informed me that no person there will begin any business, i. e. open his shop for the first time, on a Friday.

JOHN BRAND (1744–1806). *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, vol. 2 (1848–49).

- 3 Midst the wealth of facts and fancies

That our memories may recall,
Thus the old school-day romances
Are the dearest, after all!—

When some sweet thought revises

The half-forgotten tune
That opened “Exercises,”

On “Friday Afternoon.”

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “Friday Afternoon: To William Morris Pierson, [1868–1870].”

- 4 From feasts abstain; be temperate, and pray;
Fast if thou wilt; and yet, throughout the day,

Friday

- 1 The housewife should kindle the Sabbath candles with a joyous heart

Neglect no labour and no duty
shirk:
Not many hours are left thee for
thy work.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850–1919),
U.S. poet. “Poems of the Week.”

- 5 I shall never forget Shabbat in my town. When I shall have forgotten everything else, my memory will still retain the atmosphere of holiday, of serenity pervading even the poorest houses: the white tablecloth, the candles, the meticulously combed little girls, the men on their way to the synagogue. When my town shall fade into the abyss of time, I will continue to remember the light and the warmth it radiated on Shabbat.

ELIE WIESEL (b. 1928), U.S. (Romanian-born) author and Holocaust survivor. *A Jew Today* (part 1, “Words and Memories: To Be a Jew”) (1978).

- 6 It was a nice way to remember, to gather those scattered Friday nights of candles strewn over childhood’s inconsistent terrain. A token of memory, and also of history, the collective remembrance far beyond memory’s reach.

ELIZABETH EHRLICH, U.S. author. *Miriam’s Kitchen* (“October: Diaspora”) (1997).

Ehrlich describes her return to the ritual of lighting Sabbath candles on Friday nights.

Saturday

- 1 When dirty Waters from Balconies drop,
And dextrous Damsels twirle the sprinkling Mop,
And cleanse the spatter’d Sash, and scrub the Stairs;

Know *Saturday’s* conclusive Morn appears.

JOHN GAY (1685–1732), English dramatist and poet. *Trivia: Or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London* (book 2) (1716).

- 2 With regard to Saturday afternoons, perhaps men who live by manual labour, and have families to support by it, cannot spend them better than in following the several callings in which they have employed themselves on the preceding days of the week. For industry will be no bad preparation for the Sabbath.

JOHN BRAND (1744–1806). *Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, vol. 2 (1848–49).

- 3 The evening of the last day of the week was always celebrated by what is styled on board of English vessels, “The Saturday-night bottles.” Two of these were sent down into the fore-castle, just after dark; one for the starboard watch, and the other for the larboard.

HERMAN MELVILLE (1819–1891), U.S. author. *Omoo* (chapter 12, “Death and Burial of Two of the Crew”) (1847).

- 4 The common failings in that part of the country amongst the poor were Saturday-night drunkenness and looseness in the relations between young men and young women. Mrs. Caffryn’s indignation never rose to the correct boiling point against these crimes.

MARK RUTHERFORD (1831–1913), English author. *Clara Hopgood* (chapter 12) (1896).

Mrs. Caffryn is a shop owner who refuses to be as upset by her neighbor’s drunkenness as she is by the squalor in which they must live.

- 5 Saturday night is the loneliest night
in the week,
'Cause that's the night
that my sweetie and I
used to dance cheek to cheek.

SAMMY CAHN (1913–1993), U.S. lyricist.
“Saturday Night” (1996), in *The World's Greatest Fake Book*, ed. Chuck Sher (1983).

Music for the song was composed by Jules Styne.

- 6 . . . Saturday morning,
all my tiredness gone away.
Got my money and my honey,
and I'm out on the stem to play.

DAVE BARTHOLOMEW (b. 1920), U.S. trumpeter, bandleader, and songwriter, and **ANTOINE (FATS) DOMINO** (b. 1928), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Blue Monday” (1957), in *The World's Greatest Fake Book*, ed. Chuck Sher (1983).

- 7 Come Saturday morning
I'm going away with my friend.
We'll Saturday spend till the end of
the day.

DORY PREVIN (b. 1936?), U.S. lyricist.
“Come Saturday Morning” (1969).

The song, with music by Fred Karlin, is associated with the film *The Sterile Cuckoo*, starring Liza Minelli.

- 8 A congregation of Jews that reads
from the Torah every Saturday, that
includes babies and grandparents,
the memories of Holocaust survivors
and the enthusiasm of converts,
will show you that you need
not live and die on your own island
of time. You are part of an extended
family whose memories stretch
back past Mount Sinai.

PAUL COWAN (1940–1988), U.S. journalist and author. *Mixed Blessings: Marriage Between Jews and Christians* (1987).

of the celestials dost behold thy
back, O come propitious to the
chiefs whose toil ensures peace to
the fruitful earth, peace to the sea.

OVID (43 B.C.–c. A.D. 18), Roman poet.
Fasti 1.63, in *Ovid in Six Volumes* (Loeb Classical Library), vol. 5, trans. James George Frazer (1989).

- 2 A Drunkard cannot meet a Cork
Without a Revery—
And so encountering a Fly
This January Day
Jamaicas of Remembrance stir
That send me reeling in—
This moderate drinker of Delight
Does not deserve the spring—

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S. poet. “A Drunkard cannot meet a Cork.”

- 3 I do not like January very much. It
is too stationary. Not enough happens.
I like the evidences of life,
and in January there are too few of them.

VICTORIA (OR VITA) SACKVILLE-WEST (1892–1962), English novelist and poet. *Country Notes* (“January”) (1940).

- 4 In the South we go in quest of
spring as soon as Christmas is past
and the new year begins. The first
days of January find us searching
among the last fallen leaves for purple
violets and white hyacinths and
the yellow buds of winter aconite.

ELIZABETH LAWRENCE (1904–1985), U.S. landscape architect. “The Onset of Spring,” *The Home Garden* (February 1943), and reprinted in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garmey (1999).

January

- 1 Two-headed Janus, opener of the
softly gliding year, thou who alone

February

- 1 Our Roman fathers gave the name
of *februa* to instruments of purification. . . . The month is called af-

ter these things, because the Luperci purify the whole ground with strips of hide, which are their instruments of cleansing, or because the season is pure when once peace-offerings have been made at the graves and the days devoted to the dead are past. Our sires believed that every sin and every cause of ill could be wiped out by rites of purification.

OVID (43 B.C.—c. A.D. 18), Roman poet. *Fasti* 2.19 ff., in *Ovid in Six Volumes* (Loeb Classical Library), vol. 5, trans. James George Frazer (1989).

The Luperci were a group of priests who lived near the Palatine Hill in Rome and engaged in rituals of cleansing. They attempted to ensure the fertility of the women and agriculture of the country.

2 February makes a bridge and
March breaks it.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 739 (1640).

3 The most serious charge which can
be brought against New England is
not Puritanism but February. . . .
Spring is too far away to comfort
even by anticipation, and winter
long ago lost the charm of novelty.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH (1893–1970), America author and educator. *The Twelve Seasons* (1949); in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garmey (1999).

March

1 It is now March, and the northern
wind drieth up the southern dirt.
The tender lips are now masked for
fear of chapping, and the fair hands
must not be ungloved. Now riseth
the sun a pretty step to his fair
height, and Saint Valentine calls the
birds together where nature is

pleased in the variety of love. . . . I
hold it the servant of nature and
the schoolmaster of art, the hope of
labor and the subject of reason.

NICHOLAS BRETON (c. 1535–c. 1626), English author. *Fantastics: Serving for a Perpetual Prognostication* (1626).

2 Remember March, the ides of
March, remember.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Julius Caesar* 4.3.18.

The ides in the ancient Roman calendar was the 15th of March, May, July, and October and the 13th of other months.

3 It is the first mild day of March:
Each minute sweeter than before,

.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains
bare,
And grass in the green field.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850), English poet. “To My Sister.”

4 Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The Ploughboy is whooping—
anon—anon:
There’s joy in the mountains;
There’s life in the fountains!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850), English poet. “Written in March While Resting on the Bridge at the Foot of Brother’s Water.”

According to Dorothy Wordsworth’s journal, the poem was composed on a bridge at Brother’s Water, a small lake.

5 Slayer of the winter, art thou here
again?

O welcome, thou that bring'st the
summer nigh!
The bitter wind makes not thy vic-
tory vain,
Nor will we mock thee for thy faint
blue sky.
Welcome, O March!

WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896), English author, artist, and social reformer. "The Months."

- 6 When coughs are changed to
laughs, and when
Our frowns melt into smiles of
glee,
And all our blood thaws out again
In streams of ecstasy,
And poets wreak their roundelay,
The Spring is coming round this
way.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. "When Early March Seems Middle May."

- 7 March is no land of extremes. Dull
as life,
It offers small flowers and minor
holidays.

JOHN UPDIKE (b. 1932), U.S. author. "March: A Birthday Poem."

April

- 1 Some there are who grudge thee
the honour of the month, and
would snatch it from thee, Venus.
For they say that April was named
from the open (*apertum*) season,
because spring then opens (*aperit*)
all things, and the sharp frost-
bound cold departs, and earth un-
locks her teeming soil, though
kindly Venus claims the month and
lays her hand on it.

OVID (43 B.C.–C. A.D. 18), Roman poet. *Fasti* 4.85 ff., in *Ovid in Six Volumes* (Loeb

Classical Library), vol. 5, trans. James George (1989).

- 2 Whan that Aprill with his shoures
soote
The droghte of March hath perced
to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich li-
cour
Of which vertu engendered is the
flour:

.
Thanne longen folk to goon on pil-
grimages.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1343–1400), En-
glish poet. General Prologue, *The Canterbury*
Tales (c. 1387).

- 3 It is now April, and the nightingale
begins to tune her throat against
May. The sunny showers perfume
the air and the bees begin to go
abroad for honey. The dew, as in
pearls, hangs upon the tops of the
grass, while the turtles sit billing
upon the little green boughs. . . . It
were a world to set down the worth
of this month, but in sum, I thus
conclude: I hold it the heaven's
blessing and the earth's comfort.

NICHOLAS BRETON (c. 1535–c.1626),
English author. *Fantastics: Serving for a Perpet-*
ual Prognostication (1626).

- 4 O, how this spring of love resem-
bleth
The uncertain glory of an April
day,
Which now shows all the beauty of
the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all
away.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
English poet and dramatist. *Two Gentlemen of*
Verona 1.3.84–87.

Spoken by Proteus.

- 5 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and pre-
cipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious
notes,
As he were fearful that an April
night
Would be too short for him to ut-
ter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his
full soul
Of all its music!

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. "The Nightingale: A Conversation Poem, April 1798."

- 6 The April winds are magical,
And thrill our tuneful frames;
The garden-walks are passionate
To bachelors and dames.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "April."

- 7 Sweet April! many a thought
Is wedded unto thee, as hearts are
wed;
Nor shall they fail, till, to its au-
tumn brought,
Life's golden fruit is shed.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807–1882), U.S. poet. "An April Day."

- 8 Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the
brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny
leaf.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889), English poet. "Home-Thoughts from Abroad."

- 9 Ah, but I know, for never April's
shine,
Nor passion gust of rain, nor all
her flowers

Scattered in haste, were seen so
sudden fine
As she in various mood, on
whom the powers
Of happiest stars in fair conjunc-
tion smiled
To bless the birth of April's dar-
ling child.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. "An April Birthday at Sea."

- 10 Bare twigs in April enhance our
pleasure;
We know the good time is yet to
come.

.
Bare twigs in Autumn are signs for
sadness;
We feel the good time is well-
nigh past.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824–1899), Irish author. "Winter."

- 11 'Tis April again in my garden, again
the grey stone-wall
Is pranked with yellow alyssum
and lilac aubrey-cresses;
Half-hidden the mavis caroleth
in the tassely birchen tresses
And awhile on the sunny air a
cuckoo tuneth his call.

ROBERT SEYMOUR BRIDGES (1844–1930), English poet. "To Francis Jammes."

- 12 April is the cruellest month, breed-
ing
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.

T. S. ELIOT (1888–1965), Anglo-American poet and critic. *The Waste Land* ("The Burial of the Dead") (1922).

- 13 It is not enough that yearly, down
this hill,
April

Comes like an idiot, babbling and
strewing flowers.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892–1950), U.S. poet. “Spring.”

- 14 O April, full of blood, full of
breath, have pity upon us!
Pale, where the winter like a stone
has been lifted away, we emerge
like yellow grass.
Be for a moment quiet, buffet us
not, have pity upon us,
Till the green come back into the
vein, till the giddiness pass.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892–1950), U.S. poet. “Northern April.”

May

- 1 I incline to think that the elders
[*maiores*] gave their own name to
the month of May: they considered
the interests of their own class. . . .
No slight proof of the proposed
honour is furnished by the next
month, the month of June, which is
named after young men [*juvenes*].

OVID (43 B.C.—C. A.D. 18), Roman poet.
Fasti 5.75, in *Ovid in Six Volumes* (Loeb Classical Library), vol. 5, trans. James George Frazer (1989).

- 2 Is not thilke the mery moneth of
May,
When loue lads masken in fresh
aray?
How falles it then, we no merrier
bene,
Ylike as other, girt in gawdy greene?
Our bloncket liueryes bene all to
sadde,
For thilke same season, when all is
ycladd
With pleasaunce.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552?–1599), English poet and courtier. “Maye,” *The Shephear-des Calendar* (1579).

“Bloncket liueryes” are gray coats worn by the shepherds.

- 3 Then while time serves, and we are
but decaying,
Come, my Corinna! come, let’s goe
a Maying.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. “Corinna’s Going A-Maying.”

- 4 Hee that is in a towne in May lo-
seth his spring.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 988 (1640).

- 5 Hail bounteous May that dost in-
spire
Mirth and youth and warm desire!

JOHN MILTON (1608–1674), English poet. “Song: On May Morning.”

- 6 We in thought will join your
throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts today
Feel the gladness of the May!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850), English poet. “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.”

- 7 May is lilac here in New England,
May is a thrush singing “Sun up!”
on a tip-top ash-tree,
May is white clouds behind pine-
trees
Puffed out and marching upon a
blue sky.
May is a green as no other,
May is much sun through small
leaves,
May is soft earth,
And apple-blossoms,
And windows open to a South
wind.

AMY LOWELL (1874–1925), U.S. poet.
“Lilacs.”

- 8 May is a perfect time to be in Tuscany—a time when it’s still not too hot for a *contessa* to spend some time next to the pool, gazing approvingly over the vineyards that surround her.

CALVIN TRILLIN (b. 1935), U.S. author.
Travels with Alice (chapter 15, “Special Occasion”) (1989).

June

- 1 Oh for boyhood’s time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. “The Barefoot Boy.”

- 2 The end has come, as come it must
To all things; in these sweet June days
The teacher and the scholar trust
Their parting feet to separate ways.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. “At School-Close, Bowdoin Street, Boston, 1877.”

- 3 June comes in with roses in her hand, but very often with a thick shawl on her shoulders, and a bad cold in her head.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. “The Seasons,” *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881* (1891).

- 4 Too young for love?
Ah, say not so,
While daisies bloom and tulips glow!
June soon will come with lengthened day
To practise all love learned in May.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. “Too Young for Love.”

- 5 And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays:
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. “The Vision of Sir Launfal.”

- 6 June the month of months
Flowers and fruitage brings too,
When green trees spread shadiest boughs,
When each wild bird sings too.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894), English poet. “June.”

- 7 How the wind howls this morn
About the end of May,
And drives June on apace
To mock the world forlorn
And the world’s joy passed away.

WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896), English author, artist, and social reformer. “The End of May.”

Morris here seems to make a case for seeing May and June as cruel months.

- 8 What is one to say about June—the time of perfect young summer, the fulfillment of the promise of earlier months, and with as yet no sign to remind one that its fresh young beauty will ever fade?

GERTRUDE JEKYLL (1843–1932), English gardener. “Rain After Drought,” *Home and Garden* (1900); reprinted in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garmey (1999).

Jekyll is sometimes referred to as the “first lady of modern garden design.”

- 9 Ah! how sweet to seem, love,
Drugged and half aswoon
With this luscious dream, love,
In the heart of June.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “In the Heart of June.”

July

- 1 I know of nothing that makes one
feel more complacent, in these July
days, than to have his vegetables
from his own garden. What an ef-
fect it has on the market-man and
the butcher! It is a kind of declara-
tion of independence.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER (1829–1900), U.S. author. *My Summer in a Garden* (“What I Know About Gardening: Tenth Week”) (1870).

- 2 Between April’s youthful optimism
and September’s mature acceptance
comes July; characterized both by
longing and by hope, it constitutes
a sort of horticultural midlife crisis.

JOE ECK and **WAYNE WINTERROWD**, U.S. landscapers and authors. “July,” *A Year at North Hill: Four Seasons in a Vermont Garden* (1995); reprinted in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garmey (1999).

August

- 1 It is now August, and the sun is
somewhat towards his declination,
yet such is his heat as hardeneth the
soft clay, dries up the standing
ponds, withereth the sappy leaves,
and scorcheth the skin of the na-
ked.

NICHOLAS BRETON (c. 1535–c.1626), English author. *Fantastics: Serving for a Perpetual Prognostication* (1626).

- 2 In these golden latter August days,
Nature has come to a serene equi-
librium. Having flowered and
fruited, she is enjoying herself. I
can see how things are going: it is a
down-hill business after this; but,
for the time being, it is like swing-
ing in a hammock,—such a deli-
cious air, such a graceful repose!

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER (1829–1900), U.S. author. *My Summer in a Garden* (“Fourteenth Week”) (1870).

- 3 That August time it was delight
To watch the red moons wane to
white
”Twixt grey seamed stems of apple-
trees;
A sense of heavy harmonies
Grew on the growth of patient
night,
More sweet than shapen music is.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837–1909), English poet. “August.”

- 4 . . . throbbing on and on, the pulse
of heat
Increases—reaches—passes fever’s
height,
And Day slinks into slumber, cool
and sweet,
Within the arms of Night.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “August.”

- 5 When August days are hot an’ dry,
When burning copper is the sky,
I’d rather fish than feast or fly
In airy realms serene and high.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. “In August.”

- 6 I’m as corny as Kansas in August.

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN (1895–1960), U.S. lyricist and librettist. “A Wonderful Guy,” from the musical *South Pacific* (1949).

- 7 . . . lucky August, best of months
For us, as for that Roman once—
For you're a Leo, same as me
(Isn't it comforting to be
So lordly, selfish, vital, strong?)

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English poet and critic. "Dear CHARLES, My Muse, Asleep or Dead."

September

- 1 Up from the meadows rich with
corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick
stand
Green-walled by the hills of Mary-
land.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel
horde.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. "Barbara Frietchie."

- 2 Now thin mists temper the slow-
ripening beams
Of the September sun: his golden
gleams
On gaudy flowers shine, that prank
the rows
Of high-grown hollyhocks, and all
tall shows
That Autumn flaunteth in his bushy
bowers.

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–1930), English poet. "The Garden in September."

October

- 1 Can't tell what it is about
Old October knocks me out!—

I sleep well enough at night—
And the blamest appetite
Ever mortal man possessed,—

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. "Old October."

- 2 The trees are in their autumn
beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the wa-
ter
Mirrors a still sky. . . .

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865–1939), Irish poet. "The Wild Swans at Coole."

- 3 I cannot but remember
When the year grows old—
October—November—
How she disliked the cold!

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892–1950), U.S. poet. "When the Year Grows Old."

- 4 Bittersweet October. The mellow,
messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause
between the opposing miseries of
summer and winter.

CAROL BISHOP HIPPS, U.S. garden writer and photographer. "October," *In a Southern Garden* (1995), and reprinted in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garmey (1999).

November

- 1 November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832), Scottish author. *Marmion* (introduction to canto 1) (1808).

- 2 Autumn I love thy latter end to
view
In cold novembers day so bleak and
bare
When like lifes dwindld thread
worn nearly thro

Wi lingering pottering pace and
head bleached bare
Thou like an old man bids the
world adieu

JOHN CLARE (1793–1864), English poet.
“Written in November.”

- 3 Talk not of sad November, when a
day
Of warm, glad sunshine fills the
sky of noon,
And a wind, borrowed from
some morn of June,
Stirs the brown grasses and the leaf-
less spray.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–
1892), U.S. poet. “A Day.”

- 4 This sunlight shames November
where he grieves
In dead red leaves, and will not
let him shun
The day, though bough with
bough be over-run.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828–
1882), English poet and painter. *House of Life*,
sonnet 69, “Autumn Idleness.”

- 5 The world is tired, the year is old,
The faded leaves are glad to die.

SARA TEASDALE (1884–1933), U.S. poet.
“November.”

- 6 Apart from the pleasures of garden-
ing, November has beauty of its
own. The Saxons called it the wind-
month, for then the fishermen drew
up their boats and abandoned fish-
ing till the spring; it was called the
slaughter-month, too, when pigs
and cattle were salted down for
preservation throughout the winter.

**VICTORIA (OR VITA) SACKVILLE-
WEST** (1892–1962), English novelist and
poet. *Country Notes* (“Wind-month”) (1940).

- 7 While November numbly collapses,
this beech tree, heavy as death
on the lawn, braces for throat-
cutting ice, bandaging snow.

EDWIN HONIG (b. 1919), U.S. poet. “No-
vember Through a Giant Copper Beech.”

December

- 1 In drear nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne’er remember
Their green felicity—
The north cannot undo them
With a sleety whistle through
them,
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet.
“In Drear Nighted December.”

- 2 The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–
1892), U.S. poet. “Snow-Bound: A Winter
Idyl.”

- 3 Yet my heart loves December’s
smile
As much as July’s golden beam;
Then let us sit and watch the while
The blue ice curdling on the
stream.

EMILY JANE BRONTË (1818–1848), En-
glish author. “How Still, How Happy! Those
are Words.”

Spring

- 1 In the spring time, the only
pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a
ding, ding.
Sweet lovers love the spring.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 5.3.18–20.

Sung in the Forest of Arden by two of the banished pages of the Duke, to honor the marriage of Touchstone and Audrey.

- 2 Spring, the sweet Spring, is the
year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then
maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty
birds do sing.

THOMAS NASHE (1567–1601), English poet. "Spring."

- 3 Sweet spring, full of sweet dayes
and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My musick shows ye have your
closes,

And all must die.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "Vertue."

- 4 Now do a choir of chirping min-
strels bring,
In triumph to the world, the youth-
ful spring.

THOMAS CAREW (1594–1640), English poet. "The Spring."

- 5 Still let my Song a nobler Note as-
sume
And sing th' infusive Force of
Spring on Man;
When Heaven and Earth, as if con-
tending, vye
To raise his Being, and serene his
Soul.
Can he forbear to join the general
Smile
Of Nature? Can fierce Passions vex
his Breast,
While every Gale is Peace, and
every Grove
Is Melody?

JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748), Scottish poet. "Spring," *The Seasons*.

- 6 The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies;
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), English poet and artist. "The Ecchoing Green."

- 7 What a strange thing,
To be thus alive
Beneath the cherry-
blossoms!

ISSA (1763–1827), Japanese poet. In R. H. Blyth, trans. *Haiku*, 4 vols. (1949).

Blyth notes: "Of all the multitude of strange [things] in this mysterious world or ours, the strangest is the simple fact of our own existence."

- 8 The country ever has a lagging
Spring,
Waiting for May to call its vio-
lets forth,
And June its roses.

.
Within the city's bound the time of
flowers

Comes earlier. Let a mild and
sunny day,
Such as full often, for a few bright
hours,
Breathes through the sky of
March the airs of May,
Shine on our roofs and chase the
wintry gloom—
And lo! our borders glow with
sudden bloom.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT (1794–1878), U.S. poet and editor. "Spring in Town."

- 9 The Spring! I shrink and shudder at
her name!
For why, I find her breath a bit-
ter blighter!

And suffer from her *blows* as if they
came

From Spring the Fighter.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English
poet. “Spring: A New Version.”

- 10 For thou, O Spring! canst renovate
All that high God did first create.
Be still his arm and architect,
Rebuild the ruin, mend defect;
Chemist to vamp old worlds with
new,
Coat sea and sky with heavenlier
blue.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–
1882), U.S. author. “May-Day.”

- 11 . . . in my breast
Spring wakens too, and my re-
gret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the
rest.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–
1892), English poet. *In Memoriam A.H.H.* 115
(1850).

Throughout the poem Tennyson mourns the
loss of his friend and charts the progress of his
grief over the course of several years of chang-
ing seasons.

- 12 Out of the city, far away
With Spring to-day!
Where copses tufted with primrose
Give me repose,
Wood-sorrel and wild violet
Soothe my soul’s fret.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824–1889),
Irish author. “A Holiday.”

- 13 A Light exists in Spring
Not present on the Year
At any other period—
When March is scarcely here

A Color stands abroad
On Solitary Fields

That Science cannot overtake
But Human Nature feels.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S.
poet. “A Light exists in Spring.”

- 14 For winter’s rains and ruins are
over,
And all the season of snows and
sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night
that wins;
And time remembered is grief for-
gotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers be-
gotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring
begins.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE
(1837–1909), English poet. *Atalanta in Caly-
don* (first chorus).

- 15 Spring goeth all in white
Crowned with milk-white may:
In fleecy flocks of light
O’er heaven the white clouds stray:

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–1930), English
poet. *Shorter Poems* (book 4, poem 8).

- 16 Nothing is so beautiful as Spring—
When weeds, in wheels, shoot
long and lovely and lush;
Thrush’s eggs look little low
heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does
so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to
hear him sing.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844–
1889), English poet. “Spring.”

- 17 I am amazed at this spring, this
conflagration
Of green fires lit on the soil of
earth, this blaze

Of growing, these smoke-puffs that
puff in wild gyration,
Faces of people blowing across my
gaze!

D. H. LAWRENCE (1885–1930), English
author. "The Enkindled Spring."

- 18 I haven't seen a crocus or a rose-
bud,
or a robin on the wing,
But I feel so gay in a melancholy
way
that it might as well be spring.

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN (1895–1960),
U.S. lyricist and librettist. "It Might As Well Be
Spring," from the musical *State Fair* (1945).

- 19 Spring, of all seasons most gratui-
tous,
Is fold of untaught flower, is race of
water,
Is earth's most multiple, excited
daughter;

And those she has least use for see
her best.

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English
poet and critic. "Spring."

Summer

- 1 Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wude nu—
Sing cuccu!
- ANONYMOUS.** "The Cuckoo Song" (c.
1250).
- 2 All-Conquering Heat, o intermit
thy Wrath!
And on my throbbing Temples po-
tent thus
Beam not so fierce! Incessant still
you flow,

And still another fervent Flood suc-
ceeds,
Pour'd on the Head profuse. In
vain I sigh
And restless turn, and look around
for Night.

JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748), Scottish
poet. "Summer," *The Seasons*.

- 3 Rich music breaths in summers
every sound
And in her harmony of varied
greens
Woods meadows hedgrows corn-
fields all around
Much beauty intervenes
Filling with harmony the ear and
eye
While oer the mingling scenes
Far spreads the laughing sky

JOHN CLARE (1793–1864), English poet.
"Summer Images."

- 4 What is more gentle than a wind in
summer?
What is more soothing than the
pretty hummer
That stays one moment in an open
flower,
And buzzes cheerily from bower to
bower?

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet.
"Sleep and Poetry."

- 5 Now the roses are coming into
bloom; the azalea, wild honey-
suckle, is sweetening the roadsides,
the laurels are beginning to blow;
the white lilies are getting ready to
open; the fireflies are seen now and
then, flitting across the darkness;
the katydids, the grasshoppers, the
crickets make themselves heard; the
bullfrogs utter their tremendous
voices, and the full chorus of birds
make the air vocal with its melody.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. “The Seasons,” *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881* (1891).

- 6 Summer is coming, summer is coming.
I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again,
love again,
Yes, my wild little Poet.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. “The Throstle.”

- 7 There is a temperate zone in the mind, between luxurious indolence and exacting work; and it is to this region, just between laziness and labor, that summer reading belongs.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. “Eyes and Ears” (1866), in *Beecher as a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

- 8 As imperceptibly as Grief
The Summer lapsed away—
Too imperceptible at last
To seem like Perfidy—

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S. poet. “As imperceptibly as Grief.”

- 9 . . . while you gasp and pant
And try to cool yourself—and
can’t—
With soda, cream and lemonade,
The heat at ninety in the shade,—
Just calmly sit and ponder o’er
These same degrees, with ninety
more
On top of them, and so concede
The weather now is cool indeed!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “At Ninety in the Shade.”

- 10 In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “Bed in Summer,” *A Child’s Garden of Verses* (1885).

- 11 In the good old summer time,
In the good old summer time,
Strolling thro’ the shady lanes with
your baby mine;
You hold her hand and she holds
yours,
And that’s a very good sign
That she’s your tootsey wootsey
In the good old summer time.

RON SHIELDS, U.S. lyricist. “In the Good Old Summer Time.”

- 12 When th’ summer landscape takes
on a scuffed an’ faded appearance
like a over exposed ten dollar suit
we know we are face t’ face with
dog days, that midsummer season
o’ th’ year when all livin’ things just
sorter peter out an’ langour rules
supreme in shop an’ mart an’ field.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. “Dog Days,” *The Best of Kin Hubbard: Abe Martin’s Saying and Wisecracks, Abe’s Neighbors, His Almanack, Comic Drawings*, ed. David S. Hawes (1984).

- 13 ‘Tis wealth enough of joy for me
In summer time to simply be.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. “In Summer Time.”

- 14 We’re a couple of sports,
The pride of the tennis courts,
In June, July, and August,
We look cute when we’re
dressed in shorts.

IRVING BERLIN (1888–1989), U.S. songwriter. “A Couple of Swells,” as performed in the musical *Easter Parade* (1948).

- 15 This is summer, unmistakably. One
can always tell when one sees
schoolteachers hanging about the

streets idly, looking like cannibals during a shortage of missionaries.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "Of Schoolteachers," *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 16 Summers are the best. And I figured summer was my best time for meeting someone, too, because in the summer people are looking for someone to snuggle up with for the winter. And because in the summer I could take off my shirt.

ANDREW TOBIAS (JOHN REID) (b. 1947), U.S. author. *The Best Little Boy in the World Grows Up* (1998).

Tobias is commenting on trying to meet a man on Fire Island in New York.

Autumn

- 1 No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one autumnal face.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet, clergyman, and courtier. "Elegy 9: The Autumnal."

- 2 Autumnall Agues are long, or mortal.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 148 (1640).

- 3 The pale descending Year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler Mood inspires; for now the Leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful Grove,
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles thro' the waving Air.

JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748), Scottish poet. "Autumn," *The Seasons*.

- 4 O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stained
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit
Beneath my shady roof, there thou may'st rest,
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe;
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), English poet and artist. "To Autumn."

From the volume *Poetical Sketches* (1783).

- 5 Yet, in these autumn days when Nature expires,
Here, in these veiled scenes, I find more attractions;
It is a friend's sad goodbye; it is the last smile
From lips that death is going to close forever!

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE (1790–1869), French author. "Autumn," *Poetical Meditations*, tr. Gervase Hittle (1993).

- 6 O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes. . . .

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822), English poet. "Ode to the West Wind."

- 7 The warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
And the Year

On the earth her death-bed, in a
shroud of leaves dead,
Is lying. . . .

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822),
English poet. "Autumn: A Dirge."

- 8 He hath his autumn ports
And havens of repose, when his
tired wings
Are folded up, and he content
to look
On mists in idleness: to let fair
things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold
brook.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet.
"Four Seasons Fill the Measure of the Year."

"He" here refers to "man" in the collective
sense. Keats compares the seasons of man to
the seasons of the year, and here describes the
contentment of middle age.

- 9 Season of mists and mellow fruit-
fulness,
Close bosom-friend of the ma-
turing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load
and bless
With fruit the vines that round
the thatch-eves run
To bend with apples the moss'd
cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to
the core.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet.
"To Autumnn."

- 10 There the ash-tree leaves do vall
In the wind a-blown cwoolder,
An' my childern, tall or small,
Since last Fall be woone year
wolder;
Woone year wolder, woone year
dearer.

WILLIAM BARNES (1801–1886), English
poet, scholar, and clergyman. "Leaves A-Val-
len."

Barnes writes in the dialect of his native Dor-
set.

- 11 The gentle wind, a sweet and pas-
sionate wooer,
Kisses the blushing leaf, and stirs
up life
Within the solemn woods of ash
deep-crimsoned,
And silver beech, and maple yellow-
leaved,
Where Autumn, like a faint old
man, sits down
By the wayside a-weary.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW
(1807–1882), U.S. poet. "Autumnn."

- 12 Gone hath the Spring, with all its
flowers,
And gone the Summer's pomp
and show,
And Autumn, in his leafless bowers,
Is waiting for the Winter's snow.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–
1892), U.S. poet. "Autumn Thoughts."

- 13 The year is getting to feel rich, for
his golden fruits are ripening fast,
and he has a large balance in the
barns, which are his banks. The
members of his family have found
out that he is well to do in the
world. September is dressing herself
in show of dahlias and splendid
marigolds and starry zinnias. Octo-
ber, the extravagant sister, has or-
dered an immense amount of the
most gorgeous forest tapestry for
her grand reception.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–
1894), U.S. author and physician. "The Sea-
sons," *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A*
Collection of Essays, 1857–1881 (1891).

- 14 The foliage has been losing its
freshness through the month of Au-
gust, and here and there a yellow

leaf shows itself like the first gray
hair amidst the locks of a beauty
who has seen one season too many.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. “The Seasons,” *Pages from An Old Volume: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881* (1881).

- 15 The air is damp, and hushed, and close,
As a sick man’s room when he tak-
eth repose
An hour before death;
My very heart faints and my whole
soul grieves
At the moist rich smell of the rot-
ting leaves.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. “Song [A spirit haunts the year’s last hours].”

A lyric written in Tennyson’s youth at Somersby and published in 1830.

- 16 Tears, idle tears, I know not what
they mean,
Tears from the depth of some di-
vine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the
eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-
fields,
And thinking of the days that are
no more.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. *The Princess*, section 4.

Lines presented as a diverting song by one of the maidens. Tennyson wrote this lyric probably near Tintern Abbey. His friend Arthur Hallam, the subject of Tennyson’s *In Memoriam A.H.H.*, was buried nearby.

- 17 Oh, good gigantic smile o’ the
brown old earth,
This autumn morning! How he
sets his bones
To bask i’ the sun, and thrusts out
knees and feet.

From the ripple to run over in its
mirth

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889), English poet. *James Lee’s Wife* (section 7, “Among the Rocks”).

The speaker here conveys the message that men must love freely while on earth, not counting gains and losses, but opening themselves to experience, like the earth soaking up the autumn sun.

- 18 Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.

EMILY JANE BRONTË (1818–1848), English author. “Fall, leaves, fall.”

- 19 Coldly, sadly, descends
The autumn-evening. The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of wither’d leaves, and the elms
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent;—hardly a shout
From a few boys late in their play!

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888), English poet and critic. “Rugby Chapel, November 1857.”

Published 1867.

- 20 Now Autumn’s fire burns slowly
along the woods,
And day by day the dead leaves
fall and melt,
And night by night the monitory
blast
Wails in the key-hole, telling how
it pass’d
O’er empty fields, or upland soli-
tudes,
Or grim wide wave; and now the
power is felt
Of melancholy, tenderer in its
moods
Than any joy indulgent Summer
dealt.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824–1889),
Irish author. "Autumnal Sonnet."

- 21 Márgarét áre you grieving
Over Goldengrove unleaving?
Leáves, like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for,
can you?
- GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS** (1844–1889), English poet. "Spring and Fall."
- 22 This was one of those perfect New
England days in late summer where
the spirit of autumn takes a first
stealthy flight, like a spy, through
the ripening country-side, and, with
feigned sympathy for those who
droop with August heat, puts her
cool cloak of bracing air about leaf
and flower and human shoulders.
- SARAH ORNE JEWETT** (1849–1909),
U.S. author. "The Courting of Sister Wilby."
- 23 But the air's so appetizin'; and the
landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of
the airy autumn days
Is a pictur' that no painter has the
colorin' to mock—
When the frost is on the punkin
and the fodder's in the shock.
- JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY** (1849–1916), U.S. poet. "When the Frost is on the Punkin."
- 24 It almost seems as if autumn were
the true creator, more creative than
the spring, which is too even-toned,
more creative when it comes with
its will-to-change and shatters the
much too ready-made, self-satisfied
and really almost bourgeois-com-
placent image of summer.
- RAINER MARIA RILKE** (1857–1926),
German poet. Letter to Clara Rilke, 12 August
1904, *Selected Letters: 1902–1926*, trans. R. F.
C. Hull (1988).

- 25 There is the moon;
And white and yellow chrysanthemums;
Autumn draws to its close.
- SHIKI** (1869–1902), Japanese poet. In R.
H. Blyth, trans., *Haiku*, vol. 3 (1949).
Blyth notes: "Surprisingly little is needed for
happiness, for the good life, for the way of
Haiku. A great deal of wisdom, and the moon
and chrysanthemums white and yellow,—and
autumn is passing, life is being lived."
- 26 The leaves fall early this autumn, in
wind.
The paired butterflies are already
yellow with August
Over the grass in the West garden;
They hurt me. I grow older.
- EZRA POUND** (1885–1972), U.S. poet.
"The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter."
- 27 There comes a morning, always, at
this time of year when one awakes
to the realisation that one's knees
and the tip of one's nose are unex-
pectedly cold, and, still drowsy,
scrabbles to regain the blankets one
had flung off during the earlier part
of the night; then, aroused to full
consciousness, leaps from bed to
gaze out of the window. What has
happened? The familiar summer as-
pect has changed.
- VICTORIA (OR VITA) SACKVILLE-
WEST** (1892–1962), English novelist and
poet. *Country Notes* ("Between Two Seasons")
(1940).
- 28 . . . I know that Beauty must ail
and die,
And will be born again,—but ah, to
see
Beauty stiffened, staring up at the
sky!
Oh, Autumn! Autumn!—What is
the Spring to me?
- EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY** (1892–1950), U.S. poet. "The Death of Autumn."

Winter

- 1 You naked trees, whose shady
leaves are lost,
Wherein the byrds were wont to
build their bowre:
And now are clothd with mosse
and hoary frost,
Insteade of bloosmes, wherewith
your buds did flowre:
I see your teares, that from your
boughes doe raine,
Whose drops in drery ysicles re-
maine.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552?–1599), English poet and courtier. "Januarye," *The Shepheardes Calendar* (1579).

- 2 . . . winter tames man, woman, and
beast. . . .

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Taming of the Shrew* 4.1.20.

Grumio describes the effect of the cold on the hot temper of Kate, the wife of his master Petruchio and the "shrew" of the play's title.

- 3 Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 2.7.174.

- 4 How like a winter hath my absence
been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleet-
ing year!
What freezings have I felt, what
dark days seen!
What old December's bareness ev-
erywhere!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. Sonnet 97 ("How like a winter hath my absence been").

- 5 He that passeth a winters day es-
capes an enemy.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 864 (1640).

- 6 Thus Winter falls,
A heavy Gloom oppressive o'er the
World,
Thro' Nature shedding Influence
malign,
And rouses up the Seeds of dark
Disease.
The Soul of Man dies in him,
loathing Life,
And black with more than melan-
choly Views.

JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748), Scottish poet. "Winter," *The Seasons*.

- 7 My bones
Feel the quilts;
A frosty night

BUSON (1715–1783), Japanese poet. In R. H. Blyth, trans. *Haiku*, vol. 4 (1949).

Blyth notes: "The Japanese never had and never seemed to desire any means of being comfortably warm in winter. Rich and poor alike shivered from the end of autumn until the middle of spring. Especially the poets (who seem to have been indigent on the whole), more sensitive to the cold than ordinary people, spent many a night of grinding wretchedness trying to sleep in spite of cold feet and thin shanks. The way in which Buson says, 'My bones feel the quilts' instead of 'The quilts touched my bones' shows the activity of the supersensitiveness."

- 8 "The sweeping blast, the sky
o'ercast,"
The joyless winter day
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May:
The tempest's howl, it soothes my
soul,
My griefs it seems to join;
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine!

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796), Scottish poet. "Winter: A Dirge."

Burns commented in his *First Common Place Book* that he loved to walk on "a cloudy winter day, and hear a stormy wind howling among the trees and raving o'er the plain," and that winter "is my best season for devotion; my mind is rapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to Him who, in the pompous language of Scripture, 'Walks on the wings of the wind.'"

- 9 The Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry
Came loud—and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings. . . .

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. "Frost at Midnight."

Coleridge, in this "conversation poem," describes his "abstruser musings" as on a cold winter night he cares for his infant son by the "thin blue flame" of his "low-burnt fire."

- 10 The English winter—ending in July,
To recommence in August.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788–1824), English poet. *Don Juan* (canto 13, stanza 42).

- 11 As an earthquake rocks a corse
In its coffin in the clay,
So White Winter, that rough nurse,
Rocks the death-cold Year to-day;
Solemn Hours! wail aloud
For your mother in her shroud.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822), English poet. "Dirge for the Year."

- 12 The ice-bound floods that still with rigour freeze
The snow clothd valley and the naked tree
These sympathising scenes my heart can please

Distress is theirs—and they resemble me.

JOHN CLARE (1793–1864), English poet. "To a Winter Scene."

- 13 Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "The Snow-Storm."

- 14 He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit
comes! Let us meet him as we may,
And turn with the light of the parlor-fire
his evil power away;
And gather closer the circle round, when
that firelight dances high,
And laugh at the shriek of the baffled Fiend
as his sounding wing goes by!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. "The Frost Spirit."

- 15 When there is nothing left of the winter snow but these ridges behind the stone walls, and a dingy drift here and there in a hollow, or in the woods, Winter has virtually resigned the icicle which is his sceptre.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. "The Seasons," *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881* (1891).

- 16 Here comes Winter, savage as when
he met the Pilgrims at Plymouth,
Indian all over, his staff a naked
splintery hemlock, his robe torn
from the backs of bears and bison,
and fringed with wampum of rattling
icicles, turning the ground he
treads to ringing iron, and, like a
mighty sower, casting his snow far
and wide, over all hills and valleys
and plains.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1892), U.S. author and physician. “The Seasons,” *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays 1857–1881* (1891).

Holmes reflects a nineteenth-century image of American Indians.

- 17 The frost is here,
And fuel is dear,
And woods are sear,
And fires burn clear,
And frost is here
And has bitten the heel of the going
year.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. “Winter,” *The Window, or, The Song of the Wrens* (published privately in 1867, with music in 1870 and in 1874).

Apparently Tennyson liked this little song but was concerned about publishing it because he felt it was too light and might diminish his reputation.

- 18 The best fire in winter is made up
of *exercise*, and the poorest of *whiskey*. He that keeps warm on liquor
is like a man who pulls his house to
pieces to feed the fireplace.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. In *Plain and Pleasant Talk about Fruits, Flowers, and Farming* (“Almanac for the Year: Work for January”) (1859), and reprinted in *Beecher As a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works of Henry Ward Beecher*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

- 19 There’s a certain Slant of light,
Winter Afternoons—

That oppresses, like the Heft
Of Cathedral Tunes—

Heavenly Hurt, it gives us—
We can find no scar,
But internal difference,
Where the Meanings, are—

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S. poet. “There’s a certain Slant of light.”

- 20 The boughs, the boughs are bare
enough
But earth has never felt the snow.
Frost-furred our ivies are and rough

With bills of rime the brambles
shew
The hoarse leaves crawl on hissing
ground
Because the sighing wind is low.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844–1889), English poet. “Winter with the Gulf Stream.”

Hopkins describes the effects of a mild winter.

- 21 When will you cease, O dismal days?
When will you set me free?
For the frozen world and its desolate
ways
Are all unloved of me!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “Shadow and Shine.”

- 22 Winter is icummen in,
Lhude sing Goddamm,
Raineth drop and staineth slop,
And how the wind doth ramm!

EZRA POUND (1885–1972), U.S. poet. “Ancient Music.”

A parody of “Sumer is icumen in.” See Summer, quotation 1.

- 23 Midwinter spring is its own season
Sempiternal though sodden towards
sundown,
Suspended in time, between pole
and tropic.

When the short day is brightest,
 with frost and fire,
 The brief sun flames the ice, on
 pond and ditches,
 In windless cold that is the heart's
 heat.

T. S. ELIOT (1888–1965), Anglo-American poet. "Little Gidding," *Four Quartets*.

- 24 I leave this year as a man leaves
 wine,
 Remembering the summer, bounti-
 ful, the good fall, the months mel-
 low and full.
 I sit in the northern room, in the
 dusk, the death of a year,
 And watch it go down in thunder.

WILLIAM EVERSON (1912–1994), U.S. author. "Year's End."

- 25 That time of year you may in me
 behold
 When Christmas trees are blazing
 on the walk,
 Raging against stable snow and the
 cold
 And low sky's bundled wash,
 deadwhite as chalk.

DELMORE SCHWARTZ (1913–1966), U.S. author. "The Winter Twilight, Glowing Black and Gold."

Schwartz echoes Shakespeare's Sonnet 73
 "That time of year thou mayst in me behold /
 When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
 / Upon those boughs which shake against the
 cold."

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Back to School

- 1 Then the whining schoolboy, with
his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping
like snail
Unwillingly to school.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 2.7.145–47.

Jacques here describes the second of the seven stages of man.

- 2 A little learning is a dangerous
thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian
spring;
There shallow draughts intoxicate
the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us
again.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. *An Essay on Criticism* (lines 215–18) (1711).

- 3 I should, in fact, be averse to
boarding-schools, if it were for no
other reason than the unsettled
state of mind which the expectation
of the vacations produce. On these
the children's thoughts are fixed
with eager anticipating hopes, for,
at least, to speak with moderation,
half of the time, and when they ar-
rive they are spent in total dissipa-
tion and beastly indulgence.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (1759–1797), English author and feminist. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (chapter 12, "On National Education") (1792).

- 4 Well do I remember how, on the
last day of the holidays, I used al-
ways to rise early, and think that I
had got twelve more whole hours
of happiness, and how those hours
used to pass me with mercifully

slow feet. . . . Three more hours!
. . . . Sixty more minutes! . . .
Five! . . .

MAX BEERBOHM (1872–1956), English critic, essayist and caricaturist. "Going Back to School," *More* (1899).

Beerbohm describes seeing the envy "in-scribed" on the face of a "very small, pale boy" at Victoria Station. The boy's expression reminds him of his own fifteen trips back to school. He expresses his relief at having "no construe of Xenophon to prepare . . . nor any ode of Horace to learn, painfully, by heart."

- 5 Life at a vile boarding school is in
this way a good preparation for the
Christian life, that it teaches one to
live by hope. Even, in a sense, by
faith; for at the beginning of each
term, home and the holidays are so
far off that it is as hard to realize
them as to realize heaven. Tomor-
row's geometry blots out the distant
end of term as tomorrow's opera-
tion may blot out the hope of Para-
dise.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (chapter 2, "Concentration Camp") (1955).

- 6 On the first day of school, my chil-
dren said to me, "Aren't you glad
that our education's free?"

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. "The Twelve Days of School" (September 1975), in *Forever, Erma: America's Best-Loved Writing from America's Favorite Humorist* (1996).

The words here, which recall the Christmas carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas," lead into a litany of expenses—everything from Crayolas to cameras—required by "free schools."

- 7 Autumn has become my favorite
time of year. It took a while for
negative associations with the be-
ginning of the school year to wane,
for the golden sunlight and foliage

to stop conjuring up the intestinal butterflies that went along with similarly toned school buses lurching down the street.

LAUREN SPRINGER, U.S. author and newspaper columnist. In *The Undaunted Garden* (1994), and reprinted in *The Writer in the Garden*, ed. Jane Garmey (1999).

Taking Exams

- 1 I should be inclined to say that as plants are stifled with too much moisture, and lamps with too much oil, so too much study and matter stifles the action of the mind, which, being caught and entangled in a great variety of things, may lose the ability to break loose, and be kept bent and huddled down by its burden.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1589), French essayist. "Of Pedantry," book 1, essay 25 (1578–80), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 2 Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others, but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. "Of Studies," *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 3 Oh! might my ill-past hours return again!
No more, as then, should Sloth
around me throw
Her soul-enslaving, leaden chain!
No more the precious time would I employ
In giddy revells, or in thoughtless joy,
A present joy producing future woe.

But o'er the midnight Lamp I'd
love to pore,
I'd seek with care fair Learning's
depths to sound,
And gather scientific Lore.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1884), English poet and critic. "Quae Nocent Docent."

- 4 . . . this cheek and brow,
Whose paleness, burnèd in with
heats of thought,
Would make an angel smile to see
how ill
Clay thrust from Paradise consorts
with mind—

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806–1861), English poet. "The Student."

- 5 Cramming seeks to stamp things in by intense application immediately before the ordeal. But a thing thus learned can form but few associations. On the other hand, the same thing recurring on different days, in different contexts, read, recited on, referred to again and again, related to other things and reviewed, gets well wrought into the mental structure. This is the reason why you should enforce on your pupils habits of continuous application.

WILLIAM JAMES (1842–1910), U.S. philosopher and psychologist. "Memory," *Talks to*

Teachers: On Psychology; and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals (1892).

- 6 A student must be of low caliber indeed if, with printed text and written notes before him covering the entire work of the term, he cannot cram enough facts into his head and keep them there long enough to get past the examination. When he has done this, so far as his present state of mind is concerned, he seems to be through with those facts—finished; he is never going to want them again, or worry about them. The habit of forgetting, the habit of not even taking things into his consciousness except under certain extraordinary conditions, is a vicious and subtle one he is not able to shake off.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* (“Sundry Observations”; chapter 4, “Education and Work”; section 19, “The Habit of Forgetting” [1925]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

- 7 With song elate we celebrate
The struggling Student wight,
Who seeketh still to pack his pate
With treasures erudite.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–1916), U.S. poet. “The Poor Student.”

- 8 People are afraid of war and wounds and dentists, all with excellent reason; but these are not to be compared with such chaotic terrors of the mind as fell on this young man, and made him cover his eyes from the innocent morning.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “Some College Memories,” written for the “Book of the Edinburgh University Union Fancy Fair” (1886).

Stevenson describes a young man who has confidently studied all night and then goes

completely blank at daybreak on the morning of the test, finding himself unable to write his own name, much less the exam.

- 9 To those who know, a written examination is far from being a true criterion of capacity. It demands too much of mere memory, imitativeness, and the insidious willingness to absorb other people's ideas. Parrots and crows would do admirably in examinations. Indeed, the colleges are full of them.

STEPHEN LEACOCK (1865–1944), Canadian (English-born) humorist. “Oxford As I See It,” *My Discovery of England* (1922).

- 10 After these years of lectures heard,
Of papers read, of hopes deferred,
Of days spent in the dark stacks
In learning the impervious facts
So well you can dispose with them,
Now that the final day has come
When you shall answer name and
dates
Where fool and scholar judge your
fate
What have you gained?

JAMES V. CUNNINGHAM (b. 1911), U.S. author. “To a Friend, on Her Examination for the Doctorate in English.”

- 11 On students, the most immediate effect of testing is anxiety. Most families have their characteristic exam-time symptoms. The household rhythms change. Girls' parents resign themselves to the overeating or under-nourishment, the sleepiness or insomnia, the amenorrhea, the fitful tears, the furious rejection of help. Boys' parents brace themselves for the lunatic sensitivity to noise, the ritually elaborate apparatus of study, the vocabulary of grunts and snarls, the midnight car-

bohydrates and the shuddering refusal of breakfast.

DONALD BARR (b. 1921), U.S. educator. *Who Pushed Humpty Dumpty? Dilemmas in American Education Today* (chapter D, "Test Ban?") (1971).

Falling in Love

1 Love me little, love me long!

Is the burden of my song:
Love that is too hot and strong
Burneth soon to waste.
Still I would not have thee cold—
Not too backward, nor too bold;
Love that lasteth till 't is old
Fadeth not in haste.

ANONYMOUS, "Love Me Little, Love Me Long!" (16th century).

2 Many are of the opinion that the virtues of love are very many, and that it is of force to reduce us from savageness to civilnesse, from folly to wit, from covetousnesse to liberalitie, from clownishnesse to courtlinesse, yea from all vice to all vertue. But if the effects therof bee rightly considered, I see not but that wee may more justly say, that the inconveniences of love bee infinite, and that it bringeth us from modesty to impudencie, from learninge to lewdnesse, from stayed firmnes to staggering ficklenesse, from liberalitie to prodigalitie, from warinesse to wilfulnesse, from good beehaviour to dissolute livinge, from reason to rage, yea, from all goodnessse to all vanitie . . .

GEORGE PETTIE (c. 1548–1589), English author. "Scilla and Minos," *A Petite Palace of Pettie His Pleasure* (1576).

3 It lies not in our power to love or hate,

For will in us is overrul'd by fate.

.

Where both deliberate, the love is slight;

Who ever lov'd, that lov'd not at first sight?

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–1593), English poet and dramatist. "Hero and Leander" (sestiad 1, lines 167–68 and 175–76).

4 Did my heart love till now? For-swear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Romeo and Juliet* 1.5.54–64.

Romeo reacts to seeing Juliet for the first time.

5 One half of me is yours, the other half yours—
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Merchant of Venice* 3.2.16–18.

With this riddle, Portia responds to her suitors.

6 It is to be all made of fantasy,
All made of passion, and all made of wishes,
All adoration, duty, and observance,
All humbleness, all patience and impatience,
All purity, all trial, all observance.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 5.2.89–93.

The shepherd Silvius answers the question what it is to love.

7 I am giddy; expectation whirls me round.
Th' imaginary relish is so sweet

That it enchants my sense. What
will it be,
When that the wat'ry palates taste
indeed
Love's thrice repured nectar? Death,
I fear me,
Swooning destruction, or some joy
too fine,
Too subtle, potent, tun'd too sharp
in sweetness
For the capacity of my ruder pow-
ers
I fear it much; and I do fear besides
That I shall lose distinction in my
joys,
As doth a battle when they charge
on heaps
The enemy flying.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
English poet and dramatist. *Troilus and Cres-
sida* 3.2.17–28.

Troilus anticipates a meeting with Cressida, ar-
ranged by Pandarus.

- 8 She lov'd me for the dangers I had
pass'd,
And I lov'd her that she did pity
them.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
English poet and dramatist. *Othello* 1.3.169–
70.

Othello describes how he told Desdemona the
story of his life and thereby won her heart.

- 9 I brought a heart into the room,
But from the room I carried none
with me:
If it had gone to thee, I know
Mine would have taught thine heart
to show
More pity unto me; but Love,
alas,
At one first blow did shiver it as
glass.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet,
clergyman, and courtier. "The Broken Heart."

- 10 Adieu to Liberty! adieu to Fame!
For other gifts, for softer joys I
pine;
In one fair breast I wish a mutual
flame,
In one fair breast alone to burn
with mine.

GEORGE CRABBE (1754–1832), English
poet. "An Elegy to Love."

- 11 When you lov'd me, and I lov'd
you,
Then both of us were born anew.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–
1834), English poet and critic. "The Second
Birth."

- 12 There's a feast undated, yet
Both our true lives hold it fast,—
Even the day when first we met.
What a great day came and
passed,
—Unknown then but known
at last.

ALICE MEYNELL (1847–1922), English
poet. "An Unmarked Festival."

- 13 "Love at first sight," some say, mis-
naming
Discovery of twinned helplessness
Against the huge tug of procrea-
tion.

ROBERT GRAVES (1895–1985), English
author. "At First Sight."

- 14 Don't worry about losing. If it is
right, it happens—The main thing
is not to hurry. Nothing good gets
away.

JOHN STEINBECK (1902–1968), U.S.
author. Letter to his 14-year-old son Thom, 10
November 1958, in *Letters of a Nation: A Col-
lection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed.
Andrew Carroll (1997).

Steinbeck's son had written to say that he
might be in love.

- 15 Got heartburn, palpitation, indigestion, anorexia, psychasthenia, euphoria and delusions of grandeur. Hallucinations by day and insomnia by night. Got misery and ecstasy.

CHARLES DREW (b. 1921), U.S. surgeon. Letter to his fiancée Lenore Robbins, 1940, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

The doctor is writing as a medical student describing the painful details of new love and separation. He became a pioneer in the preservation and storage of blood to be used in emergencies.

- 16 I think spring is inside me. I feel spring awakening, I feel it in my entire body and soul. I have to force myself to act normally. I'm in a state of utter confusion, don't know what to read, what to write, what to do. I only know that I'm longing for something.

ANNE FRANK (1929–1945), Dutch diarist. *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive Edition* (Saturday, 12 February 1944), trans. Susan Massotty (1995).

In this entry Anne describes her growing affection for Peter, one of her fellow residents in the "Secret Annex."

Breaking Up

- 1 And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among:
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?

THOMAS WYATT (1503–1542), English poet and courtier. "The Lover's Appeal."

- 2 Since there's no help, come let us
kiss and part;
Nay, I have done, you get no more
of me,
And I am glad, yea glad with all my
heart

That thus so cleanly I myself can
free.

MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563–1631), English poet. *Idea* (sonnet 61).

- 3 Now thou hast loved me one whole
day,
Tomorrow when thou leav'st, what
wilt thou say?
Wilt thou then antedate some new-
made vow?
Or say that now
We are not just those persons
which we were?

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet, clergyman, and courtier. "Woman's Constancy."

- 4 I prethee, send me back my heart,
Since I cannot have thine;
For if from yours you will not part,
Why then should you keep mine?

HENRY LAWES (1596–1662), English poet. "I Prethee, Send Me Back My Heart."

- 5 'Tis not that I am weary grown
Of being yours, and yours alone;
But with what face can I incline
To damn you to be only mine?

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER (1647–1680), English author. "Upon Leaving His Mistress."

- 6 Let the love die. Are there not other
loves
As beautiful and full of sweet un-
rest,
Flying through space like snowy-
pinioned doves?

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX (1850–1919), U.S. poet. "Let Them Go."

- 7 What shall I give you, my lord, my
lover?
The gift that breaks the heart in
me:

I bid you awake at dawn and discover
 I have gone my way and left you free.

SARA TEASDALE (1884–1933), U.S. poet.
 “The Gift.”

- 8 Don’t try to patch it up,
 Tear it up, tear it up!
 Wash him out,
 Dry him out,
 Push him out, fly him out,
 Cancel him and let him go!

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN (1895–1960),
 U.S. lyricist and librettist. “I’m Gonna Wash
 That Man Right Outa My Hair,” from the musical
South Pacific (1949).

Richard Rodgers composed the music for the
 song.

- 9 The sleepless nights,
 The daily fights,
 The quick toboggan when you
 reach the heights—
 I miss the kisses and I miss the
 bites
 I wish I were in love again.

LORENZ HART (1895–1943), U.S. lyricist.
 “I Wish I Were in Love Again.”

- 10 I am no good at love
 I betray it with little sins
 For I feel the misery of the end
 In the moment that it begins
 And the bitterness of the last good-
 bye
 Is the bitterness that wins.

NOËL COWARD (1899–1973), English
 dramatist, composer, and actor. “I Am No
 Good at Love.”

- 11 I bet you’re wonderin’ how I knew
 ‘bout your plans to make me blue
 with some other guy you knew be-
 fore
 between the two of us guys you
 know I loved you more

I heard it through the grapevine
 Not much longer would you be
 mine.

NORMAN WHITFIELD (b. 1943) and
BARRET STRONG (b. 1941), U.S. song-
 writers. “I Heard It Through the Grapevine,” in
 Earl L. Stewart, *African American Music: An
 Introduction* (1998).

- 12 I’d like to help you in your struggle
 to be free
 There must be fifty ways to leave
 your lover.

PAUL SIMON (b. 1941), U.S. singer and
 songwriter. “50 Ways to Leave Your Lover”
 (1975).

Proposals

- 1 She’s beautiful, and therefore to be
 woo’d;
 She is a woman, therefore to be
 won.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
 English poet and dramatist. *The First Part of
 Henry VI* 5.3.78–79.

Spoken by Suffolk of the Lady Margaret.

- 2 We will have rings and things, and
 fine array;
 And kiss me, Kate, we will be mar-
 ried a’ Sunday.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
 English poet and dramatist. *The Taming of the
 Shrew* 2.1.320–21.

Petruchio proposes and plans his wedding in
 one fell swoop, despite the reluctance of Kate,
 his intended bride.

- 3 *Don Pedro*: Will you have me, lady?
Beatrice: No, my lord, unless I
 might have another for working
 days. Your grace is too costly to
 wear every day.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
 English poet and dramatist. *Much Ado About
 Nothing* 2.1.310–12.

Beatrice is too "mirthful" to be well-suited to the serious Don Pedro.

- 4 Dear Isabel,
I have a motion much imports your good,
Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
What's mine is yours and what is yours is mine.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Measure for Measure* 5.1.539–42.

In wrapping up the loose ends of the play, the Duke includes this proposal.

- 5 I am your wife, if you will marry me;
If not, I'll die your maid, To be your fellow
You may deny me, but I'll be your servant,
Whether you will or no.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Tempest* 3.1.83–86.

Miranda proposes to Ferdinand, making a move that indeed puts her in a brave new world.

- 6 Allow me, then, Mademoiselle, to place today on the altar of your charms, the offering of my heart, which aspires to and strives after no other glory than for the rest of its life to be, Mademoiselle your very humble, very obedient and very faithful servant and husband.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–1673), French dramatist. *The Hypochondriac* (La malade imaginaire) 2.5 (1673), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 8 (1926).

A physician, who is the hypochondriac father's first choice of a mate for his daughter, proposes. The doctor is not the daughter's ultimate choice.

- 7 My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish. Secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Pride and Prejudice* (vol. 1, chapter 19) (1813).

Mr. Collins proposes unsuccessfully to Elizabeth Bennet.

- 8 Let men tremble to win the hand of woman, unless they win along with it the utmost passion of her heart!

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804–1864), U.S. author. *The Scarlet Letter* (chapter 15, "Hester and Pearl") (1850).

The narrator makes this exclamation in describing the unhappy marriage of Chillingworth and Hester.

- 9 Barkis is willin'.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *David Copperfield* (chapter 5) (1849–50).

Mr. Barkis is a carrier "of a phlegmatic temperament, and not at all conversational." He asks young David to convey to the kindly cook and housekeeper Peggotty his, Mr. Barkis's, interest in marriage.

- 10 You will be surprised that he proposed seven times once in a hackney-coach once in a boat once in a pew once on a donkey at Tunbridge Wells and the rest on his knees.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Little Dorrit* (book 1, chapter 24) (1855–57).

Flora describes to Little Dorrit the proposal from Mr. F. His persistence may serve as an inspiration or his lack of success as a deterrent.

- 11 You could draw me to fire, you could draw me to water, you could draw me to the gallows, you could draw me to any death, you could draw me to anything I have most avoided, you could draw me to any exposure and disgrace. This and the confusion of my thoughts, so that I am fit for nothing, is what I mean by your being the ruin of me. But if you would return a favourable answer to my offer of marriage, you could draw me to any good—every good—with equal force.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Our Mutual Friend* (chapter 15, “The Whole Case So Far”) (1864–65).

The unsuccessful proposal of the stern schoolmaster Bradley Headstone to the mild-mannered Lizzie Hexam.

- 12 You are lonely; I love you; I want you to consent to be my wife; I will wait, but I want you to promise that you will marry me—no one else.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Middlemarch* (book 2, “Old and Young”; chapter 15) (1871–72).

In a moment of youthful indiscretion, Lydgate proposes, without success, to Madame Laure, a French actress and unsuitable potential wife for the young medical student.

- 13 And at home by the fire, whenever you look up, there I shall be—and whenever I look up, there will be you.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English author. *Far from the Madding Crowd* (chapter 4, “Gabriel’s Resolve—The Visit—The Mistake”) (1874).

In this scene, Gabriel Oak offers to Bathsheba a piano, the music of his flute, a gig for mar-

ket, nice flowers, birds, a frame for cucumbers, and newspaper chronicles of the wedding and births, and concludes with this description of the security of marriage. Bathsheba turns him down, although the two are married before the novel’s end.

- 14 My later courtship was carried on by telegraph. I taught the lady of my heart the Morse code, and when she could both send and receive we got along much better than we could have with spoken words by tapping our remarks to one another on our hands. Presently I asked her thus, in Morse code, if she would marry me. The word “Yes” is an easy one to send by telegraphic signals, and she sent it. If she had been obliged to speak it she might have found it harder.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* (“Sundry Observations”; chapter 1, “Autobiographical”; section 2 [1925]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

Edison had been deaf since the age of 12. He saw his hearing loss as an advantage in an increasingly noisy world—an attitude reflected in his celebration of his use of Morse code as a medium for his marriage proposal.

- 15 I have a theory that it is always the women who propose to us, and not we who propose to women. Except, of course, in middle-class life. But then the middle classes are not modern.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 6) (1891).

- 16 I don’t see anything romantic in proposing. It is very romantic to be in love. But there is nothing romantic about a definite proposal. Why, one may be accepted. One usually is, I believe. Then the ex-

citement is all over. The very essence of romance is uncertainty.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (act 1) (1895).

Algernon Moncrieff comments on his friend Jack Worthing's plan to propose to Gwendolyn Fairfax.

- 17 Daisy, Daisy,
Give me your answer, do!
I'm half crazy,
All for the love of you!
It won't be a stylish marriage,
I can't afford a carriage,
But you'll look sweet
On the seat
Of a bicycle built for two!

HARRY DACRE (1860–1922), Anglo-American poet. "Daisy Bell."

Margaret Bradford Boni, editor of *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs* (1952), notes that when Dacre came to this country from England he was "astounded" at the duty charged as a result of the bicycle he had transported. According to Boni, "A chance remark of a friend, 'Lucky for you it was not built for two,' gave Dacre the idea for his famous bicycle song, 'Daisy Bell,' which started the whole cycle of bicycle songs so popular in the '90s."

- 18 I have nothing to offer you but my strength for your defence, my honesty for your surety, my ability and industry for your livelihood, and my authority and position for your dignity. That is all it becomes a man to offer to a woman.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950), Irish dramatist and critic. *Candida* (act 3) (1898).

The minister Mr. Morell offers himself to his wife Candida, as he believes he must compete with the young poet Marchbanks for his wife's affection. Technically this is not a proposal but a sort of renegotiation of the marriage contract. While the poet offers "My weakness. My desolation. My heart's need," Candida says she will stick with her husband, whom she sees not as a defender or provider but as one who needs

protection after years of having been coddled by women. In explaining the wife's role as she performs it, she says, "I build a castle of comfort and indulgence and love for him, and stand sentinel always to keep little vulgar cares out. I make him master here, though he does not know it, and could not tell you a moment again how it came to be so."

- 19 I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

JAMES JOYCE (1882–1941), Irish author. *Ulysses* (chapter 18) (1921).

Molly accepts the sexual proposal of Leopold Bloom, being, if not a girl who can't say "no," at least a girl who can't say anything but "yes."

- 20 To my mind, a man must choose a wife for himself, without advice from anybody. As I said to Tony before he ever proposed to this girl: Make sure that she's *good*, and a *lady*, and *healthy*, and *intelligent*, and that she's going to get on with your friends and relations, and you with hers—and then, my dear boy, if you feel that you can afford to marry—then I suppose there's no help for it.

E. M. DELAFIELD (EDMEE ELIZABETH MONICA DASHWOOD, NÉE DE LA PASTURE) (1890–1943), English author. "Discussing the Fiancée," *As Others Hear Us* (1937).

Engagement

- 1 Courtship to marriage is as a very witty prologue to a very dull play.

WILLIAM CONGREVE (1670–1729), English author. *The Old Bachelor* (5.4) (1693).

- 2 An engaged woman is always more agreeable than a disengaged. She is satisfied with herself. Her cares are over, and she feels that she may exert all her powers of pleasing without suspicion. All is safe with a lady engaged; no harm can be done.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Mansfield Park* (vol. 1, chapter 5) (1814).

- 3 Court a gal for fun, for the luv yu bear her, for the vartue and bissness thare is in her; court her for a wife and for a mother, court her as yu wud court a farm—for the strength ov the sile and the perfeckshun ov the title; court her as tho she want a fule, and yu a nuther; court her in the kitchen, in the parlor, over the wash-tub, and at the pianner; court this way, yung man, and if yu don't git a good wife and she don't git a good hustband, the falt won't be in the courting.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW) (1818–1885), U.S. humorist. “On Courting,” *The Complete Works of Josh Billings* (1899).

- 4 I would rather not be engaged. When people are engaged, they begin to think of being married soon, . . . and I should like everything to go on for a long while just as it is.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1890), English author. *The Mill on the Floss* (book 6, “The Great Temptation”; chapter 2, “First Impressions”) (1860).

Lucy Deane here cites her reluctance to make a formal engagement with Stephen Guest.

- 5 AFFIANCE, pp. Fitted with an ankle-ring for the ball-and-chain.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 6 To speak frankly, I am not in favour of long engagements. They give people the opportunity of finding out each other's character before marriage, which I think is never advisable.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (act 3) (1895).

- 7 What could he and she really know of each other, since it was his duty, as a “decent” fellow, to conceal his past from her, and hers, as a marriageable girl, to have no past to conceal? What if, for some one of the subtler reasons that would tell with both them, they should tire of each other, misunderstand or irritate each other? . . . [With] a shiver of foreboding he saw his marriage becoming what most of the other marriages about him were: a dull association of material and social interests held together by ignorance on the one side and hypocrisy on the other.

EDITH WHARTON (1862–1937), U.S. author. *The Age of Innocence* (book 1, chapter 6) (1920).

Newland Archer contemplates his engagement to May Welland. He aspires to “passionate and tender comradeship” with his fiancée but realizes that such a relation would require “on her part, the experience, the versatility, the freedom of judgment, which she had been carefully trained not to possess.” He is not driven to wonder what qualities he would have to acquire to forge such a bond.

- 8 What's th' sense o' exhaustin' all th' pleasures o' life durin' th' first few months o' courtship? Why not save a few pleasures t' look forward t'

after you've satisfied th' instalment
houses? Marriage at best is quite a
comedown fer most any girl, 'spe-
cially if her engagement period wuz
one long an' riotous dream.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. hu-
morist. *Abe Martin's Primer* ("Th' Cost o'
Sparkin'") (1914).

Spoken by Miss Tawney Apple.

Moving In (With a Partner)

- 1 Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, hills, and
fields,
Woods or steepy mountain yield.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–
1593), English poet and dramatist. "The Pas-
sionate Shepherd to His Love."

- 2 One turf shall serve as pillow for us
both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms,
and one troth.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
English poet and dramatist. *A Midsummer
Night's Dream* 2.2.41–42.

Lysander tries to persuade Hermia to sleep
closer to him.

- 3 It seems a pity that the good old
phrase "living in sin" is likely to be
dropped by the C of E. So many
friends, happily living in sin, will
feel very ordinary and humdrum
when they become merely partners;
or, as the Americans say, "an item."
Living in sin has always sounded
daring and exotic.

ALEC GUINNESS (b. 1914), English actor.
*My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring
Actor* ("Wednesday, 7 June 1995") (1996).

- 4 Thinking in terms of one
Is easily done—
One room, one bed, one chair,
One person there,
.
But counting up to two
Is harder to do.

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English
poet and critic. "Counting."

Quitting Smoking

- 1 Some sigh for this and that,
My wishes don't go far,
The world may wag at will,
So I have my cigar.
- 2 Where, though I, by sour physician,
Am debarr'd the full fruition
Of thy favours, I may catch
Some collateral sweets, and snatch
Sidelong odours, that give life
Like glances from a neighbour's
wife;
And still live in the by-places
And the suburbs of thy graces;
And in thy borders take delight.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English es-
sayist. "A Farewell to Tobacco."

- 3 Some hard smokers are great work-
ers, as we all know; but few who
have watched the effect of nicotiza-
tion on will and character would
deny that it handicaps a man, and
often pretty heavily, in the race for
distinction. It encourages revery,—
the contemplation of the possible,
which is a charming but unwhole-
some substitute for the perfor-
mance of the duty next at hand.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–
1894), U.S. author and physician. "The Hu-
man Body and Its Management," *Pages from*

an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857–1881 (1891).

- 4 By the indulgence of a simple and harmless propensity,—of a propensity which can inflict an injury upon no person or thing except the coat and the person of him who indulges in it,—of a custom honored and observed in almost all the nations of the world,—of a custom which, far from leading a man into any wickedness or dissipation to which youth is subject, but, on the contrary, begets only benevolent silence, and thoughtful good-humored observation—I found at the age of twenty all my prospects in life destroyed.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811–1863), English novelist. *Fitz-Boodle's Confessions*; published originally in *Fraser's Magazine* (1841).

The speaker complains that women have a distaste for cigarettes and smoke and that he had a run-in with someone insulted by his indulgence.

- 5 Ernest felt now that the turning point of his life had come. He would give up all for Christ—even his tobacco. So he gathered together his pipes and pouches, and locked them up in his portmanteau under his bed where they should be out of sight, and as much out of mind as possible. He did not burn them, because someone might come in who wanted to smoke, and though he might abridge his own liberty, yet, as smoking was not a sin, there was no reason why he should be hard on other people.

SAMUEL BUTLER (1835–1902), English author. *The Way of All Flesh* (chapter 50) (1903).

- 6 A cigarette is the perfect type of a perfect pleasure. It is exquisite, and

it leaves one unsatisfied. What more can one want?

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 6) (1891).

- 7 I should like to say that I left off smoking because I considered it a mean form of slavery, to be condemned for moral as well as physical reasons; but though I see the folly of smoking clearly now, I was blind to it for some months after I had smoked my last pipe. I gave up my most delightful solace, as I regarded it, for no other reason than that the lady who was willing to fling herself away on me said that I must choose between it and her.

J. M. BARRIE (1860–1937), English author. *My Lady Nicotine* (chapter 1, “Matrimony and Smoking Compared”) (1890).

- 8 I know, I feel, that with the introduction of tobacco England woke up from a long sleep. Suddenly a new zest had been given to life. The glory of existence became a thing to speak of. Men who had hitherto only concerned themselves with the narrow things of home put a pipe into their mouths and became philosophers.

J. M. BARRIE (1860–1937), English author. *My Lady Nicotine* (chapter 13, “The Grandest Scene in History”) (1890).

- 9 Open the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba stout,
For things are running crossways,
and Maggie and I are out.

We quarrelled about Havanas—we fought o’er a good cheroot,
And I know she is exacting, and she says I am a brute.

.

A million surplus Maggies are willing to bear the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but
a good Cigar is a Smoke.

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865–1936), English author. “The Betrothed.”

The headnote for the poem cites a “Breach of Promise Case, circa, 1885” in which one of the betrothed stated: “You must choose between me and your cigar.” It appears that Kipling’s speaker has made his choice.

- 10 The nicotine addict, like the opium fiend and the alcoholic, quickly loses respect for observance of laws and any personal obligations to share in cultural or civic interests.

GRACE GEORGE (b. 1895?), U.S. social worker. *It’s Smart Not To Smoke* (1947).

In an alarming and largely unscientific way, this short work outlines the social and health consequences of smoking.

- 11 What a weird thing smoking is and I can’t stop it. I feel cosy, have a sense of well-being when I’m smoking, poisoning myself, killing myself slowly. Not so slowly maybe. I have all kinds of pains I don’t want to know about and I know that’s what they’re from. But when I don’t smoke I scarcely feel as if I’m living. I don’t feel as if I’m living unless I’m killing myself.

RUSSELL HOBAN (b. 1925), U.S. author. *Turtle Diary* (chapter 7, “William G.”) (1975).

- 12 I like you more than I would like
To have a cigarette

WENDY COPE (b. 1945), English poet. “Giving Up Smoking.”

In *A Poem a Day* (1994), in which this poem appears, Cope is quoted as saying: “People who have never been addicted to nicotine don’t understand what an intense love poem it is.”

- 13 Smoking is, if not my life, then at least my hobby. I love to smoke. Smoking is fun. Smoking is cool. Smoking is, as far as I am concerned, the entire point of being an adult. It makes growing up genuinely worthwhile. I am quite well aware of the hazards of smoking. Smoking is not a healthful pastime, it is true. Smoking is indeed no bracing dip in the ocean, no strenuous series of calisthenics, no two laps around the reservoir. On the other hand, smoking has to its advantage the fact that is a quiet pursuit. Smoking is, in effect a dignified sport.

FRAN LEBOWITZ (b. 1950), U.S. author. “When Smoke Gets in your Eyes . . . Shut Them,” *Social Studies* (1981).

- 14 Twelve hundred people—two jumbo jet planeloads a day of men, women, and children. Yes, innocent children, denied their bright futures, those happy moments of scoring the winning touchdowns, of high school and college graduations, marriage, parenthood, professional fulfillment, breakthroughs in engineering, medicine, economics, who know *how* many Nobel Prize winners? Lambs, slaughtered by Nicholas Naylor and the tobacco industry fiends he so slickly represented.

CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY (b. 1952), U.S. author. *Thank You for Smoking* (Prologue) (1994).

In Buckley’s novel, Naylor is a public-relations man for the tobacco industry.

Quitting Drinking

- 1 If you wish to keep your affairs secret, drink no wine. For wine

causes the voice to be uplifted and secrets to be revealed.

Zohar 4.177b, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 All excess is ill; but drunkenness is of the worst sort. It spoils health, dismounts the mind, and unmans men. It reveals secrets, is quarrelsome, lascivious, impudent, dangerous, and mad. In fine, he that is drunk is not a man: because he is so long void of reason, that distinguishes a man from a beast.

WILLIAM PENN (1644–1718), English philosopher and statesman. *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (part 1), “Temperance,” no. 72 (1693).

- 3 Sir, I have no objection to a man’s drinking wine, if he can do it in moderation. I found myself apt to go to excess in it, and therefore, after having been for some time without it, on account of illness, I thought it better not to return to it. Every man is to judge for himself, according to the effects which he experiences.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. Quoted in James Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (“16 March 1776”) (1791).

- 4 Hence Burgundy, Claret, and Port,
Away with old hock and madeira!
Too earthly ye are for my sport;
There’s a beverage brighter and clearer!

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet. “Hence Burgundy, Claret, and Port.”

The speaker vows to eschew alcohol and instead to “drink at the eye” on sunshine.

- 5 See drinkers of water, their wits
never lacking,

Direct as a railroad and smooth in
their gaits;
But look at the bibbers of wine,
they go tacking,
Like ships that have met a foul
wind in the *straights*.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. “Drinking Song: By a Member of a Temperance Society, as Sung by Mrs. Spring at Watterman’s Hall.”

- 6 Men “drink” because they like it, much more than for any good they suppose it does them, beyond such pleasure as it may afford; and this is precisely the point that all arguments fail to reach. Pleasure is the bird in the hand which foolish persons will always choose before the two birds in the bush which are to be the rewards of virtue.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. “The Human Body and Its Functioning,” *Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1858–1881* (1891).

Holmes explains why it is so difficult to persuade people to quit drinking.

- 7 Who hath sorrow? Who hath woe?
They who do not answer no;
They whose feet to sin incline,
While they tarry at the wine.

CARRIE NATION (1846–1911), U.S. prohibitionist. Comment made circa 1893. Quoted in Carleton Beals, *Cyclone Carry* (chapter 14) (1962).

- 8 If ever I want to sign the pledge,
It’s the morning after I’ve had an
edge.

GEORGE ADE (1866–1944), U.S. humorist and journalist. “R-E-M-O-R-S-E.”

- 9 If when you say “whisky” you
mean the devil’s brew, the poison
scourge, the bloody monster that

defiles innocence, dethrones reason, destroys the home, creates misery and poverty, yea literally takes the bread from the mouths of little children; if you mean the evil drink that topples the Christian man and woman from the pinnacle of righteous, gracious living into the bottomless pit of degradation, and despair, and shame, and helplessness, and hopelessness—then certainly I am against it. But, if when you say “whisky” you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine, the ale that is consumed when good fellows get together, that puts a song in their hearts and laughter on their lips, and the warm glow of contentment in their eyes . . . if you mean the drink that enables a man to magnify his joy, and his happiness, and to forget, if only for a little while, life’s great tragedies, and heartaches, and sorrows . . . then certainly I am for it.

NOAH SWEAT, U.S. judge and politician. Campaign speech, 1948, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

Sweat was running for state representative in Alcorn County, Miss. Safire indicates that Sweat copyrighted the speech in 1952 because so many politicians were using it.

Losing Weight

- 1 Eat a third, drink a third, and leave empty in your stomach the remaining third. If anger overtakes you, there will be room for the expansion of your stomach, and you will not suffer from apoplexy.

Gittin 70, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 I think thou art in the habit of eating a great deal, and that thy power

of restraining appetite is more slender than a hair, whilst an appetite such as thou nourishest would rupture a chain, and a day may come when it will tear thee up.

SHEIKH SA’DI (1184–1291), Persian author. *Tales from The Gulistân or the Rose-Garden of the Sheikh Sa’di of Shirâz* (story 93) (1258), trans. and ed. Richard Burton (1928).

- 3 But temprance teacheth this, where he keepeth schoole;
He that knoweth when he hath enough is no foole.
Feed by measure, and defie the phisition!
And in the contrarie mark this condition;
A swine over fat is cause of his own bane.

JOHN HEYWOOD (1497?–?1580), English author and musician. *The Proverbs of John Heywood* (part 2, chapter 7) (1874; originally published 1546).

- 4 When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle’s talent in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman’s thumb-ring. A plague of sighing and grief! It blows a man up like a bladder.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The First Part of King Henry IV* 2.4.326 ff.

Falstaff, known for his generous spirit, dissolute life, and corpulence, considers the issue of his weight.

- 5 Do I not bate? Do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady’s loose gown; I am wither’d like an old apple-john.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The First Part of King Henry IV* 3.3.2–4.

Falstaff complains of losing some of the pounds from his ample frame.

- 6 [Temperance.] To this a spare diet contributes much. Eat therefore to live, and do not live to eat. That is like a man, but this below a beast.

WILLIAM PENN (1644–1718), English philosopher and statesman. *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (part 1), “Temperance,” no. 59 (1693).

- 7 Th’ great national curse t’day is over-eatin’. We do not only eat too much, but we devote too much time thinkin’ about eatin’. . . . Ever’where we look there’s a eatin’ place. . . . Wherever ther’s population enough t’ fill a few stools we find a great brazen coffee urn an’ a stack of buns.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. “Eats’ by Dr. Mopps,” *Abe Martin’s Primer: The Collected Writings of Abe Martin and His Brown County, Indiana, Neighbors* (1914).

- 8 From the day on which she weighs 140, the chief excitement of a woman’s life consists in spotting [people] who are fatter than she is.

HELEN ROWLAND (1875–1950), columnist and essayist. In *The Penguin Book of Women’s Humor*, ed. Regina Barreca (1996).

- 9 . . . I wonder if there is a woman in the world strong-minded enough to shed ten pounds or twenty,—
And say There now, that’s plenty.

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet. “Curl Up and Diet.”

- 10 A big man is always accused of gluttony, whereas a wizened or osseous man can eat like a refugee at every meal, and no one ever notices his greed.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. “Avoirdupois a Cross,” *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

The speaker describes eating lunch with a “man of generous proportions” who is “tormented unmercifully” about his weight by his fellow diners. Marchbanks comments that the man in fact eats “consideringly, without haste or greed.”

- 11 Unnecessary dieting is because everything from television to fashion ads have made it seem wicked to cast a shadow. This wild, emaciated look appeals to some women, though not to many men, who are seldom seen pinning up a *Vogue* illustration in a machine shop.

PEG BRACKEN (b. 1918), U.S. author. *The I Hate to Cook Book* (1960).

- 12 As you know, there are more diet books than dieters, among them the Atkins diet, the Stillman diet, the Scarsdale diet, the Zone diet, the grapefruit diet, the Drinking Man’s diet, the Eating Man’s diet, the Sleeping Man’s diet, the Beverly Hills diet, the Akron, Ohio diet, the Mayo Clinic diet, the Hold the Mayo diet, and the latest, the Nothing But Prunes and Kaopectate diet.

MEL BROOKS (b. 1926) and **CARL REINER** (b. 1922), U.S. comics. *The 2,000 Year Old Man In the Year 2000: The Book. Including How Not to Die and Other Good Tips* (chapter 35, “The 2,000 Year Old Man’s Seven-Day Diet”) (1997).

- 13 Although he has “been down,” as he puts it, for fourteen years, after twenty-five years of exceptional fatness, he sees himself not as a man who weighs one hundred and sixty but as a man who is constantly in danger of weighing three hundred and twenty.

CALVIN TRILLIN (b. 1935), U.S. author. *American Fried: Adventures of a Happy Eater* (chapter 3) (1979).

Trillin refers to his friend Fats Goldberg, the pizza baron.

- 14 She's got this real funny idea about a diet: you don't get fat if no one sees you eating.

GLORIA NAYLOR (b. 1950), U.S. novelist. *Linden Hills* ("December 22nd") (1985).

Wedding

- 1 In house to kepe houshold *when folkes will needes wed,*
Moe things belong then foure bare legges in a bed.
 I reckened my wedding a suger sweete spice,
 But *reckeners without their host must reckon twice.*
 And although it were sweet for a weeke or twaine,
Sweete meate will have sowre sauce, I see now plaine.

JOHN HEYWOOD (1497?–?1580), English author and musician. *The Proverbs of John Heywood* (part 1, chapter 8) (1874; originally published 1564).

- 2 Let endless Peace your steadfast hearts accord,
 And blessed Plentie wait vpon your bord;
 And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
 That fruitfull issue may to you afford
 Which may your foes confound,
 And make your joyes redound.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552?–1599), English poet and courtier. *Prothalamion* (lines 101–106).

- 3 Wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a

cinquepace. The first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and anticentry; and then comes Repentance and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Much Ado About Nothing* 2.1.67 ff.

Beatrice comments on marriage, before she is won over by the charms of Benedick.

- 4 Wedding is great Juno's crown,
 O blessed bond of board and bed!
 'Tis Hymen peoples every town;
 High wedlock then be honorèd.
 Honor, high honor, and renown,
 To Hymen, god of every town!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 5.4.140–45.

- 5 Honor, riches, marriage-blessing
 Long continuance, and increasing,
 Hourly joys be still upon you!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Tempest* 4.1.106–108.

Lines spoken by Juno in the pageant, organized by Prospero and his minion Ariel, to celebrate the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand.

- 6 I . . . chose my wife, as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (c. 1728–1774), Anglo-Irish author. *The Vicar of Wakefield* (chapter 1, "The Description of the Family of Wakefield in Which a Kindred Likeness Prevails as Well of Minds as of Persons") (1766).

- 7 Timid brides, you have, probably, hitherto been addressed as angels.

Prepare for the time when you shall again become mortal.

MARIA EDGEWORTH (1768–1849), Irish author. “An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification,” *Letters for Literary Ladies* (1795).

Edgeworth goes on to advise brides: “Contra-dict, debate, justify, recriminate, rage, weep, swoon, do anything but yield to conviction.”

- 8 A wedding is a licensed subject to joke upon, but there really is no great joke in the matter after all;—we speak merely of the ceremony, and beg it to be distinctly understood that we indulge in no hidden sarcasm upon a married life. Mixed up with the pleasure and joy of the occasion, are the many regrets at quitting home, the tears of parting between parent and child, the consciousness of leaving the dearest and kindest friends of the happiest portion of human life, to encounter its cares and troubles with others still untried and little known: natural feelings which we would not render this chapter mournful by describing, and which we should be still more unwilling to be supposed to ridicule.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *The Pickwick Papers* (chapter 28, “A Good-Humoured Christmas Chapter, Containing an Account of a Wedding, and Some Other Sports Beside: Which Although in Their Way, Even as Good Customs as Marriage Itself, Are Not Quite so Religiously Kept Up in These Degenerate Times”) (1837).

Dickens describes the mixed feelings occasioned by a wedding ceremony.

- 9 Such days can hardly be agreeable to the man of whom it is known by all around him that he is on the eve of committing matrimony. There is always, on such occasions, a feeling of weakness, as though the man

had been subdued, brought at length into a cage and tamed, so as to be made fit for domestic purposes, and deprived of his ancient freedom amongst the woods; whereas the girl feels herself to be the triumphant conqueror, who has successfully performed this great act of taming.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815–1882), English novelist. *Ayala's Angel* (chapter 64, “Ayala's Marriage”) (1881).

- 10 “It is a habit which exhibits, perhaps, the unconscious inherent cynicism of the human mind, for people who consider that they have reached the acme of mundane felicity, to distribute this token of esteem to their friends, with the object probably” (he took the knife from a waiter and went to the table to slice the cake) “of enabling those friends (these edifices require very delicate incision—each particular currant and subtle condiment hangs to its neighbour—a wedding-cake is evidently the most highly civilized of cakes, and partakes of the evils as well as the advantages of civilization!)—I was saying, they send us these love-tokens, no doubt (we shall have to weigh out the crumbs, if each is to have his fair share) that we may the better estimate their state of bliss by passing some hours in purgatory.”

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828–1909), English author. *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (chapter 32, “Procession of the Cake”) (1859).

Adrian carefully portions out a piece of cake and extravagantly analyzes its meaning for Hippias.

- 11 I think a wedding-day
Looks best, as mountains do,
some miles away,

Or squalid fishing-smacks far out to
sea,
Seen lily-sailed in sunshine and
blue haze,
Where the delicious lights are all
men chase,
And no man ever reaches.

W. H. MALLOCK (1849–1923), English author. “A Marriage Prospect (From an Unfinished Drama).”

The speaker savors the six weeks before his wedding. After the marriage he anticipates only the misery attendant upon having to “consecrate” his days “In sober, sombre truth, for good and ill, / To the one worship of a withering face.”

- 12 Every time I hear that march from
Lohengrin,
I am glad I’m on the outside looking in.
I have heard a lot of married people talk,
And I know that marriage is a long,
long walk.
To some people weddings mean romance,
But I prefer a picnic or a dance.

GUS KAHN (1886–1941), U.S. lyricist. “Makin’ Whoopee.”

- 13 Of all life’s ceremonies that of marriage is the most touching and beautiful. This is the long anticipated climax of girlhood—and boyhood, too—the doorway to true maturity, the farewell to parents as protectors, the acceptance of responsibility.

AMY VANDERBILT (1908–1974), U.S. author. *Amy Vanderbilt’s Etiquette* (introduction, “The Ceremonies of Life”) (1971).

Vanderbilt urges her readers to remember that “the elaborateness or simplicity of the wedding is of no real consequence. It is the spirit in which we marry that is truly meaningful.”

- 14 Women often weep at weddings,
whereas my own instinct is to laugh

uproariously and encourage the bride and groom with merry whoops. The sight of people getting married exhilarates me; I think that they are doing a fine thing, and I admire them for it.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. “Of Nuptial Merriment,” *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 15 I toast you both, good son and dear
new daughter.
May you not lack for water,
And may that water smack of
Cana’s wine.

RICHARD WILBUR (b. 1921), U.S. poet. “A Wedding Toast.”

Starting a Business

- 1 I hired me a little shop, . . . took
small gain, kept no debt-book, garnished my shop, for want of plate, with good wholesome thrifty sentences, as “Touchstone, keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee.” “Light gains make heavy purses.”

GEORGE CHAPMAN (1559–1634), English author. *Eastward Hoe* (1.1.45 ff.) (c. 1605).

These are the words of the goldsmith Touchstone. Chapman collaborated on the play with Ben Jonson and John Marston. Jonson and Chapman were imprisoned because of the anti-Scottish satire in the play.

- 2 If a man will begin with certainties,
he shall end in doubts; but if he
will be content to begin with
doubts, he shall end in certainties.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. *The Advancement of Learning* 1.5.8 (1605).

Bacon’s advice is not necessarily intended for entrepreneurs, but it represents one approach to a start-up.

- 3 Those that never were in business have reason to avoid it, because they do not know it. Those that have been in it, have at least as much reason to dislike it, because they do know it.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and author. *Maxims* (1750), in *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 3 (1989).

- 4 A vigorous beginning at business carries it very near the end. A wavering at the first setting out invites and calls for a misfortune.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and author. *Maxims* (1750), in *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 4 (1989).

- 5 Whatever business you have, do it the first moment you can; never by halves, but finish it without interruption, if possible. Business must not be sauntered and trifled with.

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD (1694–1773), English statesman and author. Letter to his son, 5 March 1752 OS, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. John Bradshaw, vol. 2 (1929).

- 6 Nothing . . . will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinnia* (chapter 6, “A Dissertation on the Art of Flying”) (1759).

Johnson’s characters are not talking about business, but their emphasis on taking a leap of faith represents one approach to starting any new enterprise.

- 7 The best-laid schemes o’ mice an’ men
Gang aft a’gley.

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796), Scottish poet. “To a Mouse.”

Burns’s speaker suggests the limits of planning.

- 8 I draw a plan and work out every detail on the plan before starting to build. For otherwise one will waste a great deal of time in makeshifts as the work goes on and the finished article will not have coherence. It will not be rightly proportioned. Many inventors fail because they do not distinguish between planning and experimenting.

HENRY FORD (1863–1947), U.S. industrialist. In *My Life and Work* (1922; reprint 1973), and reprinted in *Ford on Management: Harnessing the American Spirit* (chapter 1, “The Beginning of Business”) (1991).

- 9 This is the strategy of “creative imitation.” It waits until somebody else has established the new, but only “approximately.” Then it goes to work. And within a short time it comes out with what the new really should be to satisfy the customer, to do the work customers want and pay for. The creative imitation has then set the standard and takes over the market.

PETER F. DRUCKER (b. 1909), U.S. businessman and writer. *The Executive in Action* (“Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Practice and Principles”; section 3, “Entrepreneurial Strategies”; chapter 17, “Hit Them Where They Ain’t”) (1996).

Drucker gives the example of IBM’s “perfection” of the Apple company’s personal computer.

- 10 Start with good people, lay out the rules, communicate with your employees, motivate them, and reward them if they perform. If you do all those things effectively, you can’t miss.

LEE IACocca (b. 1924), U.S. businessman. *Talking Straight* (chapter 4, "Good Business—More in Management") (1988).

- 11 The debit side of the balance sheet reflects incredibly hard work and self-sacrifice—with very little material return for the investment in the first few years. The credit side? It will be whatever you make it.

IRENE SMITH (b. ?1935), U.S. businesswoman and writer. *Diary of a Small Business* (chapter 20, "If I Had It to Do Over Again . . . And Knew What I Know Now") (1982).

- 12 People say it takes so much courage to become an entrepreneur. I think it takes far more courage to work for somebody else, to get up each morning and go to work and not have something in your control.

HELEN VER STANDIG (b. ?1920), entrepreneur. Quoted in Edward A. Gazvoda, William M. Haney III, and John Greenya, *The Harvard Entrepreneurs Society's Guide to Making Money, or The Tycoon's Handbook* (book 4, "Entrepreneurism: Passing Fad? or Future?") (1983).

Ver Standig is "Madame Wellington," owner of The Wellington Stores, which sell simulated precious gemstones.

- 13 In games, many times there are prizes for effort. You can get second prize or third prize, and that is not bad at all. However, as in a battle, in the small business game it is winner take all. No reward for effort, no second prize. You try and you win or you lose. Please know this before you jump in. It is sink or swim.

WILLIAM A. DELANEY. *Why Small Businesses Fail—Don't Make the Same Mistake Once* ("What Exactly Are Your Chances") (1984).

- 14 **YOUR OWN BUSINESS**
Start small and grow big.
Start big and go broke.

MALCOLM FORBES (?–1990), U.S. businessman. *The Further Sayings of Chairman Malcolm* ("Boardroom Banter") (1986).

- 15 Most aspiring entrepreneurs believe that the key to success lies in developing an innovative and exciting product. After all, remember Emerson's adage "Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door." I'm here to tell you that if you believe in that adage, then you are doomed to failure. . . . The truth is, it's far better to aggressively market a mediocre mousetrap than to build a superior trap and wait for the phones to ring.

SCOTT A. CLARK, U.S. author. *Beating the Odds: Ten Smart Steps to Small Business Success* (chapter 1, "First Things First") (1991).

Sarah S. B. Yule and Mary S. Keene credit Emerson with the comment about the mousetrap, noting in their *Borrowings* (1889) that Emerson said, "If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbor, though he builds his house in the woods the world will make a beaten path to his door."

- 16 Benjamin Franklin discovered electricity, but the man who developed the electric meter made a lot more money from it.

E. JOSEPH COSSMAN (b. 1918) and **WILLIAM A. COHEN**, U.S. businessmen. *Making It!: Wealth-Building Secrets From Two Great Entrepreneurial Minds* ("Know How to Start a Business") (1994).

Promotion

- 1 The Master said, "Do not worry because you have no official position. Worry about your qualifications. Do not worry because no one appreciates your abilities. Seek to be worthy of appreciation."

CONFUCIUS (551?–479 B.C.), Chinese philosopher. *Analects* (Lun yǔ), book 4, section 14, trans. D. C. Lau (1979).

Confucius was writing before the era of downsizing, the hiring bonus, and 401k.

- 2 Winning promotion through Pull is a thing we all hate—in other people. Co-workers dislike the beneficiary of Pull (The Pullee) and usually express that dislike in comments on his incompetence.

RAYMOND HULL (b. 1919), U.S. author. *The Peter Principle* (chapter 4, “Pull and Promotion”) (1969).

According to Hull, writing as Laurence J. Peter, the Peter Principle can be formulated as: “In a Hierarchy Every Employee Tends to Rise to His Level of Incompetence.” The author restates the principle as: “In every hierarchy the cream rises until it sours.” He defines “pull” as “an employee’s relationship—by blood, marriage or acquaintance—with a person above him in the hierarchy.”

- 3 Most managements complain about the lack of able people and go outside to fill key positions. Nonsense. Nobody inside an organization ever looked ready to move into a bigger job. I use the rule of 50 percent. Try to find somebody inside the company with a record of success (in any area) and with an appetite for the job. If he looks like 50 per cent of what you need, give him the job. In six months he’ll have grown the other 50 per cent and everybody will be satisfied.

ROBERT TOWNSEND (b. 1920), U.S. author. *Up the Organization* (“Promotion, from Within”) (1970).

- 4 People used to think at 45: *How do I prepare myself for the next promotion?* Now they have to think: *How do I prepare myself to make another start if/when I’m pitched over the*

side? Companies today treat employees as disposable resources.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time* (part 2, “The Flourishing Forties”; chapter 3, “Men Redefining Success”) (1995).

Becoming a Parent

- 1 Let not the fear of bad offspring deter you from having children; you must do your duty and God will do what pleases Him.

Berakoth 10a (Talmud).

- 2 A man without children is like a piece of wood, which though kindled does not burn or give out light.

Zohar, 1.187a, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 3 Families, when a child is born
Want it to be intelligent.
I, through intelligence,
Having wrecked my whole life,
Only hope that the baby will prove
Ignorant and stupid.
Then he will crown a tranquil life
By becoming a Cabinet Minister.

SU SHIH (SU TUNG-PO) (1036–1101), Chinese poet. “On the Birth of His Son,” trans. Arthur Waley in *170 Chinese Poems* (1977; originally published 1962).

- 4 Children sweeten labours, but they make misfortunes more bitter; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. “Of Parents and Children,” *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 5 He that hath children, all his morsels are not his owne.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 423 (1640).

- 6 Infants manners are moulded more by the example of Parents, then by stars at their nativities.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Jacula Prudentum, or Outlandish Proverbs, Sentences, Etc.*, no. 1060 (1652).

- 7 You may love your children without living in the Nursery, and you may have a competent and discreet care of them, without letting it break out upon the company . . .

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and author. *The Lady's New-Year's Gift; or, Advice to a Daughter on Religion and Morality* (1688), in *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 2 (1989).

- 8 The Desire of having Children is as much the Effect of Vanity as of Good-nature. We think our Children a Part of ourselves, though as they grow up they might very well undeceive us.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and author. *Miscellaneous Thoughts and Reflections* (1750), in *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 3 (1989).

- 9 As marriage produces children, so children produce care and disputes; and wrangling, as is said (at least by old bachelors and old maids), is one of the sweets of the conjugal state.

MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU (1689–1762), English author. Letter, 13 January

1715–16, *Letters* [Mary Wortley Montagu], ed. Clare Brant (1992).

- 10 I wish either my father or my mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me; had they duly considered how much depended upon what they were then doing;—that not only the production of a rational Being was concerned in it, but that possibly the happy formation and tempera-
ture of his body, perhaps his genius and the very cast of his mind;—and, for aught they knew to the contrary, even the fortunes of his whole house might take their turn from the humours and dispositions which were then uppermost :—Had they duly weighed and considered all this, and proceeded accordingly, —I am verily persuaded I should have made a quite different figure in the world from that in which the reader is likely to see me.

LAURENCE STERNE (1713–1768), Anglo-Irish author. *Tristram Shandy* (chapter 1, opening lines) (1760–67).

- 11 The parent who sedulously endeavours to form the heart and enlarge the understanding of his child, has given that dignity to the discharge of a duty, common to the whole animal world, that only reason can give. This is the parental affection of humanity, and leaves instinctive natural affection far behind. Such a parent acquires all the rights of the most sacred friendship, and his advice, even when his child is advanced in life, demands serious consideration.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (1759–1797), English author and feminist. *A Vindica-*

tion of the Rights of Women (chapter 11, "Duty to Parents") (1792).

Wollstonecraft argues, however, that children should only be expected to follow parental advice slavishly while they are too young to reason for themselves.

- 12 O dearest, dearest boy! my heart
For better lore would seldom yearn,
Could I but teach the hundredth
part
Of what from thee I learn.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850), English poet. "An Anecdote for Fathers."

- 13 Our notion of the perfect society
embraces the family as its centre
and ornament. Nor is there a paradise
planted till the children appear
in the foreground to animate and
complete the picture. Without
these, the world were a solitude,
houses desolate, hearts nameless;
there are neither perspectives, nor
prospects; ourselves are not our-
selves, nor were there a future for
us.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT (1799–1888), U.S. philosopher and educator. "Friendship," *Tablets* (1868).

- 14 Infancy conforms to nobody: all
conform to it, so that one babe
commonly makes four or five out
of the adults who prattle and play
to it.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Self-Reliance," *Essays, First Series* (1841).

- 15 Respect the child. Wait and see the
new product of Nature. Nature
loves analogies, but not repetitions.
Respect the child. Be not too much
his parent. Trespass not on his soli-
tude.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author and philosopher. "Education," *Lectures and Biographical Sketches* (1883).

- 16 It is a pleasant thing to reflect
upon, and furnishes a complete an-
swer to those who contend for the
gradual degeneration of the human
species, that every baby born into
the world is a finer one than the
last.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Nicholas Nickleby* (chapter 36, "Private and confidential; relating to family matters. Showing how Mr. Kenwigs underwent violent Agitation, and how Mrs. Kenwigs was as well as could be expected") (1838–39).

- 17 When the mother's passionate wel-
come,
Sorrow-like, bursts forth in tears,
And a sire's self-gratulation
Prophecies of future years—
It is well we cannot see
What the end shall be.

FRANCES BROWNE (1816–1879), Irish poet. "What the End Shall Be," in *Famous and Single Fugitive Poems*, ed. Rossiter Johnson (1890).

Johnson notes: "This poem has been handed about for a quarter of a century. It is attributed to Frances Browne, the blind poetess (b. Stran-
olar, Ireland, 1816)."

- 18 Family likeness has often a deep
sadness in it. Nature, that great
tragic dramatist, knits us together
by bone and muscle, and divides us
by the subtler web of our brains;
blends yearning and repulsion; and
ties us by our heartstrings to the
beings that jar us at every move-
ment.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Adam Bede* (chapter 4, "Home and Its Sorrows") (1859).

- 19 If you would have your son to walk honorably through the world, you must not attempt to clear the stones from his path, but teach him to walk firmly over them—not insist upon leading him by the hand, but let him learn to go alone.

ANNE BRONTË (1820–1849), English author. *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (chapter 3, “A Controversy”) (1848).

Advice given to a mother who is accused of pampering her son.

- 20 Only a tender flower
Sent us to rear;
Only a life to love
While we are here;
Only a baby small,
Never at rest;
Small, but how dear to us,
God knoweth best.

MATTHIAS BARR (1831–?), Scottish poet. “The Children’s Laureate.” “Only a Baby Small.”

- 21 . . . be aught you please, let all fulfil
All your pleasure; be your world
your toy;
Mild or wild we love you, loud or
still,
Child or boy.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837–1909), English poet. “Not a Child.”

- 22 What does it matter, when you come to think of it, whether a child is yours by blood or not? All the little ones of our time are collectively the children of us adults of the time, and entitled to our general care. That excessive regard of parents for their own children, and their dislike of other people’s, is, like class-feeling, patriotism, save-your-own soul-ism and other virtues, a mean exclusiveness at bottom.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English author. *Jude the Obscure* (part 5, chapter 3) (1896).

- 23 **BABE or BABY**, n. A misshapen creature of no particular age, sex, or condition, chiefly remarkable for the violence of the sympathies and antipathies it excites in others, itself without sentiment or emotion.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil’s Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 24 Can you think of any service constituting a stronger claim on the nation’s gratitude than bearing and nursing the nation’s children? According to our view, none deserve so well of the world as good parents. There is no task so unselfish, so necessarily without return, though the heart is well rewarded, as the nurture of the children who are to make the world for one another when we are gone.

EDWARD BELLAMY (1850–1898), U.S. author and journalist. *Looking Backward* (chapter 25) (1888).

Bellamy’s utopian novel looks forward to a time when this attitude about parenting and the importance of the equality of men and women is a reality.

- 25 Children begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them; sometimes they forgive them.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 5) (1890).

- 26 It’s a strange thing, . . . but you can’t love a man till you’ve had a baby by him. . . . If a woman’s got a baby and a husband she’s got the best things the Lord can give her.

OLIVE SCHREINER (1855–1920), South African author. *The Story of An African Farm* (part 2, chapter 14, “Waldo Goes Out to Sit in the Sunshine”) (1883).

- 27 They are a great deal of trouble,
and they make a place untidy, and
they cost a lot of money to keep;
but still we would not have the
house without them. It would not
be home without their noisy
tongues and their mischief-making
hands. Would not the rooms seem
silent without their pattering feet,
and might not you stay apart if no
prattling voices called you together?

JEROME K. JEROME (1859–1927), English actor and writer. “On Babies,” *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* (1892).

- 28 Just when they sit down to enjoy in
peace their evening meal of existence,
the tables of most parents are
pounced upon as by harpies, and
pillaged by their children.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Age and Death,” *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 29 The parents exist to teach the child,
but they must learn what the child
has to teach them; and the child
has a very great deal to teach them.
Chiefly the child has to teach them
imagination, which is the source of
justice and the foe of cruelty, conscious
or unconscious.

ARNOLD BENNETT (1867–1931), English author. *How to Make the Best of Life* (chapter 8, “Children”) (1923).

- 30 God, you have given me a boy:
Now help me still my boy to
rear;
Too kind to quarrel, brave to
fear,
Too good for any sinful joy,
Or, if temptation prove too
strong,
Too wise to follow folly long.

DOUGLAS MALLOCH (1877–1938), U.S. poet. “A Father’s Prayer.”

- 31 One of the most fascinating preoccupations when one has a child of one’s own is watching for the appearance of hereditary traits and predispositions that can be attributed to—or blamed upon—one side of the family or the other. . . . The traits in which one takes pride and the traits of the other parent whom one loves are doubly endearing in the shared child.

MARGARET MEAD (1901–1978), U.S. anthropologist. *Blackberry Winter* (“Catherine, Born in Wartime”) (1972).

Mead describes in her autobiography the birth of her daughter after she had been told she could not have children.

- 32 Everybody who has a baby thinks
everybody who hasn’t a baby
ought to have a baby.

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet. “Did Someone Say ‘Babies?’”

- 33 Trust yourself. You know more than
you think you do.

BENJAMIN SPOCK (1903–1998), U.S. psychologist. *Baby and Child Care* (opening chapter) (1977; originally published 1946 as *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*).

- 34 Loving a baby or child is a circular
business, a kind of feedback loop.
The more you give, the more you
get, and the more you get, the more
you feel like giving.

PENELOPE LEACH, English psychologist. *Your Baby & Child: From Birth to Age Five* (introduction) (1993).

- 35 Children do not need superhuman,
perfect parents. They have always
managed with good enough parents:
the parents they happened to
have.

PENELOPE LEACH, English psychologist. *Your Baby & Child: From Birth to Age Five* (introduction) (1993).

- 36 Getting advice on the best way to bring up children is like getting advice on the best way to breathe; sooner or later, you're probably going to forget it and go back to your regular old in-and-out.

CALVIN TRILLIN (b. 1935), U.S. author. *Family Man* (chapter 1, "No Advice Here") (1998).

- 37 Your responsibility as a parent is not as great as you might imagine. You need not supply the world with the next conqueror of disease or major motion-picture star. If your child simply grows up to be someone who does not use the word "collectible" as a noun, you can consider yourself an unqualified success.

FRAN LEBOWITZ (b. 1950), U.S. author. "Parental Guidance," *Social Studies* (1981).

- 38 [From a list of pros and cons for "prospective parents"]

[Pro:] Children ask better questions than do adults. "May I have a cookie?" "Why is the sky blue?" and "What does a cow say?" are far more likely to elicit a cheerful response than "Where's your manuscript?" "Why haven't you called?" and "Who's your lawyer?"

[Con:] Notoriously insensitive to subtle shifts in mood, children will persist in discussing the color of a recently sighted cement mixer long after one's own interest in the topic has waned.

FRAN LEBOWITZ (b. 1950), U.S. author. "Children: Pro or Con?" *Metropolitan Life* (1978).

mi blood like a gin sling, they krawl into me and nestle by the side ov mi soul, like a kitten under a cook stove. . . . I have got grandchildren, and they are wuss than the first krop tew riot among the feelings.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW) (1818–1885), U.S. humorist. "Babys," *The Complete Works of Josh Billings* (1876).

- 2 As grandparents, elders can *contribute* to the grandchildren's guidance and maintenance without being *responsible* for them. As grandparents, they can love, care for, and be helpful to the grandchildren—all without bearing the responsibility inherent in parental generativity. This freedom from middle age's responsibility for maintaining and perpetuating the world is central to the grand-generativity that characterizes old-age caring.

ERIK H. ERIKSON (1902–1994), American (German-born) psychoanalyst; **JOAN M. ERIKSON** (1902–1997), U.S. artist and therapist; and **HELEN Q. KIVNICK**, psychologist. *Vital Involvement in Old Age* (section II, "The Voices of Our Informants"; section 2, "Generativity and Stagnation: Care") (1986).

- 3 Because they are usually free to love and guide and befriend the young without having to take daily responsibility for them, they can often reach out past pride and fear of failure and close the space between generations.

JIMMY CARTER (b. 1924), U.S. president. Proclamation (9 September 1979) of National Grandparents' Day; quoted in Ruth K. Westheimer and Steven Kaplan, *Grandparenthood* (1998).

Becoming a Grandparent

- 1 Babys i luv with all mi heart; they are mi sweetmeats, they warm up

Moving House

- 1 The leaving a neighbourhood in which we had enjoyed so many hours of tranquility was not with-

out a tear, which scarce fortitude itself could suppress.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1730?–1774), Anglo-Irish author. *The Vicar of Wakefield* (chapter 3, “A Migration. The Fortunate Circumstances of Our Lives are Generally Found at Last to Be of Our Own Procuring”) (1766).

- 2 These annual migrations from farm to farm were on the increase. . . . With the younger families it was a pleasant excitement which might possibly be an advantage. The Egypt of one family was the Land of Promise to the family who saw it from a distance, till by residence there it became in turn their Egypt also; and so they changed and changed.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English author. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (Phase the Sixth, “The Convert”; chapter 51) (1891).

Hardy describes the annual custom of changing jobs and households on Lady Day. In the story of Exodus, the Israelites suffered in Egypt and anticipated a return to the Promised Land.

- 3 “I understand that inside of the Pearly Gates, each Family has Permanent Quarters. There are no Folding Beds to juggle down Back Stairways, no Picture Cords to shorten, no Curtain Poles to saw off, no Book Cases to get jammed in Stairways. I am sure there will be no Piano Movers, for I have heard their Language. Do you think you can be happy in the Promised Land?”

“It will depend entirely on whether or not the Rugs fit.”

GEORGE ADE (1866–1944), U.S. humorist and journalist. “The Search for the Right House and How Mrs. Jump Had Her Annual Attack”; in *The Permanent Ade: The Living Writings of George Ade*, ed. Fred C. Kelly (1947).

A dialogue between Mr. Jump and his wife, who every spring looks for a “House that had

twice as many Closets as Rooms and a Southern Exposure on All four sides.”

- 4 O dear little cabin, I've loved you so long,
And now I must bid you good-bye!
I've filled you with laughter, I've thrilled you with song
And sometimes I've wished I could cry.
Your walls they have witnessed a weariful fight,
And rung to a won Waterloo:
But oh, in my triumph I'm dreary to-night—
Good-bye, little cabin, to you!

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian poet. “Good-Bye, Little Cabin.”

- 5 In the little houses the tenant people sifted their belongings and the belongings of their fathers and of their grandfathers. Picked over their possessions for the journey to the west. The men were ruthless because the past had been spoiled, but the women knew how the past would cry to them in the coming days.

JOHN STEINBECK (1902–1968), U.S. novelist. *The Grapes of Wrath* (chapter 9) (1939).

Steinbeck describes the plight of farmers forced to move from dust-bowl states like Oklahoma to the “promised land” of California.

- 6 Without my twenty to forty years of clutter, the lightness I feel here in this new home is *good*. Come to think of it, this move liberated me. It refreshed and energized me somehow, knowing I had to make new friends here, start new projects, plant my roots anew in journalist, political, feminist, and writers' groups (the interests of my past)—

even try something truly new for me.

BETTY FRIEDAN (b. 1921), U.S. author and feminist. *The Fountain of Age* (chapter 11, "To Move or to Stay?") (1993).

Friedan talks about a move made when she was in her mid-sixties, from New York to California, to teach. She argues: "Older, we must move, and stay, and move again, to keep our life-giving ties alive, for this movement is our fountain of age. And there's a freedom in realizing this, a new freedom to move or stay, new necessities and possibilities of choice."

- 7 Ah, I like the look of packing crates! A household in preparation for a journey! . . . Something full of the flow of life. . . . Movement, progress.

LORRAINE HANSBERRY (1930–1965), U.S. dramatist. *A Raisin in the Sun* (act 3) (1958).

Spoken by the character Asagai, who is a voice for change in the play.

- 8 The smell of fresh paint barely overlaid a fainter, more pungent odor, the accumulated fear and loneliness and terrified excitement of those who had lived here before me.

JOHN THORNE, U.S. author. "Learning to Eat" (1992), in *The Penguin Book of Food and Drink*, ed. Paul Levy (1996).

Thorne describes moving into his first New York City apartment, where the former tenant has left all her possessions.

- 2 True and false fears let us refrain;
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write threescore; this is the second of our reign.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet, clergyman, and courtier. "The Anniversary."

- 3 If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were loved by wife,
then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.

ANNE BRADSTREET (1612?–1672), U.S. (English-born) poet. "To My Dear and Loving Husband."

- 4 Frequent visits, presents, intimate correspondence, and intermarriages within allowed bounds, are means of keeping up the concern and affection that nature requires from relations.

WILLIAM PENN (1644–1718), English philosopher and statesman. *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (part 1), "Marriage," no. 105 (1693).

Many couples may find Penn's advice interesting (what does he mean by "intermarriages"? and inspiring (although for them probably only the presents would have a practical application).

- 5 Marriage is the beginning and the end of all culture. It makes the savage mild; and the most cultivated has no better opportunity for displaying his gentleness. Indissoluble

Wedding Anniversary

- 1 To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. Sonnet 104.

it must be, because it brings so much happiness that what small exceptional unhappiness it may bring counts for nothing in the balance.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749–1832), German poet, novelist, and dramatist. *Elective Affinities* (book 1, chapter 9) (1809), trans. James Froude and R. Dillon Boylan (1962).

The passionate words of Mittler.

- 6 Dear Ellen, many a golden year
May ripe, then dim, thy beauty's
bloom
But never shall the hour appear
In sunny joy, in sorrow's gloom,
When aught shall hinder me from
telling
My ardent love, all loves excelling.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Dear Ellen" (1829).

Emerson wrote these lines during his engagement.

- 7 Ah, Lucy, life has swiftly sped
From April to November;
The summer blossoms all are shed
That you and I remember;
But while the vanished years we
share
With mingling recollections,
How all their shadowy features
wear
The hue of old affections!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. "Lucy: for Her Golden Wedding, October 18, 1875."

- 8 Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889), English poet. "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (opening lines).

- 9 The noble lady's condition on these
delightful occasions was one com-
pounded of heroic endurance and
heroic forgiveness. Lurid indica-

tions of the better marriages she might have made, shone athwart the awful gloom of her composure, and fitfully revealed the cherub as a little monster unaccountably favoured by Heaven, who had possessed himself of a blessing for which many of his superiors had sued and contended in vain. So firmly had this his position towards his treasure become established, that when the anniversary arrived, it always found him in an apologetic state.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Our Mutual Friend* (book 3, chapter 4, "A Happy Return of the Day") (1864–65).

Describing the anniversary of the Wilfers, married more than 25 years. They celebrate the day "morally, rather as a Fast than a Feast." Mr. Wilfer is described as "cherubic" throughout the novel.

- 10 I have now been married ten years.
. . . I am my husband's life as fully
as he is mine. . . . To talk to each
other is but a more animated and
an audible thinking.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816–1855), English author. *Jane Eyre* (chapter 38, "Conclusion") (1847).

- 11 The Silver Wedding! on some pen-
sive ear
From towers remote as sound the
silvery bells,
To-day from one far unforgotten
year
A silvery faint memorial music
swells.

And silver-pale the dim memorial
light
Of musing age on youthful joys is
shed,
The golden joys of fancy's dawning
bright,

The golden bliss of, Woo'd, and
won, and wed.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819–1861),
English poet. "The Silver Wedding."

Written for the 25th wedding anniversary of
Mr. and Mrs. Walrond.

- 12 True Love is but a humble, low-
born thing,
And hath its food served up in
earthen ware;
It is a thing to walk with, hand in
hand,
Through the every-dayness of this
work-day world.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891),
U.S. author. "Love."

- 13 Kissing don't last; cookery do!

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828–1909), En-
glish author. *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*
(chapter 28, "Preparations for Action") (1859).

Mrs. Berry, a woman whose husband left her
after only nine months of marriage, gives this
advice to a romantic young woman soon to be
married herself.

- 14 Unto us all our days are love's an-
niversaries, each one
In turn hath ripen'd something of
our happiness.

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–1930), English
poet. "Anniversary," *Poems in Classical Pros-
ody*.

- 15 Do you know many wives . . . who
respect and admire their husbands?
And yet they and their husbands
get on very well. How many brides
go to the altar with hearts that
would bear inspection by the men
who take them there? And yet it
doesn't end unhappily—somehow
or other the nuptial establishment
jogs on. The truth is, that women
try marriage as a Refuge, far more

numerously than they are willing to
admit; and, what is more, they find
that marriage has justified their
confidence in it.

WILKIE COLLINS (1848–1889), English
author. *The Moonstone* (Second Period, "The
Discovery of the Truth"; First Narrative, chap-
ter 5) (1868).

- 16 Small is the trust when love is green
In sap of early years;
A little thing steps in between
And kisses turn to tears.

A while—and see how love be
grown

In loveliness and power!
A while, it loves the sweets alone,
But next it loves the sour.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–
1894), Scottish author. "Small is the Trust
When Love is Green."

- 17 You've lived with me these fifty
years,
And all the time you loved me
dearly:
I may have given you cause for
tears:
I may have acted rather queerly.

I ceased to love you long ago:
I loved another for a season:
As time went on I came to know
Your worth, my wife. . . .

J. K. STEPHEN (1859–1892), English law-
yer and journalist. "After the Golden Wedding
(Three Soliloquies)."

Stephen's poem is a cynical juxtaposition of
soliloquies. The wife indeed never loved the
husband, although the minister who presides
over this golden wedding anniversary sees
them as a happy couple worthy of imitation.

- 18 Sometimes, I recollect, those twenty
years with her had seemed long;

but that was because, firstly, twenty years were long, and secondly because we are none of us perfect, and thirdly, because a wife, unless she is careful, is apt to get on one's nerves.

MARY ANNETTE (BEAUCHAMP) RUSSELL, COUNTESS RUSSELL (MARY ELIZABETH BEAUCHAMP) (1866–1941), English novelist. *The Caravanners* (chapter 14) (1909).

Baron Von Ottringel, a Prussian army officer, remembers his experience with his first wife.

- 19 Wasn't marriage, like life, unstimulating and unprofitable and somewhat empty when too well ordered and protected and guarded. Wasn't it finer, more splendid, more nourishing, when it was, like life itself, a mixture of the sordid and the magnificent; of mud and stars; of earth and flowers; of love and hate and laughter and tears and ugliness and beauty and hurt.

EDNA FERBER (1887–1968), U.S. novelist. *Show Boat* (chapter 19) (1926).

Kim questions whether something is missing from marriage, although she relishes her "separate bedrooms and those lovely negligees" and her "personal liberty and privacy of thought and action."

- 20 Husbands are things that wives have to get used to putting up with,
And with whom they breakfast with and sup with.
They interfere with the discipline of nurseries,
And forget anniversaries.

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet. "What Almost Every Woman Knows Sooner or Later."

- 21 For you wake one day,
Look around and say

Somebody wonderful
Married me.

FRED EBB, lyricist. "Married," from the musical *Cabaret* (act one) (1963).

- 22 That we arrived at fifty years together is due as much to luck as to love, and a talent for knowing, when we stumble, where to fall, and how to get up again.

RUBY DEE (b. 1924) and **OSSIE DAVIS** (b. 1917), U.S. actors. *Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together* ("Sex Comes Out of the Closet") (1998).

- 23 A husband has many, many ways of making a wife feel loved, but he almost never does it with champagne and roses. . . . I will happily settle for love in its many oblique and unglamorous manifestations, for "I love you" can be translated into his willingness to lace my ski boots, and to listen to my discussion of infant diarrhea.

JUDITH VIORST (b. 1931), U.S. author. *Yes, Married* (chapter 14, "The Reason It's Worth It") (1972).

- 24 When I was . . . little, my mother once told me that if a married couple puts a penny in a pot for every time they make love in the first year, and takes a penny out every time after that, they'll never get all the pennies out of the pot.

ARMISTEAD MAUPIN (b. 1944), U.S. author. *Tales of the City* (1978).

Spoken by Mrs. Madrigal, who is explaining that sex is not the most binding or lasting element of marriage.

Family Reunion

- 1 For the hands that cannot clasp thee,

For the voices that are dumb,
For each and all I bid thee
A grateful welcome home!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. “A Welcome to Lowell.”

In writing these lines to welcome James Russell Lowell, a fellow poet, Whittier also expresses the likely sentiment of someone speaking for any family that is understood to consist of the dead as well as the living.

- 2 To that dear home beyond the sea,
My Kathleen shall again return,
And when thy old friends welcome thee,
Thy loving heart will cease to yearn.

THOMAS P. WESTENDORF (1848–1923). “I’ll Take You Home Again, Kathleen.”

A husband here promises to take his wife back to their native Ireland.

- 3 Some human rôles are so fixed that it is too great a strain to act them in any but the accepted manner. Fathers ought to be tyrannical, and sons ungrateful; grandmothers must demoralize their children’s children, and mothers-in-law make all the mischief they can.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Other People,” *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

Smith’s comments may remind us of the ways in which reunions may exaggerate our rôles within our families.

- 4 Home agin, an’ home to stay—
Yes, it’s nice to be away.
Plenty things to do an’ see,
But the old place seems to me
Jest about the proper thing.
Mebbe ‘ts ‘cause the mem’ries cling
Closer ‘round yore place o’ birth
‘N any other spot on earth.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. “Bein’ Back Home.”

- 5 People feel better when they gather together for the sake of love and fellowship. Their hearts are cleansed and kindled by the warm fire of eternal goodness.

JAMES FOLSON, U.S. politician, governor of Alabama. Christmas message, 25 December 1949, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 6 We’re all gonna be here forever
So Mama don’t you make such a stir
Just put down that camera
And come on and join up
The last of the family reserve.

LYLE LOVETT (b. 1956), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Family Reserve.”

The speaker urges his mother to join the living members of the family, though most of the verses of his song recall bizarre and tragic deaths.

School Reunion

- 1 I,—the man of middle years,
In whose sable locks appears
Many a warning fleck of gray,—
Looking back to that far day,
And thy primal lessons, feel
Grateful smiles my lips unseal,
As, remembering thee, I blend
Olden teacher, present friend.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. “To My Old Schoolmaster: An Epistle Not After the Manner of Horace.”

Whittier writes in the headnote to this poem: “These lines were addressed to my worthy friend Joshua Coffin, teacher, historian, and antiquarian. He was one of the twelve persons who with William Lloyd Garrison formed the first anti-slavery society in New England.”

- 2 We are older: our footsteps, so light
in the play
Of the far-away school-time, move
slower to-day;—

Here a beard touched with frost,
there a bald, shining crown,
And beneath the cap's border gray
mingles with brown.

But faith should be cheerful, and
trust should be glad,
And our follies and sins, not our
years, make us sad.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807–1892), U.S. poet. “The Quaker Alumni: Read at the Friends’ School Anniversary, Providence, R.I., 6th mo., 1860.”

- 3 To-day our Reverend Mother wel-
comes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who un-
derstood
The deeper teaching of her mystic
tome,
And offered their fresh lives to
make it good.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. “Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration, July 21, 1865.”

- 4 It takes some time to accept and re-
alize that fact that while you have
been growing old, your friends have
not been standing still, in that mat-
ter.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *Life on the Mississippi* (chapter 55, “A Vendetta and Other Things”) (1883).

- 5 Whether we like it, or don’t
There’s a sort of bond in the fact
That we all by one master were
taught,
By one master were bullied and
whackt.
And now all the more when we see
Our class in so shrunken a state
And we, who were seventy-two,
Diminished to seven or eight.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “Poem for a Class Reunion.”

Stevenson describes a reunion of the Edinburgh private school run by Mr. D’Arcy Wentworth Thompson. Stevenson attended the school from 1864 through 1867.

- 6 Is this the great campus that I re-
member so well from my freshman
days? What was it? Half a mile
long, I think, and broader even
than its length. That football goal
that stood some fifty or sixty feet in
the air, has it shrunk to these poor
sticks? These simple trees, can they
be the great elms that reared them-
selves up to the autumn sky? And
was the Tower no higher than this?

STEPHEN LEACOCK (1869–1944), Canadian (English-born) humorist. *College Days* (“My College Days: A Retrospect”) (1923).

- 7 We’ll love her as we loved the dear
old school or very very near it,
For tho’ she’s thrown the dress
away, she’s kept the same old
spirit;
And of her present boys and girls
we’ll each prove a believer
That every year she’ll turn them
out as good and bright as we
were.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906), U.S. poet. “The Old High School and the New.”

Dunbar dedicates a new school building for both its current students and its alumni.

- 8 We have come back here, along
with those we love, to see one an-
other again. And by being together
we shall remember that we are part
of a great company, we shall re-
member that we are not mere indi-
viduals isolated in a tempest, but
that we are members of a commu-
nity—that what we have to do, we

shall do together, with friends beside us.

WALTER LIPPMANN (1889–1974), U.S. newspaper columnist. Speech (summer 1940) to Harvard class of 1910, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 9 I never go to a college reunion that I don't come away feeling sorry for all those paunchy, balding jocks trying to hang onto youth. I feel sorry for the men, too.

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. "College Reunion" (3 November 1977), in *Forever, Erma: America's Best-Loved Writing from America's Favorite Humorist* (1996).

- 10 The class reunion, known as a splendid opportunity to check out how we're doing in comparison to our age peers, is less often acknowledged for its temporal impact—for being a stark reminder of time's relativity. Returning for a reunion, we hear the same chorus of bedeviled reactions "Can you believe it's been a quarter of a century?" "Where has the time gone!" It seems like yesterday! The decades since graduation have raced by like a jet stream, sucking us along and depositing us in the present before we realized what was happening. But the four years when we were in school were as leisurely as a stroll; they ambled, they meandered, they distinguished themselves one from the other . . . as if each were a separate country, and we a different person every year.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey* (chapter 4, "Time Is All There Is") (1996).

Hospitals and Doctors

- 1 I do not deny that medicine is a gift of God, nor do I refuse to acknowledge science in the skill of many physicians; but, take the best of them, how far are they from perfection? . . . I have no objection to the doctors acting upon certain theories, but, at the same time, they must not expect us to be the slaves of their fancies.

MARTIN LUTHER (1483–1546), German leader of the Protestant Reformation. *The Table Talk of Martin Luther*, no. 471, trans. W. Hazlitt (1848), ed. Thomas S. Kepler (1952).

- 2 Physicians are some of them so pleasing and conformable to the humour of the patient, as they press not the true cure of the disease; and some are so regular in proceeding according to art for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient. Take one of a middle temper; or if it may not be found in one man, combine two of either sort; and forget not to call, as well the best acquainted with your body, as the best reputed of for his faculty.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. "Of Regiment of Health," *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 3 When the artlesse Doctor sees
No one hope, but of his Fees,
And his skill runs on the lees,
Sweet Spirit comfort me!

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. "His Letanie, to the Holy Spirit."

- 4 God heales, and the Physitian hath
the thankses.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 169 (1640).

- 5 When a doctor talks to you of aiding, succouring and relieving nature, of taking away from her what is injurious and of giving her what she lacks; of re-establishing her and restoring her to the full exercise of her functions; when he talks to you of purifying the blood, of regulating the bowels and the brain, of reducing the spleen, of strengthening the chest, of renovating the liver, of improving the action of the heart, of re-establishing and preserving natural heat, and being possessed of secrets which will prolong life for many years: he is beguiling you with the romance of physic. But, when you come to learn the truth of things by experience, you find there is nothing in it all, it is like those beautiful dreams which, when you wake, leave you nothing but the regret of having put faith in them.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–73), French dramatist. *The Hypochondriac* (*La maladie imaginaire*) 3.3 (1673), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 8 (1926).

The practical brother of the play's hypochondriac warns against putting faith in doctors.

- 6 God heals, and the doctor takes the fees.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790), U.S. statesman, scientist, and author. *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1732–1757).

- 7 If you are making choice of a physician, be sure you get one, if possible, with a cheerful and serene countenance.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Professor at the Breakfast Table* (chapter 6) (1872).

- 8 For everybody's family doctor was remarkably clever, and was understood to have immeasurable skill in the management and training of the most skittish or vicious diseases. The evidence of his cleverness was of the higher intuitive order, lying in his lady-patients' immovable conviction, and was unassailable by any objection except that their intuitions were opposed by others equally strong; each lady who saw medical truth in Wrench and "the strengthening treatment" regarding Toller and "the lowering system" as medical perdition. . . . The strengtheners and the lowerers were all "clever" men in somebody's opinion, which is really as much as can be said for any living talents.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Middlemarch* (chapter 15) (1872).

- 9 PHYSICIAN, n. One upon whom we set our hopes when ill and our dogs when well.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 10 It is the humdrum, day-in, day-out, everyday work that is the real satisfaction of the practice of medicine; the million and a half patients a man has seen on his daily visits over a forty-year period of weekdays and Sundays that make up his life. I have never had a money practice; it would have been impossible for me. But the actual calling on people, at all times and under all conditions, the coming to grips

with the intimate conditions of their lives, when they were being born, when they were dying, watching them die, watching them get well when they were ill, has always absorbed me.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1883–1963), U.S. poet and physician. “The Practice,” *Autobiography* (1951).

- 11 Have your own doctor, who answers to you. If you don’t, when the time comes that you get mixed up with hospitals, they’ll treat you like a fool. . . . You’re bound to lose your health at some point, but you don’t have to lose your dignity, too.

SARAH DELANY (1889–1997) and **A. ELIZABETH DELANY** (1891–1995), U.S. authors. “A Word to Older Folks,” *The Delany Sisters’ Book of Everyday Wisdom* (1994).

- 12 Here in the hospital, I say, that is not my body, not my body. I am not here for the doctors to read like a recipe.

ANNE SEXTON (1928–1974), U.S. poet. “August 17th,” *Scorpio, Bad Spider, Die: The Horoscope Poems*.

- 13 Doctors need to give every patient a chance to talk with their clothes on after the examination is over.

RICHARD C. REYNOLDS (b. 1929), U.S. physician, educator and writer. “A Day in the Life of an Internist,” in *On Doctoring: Stories, Poems, Essays*, ed. Richard Reynolds and John Stone (1991).

- 14 There is, of course, an ordinary medicine, an everyday medicine, humdrum, prosaic, a medicine for stubbed toes, quinsies, bunions and boils; but all of us entertain the idea of *another* sort of medicine, of a wholly different kind: something deeper, older, extraordinary, almost

sacred, which will restore to us our lost health and wholeness, and give us a sense of perfect well-being.

OLIVER SACKS (b. 1933), English neurologist and author. *Awakenings* (introduction, “The Coming of L-dopa”) (1974).

- 15 The first thing about being a patient is—you have to be patient.

OLIVER SACKS (b. 1933), English neurologist and author. *A Leg to Stand On* (chapter 3, “Limbo”) (1984).

Sacks, a neurologist, has injured his leg and finds himself in the unusual position of being a patient. This advice comes to him from a pilot who is transporting him from one hospital to another.

- 16 I like to see doctors cough.
What kind of human being
would grab all your money
just when you’re down?
I’m not saying they enjoy this:

.
they’d rather be playing golf
and swapping jokes about our
feet.

JAMES TATE (b. 1943), U.S. poet and educator. “On the Subject of Doctors.”

Illness (Mild)

- 1 For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache
patiently,
However they have writ the style of
gods
And made a push at chance and
sufferance.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Much Ado About Nothing* 5.1.35–38.

- 2 If a Child be sick, give it whatever
it wants to eat or drink, although
particularly forbid by the Doctor:
For what we long for in Sickness,

will do us good; and throw the
Physick out of the Window; the
Child will love you the better; but
bid it not tell. Do the same to your
Lady when she longs for anything
in Sickness, and engage it will do
her good.

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745), Anglo-Irish author. *Directions to Servants* (chapter 12, “Directions to the Children’s Maid”) (1745).

- 3 The best of remedies is a beefsteak
Against sea-sickness; try it, Sir, be-
fore
You sneer, and I assure you this is
true,
For I have found it answer—so may
you.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON
(1788–1824), English poet. *Don Juan* (canto
2, stanza 13).

- 4 Laffing keeps oph sickness, and haz
conquered az menny diseases az
ever pills have, and at mutch less
expense. —It makes flesh, and
keeps it in its place. It drives away
weariness and brings a dream ov
sweeness to the sleeper.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW)
(1818–1885), U.S. humorist. “Laughing,” *The
Complete Works of Josh Billings* (1899).

- 5 I reckon being ill as one of the
great pleasures of life, provided one
is not too ill and is not obliged to
work till one is better.

SAMUEL BUTLER (1835–1902), English
author. *The Way of All Flesh* (chapter 80)
(1903).

polish every stone that goes to that
building; and so our health is a
long and regular work. But in a
minute a cannon batters all, over-
throws all, demolishes all; a sickness
unprevented for all our diligence,
unsuspected for all our curiosity,
nay, undeserved, if we consider
only disorder, summons us, seizes
us, possesses us, destroys us in an
instant.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet,
clergyman, and courtier. Meditation 1 (“The
first alteration, the first grudging of the sick-
ness”), *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*
(1624).

- 2 Now that the frequent pangs my
frame assail,
Now that my sleepless eyes are sunk
and dim,
And seas of Pain seem waving
through each limb—
Ah what can all Life’s gilded scenes
avail?

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–
1834), English poet and critic. “Pain.”

- 3 Long illness is the real vampyrism;
think of living a year or two after
one is dead, by sucking the life-
blood out of a frail young creature
at one’s bedside! Well, souls grow
white, as well as cheeks, in these
holy duties; one that goes in a
nurse may come out an angel.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–
1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Auto-
crat of the Breakfast-Table* (chapter 9) (1858).

Holmes paints a grim picture of the caregiver’s
role.

- 4 The sick man in his apparent inac-
tivity has a very grand human task
to fulfil. He must of course never
cease to aim at his own cure and
recovery. Also he must of course

Severe Illness

- 1 We study health, and we deliberate
upon our meats and drink and air
and exercises, and we hew and we

use all the strength that remains to him for the different kinds of sometimes extremely productive work that are within his powers. Christian resignation, in fact, is just the opposite of giving up. Once he has resolved to combat his sickness in this way, the sick man must realize that in proportion to his sickness he has a special function to perform, in which no one can replace him: the task of co-operating in the transformation (one might say conversion) of human suffering.

PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN (1881–1955), French philosopher, paleontologist, and Jesuit priest. In “Human Energy” (written 1933), trans. J. M. Cohen (1969), and included in *On Suffering* (1974).

- 5 In the last states of a final illness, we need only the absence of pain and the presence of family.

HELEN HAYES (b. 1900), U.S. actress. *Loving Life* (“A Stop Along the Way”) (1987).
Written with Marion Glasserow Gladney.

- 6 I might have had a tough break; but I have an awful lot to live for!

LOU GEHRIG (1903–1941), U.S. baseball player. Speech at Yankee Stadium, Bronx, N.Y., 4 July 1939, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

Having been diagnosed with the paralyzing illness that bears his name, Gehrig bid farewell to baseball, commenting, “I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth.”

- 7 To be sick brings out all our prejudices and primitive feelings. Like fear or love, it makes us a little crazy. Yet the craziness of the patient is part of his condition.

ANATOLE BROYARD (1920–1990), U.S. editor, critic, and essayist. “Doctor, Talk to Me,” *The New York Times Magazine* (26 August 1990), and reprinted in *Intoxicated by My Illness: And Other Writings on Life and Death* (1992).

- 8 A man’s illness is his private territory and, no matter how much he loves you and how close you are, you stay an outsider. You are healthy.

LAUREN BACALL (b. 1924), U.S. actress. *Lauren Bacall by Myself* (1978).

Bacall’s husband, Humphrey Bogart, died from cancer.

- 9 Pain probably makes us a bit godly . . . as tender love does. It makes us rue and summarize; it makes us bend and yield up ourselves.

EDWARD HOAGLAND (b. 1932), U.S. essayist. “The Threshold and the Jolt of Pain,” in *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Phillip Lopate (1994).

- 10 Grieve for a decent limited time over whatever parts of your old self you know you’ll miss. . . . Then stanch the grief, by whatever legal means. Next find your way to be somebody else, the next viable you—a stripped down whole other clear-eyed person, realistic as a sawed-off shotgun and thankful for air, not to speak of the human kindness you’ll meet if you get normal luck.

REYNOLDS PRICE (b. 1933), U.S. author. *A Whole New Life: An Illness and a Healing* (chapter 7) (1994).

Price here writes about his “recovery” from spinal cancer, which left him a paraplegic.

- 11 Cancer patients are lied to, not just because the disease is (or is thought to be) a death sentence, but because it is felt to be obscene—in the original meaning of the word: ill-omened, abominable, repugnant to the senses.

SUSAN SONTAG (b. 1933), U.S. author. *Illness as Metaphor* (chapter 1) (1977).

- 12 Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick.

SUSAN SONTAG (b. 1933), U.S. author. *Illness as Metaphor* (introduction) (1977).

- 13 Right there is the usefulness of migraine, there in that imposed yoga, the concentration on the pain. For when the pain recedes, ten or twelve hours later, everything goes with it, all the hidden resentments, all the vain anxieties. The migraine has acted as a circuit breaker, and the fuses have emerged intact. There is a pleasant convalescent euphoria.

JOAN DIDION (b. 1934), U.S. author. "In Bed," in *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Phillip Lopate (1994).

- 14 For a while she'd exist in that peculiar stage in her recovery in which she'd be too strong for the hospital, yet too weak for the world, able to repossess her body only enough to feel again the claims of those who loved and needed her, but not enough to feel that she could satisfy those claims.

ALAN SHAPIRO (b. 1952), U.S. poet and educator. *The Last Happy Occasion* ("Sittin' in a Funeral Place") (1996).

- 15 Night is when the patient imagines dying. It was at these moments that I was most acutely conscious of the stark truth that everyone faces in hospital: no amount of loving care and attention (and I was greatly blessed in this) can disguise the fact that a dramatic illness emphasizes our solitude and isolation.

ROBERT MCCRUM (b. 1953), author and editor. *My Year Off: Rediscovering Life After a Stroke* (August 1–5) (1998).

Separation

- 1 How like a winter hath my absence been,
From Thee, the pleasure of the
fleeting year!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. Sonnet 97.

- 2 Though seas and land betwixt us
both
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls;
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown, and greet as an-
gels greet.

RICHARD LOVELACE (1618–1657), English poet. "To Lucasta. Going Beyond the Seas."

- 3 There can never be any adequate ground for separation. The condition of man is pitched so high in its joys and in its sorrows, that the sum which two married people owe to each other defies calculation. It is an infinite debt, which can only be discharged through all eternity.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749–1832), German poet, novelist, and dramatist. *Elective Affinities* (book 1, chapter 9) (1809), trans. James Anthony Froude and R. Dillon Boylan (1962).

- 4 For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the
breast,
And the heart must pause to
breathe,
And love itself have rest.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788–1824), English poet. "So We'll Go No More A-Roving."

- 5 My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone,
And left me in this dreary world alone?
Thy form is here indeed—a lovely one—
But thou art fled, gone down the dreary road,
That lead to Sorrow's most obscure abode.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822), English poet. “To Mary Shelley.”

- 6 When two people are once parted—have abandoned a common domicile and a common environment—new growths insensibly bud upward to fill each vacated place; unforeseen accidents hinder intentions, and old plans are forgotten.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English author. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles, A Pure Woman* (Phase the Fifth, “The Woman Pays”; chapter 36) (1895).

- 7 Marriage is easy, and divorce difficult, because this is Nature's plan. The natural law of attraction brings men and women together, and it is difficult to separate them. . . . Most couples who desire freedom only think they do: what they really want is a vacation; but they would not separate for good if they could. It is hard to part—people who have lived together grow to need each other. They want someone to quarrel with.

ELBERT HUBBARD (1856–1915), U.S. author, founder of the Roycroft community. *The Philosophy of Elbert Hubbard* (“His Thoughts about Marriage and Divorce”) (1930).

- 8 Let him lack for the million and one things that a wife has done so

long for his comfort that he did not even know she had done them. Above all, let him have to turn to strangers who are not interested in him and his affairs and who have no common backgrounds or mutual interests with him, for society. Then he will find out the worth of a wife and the price of a divorce.

DOROTHY DIX (1861–1951), U.S. author. *How to Win and Hold a Husband* (chapter 34, “Trial Separation as a Divorce Cure”) (1939).

Divorcing

- 1 When a divorced man marries a divorced woman, there are four natures with which to contend.

Pesahim 112, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 O Prophet! When ye (men) put away women, put them away for their (legal) period and reckon the period, and keep your duty to Allah, your Lord. Expel them not from their houses nor let them go forth unless they commit open immorality. Such are the limits (imposed by) Allah; and whoso transgresseth Allah's limits, he verily wrongeth his soul. Thou knowest not: it may be that Allah will afterward bring some new thing to pass. Then, when they have reached their term, take them back in kindness or part from them in kindness, and call to witness two just men among you, and keep your testimony upright for Allah.

Qur'an 65.1–2; *The Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation* by Marmaduke Pickthall (1930; reprint 1992).

- 3 Weakness and incapacity legitimately break up a marriage.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE

(1533–1592), French essayist. "On Some Verses of Virgil," book 3, essay 5 (1585–88), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 4 Alas, sir,
In what have I offended you? What
cause
Hath my behavior given to your
displeasure,
That thus you should proceed to
put me off
And take your good grace from
me? Heaven witness,
I have been to you a true and hum-
ble wife,
At all times to your will conforma-
ble,
Ever in fear to kindle your dislike,
Yea, subject to your countenance—
glad or sorry
As I saw it inclin'd.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *King Henry VIII* 2.4.16–24.

Queen Katharine pleads with Henry VIII for justice as she fights the idea of divorce. Although he and his ministers proceed with the divorce, the king makes this acknowledgement: "That man i' th' world who shall report he has / A better wife, let him in nought be trusted / For speaking false in that."

- 5 Love in marriage cannot live nor
subsist unless it be mutual; and
where love cannot be, there can be
left of wedlock nothing but the
empty husk of an outside matri-
mony, as undelightful and unpleas-
ing to God as any other kind of hy-
pocrisy.

JOHN MILTON (1608–1674), English poet. "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce" (chapter 6, "The fourth Reason of this Law, that God regards Love and Peace in the family more than a compulsive performance of marriage, which is more broke by a grievous

continuance than by a needful divorce") (1643).

- 6 When a man receives no dowry
[other] than that of beauty in his
wife, he repents soon after the wed-
ding ceremony is over, and the
best-looking woman has but few
means of defence against the indif-
ference that soon takes the place of
infatuation. I tell you again, these
unbalanced raptures, these youthful
longings and these transports may
give us, at first, a few enjoyable
nights, but this kind of happiness is
not lasting, and, when our passion
cools, disagreeable days follow the
pleasant nights.

**MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUE-
LIN)** (1622–1673), French dramatist. *The Blunderer* (L'Etourdi) 4.3 (first performed 1653 or 1655 and published 1658), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 8 (1926).

Anselm's advice to the young gentleman Léandre, who has fallen in love with a young woman of a lower social class.

- 7 Why should a foolish marriage vow
Which long ago was made,
Oblige us to each other now
When passion is decayed?

JOHN DRYDEN (1631–1700), English poet and dramatist. *Marriage à la Mode* (act 1, opening song) (1672).

- 8 When they [the French] promise
always to love a woman, they sup-
pose that she, in turn, promises
that she will always be lovable; if
she breaks her word, they no longer
feel bound to theirs.

**CHARLES LOUIS DE SECONDAT,
BARON DE LA BRÈDE ET DE MON-
TESQUIEU** (1689–1755), French jurist and
political philosopher. Letter 55 (Rica to Ibben,
at Smyrna, Paris, the 7th of the moon of Zil-
cade, 1714), *The Persian Letters* (1721); trans.
George R. Healy (1964).

- 9 It is quite difficult to understand clearly what reason led the Christians to abolish divorce. Marriage, in every nation on earth, is a contract sensitive to all conventions, and from it should be abolished only what could enfeeble its intended purpose. But the Christians do not regard it from this point of view and they go to considerable trouble to explain their attitude. Marriage to them does not consist in sensual pleasure; on the contrary . . . it seems they wish to banish that element from it as much as possible. Rather, it is to them an image, a symbol, and something mysteriously more, which I do not understand.

CHARLES LOUIS DE SECONDAT, BARON DE LA BRÈDE ET DE MONTESQUIEU (1689–1755), French jurist and political philosopher. Letter 116 (Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice, Paris, the 19th of the moon of Chahban, 1718), *Persian Letters* (1721); trans. George R. Healy (1964).

- 10 Divorce is probably of nearly the same date as marriage. I believe, however, that marriage is some weeks more ancient; that is to say, men quarrelled with their wives at the end of five days, beat them at the end of the month, and separated from them after six weeks' cohabitation.
- VOLTAIRE (FRANÇOIS-MARIE AR-OUET)** (1694–1778), French philosopher and author. "Divorce," *Philosophical Dictionary* (1764).
- 11 The only way to be reconciled to old friends is to part with them for good: at a distance we may chance to be thrown back (in a waking dream) upon old times and old feelings: or at any rate we should

not think of renewing our intimacy, till we have fairly *spit our spite*, said, thought, and felt all the ill we can of each other.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1788–1830), English essayist and critic. "On the Pleasure of Hating."

- 12 [Marriage] is never wholly happy. Two people can never literally be as one: there is, perhaps, a possibility of content under peculiar circumstances, such as are seldom combined; but it is as well not to run the risk: you may make fatal mistakes. . . . Let all the single be satisfied with their freedom.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816–1855), English author. *Shirley* (chapter 21; or vol. 2, chapter 10) (1849).

Mrs. Pryor responds here to Caroline, who suggests: "Where affection is reciprocal and sincere, and minds are harmonious, marriage *must* be happy." She argues not for divorce but for the avoidance of marriage. Her comments nonetheless suggest why divorce is such a prevalent practice.

- 13 The sort of men and women that marriage enslaves would be vastly more wretched and mischievous, if they were set free. I believe that the hell people make for themselves isn't at all a bad place for them. It's the best place for them.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS (1837–1920), U.S. author. *A Modern Instance* (chapter 26) (1882).

Atherton, a bachelor who considers marriage "the realm of unreason," explains his theories on the subject to his friend Halleck, who considers him "horrible" and "cold-blooded."

- 14 The instant, quick release by divorce from all troubles, great and small, between man and wife, is not better than that other instant, quick relief from bodily pain, which is

morphia. . . . We are a cowardly generation, and men shrink from pain.

FRANCES MARION CRAWFORD (1854–1909), U.S. author. *A Rose of Yesterday* (chapter 13) (1897).

- 15 When people are tied together for life they too often regard manners as a mere superfluity, and courtesy as a thing of no moment; but where the bond can be easily broken, its very fragility makes its strength, and reminds the husband that he should always try to please, and the wife that she should never cease to be charming.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. "The American Man," *Court and Society Review* 4 (13 April 1887), and reprinted in *The Artist as Critic: Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde*, ed. Richard Ellman (1968).

In this article Wilde describes the possibility of divorce as one of the strengths of American marriages.

- 16 Divorces are made in Heaven.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (act 1) (1895).

Algernon Moncrieff makes this statement in the course of discouraging his friend Jack Worthing from proposing to Gwendolyn Fairfax.

- 17 Divorce is a heroic remedy for an awful condition. It is the culmination of a fearful tragedy. I know of nothing worse than incompatibility. There is no hell equal to the hell of having to live with a person who is not your own.

ELBERT HUBBARD (1856–1915), U.S. author, founder of the Roycroft community. *The Philosophy of Elbert Hubbard* ("His Thoughts about Marriage and Divorce") (1930).

- 18 All young women begin by believing they can change and reform the men they marry. They can't.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950), Irish dramatist and critic. *On the Rocks* (act 2) (1933).

- 19 Do you know, I always have a distinct feeling of pleasure when I hear of married people parting. . . . But it isn't a malicious pleasure; There's nothing personal in it. . . . But marriage in general is *such* a humbug—you forgive the word.

GEORGE GISSING (1857–1903), English author. *The Odd Women* (chapter 27) (1893).

Mrs. Cosgrove reacts to the breakup of the Widdowsons' unhappy and childless marriage.

- 20 Women are so used t' takin' things home on approval, an' makin' things over, an' exchangin' things, an' takin' things back, that they use th' same system with husbands. They jest reason that they kin take a man an' if they don't like him they kin dump him. Sometimes they try t' make him over. Men don't hanker fer divorces as much as women do. They hain't home much an' besides they kin get away with a double life better'n a woman.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. "The Licklider Divorce Case," *The Best of Kin Hubbard: Abe Martin's Sayings and Wisecracks, Abe's Neighbors, His Almanack, Comic Drawings*, ed. David S. Hawes (1984).

- 21 *Alimony*—The ransom that the happy pay to the devil.

H. L. MENCKEN (1880–1956), U.S. author. "Sententiae," *A Book of Burlesques* (1920).

- 22 Each in a marriage must make a contribution. Of course. What was

that old song? "You're the cream in my coffee . . . You're the salt in my stew"? How great and how true. One has a right to expect such a complement. I was always eager to salt a good stew. The trouble was that I was expected to supply the meat and potatoes as well.

BETTE DAVIS, U.S. actress. *The Lonely Life: An Autobiography* (chapter 20) (1962).

One of Davis's husbands obtained a divorce on the grounds that "She reads in bed; she neglected me for her work." She reveals the blend of cynicism and lost innocence provoked by the end of one of her marriages when she writes: "I had no time to be shocked that my little white cottage was crumbling. Like a set that is struck after a performance, it seemed like the dream it was—a façade, a temporary scene for pointless arguments.

" . . . A boy and girl had adored each other, married and never dreamed of such an ending at all. It made me feel old and weary. The fact that I didn't care anymore that I was finding other men attractive was heartbreaking to me."

- 23 It is not the frequency of divorce which makes the times wicked; it is the wickedness of the times which increases divorce.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "Of Divorce," *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 24 Judaism regards divorce as a catastrophe that is bound to occur in a certain number of mistaken marriages. Rather than chain two unsuited and hating partners together for life, our law provides the machinery for dissolving such unions.

HERMAN WOUK (b. 1915), U.S. author. *This Is My God: The Jewish Way of Life* (chapter 11, "Love and Marriage: And Certain Elegant Variations") (1988).

- 25 I no longer believe that marriage means forever no matter how lousy

it is—or "for the sake of the children."

ANN LANDERS (EPPIE LEDERER) (b. 1918), U.S. advice columnist. Quoted in *U.S. News and World Report* (23 October 1995).

Ann Landers had been married to her husband for 35 years when they divorced.

- 26 I am still divorcing him,
adding up the crimes
Of how he came to me,
how he left me.

ANNE SEXTON (1928–1974), U.S. poet. "Divorce, Thy Name Is Woman."

- 27 I've been married too many times.
How terrible to change children's
affiliations, their affections—to give
them the insecurity of placing their
trust in someone when maybe that
someone won't be there next year.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR (b. 1932), U.S. (English-born) actress. *Elizabeth Taylor: An Informal Memoir* (chapter 8) (1965).

- 28 The only hope I can see for the unhappiness of divorce is knowing that it is better than a bad marriage. The unhappiness of divorce ends, in time, for healthy people. Healthy people refuse to stay unhappy. Sooner or later they wake up and decide to be happy again. They lose weight and start exercising. They dye their hair or get a toupee. They buy a red dress and get to a party and start flirting. They redecorate their living quarters. They get out their address books and start looking for old lovers to recycle.

ELLEN GILCHRIST (b. 1935), U.S. author. "Meditations on Divorce," in *Women on Divorce: A Bedside Companion*, ed. Penny Kaganoff and Susan Spano (1995).

- 29 There is cruelty in divorce. There is cruelty in forced or unfortunate marriage. We will continue to cry at weddings because we know how bittersweet, how fragile is the troth. We will always need legal divorce just as an emergency escape hatch is crucial in every submarine. No sense, however, in denying that after every divorce someone will be running like a cat, tin cans tied to its tail: spooked and slowed down.

ANNE ROIPHE (b. 1935), U.S. author. "A Tale of Two Divorces," in *Women on Divorce: A Bedside Companion*, ed. Penny Kaganoff and Susan Spano (1995).

- 30 Divorce after sixty is likely to mean that one or both partners feel imprisoned—not enough space between them to breathe, too much togetherness, too much interdependence, and no separate hobbies, trips or learning experiences. Boredom from passivity; too *much* acceptance of limitations.

EDA LESHAN, U.S. author. *It's Better to Be Over the Hill Than Under It: Thoughts on Life Over Sixty* ("Divorce After Sixty") (1990).

- 31 There is rhythm to the ending of marriage just like the rhythm of courtship—only backward. You try to start again but get into blaming over and over. Finally, you are both worn out, exhausted, hopeless. Then lawyers are called in to pick clean the corpses.

ERICA JONG (b. 1942), U.S. novelist and poet. *How to Save Your Own Life* ("There is a rhythm to the ending . . .") (1977).

- 32 What we're asking when we ask about divorce is how people fall out of love. And if, as girls, we searched for answers about what boys really

wanted, what we're asking, as adults, is what men and women *don't* want—what causes them to take a stand, to draw the line, to divorce.

FRANCINE PROSE (b. 1947), U.S. author. "Divorce as a Spectator Sport," in *Women on Divorce: A Bedside Companion*, ed. Penny Kaganoff and Susan Spano (1995).

- 33 Sometimes I dream of an eighth sacrament, the sacrament of divorce. Like communion, it is a slim white wafer on the tongue. Like confession, it is forgiveness. Forgiveness is important not so much for what we've done wrong, but for what we feel we need to be forgiven for. Family, friends, God, whoever loves us, forgives us, takes us in again. They are thrilled by our life, our possibilities, our second chances.

ANN PATCHETT (b. 1963), U.S. author. "The Sacrament of Divorce," *Women on Divorce: A Bedside Companion*, ed. Penny Kaganoff and Susan Spano (1995).

- 34 Nothing teaches children about our capacity for deception, for multiple selves, like divorce.

JONATHAN ROSEN (b. 1963), U.S. author and editor. "Pandora's Box," in *Men on Divorce: The Other Side of the Story*, ed. Penny Kaganoff and Susan Spano (1997).

- 35 Truth be told, there is nothing like a divorce to make a Madonna out of a Tammy Wynette. Nothing like a divorce, that is, to make even the most accommodating and least politicized female sit up and take note of the fact that the judicial system is run primarily by men who tend on the whole to favor women who stay home and busy themselves

with *kinder* and *küche* —and to regard with punitive suspicion (however unconscious) those women who want it every which way, the career and the children and the divorce.

DAPHNE MERKIN, U.S. author and editor. "In the Country of Divorce," in *Women on Divorce: A Bedside Companion*, ed. Penny Kaganoff and Susan Spano (1995).

Reuniting

- 1 The course of true love never did run smooth.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 1.1.134.

- 2 We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
And kissed again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears!

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. *The Princess* (section 1, concluding lyric) (1850).

- 3 I met my old lover on the street last night
She seemed so glad to see me, I just smiled
And we talked about some old times
And we drank ourselves some beers
Still crazy after all these years.

PAUL SIMON (b. 1941), U.S. singer and songwriter. "Still Crazy After All These Years" (1974).

Disasters

- 1 Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He

cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

Job 14.1–2.

- 2 The pencil of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job, than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. . . . Certainly, virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant, when they are incensed, or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. "Of Adversity," *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 3 I have often had occasion to remark the fortitude with which women sustain the most overwhelming reverses of fortune. Those disasters which break down the spirit of a man and prostrate him in the dust seem to call forth all the energies of the softer sex, and give such intrepidity and elevation to their character that at times it approaches to sublimity. Nothing can be more touching than to behold a soft and tender female, who had been all weakness and dependence and alive to every trivial roughness while treading the prosperous paths of life, suddenly rising in mental force to be the comforter and support of her husband under misfortune, and abiding with unshrinking firmness the bitterest blasts of adversity.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "The Wife," *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

- 4 The petty misfortunes that vex us every hour may be regarded as intended to keep us in practice so that the strength to endure great misfortunes may not be wholly dissipated in prosperity.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER (1788–1860), German philosopher. *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays* (chapter 5, "Counsels and Maxims") (1851), trans. E. F. J. Payne (1974).

- 5 God uses suffering as a whetstone, to make men sharp with.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. "Sermon: Bearing, but Not Overbourn," *Beecher as a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

- 6 Nothing ever happens but the unforeseen.

GEORGE DU MAURIER (1834–1896), English author. *Trilby* (part 4) (1894).

- 7 CALAMITY, n. A more than commonly plain and unmistakeable reminder that the affairs of this life are not of our own ordering.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 8 Life is terribly deficient in form. Its catastrophes happen in the wrong way and to the wrong people.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. "The Critic as Artist," *Intentions. A Dialogue: Part II* (1891).

- 9 He will be far less exposed to disaster who cherishes ideas within him that soar high above the indifference, selfishness, vanities of every-

day life. And therefore, come happiness or sorrow, the happiest man will be he within whom the greatest idea shall burn the most ardently.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK (1862–1949), Belgian author. *Wisdom and Destiny* (section 16), trans. Alfred Sutro (1901).

- 10 We are perplexed to see misfortune falling upon decent, inoffensive, worthy people—on capable, hard-working mothers of families or diligent, thrifty, little trades-people, on those who have worked so hard, and so honestly, for their modest stock of happiness and now seem to be entering on the enjoyment of it with the fullest right. . . . Let me implore the reader to try to believe, if only for the moment, that God, who made these deserving people, may really be right when He thinks that their modest prosperity and the happiness of their children are not enough to make them blessed: that all this must fall from them in the end, and that if they have not learned to know Him they will be wretched.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *The Problem of Pain* (chapter 6, "Human Pain") (1940).

Bereavement

- 1 Tzu-yu said, "When mourning gives full expression to grief nothing more can be required."

CONFUCIUS (551?–479), Chinese philosopher. *Analects* (Lun yü), book 19, section 12, trans. D. C. Lau (1979).

- 2 Jeremiah said: "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him" (Jeremiah 22.10). Weep not overmuch

and bemoan not beyond the measure. What is the measure? Three days for weeping; seven days for bemoaning; thirty days for not donning clothes that have been pressed, and for not having the hair cut. From now on, saith the Lord, ye may not feel more compassion over him than I do.

Moed Katon 27, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 3 I will instruct my sorrows to be proud,
For grief is proud and makes his owner stoop.
To me and to the state of my great grief
Let kings assemble, for my grief's so great
That no supporter but the huge firm earth
Can hold it up.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *King John* 3.1.68–73).

- 4 Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead, excessive grief the enemy to the living.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *All's Well That Ends Well* (1.1.55–56).

Spoken by Lafew, an old lord who seems rather practical and cynical when it comes to emotions and matters of the heart.

- 5 It is the will of God and Nature that these mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life; 'tis rather an embrio state, a preparation for living; a man is not completely born until he be dead: Why then should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals?

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790), U.S. statesman, scientist, and author. Letter to Elizabeth Hubbard, 22 February 1756, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Franklin consoles Hubbard on the loss of her stepfather, his brother John Franklin.

- 6 Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and it is remedied by exercise and motion.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1884), English author. "Means of Regulating Sorrow," *The Rambler*, no. 47 (28 August 1750).

- 7 Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *Milton* (preface).

Johnson criticizes Milton's elegy *Lycidas*, noting true passion would not run after "remote allusions and obscure opinions."

- 8 She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850), English poet. "She dwelt among the untrodden ways."

This is one of a group of poems about a girl named Lucy, whom some readers associate with Wordsworth's sister Dorothy.

- 9 The sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be divorced. Every other wound we seek to heal—every other affliction to forget; but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open—this affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "Rural Funerals," *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

- 10 Ah, woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822), English poet. “Adonais” (section 18).

- 11 The persons on whom I have bestowed my dearest love, lie deep in their graves; but, although the happiness and delight of my life lie buried there too, I have not made a coffin of my heart, and sealed it up, for ever, on my best affections. Deep affliction has but strengthened and refined them.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English novelist. *Oliver Twist* (chapter 14, “Comprising further Particulars of Oliver’s Stay at Mr. Brownlow’s, with the remarkable Prediction which one Mr. Grimwig uttered concerning him, when he went out on an Errand”) (1837–38).

Mr. Brownlow tells young Oliver of the grief he has suffered.

- 12 Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of earth, overlying our hard hearts.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Great Expectations* (chapter 19) (1860–61).

Pip describes how he finally gave in to tears after parting from his family.

- 13 Only those whom we have never possessed can pass away. And we cannot even mourn not having truly possessed this person or that—we have neither time, nor strength nor right to do so, for the most fleeting experience of any real possession . . . casts us back into ourselves with so much force, gives us so much to do there, demands so much loneliest development

from us, that it suffices to absorb our individual attention for ever.

RAINER MARIA RILKE (1857–1926), German poet. Letter to Clara Rilke, 12 August 1904, *Selected Letters: 1902–1926*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (1988).

- 14 When we lose one we love, our bitterest tears are called forth by the memory of hours when we loved not enough.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK (1862–1949), Belgian (writing in French) author. *Wisdom and Destiny* (section 44) (1901), trans. Alfred Sutro (1901).

- 15 No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear. I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning. I keep on swallowing. At other times it feels like being mildly drunk, or concussed. There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me. I find it hard to take in what anyone says. Or perhaps, hard to want to take it in.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *A Grief Observed* (chapter 1) (1961).

- 16 . . . the body remains in a vacuum
Gagged, bound, and sick with dread
Knowing the words that can’t be spoken
Searching for words that must be said
Dumb, inarticulate, heartbroken.

NOËL COWARD (1899–1973), English dramatist, composer, and actor. “Condolence.”

- 17 About suffering they were never wrong,
The Old Masters; how well they understood
Its human position; how it takes place

While someone else is eating or
opening a window or just walking
dully along.

W. H. AUDEN (1907–1973), English poet.
“Musée des Beaux Arts.”

- 18 Life is very insistent; and it always
seems to be so when friends sadly
leave us.

ALEC GUINNESS (b. 1914), English actor.
*My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring
Actor* (“Monday, 22 May 1995”) (1996).

- 19 You know it takes a year, a full turn
of the calendar, to get over losing
somebody. That’s a true saying.

ANNIE PROULX (b. 1935), author. *The
Shipping News* (chapter 4, “Cast Away”)
(1993).

- 20 I mourn in grey, grey as the sleeted
wind the bled shades of twilight,
gunmetal, battleships, industrial
paint.

MARGE PIERCY (b. 1936), U.S. poet.
“For mourning.”

Piercy contrasts her color of mourning, the
“color of ash,” with the traditional black of
mourning, which she associates with rare,
sleek, shining things.

Funeral

- 1 Formerly the deceased of the
wealthy were buried in fancy cas-
kets, of the poor in cheap coffins.
This, too, was altered, and now all
who die, whether rich or poor, are
buried in inexpensive caskets.

Moed Katon 27, in *The Talmudic Anthology:
Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I.
Newman (1947).

- 2 Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be
strown;

Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones
shall be thrown.

A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
English poet and dramatist. *Twelfth Night*
(2.4.59–66).

The clown Feste sings for Duke Orsino to hu-
mor his melancholy mood.

- 3 I cannot choose but weep, to think
they would lay him i’ th’ cold
ground.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616),
English poet and dramatist. *Hamlet* (4.5.70–
71).

Ophelia, maddened by grief, mourns her father
Polonius.

- 4 Then cheerly to your work again
With hearts new-brac’d and set
To run, untir’d, love’s blessèd race,
As meet for those, who face to face
Over the grave their Lord have
met.

JOHN KEBLE (1792–1866), English cler-
gyman and poet. “Burial of the Dead,” *The
Christian Year* (1827).

- 5 Ah, with the Grape my fading Life
provide,
And wash my Body whence the Life
had died,
And in a Windingsheet of Vine-
leaf wrapt,
So bury me by some sweet Garden-
side.

EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809–1883),
English author and translator. *Rubáiyát of
Omar Khayyám* (section 67) (1859).

- 6 No funeral gloom, my dears, when
I am gone,

Corpse-gazing, tears, black raiment,
graveyard grimness;
Think of me as withdrawn into the
dimness,
Yours still, you mine; remember all
the best
Of our past moments, and forget
the rest.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824–1889),
Irish author. “A Poet’s Epitaph.”

- 7 Why is it that we rejoice at a birth
and grieve at a funeral? Is it be-
cause we are not the person in-
volved?

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS)
(1835–1910), U.S. author. *Pudd’nhead Wil-
son* (“Pudd’nhead Wilson’s Calendar” at chap-
ter 9) (1894).

- 8 It comes strangely over me in bid-
ding you good-bye how a life is but
a day and expresses mainly but a
single note. It is so much like the
act of bidding an ordinary good-
night. Good night, my sacred old
Father! If I don’t see you again—
Farewell! a blessed farewell!

WILLIAM JAMES (1842–1910), U.S. phi-
losopher and psychologist. Letter to his father
Henry James Sr., 14 December 1882, in *Letters
of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary
American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Henry James Sr. died before he received his
son’s farewell letter. It was read at the funeral
by Henry James Jr.

- 9 I know those are the conventional
virtues that are inscribed on tomb-
stones—but he is the one person in
a million who deserves them. Per-
haps these virtues are so common
in cemeteries because they are so
rare in life.

EUGENE O’NEILL (1888–1953), U.S.
dramatist. Letter to his wife Agnes, 10 August

1920, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of
Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew
Carroll (1997).

O’Neill describes watching his father die of in-
testinal cancer. He refers to his father as some-
one who was “well-liked” and a good hus-
band and father.

- 10 Down, down, down into the dark-
ness of the grave
Gently they go, the beautiful, the
tender, the kind;
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the
witty, the brave.
I know. But I do not approve. And
I am not resigned.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892–
1950), U.S. poet. “Dirge Without Music.”

- 11 Tell all my mourners
To mourn in red—
Cause there ain’t no sense
In my bein’ dead.

LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–1967), U.S.
poet. “Wake.”

- 12 Funerals are pretty compared to
deaths. Funerals are quiet, but
deaths—not always. Sometimes
their breathing is hoarse, and some-
times it rattles, and sometimes they
even cry out to you, “Don’t let me
go!”

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS (1914–1983),
U.S. dramatist. *A Streetcar Named Desire*
(scene 1) (1947).

Blanche reproaches her sister Stella for being
present only for the “pretty flowers” of funerals
and not for the harsh reality of death.

- 13 O death, where is thy sting? O
grave, where is thy victory? Where,
indeed. Many a badly stung survi-
vor, faced with the aftermath of
some relative’s funeral, has ruefully
concluded that the victory has been
won hands down by a funeral es-

tablishment—in a disastrously unequal battle.

JESSICA MITFORD (1917–1996), U.S. author. *The American Way of Death Revisited*. (chapter 2, “The American Way of Death”) (1998).

- 14 Every man in the chapel hoped that when his hour came he, too, would be eulogized, which is to say forgiven, and that all of his lapses, greeds, errors, and strayings from the truth would be invested with coherence and looked upon with charity. This was perhaps the last thing human beings could give each other, and it was what they demanded, after all, of the Lord.

JAMES BALDWIN (1924–1987), U.S. author. *Notes of a Native Son* (section 3) (1955).

Baldwin here comments on hearing a cleaned-up version of his father’s life in a funeral sermon.

- 15 I have no weddings or baptisms in the funeral home and the folks that pay me have maybe lost sight of the obvious connections between the life and the death of us. And how the rituals by which we mark the things that only happen to us once, birth and death, or maybe twice in the case of marriage, carry the same emotional mail—a message of loss and gain, love and grief, things changed utterly.

THOMAS LYNCH (b. 1948), U.S. undertaker and author. *The Undertaking: Life Studies from the Dismal Trade* (“Crapper”) (1997).

Lynch comments throughout his work on the disadvantages of the modern “out of sight, out of mind” treatment of death. He says that only a few “marginalized” people like “poets and preachers, foreigners and undertakers” can appreciate “the ‘good’ in ‘goodbye,’ the ‘sane’ in ‘sadness,’ the ‘fun’ in ‘funerals.’”

Recovery

- 1 The Physicians told me that yet there was one help for me, if I could constantly pursue it, to wit, *A sober and orderly life*: for this had every way great force for the recovering and preserving of Health, as a disorderly life to the overthrowing of it; as I too wel by experience found. For Temperance preserves even old men and sickly men sound: But Intemperance destroyes most healthy and flourishing constitutions.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *A Treatise of Temperance and Sobrietie: Written by Lud. Comarus, Translated into English by Mr. George Herbert* (1634).

- 2 See the Wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe, and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the
gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To Him are opening Paradise.

THOMAS GRAY (1716–1771), English poet. “Ode on the Pleasure Arising from Vicissitude.”

- 3 The longer I abstained the higher my spirits were, the keener my enjoyment—till the moment, the direful moment, arrived when my pulse began to fluctuate, my heart to palpitate, and such a dreadful falling abroad, as it were, of my whole frame, such intolerable restlessness, and incipient bewilderment, that in the last of my several attempts to abandon the dire poison, I exclaimed in agony, which I now re-

peat in seriousness and solemnity,
“I am too poor to hazard this.”

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. Letter to Joseph Cottle, 26 April 1814, *A Second Treasury of the World's Great Letters*, ed. Wallace Brockway and Bart Winer (1941).

- 4 To promise not to do a thing is the surest way in the world to make a body want to go and do that very thing.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), English author. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (chapter 22, “Tom’s Confidence Betrayed—Expects Signal Punishment”) (1876).

Tom here realizes the difficulty of keeping the vows, of the Cadets of Temperance, that he “abstain from smoking, chewing, and profanity.”

- 5 It is difficult to live without opium after having known it because it is difficult, after knowing opium, to take earth seriously. And unless one is a saint, it is difficult to live without taking earth seriously.

JEAN COCTEAU (1889–1963), French author and filmmaker. *Opium: The Diary of a Cure* (1930), trans. Margaret Crosland and Sinclair Road (1958).

- 6 God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

ANONYMOUS, Serenity Prayer.

This prayer is used in many twelve-step recovery programs.

- 7 I’m here to say that *you* can reel with your own heart and your own brain too once you quit believing that only alcohol or drugs can make you joyful. Sometimes, I’m almost sorry for people who *haven’t* been alcoholic, because I know

things that a person who’s never been sick doesn’t know. I had to climb over hurdles. I had to experience the disease, be sick with it and then experience recovery.

BETTY FORD, U.S. author, former First Lady, and founder of the Betty Ford Clinic. *Betty: A Glad Awakening* (chapter 16) (1987).

Vacation

- 1 Keep moving! Steam, or Gas, or Stage,
Hold, cabin, steerage, hencoop’s cage—

Tour, Journey, Voyage, Lounge,
Ride, Walk,
Skim, Sketch, Excursion, Travel-talk—

For move you must! ‘Tis now the
rage,

The law and fashion of the Age.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. “The Delinquent Travellers.”

- 2 I must have leave, in the fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing away-with altogether, of those consolatory interstices and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons,—the *red-letter days*, now become, to all intents and purposes, *dead-letter days*. . . . These were bright visitations in a scholar’s and clerk’s life—“far off their coming shone.”

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. “Oxford in the Vacation,” *Essays of Elia* (1823).

Lamb comments on the unusual peace of a university town when the students are on vacation.

- 3 He never took a vacation, and at sixty they read his will.

His day for "retiring from business"
 Death wrote in a codicil;
 And pinn'd on the door of his of-
 fice
 Was a notice which grimly read,
 "Out of town—on a long vacation
 Indefinite" it said.

JOHN WARREN HARPER. "He Never
 Took a Vacation."

- 4 The average wife does not get enough holidays. The average husband gets a day and a half every week, besides his annual holiday. The wife's working week consists of seven days; for there is no period in the week when she can throw off the burden of housekeeping. . . . Many wives have even to keep house during their so-called vacation, and thus obtain no real relief whatever. And so they continue without surcease for twenty years, thirty years, half a lifetime! At best the wife who always takes vacation in the company of her husband only achieves a partial holiday.

ARNOLD BENNETT (1867–1931), English author. *How to Make the Best of Life* (chapter 7, "The Continuation of Marriage") (1923).

- 5 I do not really like vacations; I much prefer an occasional day off when I do not feel like working. When I am confronted with a whole week in which I have nothing to do but enjoy myself I do not know where to begin. To me, enjoyment comes fleetingly and unheralded; I cannot determinedly enjoy myself for a whole week at a time.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "Of Pleasure Too Determinedly Sought," *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

Travel

- 1 The advantages of travel are many, such as recreation of the mind entailing profit; seeing of wonderful, and hearing of strange things; recreation in cities, associating with friends, acquisition of dignity, rank, property, the power of discriminating among acquaintances, and gaining experience of the world, as the travelers in the Tariqat have said: "As long as thou walkest about the shop or the house, thou wilt never become a man, O raw fellow! Go and travel in the world, before that day when thou goest from the world."

SHEIKH SA'DI (1184–1291), Persian author. *Tales from the Gulistān or Rose-Garden of the Sheikh Sa'di of Shirāz* (story 116) (1258) (1928), trans. and ed. Richard Burton (1928).

- 2 When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. "Of Travel," *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 3 A traveler! By my faith, you have great reason to be sad. I fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's. Then to have seen much and to have nothing is to have rich eyes and poor hands.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 4.1.20 ff.

Rosalind gently teases the melancholy Jacques, who values his “experience” though it makes him sad.

- 4 Walking has something that animates and enlivens my ideas: I almost cannot think when I stay in place; my body must be in motion to set my mind in motion . . .

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712–1778), French author. *Confessions* (book 4) (1781), trans. Christopher Kelly (1990).

- 5 The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go on a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778–1830), English essayist and critic. “On Going on a Journey,” *Table Talk; or Original Essays* (vol. 2) (1822).

- 6 Everything good is on the highway.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Experience,” *Essays, Second Series* (1844).

- 7 There are hotels that are a joy upon earth, where a man pays his bill as cheerfully as he did the parson who married him, where you can find the landlord unless you hunt in the kitchen, where servants glide around like angels of mercy, where the beds fit a man’s back like the feathers on a goose, and where the little taste just as though your wife, or your mother had fried them. These kind of hotels ought to be built on wheels and travel around the country; they are as full of real comfort as a Thanksgiving pudding, but

alass! yes, alas! they are as unpleasant as double-yelk eggs.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW) (1818–1885), U.S. humorist. “Hotels,” *The Complete Works of Josh Billings* (1899).

- 8 We wish to learn all the curious, outlandish ways of all the different countries, so that we can “show off” and astonish people when we get home. We wish to excite the envy of our untraveled friends with our strange foreign fashions which we can’t shake off. All our passengers are paying strict attention to this thing, with the end in view which I have mentioned. The gentle reader will never, never know what a consummate ass he can become until he goes abroad. I speak now, of course, in the supposition that the gentle reader has not been abroad, and therefore is not already a consummate ass.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *The Innocents Abroad, or, The New Pilgrims Progress* (chapter 23) (1869).

- 9 Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *The Innocents Abroad, or, The New Pilgrims Progress* (“Conclusion”) (1869).

- 10 An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered.

G. K. CHESTERTON (1874–1936), English author. “On Running After One’s Hat,” *All Things Considered* (1908).

- 11 The traveller who has gone to Italy to study the tactile values of Giotto, or the corruption of the Papacy, may return remembering nothing but the blue sky and the men and women who live under it.

E. M. FORSTER (1879–1970), English novelist. *A Room With a View* (chapter 2, “In Santa Croce with No Baedeker”) (1908).

Lucy Honeychurch leans out her window at the pension and watches the Italian crowds instead of preparing for a day of sightseeing.

- 12 And who would be a traveler
And see the world afar,
What joys at Rome could equal
home
Where my two children are?

EDGAR A. GUEST (1881–1959), U.S. poet. “On Traveling.”

- 13 Somewhere along the line I knew
there’d be girls, visions, everything;
somewhere along the line the pearl
would be handed to me.

JACK KEROUAC (1922–1969), U.S. author. *On the Road* (part 1, section 1) (1957).

Kerouac describes the attraction of his dream of taking “one great red line across America.”

- 14 I didn’t know who I was—I was far away from home, haunted and tired with travel, in a cheap hotel room I’d never seen, hearing the hiss of steam outside, and the creak of the old wood of the hotel, and footsteps upstairs, and all the sad sounds, and I looked at the cracked high ceiling and really didn’t know who I was for about fifteen strange seconds. I wasn’t scared; I was just somebody else, some stranger, and my whole life was a haunted life, the life of a ghost.

JACK KEROUAC (1922–1969), U.S. author. *On the Road* (part 1, section 3) (1957).

Kerouac describes the reality of travelling across the country as a hitchhiker.

Writing a Report

- 1 True Ease in Writing comes from
Art, not Chance,
As those move easiest who have
learn’d to dance.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. “An Essay on Criticism” (lines 362–63).

- 2 Sleep on your writing; take a walk over it; scrutinize it of a morning; review it of an afternoon; digest it after a meal; let it sleep in your drawer a twelvemonth; never venture a whisper about it to your friend, if he be an author especially. You may read selections to sensible women,—if young the better.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT (1799–1888), U.S. philosopher and educator. *Concord Days* (“April: Scholarship. April 28”) (1872).

- 3 What nuisance can be so great to a man busied with immense affairs, as to have to explain, or to attempt to explain, small details to men incapable of understanding them?

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815–1882), English novelist. *The Way We Live Now* (chapter 37) (1875).

- 4 A little inaccuracy sometimes saves tons of explanation.

SAKI (HECTOR HUGH MORTON) (1870–1916), English author. “Clovis upon the Alleged Romance of Business,” *The Square Egg* (1924).

- 5 Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.

C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON (1909–1993), historian, journalist, and novelist. *Parkinson’s Law, and Other Studies in Administra-*

tion (chapter 1, "Parkinson's Law, or the Rising Pyramid") (1958).

Drinking

- 1 They question thee about strong drink and games of chance. Say: In both is great sin, and (some) utility for men; but the sin of them is greater than their usefulness.

Qur'an 2.219; *The Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation* by Marmaduke Pickthall (1930; reprint 1992).

- 2 A good sherris-sack . . . ascends me into the brain, dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapors which environ it, makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and delectable shapes, which, deliver'd o'er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Second Part of King Henry IV* 4.3.95 ff.

Falstaff praises the benefits of his favorite libation, sack sherry. "Forgetive" means "inventive."

- 3 Good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well us'd. Exclaim no more against it.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Othello* 2.3.303 ff.

Iago consoles Cassio, who regrets that through drunkenness he may have jeopardized his position.

- 4 Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not

stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Macbeth* 2.3.28.

The porter here talks about the effects of drink, noting that it also provokes "nose-painting, sleep, and urine."

- 5 Old wine, and an old friend, are good provisions.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 136 (1640).

- 6 How doth the earth bring forth herbs, flowers, and fruits, both for physick and the pleasure of mankind? and above all, to me at least, the fruitful *Vine*, of which when I drink moderately, it clears my brain, cheers my heart, and sharpens my wit.

ISAAC WALTON (1593–1683), English author. *The Compleat Angler* (chapter 1, "A Conference betwixt an Angler, a Faulkner, and a Hunter, each commending his recreation") (1668).

- 7 Cupid and Bacchus my saints are;
May drink and love still reign:
With wine I wash away my cares,
And then to love again.

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER (1647–1680), English author. "Upon Drinking in a Bowl."

- 8 Who, by disgraces or ill fortune sunk,
Feels not his soul enlivened when he's drunk?

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745), Anglo-Irish author. "Toland's Invitation to Dismal to Dine with the Calves' Head Club, Imitated from Horace Epistle 5, Liber 1."

The poem is a satire depicting a group of Whigs who have gathered to celebrate the anniversary of the execution of Charles I on 30 January 1649.

- 9 A facetious friend of mine used to say, the wine could not be bad, where the company is agreeable; a maxim which, however, ought to be taken *cum grano salis*.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT (1721–1771), Scottish novelist. *Humphry Clinker* (letter from Matthew Bramble to Dr. Lewis, dated June 8) (1771).

- 10 That's all that distinguishes us from the beasts, Madam—drinking when we aren't thirsty and making love whenever we feel like it.

PIERRE-AUGUSTIN CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS (1732–1799), French dramatist. *The Marriage of Figaro* (act 2) (1874), trans. John Wood (1964).

- 11 O Whisky! soul o' plays an' pranks!
Accept a Bardie's grateful' thanks!
When wanting thee, what tuneless cranks
Are my poor verses!

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796), Scottish poet. "Scotch Drink."

- 12 You women are always thinking of men's being in liquor. Why, you do not suppose a man is overset by a bottle? I am sure of *this*—that if everybody was to drink their bottle a day, there would not be half the disorders in the world there are now. It would be a famous good thing for us all. . . . There is not the hundredth part of the wine consumed in this kingdom that there ought to be. Our foggy climate wants help.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Northanger Abbey* (chapter 9) (1818).

Speaking to the heroine Catherine, Mr. Thorpe advances his theories on the benefits of drinking.

- 13 Gin! Gin! a Drop of Gin!
Oh! then its tremendous temptations begin,
To take, alas!
To the fatal glass,—
And happy the wretch that it does not win
To change the black hue
Of his ruin to blue—
While Angels sorrow, and Demons grin—
And lose the rheumatic
Chill of his attic
By plunging into the Palace of Gin!

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. "A Drop of Gin."

- 14 I rather like bad wine, . . . one gets so bored with good wine.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI (1804–1881), British statesman and author. *Sybil* (book 1, chapter 1) (1845).

- 15 Better is old wine than new, and old friends likewise.

CHARLES KINGSLEY (1819–1875), English author. *Hereward the Wake* (chapter 27, "How They Held a Great Meeting in the Hall of Ely") (1866).

- 16 **ABSTAINER**; n. A weak person who yields to the temptation of denying himself a pleasure. . . .
BRANDY; n. A cordial composed of one part thunder-and-lightning, one part remorse, two parts bloody murder.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 17 The cocktail is a pleasant drink, It's mild and harmless, I don't think.
When you've had one, you call for two,

And then you don't care what you
do.

GEORGE ADE (1866–1944), U.S. humor-
ist and journalist. “R-E-M-O-R-S-E.”

- 18 Say what you like and I'll be calm,
No matter what I think;
But if you value blood and bones—
No disrespect to Drink!

W. H. DAVIES (1871–1940), Welsh au-
thor. “Drink.”

- 19 The harsh, useful things of the
world, from pulling teeth to digging
potatoes, are best done by men who
are as starkly sober as so many con-
victs in the death-house, but the
lovely and useless things, the
charming and exhilarating things,
are best done by men with, as the
phrase is, a few sheets in the wind.

H. L. MENCKEN (1880–1956), U.S. au-
thor and journalist. *Prejudices, Fourth Series*
(1924).

- 20 In some secluded rendez-vous
That overlooks the avenue
with someone sharing a delightful
chat
Of this and that
and cocktails for two.

ARTHUR JOHNSON and **SAM COSLOW**
(1902–1982), U.S. songwriters. “Cocktails
for Two” (1934), in *The World's Greatest Fake*
Book, ed. Chuck Sher (1983).

- 21 Regular habits sweeten simplicity.
In the middle of every morning I
leave the kitchen and have a glass of
sherry with Aunt. I can only say
that *this is glorious*. There is a great
deal of gloriousness in simplicity.

STEVIE SMITH (1902–1971), English poet
and novelist. “Simply Living” (1964), in *Me*
Again: Uncollected Writings of Stevie Smith
(1981).

- 22 There is one thing I know I shall
never get enough of—champagne. I
cannot say when I drank my first,
prickly, delicious glass of it. . . . I
think I probably started my lifelong
affair with Dom Pérignon's discov-
ery in 1929, when I first went to
France. It does not matter. I would
gladly ask for the same end as a
poor peasant's there, who is given a
glass of champagne on his death
bed to cheer him on his way.

M. F. K. FISHER (1908–1992), U.S.
food writer. “Once a Tramp, Always . . .,” in
The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology
from the Classical Era to the Present, ed. Phil-
lip Lopate (1995).

- 23 Do not allow your children to mix
drinks. It is unseemly and they use
too much vermouth.

FRAN LEBOWITZ (b. 1950), U.S. author.
“Parental Guidance,” *Social Studies* (1981).

Toasting

- 1 Now let them drink till they nod
and wink
Even as good fellows should do;
They shall not miss to have the
bliss
Good ale doth bring men to.

JOHN STILL (d. 1607), English prelate,
bishop of Bath and Wells; **WILLIAM STE-**
VENSON. *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (17th
cent.).

Authorship of *Gammer Gurton's Needle* is un-
certain. It is attributed variously to Still, to Ste-
venson, to both, to “Mr S.,” and to Anony-
mous.

- 2 Please ye we may contrive this af-
ternoon
And quaff carouses to our mistress'
health,
And do as adversaries do in law,

Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Taming of the Shrew* 1.2.276–77.

The suitors of Baptista's daughters agree to enjoy one another's company despite their rivalry.

- 3 The best smell is bread, the best savour, salt, the best love that of children.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 741 (1640).

- 4 Wine and beauty by turns great souls should inspire;
Present all together! and now, boys, give fire!

SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE (1634–1691), English author. *The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter* (4.2.494–95) (1676).

- 5 May you live as long as you are fit to live, but no longer! or, may you rather die before you cease to be fit to live than after!

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD (1694–1773), English statesman and author. Letter to his son, 26 December 1749 OS, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. John Bradshaw, vol. 1 (1929).

- 6 I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon,—
Her health! And would on earth
there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

EDWARD COATE PINKNEY (1802–1828), U.S. poet. "A Health."

Pinkney wrote only a few poems.

- 7 Think where man's glory most begins and ends
And say my glory was I had such friends.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865–1939), Irish poet. "The Municipal Gallery Revisited."

Yeats imagines the portraits of the men who have shaped Ireland's history.

- 8 If Time, so fleeting, must like humans die, let it be filled with good food and good talk, and then embalmed in the perfumes of conviviality.

M. F. K. FISHER (1908–1992), food writer. "Meals for Me," *Serve It Forth* (1937).

Giving a Speech

- 1 The loud applause your speech received
Was not at all deserved.
It was not the speech you gave we liked,
But the dinner that you served.

MARTIAL (MARCUS VALERIUS MARTIALIS) (A.D. c. 40–c. 103), Roman poet. "To Pomponius" (6.48), *Selected Epigrams*, trans. Ralph Marcellino (1968).

- 2 A rhetorician of times past said that his trade was to make little things appear and be thought great. That's a shoemaker who can make big shoes for a small foot. They would have had him whipped in Sparta for professing a deceitful and lying art. . . . Those who mask and make up women do less harm, for it is a matter of small loss not to see them in their natural state; whereas the other men make a profession of deceiving not our eyes but our judgment, and of adulterating and corrupting the essence of things.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1589), French essayist. “Of the Vanity of Words,” book 1, essay 51 (1572–80), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 3 Very good orators, when they are out, they will spit.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As Like You Like It* 4.1.71–72.

Posing as Ganymede, Rosalind urges Orlando to speak before he kisses when he goes to woo his beloved, who is Rosalind herself. She notes that he can kiss when he has run out of things to say, as “good orators” spit when they run out of “matter.”

- 4 . . . since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Hamlet* 2.2.90.

In the midst of a rather long speech, Polonius announces his intention to be brief. He provokes Gertrude, his impatient interlocutor, to request “more matter, with less art.”

- 5 That is not good language which all understand not.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 302 (1640).

- 6 To make oneself understood is good enough language for me; all your fine sayings don’t do me no good.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–1673), French dramatist. *The Learned Ladies* (*Les Femmes savantes*) 2.6 (1672), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 8 (1926).

A servant chides her betters.

- 7 The best foundation of eloquence, is the being master of the subject upon which a man is to speak. That is a root that will furnish sap to a

discourse, so that it shall not go dry.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and author. *Maxims* (1750), in *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 3 (1989).

- 8 It is not enough to speak the language he speaks in, in its utmost purity, and according to the rules of grammar; but he must speak it elegantly; that is, he must choose the best and most expressive words, and put them in the best order. He should likewise adorn what he says by proper metaphors, similes and other figures of rhetoric; and he should enliven it, if he can, by quick and sprightly turns of wit.

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD (1694–1773), English statesman and author. Letter to his son, Philip Stanhope, 1 November 1739 OS, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. John Bradshaw, vol. 1 (1929).

The earl begins his advice by insisting on the importance of persuading and pleasing one’s audience.

- 9 . . . true Expression, like th’ unchanging Sun,
Clears, and improves whate’er it shines upon,
It gilds all Objects, but it alters none.
Expression is the Dress of Thought, and still
Appears more decent as more suitable;
A vile Conceit in pompous Words exprest,
Is like a Clown in regal Purple drest;
For diff’rent Styles with diff’rent Subjects sort,

As several Garbs with Country,
Town, and Court.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. *An Essay on Criticism* (lines 315–23).

- 10 The *average* intellect of five hundred persons, taken as they come, is not very high. It may be sound and safe, so far as it goes, but it is not very rapid or profound. A lecture ought to be something which all can understand, about something which interests everybody.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (chapter 5) (1858).

- 11 A liberal use of wine makes after-dinner speaking much easier. Men will then laugh heartily at the oldest kind of a chestnut.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. “Baptist Union: After-Dinner Speech,” *Beecher as a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

Beecher does not specify whether the speaker or the auditors are to make “liberal use of wine.”

- 12 Never be grandiloquent when you want to drive home a searching truth. Don’t whip with a switch that has the leaves on, if you want it to tingle.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. *Yale Lectures on Preaching*, first series; *The Personal Elements Which Bear an Important Relation to Preaching* (section 9, “Sermon-Making”) (1872).

- 13 My heart goes out to anyone who is making his first appearance before an audience of human beings.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS), 1835–1910 author. Speech delivered after his daughter made her singing debut, Norfolk,

Conn., 5 October 1906, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 14 Once I was elected to membership in a certain business organization. I went to its dinners where there was much speech-making. At first I regretted that I could not hear those often long orations. Then, one year, they printed them after the dinner and I read them. I haven’t felt a mite of sorrow since.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* (“Sundry Observations”; chapter 1, “Autobiographical”; section 2 [1925]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

Edison lost his hearing when he was twelve, but in this chapter proves, with many examples, how his deafness relieved him from noise, which he considered to be one of the greatest sources of “nerve strain of our modern life.” In discussing speeches, he goes on to say: “When the other day, I read that a certain scientist had developed a short-term anesthetic, the first thought that came to me was that it should be served out at banquets to people with good hearing.”

- 15 I suppose that for every half-hour speech that I make before a convention or over the radio, I put in ten hours preparing it.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (1882–1945), U.S. president. Speech to the Daughters of the American Revolution, 20 April 1930, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 16 To read as if you were talking you must first write as if you were talking. What you have on the paper in front of you must be talk stuff, not book stuff.

JOHN HILTON, U.S. broadcaster in London, for BBC, before the Second World War. BBC broadcast, 1 July 1937, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 17 You can scrap, in writing a talk, most of what you've been told all your life was literary good form. You have to; if you want your talk to ring the bell and walk in and sit down by the hearth.

JOHN HILTON, U.S. broadcaster in London, for BBC, before the Second World War. BBC broadcast, 1 July 1937, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 18 On the platform, as anyone used to public speaking knows, it is almost impossible not to take your tone from the audience. It is always obvious within a few minutes what they will respond to and what they will not, and in practice you are almost compelled to speak for the benefit of what you estimate as the stupidest person present, and also to ingratiate yourself by means of the ballyhoo known as "personality." If you don't do so, the result is always an atmosphere of frigid embarrassment.

GEORGE ORWELL (ERIC ARTHUR BLAIR) (1903–1950), English author. "Poetry and the Microphone" (1945), in *Collected Essays* (1961).

- 19 The man who writes only for the eye generally writes badly; the man who writes to be heard will write with some eloquence, some regard for the music of words, and will reach nearer to his reader's heart and mind.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "The Inner Voice," *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 20 I wonder whose after-dinner speeches, in history, have been most dreaded? Socrates went on and on

but at least he kept his young fellow diners wide awake by catching them out with trick questions. . . . Of course you don't have to go back almost two thousand years to find people who bang on; they are right with us today.

ALEC GUINNESS (b. 1914), English actor. *My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring Actor* ("Monday, 5 February 1996") (1996).

Seeking a Favor

- 1 O, reason not the need! our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous.
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *King Lear* 2.4.264–67.

Lear's angry response when his daughter Regan refuses him a retinue of followers.

Financial Success

- 1 Let us not repine, or so much as think the gifts of God unequally dealt, if we see another abound with riches, when as God knows, the cares that are the keys that keep those riches hang often so heavily at the rich mans girdle, that they clog him with weary days and restless nights, even when others sleep quietly. We see but the outside of the rich mans happiness: few consider him to be like the Silk-worm, that, when she seems to play, is at the very same time spinning her own bowels, and consuming her self. And this many rich men do; loading themselves with the corro-

ing cares, to keep what they have
(probably) unconscionably got.

IZAAK WALTON (1593–1683), English author. *The Compleat Angler* (part 1; chapter 21, “Directions for making of a Line, and for the colouring of both Rod and Line”) (1668).

- 2 Gold gives to the plainest a pleasing charm: without it all else is a miserable business.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–1673), French dramatist. *Sganarelle: The Husband Who Thought Himself Wronged* (Sganarelle ou, Le cocu imaginaire) (scene 1) (1660), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 2 (1926).

A father urges his daughter to marry a wealthy suitor rather than the man she has chosen because she loves him.

- 3 Billionism, or even millionism, must be a blessed kind of state, with health and clear conscience and youth and good looks,—but most blessed is this, that it takes off all the mean cares which give people the three wrinkles between the eyebrows, and leaves them free to have a good time and make others have a good time.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *Elsie Venner* (chapter 7, “The Event of the Season”) (1861).

- 4 I love money; just to be in the room with a millionaire makes me less forlorn. Wealthy people should be segregated like lepers to keep them from contaminating others.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “In the World,” *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

These comments which seem to contradict one another occur side by side in Smith’s text.

- 5 Alas! old man, we’re wealthy now, it’s sad beyond a doubt;

We cannot dodge prosperity, success has found us out.

Your eye is very dull and drear, my brow is creased with care,
We realize how hard it is to be a millionaire.

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian author. “The Joy of Being Poor.”

- 6 Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. The joy and moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (1882–1945), U.S. president. Inaugural address, March 1933, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

Roosevelt delivered his speech at the height of the Depression, suggesting ways to handle the financial losses and burdens of the time.

Financial Loss

- 1 Poverty of goods is easy to cure, poverty of soul impossible.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1589), French essayist. “Of Husbanding Your Will,” book 3, essay 10 (1585–1588), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 2 He that hath lost his credit is dead to the world.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 357 (1640).

- 3 O fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,
The lover and the love of human-kind,
Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear;

Because he wants a thousand
pounds a year.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. *An Essay on Man: Or the First Book of Ethnic Epistles to H. St. John L. Bolingbroke*, Epistle 4, lines 189–92.

- 4 Unless I die, I shall beat [sic] up against this foul weather. A penny I will not borrow from any one. . . . I am grieved for Lady Scott and Anne, who cannot conceive adversity can have the better of them, even for a moment. If it teaches a little of the frugality which I never had the heart to enforce when money was plenty, and it seemed cruel to interrupt the enjoyment of it in the way they liked best, it will be well.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832), Scottish author. Letter to John Gibson Lockhart, his biographer and son-in-law, 20 January 1826, *A Second Treasury of the World's Great Letters*, ed. Wallace Brockway and Bart Keith Winer (1941).

Scott ran up enormous debts by trying to manage his own publishing and printing firm and by pouring money into the construction of his estate, Abbotsford.

- 5 A man willing to work, and unable to find work, is perhaps the saddest sight that Fortune's inequality exhibits under this sun.

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795–1881), Scottish author. *Chartism* (chapter 4, "Finest Peasantry in the World") (1839).

- 6 If success is rare and slow, everybody knows how quick and easy ruin is.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811–1863), English novelist. *Vanity Fair* (chapter 18, "Who Played on the Piano Captain Dobbin Bought") (1847).

- 7 It is wonderful what an insight into domestic economy being really hard

up gives one. If you want to find out the value of money, live on fifteen shillings a week, and see how much you can put by for clothes and recreation. You will find that it is worthwhile to wait for the farthing change, that it is worthwhile to walk a mile to save a penny, that a glass of beer is a luxury to be indulged in only at rare intervals, and that a collar can be worn for four days.

JEROME K. JEROME (1859–1927), English actor and writer. "On Being Hard Up," *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* (1922).

- 8 Bein' poor never holds stylish people back.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. *52 Weeks of Abe Martin* (1924).

- 9 Pity those in Mammon's thrall,
Poor, misguided souls are they,
Money's nothing, after all—
Make the grocer think that way!

DOROTHY PARKER (1893–1967), U.S. author. "Song for the First of the Month."

Meals

- 1 Regard thy table as the table before the Lord. Chew well, and hurry not.

Zohar 4.246a, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 Dry bread at home is better than roast meat abroad.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 681 (1640).

- 3 When I am hungry the least disappointment seizes me and pulls me down, but when I have had a

heartly meal I can face the world,
and the greatest misfortunes do not
matter a snap. Take my advice,
drink freely to support yourself
against the blows of fortune; twenty
glasses of wine round your heart
will prevent sorrow entering it.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–1673), French dramatist. *Sganarelle: The Husband Who Thought Himself Wronged* (Sganarelle ou, Le cocu imaginaire) (scene 7) (1660), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 2. (1926).

The advice of a valet to his master.

- 4 Why, to eat and drink together, and to promote kindness; and Sir, this is better done when there is no solid conversation; for when there is, people differ in opinion, and get into bad humour, or some of the company who are not capable of such conversation, are left out, and feel themselves uneasy. It was for this reason, Sir Robert Walpole said, he always talked bawdy at his table, because in that all could join.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. Quoted in James Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (“May 1776”) (1791).

Boswell has complained about a dinner party where there was no memorable conversation and asks why men should meet at all during a meal if there is not to be discussion. Johnson replies.

- 5 A breakfast, a lunch, a tea, is a circumstance, an occurrence, in social life, but a dinner is an event. It is the full-blown flower of that cultivated growth of which those lesser products are the buds.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *One Hundred Days in Europe* (chapter 1) (1891).

- 6 Fill up the lonely glass, and drain it
In memory of dear old times.

Welcome the wine, whate’er the
seal is;

As sit you down and say your
grace

With thankful heart, whate’er the
meal is.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811–1863), English author. “The Ballad of Bouillabaisse.”

- 7 Even to this hour, the first acquaintance with oysters is with much hesitation and squeamish apprehension. Who, then, first gulped the dainty thing, and forever after called himself blessed?

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. “Food Discoveries,” *Eyes and Ears* (1866).

- 8 The best of the tables and the best of the fare—
And as for the others, the devil may care;
It isn’t our fault if they dare not afford

To sup like a prince and be drunk
as a lord.

So pleasant it is to have money,
heigh ho!

So pleasant it is to have money.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819–1861), English poet. *Dipsychus* (scene 4, lines 161–65) (1850).

The Spirit here gives voice to the worldly side of Dipsychus’s nature.

- 9 Great was the clatter of knives and pewter-plates and tin-cans when Adam entered the house-place, but there was no hum of voices to this accompaniment: the eating of excellent roast-beef, provided free of expense, was too serious a business to those good farm-labourers to be performed with a divided attention,

even if they had had anything to say to each other, —which they had not.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Adam Bede* (chapter 53, “The Harvest Supper”) (1859).

The Poyser family in the novel provides this meal for their laborers who seldom have the treat of “hot roast-beef and fresh-drawn ale.”

- 10 A good dinner brings out all the softer side of a man. Under its genial influence, the gloomy and morose become jovial and chatty. Sour, starchy individuals, who all the rest of the day go about looking as if they lived on vinegar and Epsom salts, break out into wreathed smiles after dinner, and exhibit a tendency to pat small children on the head, and talk to them—vaguely—about sixpences. Serious young men thaw, and become mildly cheerful; and snobbish young men, of the heavy moustache type, forget to make themselves objectionable.

JEROME K. JEROME (1859–1927), English actor and writer. “On Eating and Drinking,” *Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* (1892).

- 11 We are all reared in a traditional belief that what we get to eat at home is, by virtue of that location, better than what we get to eat anywhere else. The expression, “home-cooking,” carries a connotation of assured excellence, and the popular eating-house advertises “pies like those your mother used to make,” as if pie-making were a maternal function. Economy, comfort, and health are supposed to accompany our domestic food supply, and danger to follow the footsteps of those

who eat in a hotel, a restaurant, or a boarding house.

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN (1860–1935), U.S. author. *The Home: Its Work and Influence* (chapter 7, “Home-Cooking”) (1903; reprint 1972).

Gilman questions the truth of this old belief and shows the severe limitations placed on women who must struggle daily to feed families and have little time to experiment or improve the kinds of food they offer.

- 12 When I think of Etiquette and Funerals; when I consider the euphemisms and conventions and various costumes with which we invest the acts of our animal existence; when I bear in mind how elegantly we eat our victuals, and remember all the ablutions and preparations and salutations and exclamations and manipulations I performed when I dined out last evening, I reflect what creatures we are of ceremony; how elaborately polite a simian Species.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Dining Out,” *More Trivia* (1931) and *All Trivia: More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 13 The dinner table was the intellectual, spiritual, and social center of our lives. It was where the day was headed and it was about as close to heavenly satisfaction as a poor man could expect to get.

OSSIE DAVIS (b. 1917), U.S. actor. *Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together* (“The Way-cross Years”) (1998).

Davis and his wife alternate chapters describing their lives before they met. This is Davis’s description of meals in his boyhood.

Parties

- 1 I sent out invitations
To summon guests.

I collected together
All my friends.
Loud talk
And simple feasting.

CH'ENG-KUNG SUI (D. A.D. 273), Chinese poet. "Inviting Guests," *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*, trans. Arthur Waley (1977; originally published 1962).

- 2 To what end the house, if not for conversation, kindly manners, the entertainment of friendships, and cordialities that render the house large, and the ready receptacle of hosts and guests?

A. BRONSON ALCOTT (1799–1888), U.S. philosopher and educator. "Fellowship," *Tablets* (1868).

- 3 More fascinating at a party, than any other music is the rushing sound of fashionable voices;—the vociferation of all those fairies, each faintly blowing its own trumpet.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. "In the World," *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 4 Every time she gave a party she had this feeling of being something not herself, and that every one was unreal in one way; much more real in another. It was, she thought, partly their clothes, partly being taken out of their ordinary ways, partly the background, it was possible to say things you couldn't say anyhow else, things that needed an effort; possible to go much deeper.

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882–1941), English novelist. *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925).

- 5 Superior people never make long visits.

MARIANNE MOORE (1887–1972), U.S. poet. "Silence."

- 6 I like large parties. They're so intimate. At small parties there isn't any privacy.

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (1896–1940), U.S. author. *The Great Gatsby* (chapter 3) (1925).

Jordan Baker, a bored socialite, comments on the large, elaborate parties given by Jay Gatsby.

- 7 Many times my heart has bled for the hostess who has slaved for hours to produce four kinds of sandwiches and two kinds of cake, and who is so exhausted by her labours that she casts a gloom over her own party. Far, far better to offer something simple and good, in a spirit of revelry, than to toil to produce pretentious mediocrity. It is the spirit which makes a party, and not dainty sandwiches, cut in the form of hearts and tasting like spades.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "Of Wasted Effort," *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 8 To entertain at home is both a relief and a rediscovery—of rooms and settings, of your favorite things, and particularly of your own tastes and ideas.

MARTHA STEWART, U.S. author and television personality. *Entertaining* (introduction) (1987).

- 9 Most importantly, one must never go to a party without a clear objective: whether it be to "network," thereby adding to your spread of contacts to improve your career; to make friends with someone specific; or simply "clinch" a top deal. Understand where have been going wrong by going to parties armed

only with objective of not getting too pissed.

HELEN FIELDING, English author. *Bridget Jones's Diary* ("Tuesday 11 April") (1998).

Bridget here plans her strategy according to an article on how to make parties "work" for one.

Meetings

- 1 The more we enquire, the less we can resolve.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinnia* (chapter 26, "The Princess Continues Her Remarks Upon Private Life") (1759).

- 2 If you want a piece of work well and thoroughly done, pick a busy man. The man of leisure postpones and procrastinates, and is ever making preparations and "getting things in shape"; but the ability to focus on a thing and do it is the talent of the man seemingly o'erwhelmed with work.

ELBERT HUBBARD (1856–1915), U.S. author, founder of the Roycroft community. *The Philosophy of Elbert Hubbard* ("His Thoughts about Business") (1930).

Interviews

- 1 It seems odd to me that in our present educational system, in which virtually everything else is taught or half-taught, nobody teaches these young hopefuls how to behave when looking for a job. I do not ask for groveling humility, but some hint of modesty, and some offer of honest service, would be welcome.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. "Of Getting a Job," *The Table-Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1945).

The speaker describes the tiresome task of having to interview applicants who state quite

openly that they ultimately want to move on to other jobs.

- 2 Walk in very serious. You are not applying for a boy's job. Money is to pass. Be quiet, fine, and serious. Everybody likes a kidder, but nobody lends him money. . . .

Walk in with a big laugh. Don't look worried. Start off with a couple of your good stories to lighten things up. It's not what you say, it's how you say it—because personal-ity always wins the day.

ARTHUR MILLER (b. 1915), U.S. dramatist. *Death of a Salesman* (act 1) (1949).

Willy Loman's seemingly contradictory advice to his son Biff, who has just proposed going to ask an old friend for a job.

- 3 You have an interviewer pretending to be a person, and an applicant pretending to be what he is not. They are both talking past each other to the Mt. McKinley Business School.

ALAN HARRINGTON (1919–1997), U.S. author. *Life in the Crystal Palace* (chapter 4, "The Tyranny of Forms") (1959).

Introductions

- 1 Alice—Mutton: Mutton—Alice.

LEWIS CARROLL (CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON) (1832–1898), English author and mathematician. *Through the Looking Glass* (chapter 9, "Queen Alice") (1871).

Here the Red Queen introduces a rather shy "queen" Alice to the mutton brought to a dinner party table. The Red Queen warns that "it isn't etiquette to cut any one you've been introduced to," and the meat is taken away uneaten.

- 2 If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like,

and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all the David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth.

J. D. SALINGER (b. 1919), U.S. author. *The Catcher in the Rye* (chapter 1) (1951).

- 3 Usually, I forget first meetings, excepting always those solemn audiences granted by the old and famous when I was young and green.

GORE VIDAL (b. 1925), U.S. author. "Some Memories of the Glorious Bird and an Earlier Self," *United States: Essays 1952–1992* (1993).

Vidal here writes about meeting Tennessee Williams.

Consolation

- 1 Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 2.1.12.

- 2 There is nothing so distressing as the consolations to be drawn from the necessity of evil, the uselessness of remedies, the inevitability of fate, and the wretchedness of the human condition. It is a mockery to try to lessen an evil by recalling that man is miserable; how much better it is to raise the mind away from such

reflections and to treat man as a feeling, rather than a reasoning being.

CHARLES LOUIS DE SECONDAT, BARON DE LA BRÈDE ET DE MONTESQUIEU (1689–1755), French jurist and political philosopher. Letter 33 (Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice, Paris, the 25th of the moon of Zilcade, 1713), *The Persian Letters* (1721), trans. George R. Healy (1964).

- 3 Human life is every where a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (chapter 11, "Imlac's Narrative Continued. A Hint on Pilgrimage") (1759).

- 4 Before an affliction is digested,—
consolation ever comes too soon;—
and after it is digested, it comes too late.

LAURENCE STERNE (1713–1768), Anglo-Irish author. *Tristram Shandy* (vol. 3, chapter 28) (1760–67).

- 5 It would be a poor result of all our anguish and our wrestling, if we won nothing but our old selves at the end of it—if we could return to the same blind loves, the same self-confident blame, the same light thoughts of human suffering, the same frivolous gossip over blighted human loves, the same feeble sense of that Unknown towards which we have sent forth irrepressible cries in our loneliness. Let us rather be thankful that our sorrow lives in us as an indestructible force, only changing its form, as forces do, and passing from pain into sympathy—the one poor word which includes all our best insight and our best love.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1890), English author. *Adam Bede* (chapter 50, “In the Cottage”) (1859).

- 6 This World is not Conclusion.
A Species stands beyond—
Invisible, as Music—
But positive, as Sound.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S. poet. “This World is not Conclusion.”

- 7 Sorrow comes in great waves . . .
but it rolls over us, and though it
may almost smother us it leaves us
on the spot and we know that if it
is strong we are stronger, inasmuch
as it passes and we remain. It wears
us, uses us, but we wear it and use
it in return; and it is blind, whereas
we after a manner see.

HENRY JAMES (1843–1916), U.S. author. Letter to Grace Norton, 28 July 1883, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

James, who himself often suffered from depression, was writing to Norton, also a writer, to console her in a time of emotional distress.

- 8 The test of a first-rate intelligence is
the ability to hold two opposed
ideas in the mind at the same time,
and still retain the ability to func-
tion. One should, for example, be
able to see that things are hopeless
and yet be determined to make
them otherwise.

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (1896–1940), U.S. author. “The Crack-Up,” *Esquire* magazine (1936) and *The Crack-Up* (1945).

- 9 A man cannot despair if he can
only imagine a better life, and if he
can enact something of its possibil-
ity.

WENDELL BERRY (b. 1934), U.S. poet and essayist. “An Entrance to the Woods.”

Awards, Rewards, and Congratulation

- 1 Whoever is a good man only be-
cause people will know it, and be-
cause they will esteem him better
for it after knowing it, whoever will
do well only on condition that his
virtue will come to the knowledge
of men, that man is not one from
whom one can derive much service.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1592), French essayist. “Of Glory,” book 2, essay 16 (1578–80), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 2 It might perhaps be excusable for a
painter or another artisan, or even
for a rhetorician or a grammarian,
to toil to acquire a name by his
works; but the actions of virtue are
too noble in themselves to seek any
other reward than from their own
worth, and especially to seek it in
the vanity of human judgments.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1592), French essayist. “Of Glory,” book 2, essay 16 (1578–80), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 3 Certainly, Fame is like a river, that
beareth up things light and swollen
and drowns things weighty and
solid. But if persons of quality and
judgement concur, then it is, (as
the Scripture saith) *Nomen bonum
instar unguenti fragrantis*: it filleth
all round about, and will not easily
away. For the odours of ointments
are more durable than those of
flowers.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. “Of Praise,” *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral*

(1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

The Latin phrase refers to Ecclesiastes 7.1 and is translated: "A good name is like a fragrant ointment.

- 4 The winning of honour is but the revealing of a man's virtue and worth without disadvantage. For some in their actions do woo and affect honour and reputation, which sort of men are commonly much talked of, but inwardly little admired. And some, contrariwise, darken their virtue in the show of it, so as they be undervalued in opinion. . . . Envy, which is the canker of honour, is best extinguished by declaring a man's self in his ends, rather to seek merit than fame, and by attributing a man's successes, rather to divine Providence and felicity, than to his own virtue or policy.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. "Of Honour and Reputation," *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 5 How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Merchant of Venice* 5.1.107.

Portia here notes that many times we praise by comparison or because of context. If a nightingale, for example, were heard during the day instead of during the still of the night, it "would be thought / No better a musician than the wren."

- 6 Good and evil, reward and punishment, are the only motives to a rational creature: these are the spur

and reins whereby all mankind are set on work, and guided.

JOHN LOCKE (1632–1704), English philosopher. *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (section 54) (1693).

- 7 The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "New England Reformers," *Essays, Second Series* (1844).

- 8 The reward of labor is *life*. Is that not enough? . . . If you are going to ask to be paid for the pleasure of creation, which is what excellence in work means, the next thing we shall hear of will be a bill sent in for the begetting of children.

WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896), English author, artist, and social reformer. *News from Nowhere* (chapter 15, "On the Lack of Incentive to Labour in a Communist Society") (1891).

Hammond replies to the question as to how one gets people to "work strenuously" when there is "no reward of labour."

Inspiring

- 1 Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (chapter 13, "Rasselas Discovers the Means of Escape") (1759).

- 2 There is no allurements or enticement, actual or imaginary, which a well-disciplined mind may not sur-

mount. The *wish* to resist more than half accomplishes the object.

CHARLOTTE DACRE (1782–?1841), English author. *The Passions* (vol. 2, letter 41) (1811).

- 3 Nothing contributes so much to tranquilize the mind as a steady purpose—a point on which the soul may fix its intellectual eye.

MARY SHELLEY (1797–1851), English author. *Frankenstein* (letter 1) (1816).

- 4 Insist on yourself; never imitate.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Self-Reliance,” *Essays, First Series* (1841).

- 5 Preach! Write! Act! Do any thing, save to lie down and die!

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804–1864), U.S. author. *The Scarlet Letter* (chapter 17, “The Pastor to His Parishioner”) (1850).

- 6 If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817–1862), U.S. author. *Walden* (Conclusion) (1854).

- 7 Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a nobler, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever growing insistency.

DANIEL HUDSON BURNHAM (1846–1912), U.S. architect and city planner, master architect of the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition. In *Introduction to Planning History in the United States*, ed. Donald A. Krueckeberg (1983).

- 8 The world is full of people giving good advice to others, but I have thought we should all be better off if we would advise ourselves more, and others less. If I could take the good advice I am capable of giving, I should have no occasion to accept it from others.

E. W. HOWE (1853–1937), U.S. author. *The Story of a Country Town* (chapter 10, “Jo Erring Makes a Full Confession”) (1883).

- 9 We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *Lady Windermere’s Fan* (act 3) (1893).

- 10 Always give your best. Never get discouraged. Never be petty. Always remember: others may hate you. Those who hate you don’t win unless you hate them. And then you destroy yourself. . . .

Only if you have been in the deepest valley can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain.

RICHARD NIXON (1913–1994), U.S. president. Nixon’s farewell to the White House staff (August 1973); in Robert Ramsay and Randall Toye, *The Goodbye Book* (1979).

- 11 Know whence you came. If you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go.

JAMES BALDWIN (1924–1987), U.S. author. “My Dungeon Shook: Letter To My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation,” *The Fire Next Time* (1962).

- 12 The best remedy for those who are frightened, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere they can be alone, alone with the sky, nature and God. For then and only then can you feel that everything is as it

should be and that God wants people to be happy amid nature's beauty and simplicity.

ANNE FRANK (1929–1945), Dutch diarist. *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive Edition* (Wednesday, 23 February 1944), trans. Susan Massotty (1995).

- 13 If you cultivate a healthy poverty and simplicity, so that finding a penny will literally make your day, then, since the world is in fact planted in pennies, you have with your poverty bought a lifetime of days.

ANNIE DILLARD (b. 1945), U.S. author. "Seeing," *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974).

Invitation

- 1 Tonight, grave sir, both my poor house and I
Do equally desire your company;
Not that we think us worthy such a guest,
But that your worth will dignify our feast
With those that come, whose grace may make that seem
Something, which else could hope for no esteem.

BEN JONSON (1572/3–1637), English poet and dramatist. "Inviting a Friend to Supper," *Epigrams*, no. 101 (1616).

- 2 I happened to start a question of propriety, whether, when a man knows that some of his intimate friends are invited to the house of another friend, with whom they are all equally intimate, he may join them without an invitation. **JOHN-SON**. "No, Sir; he is not to go when he is not invited. They may be invited on purpose to abuse him" (smiling).

JAMES BOSWELL (1740–1795), Scottish author. *Life of Johnson* ("18 April 1775") (1791).

- 3 Best and brightest, come away!

.
Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822), English poet. "To Jane: The Invitation."

- 4 "I didn't know I was to have a party at all," said Alice; "but, if there *is* to be one, I think *I* ought to invite the guests."

LEWIS CARROLL (CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON) (1832–1898), English author and mathematician. *Through the Looking Glass* (chapter 9, "Queen Alice") (1871).

In this chapter Alice has been made a queen, but she puzzles over the manners and customs of the Looking Glass world.

- 5 No one should consider a last-minute invitation an insult. . . . A neighbor or close friend should not feel diffident about offering last-minute invitations. It is a pleasant thing at the end of a long day to find that you have plenty of food and energy to entertain a guest or two who may well feel equally delighted to put aside dinner plans and join you. This kind of spontaneous entertainment is much more attractive than the planned kind.

AMY VANDERBILT (1908–1974), U.S. author. *Amy Vanderbilt's Etiquette* (chapter 38, "Hosts and Guests") (1972).

- 6 So come, and slowly we will walk through green gardens and marvel at this strange and sweet world.

SYLVIA PLATH (1932–1963), U.S. author. Letter to her mother, 23 April 1956, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

In this letter Plath invites her mother Aurelia to visit her in England in order to recuperate from an operation.

Welcome

- 1 For I was hungry, and ye gave me food; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in. . . . Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Matthew 25.35, 25.40.

- 2 . . . unbidden guests
Are often welcomest when they are gone.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The First Part of King Henry VI* 2.2.55–56.

- 3 I can express no kinder sign of love
Than this kind kiss.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Second Part of King Henry VI* 1.1.18–19

King Henry VI greets Queen Margaret.

- 4 Small cheer and great welcome
makes a merry feast.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Comedy of Errors* 3.1.26.

- 5 As a long-parted mother with her child
Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,
So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee,
my earth,
And do thee favors with my royal hands.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Richard II* 3.2.8–10.

King Richard expresses his gratitude on returning to his home after a difficult voyage by sea.

- 6 Th' appurtenance of welcome is
fashion and ceremony.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Hamlet* 2.2.371.

Hamlet indicates to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that he will put on the proper formalities to welcome the players.

- 7 It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
. . . If I were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Othello* 2.1.181–89.

Othello greets his wife Desdemona on her safe arrival in Cyprus.

- 8 True friendship's laws are by this rule express'd,
Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

HOMER (9th?–8th? cent. B.C.), Greek poet. *Odyssey* 15.83–84, trans. Alexander Pope (1725–26).

Pope also makes reference to this passage in *The Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace Paraphrased*, written in 1733 and published in 1734. There he writes: "For I, who hold sage Homer's rule the best, / Welcome the coming, speed the going guest" (l.159–60).

- 9 In a commercial country, a busy country, time becomes precious, and therefore hospitality is not so much valued. No doubt there is still room for a certain degree of it; and a man has a satisfaction in seeing his friends eating and drinking around him. But promiscuous hospitality is not the way to gain real influence. You must help some people at table before others; you must ask some people how they like their wine oftener than others. You therefore offend more people than you please.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. Quoted in James Boswell, *Life of Johnson* ("31 March 1772") (1791).

- 10 Hospitality is one of the first Christian duties. The beast retires to its shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from his fellow creature. The greatest stranger in this world was he that came to save it. He never had an house, as if willing to see what hospitality was left remaining amongst us.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728–1774), Anglo-Irish author. *The Vicar of Wakefield* (chapter 6, "The Happiness of a Country Fire-Side") (1764).

- 11 There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described but is immediately felt and puts the stranger at once at his ease.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "Christmas Eve," *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

- 12 'Tis an honour to see me, a favour to hear:
'Tis a privilege high to have dinner and tea

Along with the Red Queen, the White Queen, and me!

LEWIS CARROLL (CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON) (1832–1898), English author and mathematician. *Through the Looking Glass* (chapter 9, "Queen Alice") (1871).

As she listens to this shrill song, Alice thinks to herself, "I'm glad they've come without waiting to be asked. . . . I should never have known who were the right people to invite."

- 13 Hail, guest, and enter freely! All you see
Is, for your momentary visit, yours; and we
Who welcome you, are but the guests of God
And know not our departure.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. "Hail, Guest, and Enter Freely!"

The lines were a proposed inscription for Stevenson's new house, Skerryvore.

- 14 Good morning, Life—and all Things glad and beautiful.
My pockets nothing hold,
But he that owns the gold,
The Sun, is my great friend—
His spending has no end.

W. H. DAVIES (1871–1940), Welsh author. "A Greeting."

Saying Goodbye

- 1 Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! And, lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
A dateless bargain to engrossing death.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Romeo and Juliet* 5.3.112–15.

- 2 After three days men grow weary,
of a wench, a guest, and weather
rainy.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790),
U.S. statesman, scientist, and author. *Poor
Richard's Almanack*, June 1733.

- 3 Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie,
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonnie lassie.

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796), Scottish
poet. "The Silver Tassie."

- 4 It is a far, far better thing that I do,
than I have ever done; it is a far, far
better rest that I go to than I have
ever known.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), En-
glish author. *A Tale of Two Cities* (book 3;
chapter 15, "The Footsteps Die out For Ever")
(1859).

Sydney Carton's final words and the final
words of the novel.

- 5 I still remember the refrain of one
of the most popular barrack ballads
of the day which proclaimed most
proudly that old soldiers never die;
they just fade away. And, like the
old soldier of that ballad, I now
close my military career and just
fade away, an old soldier who tried
to do his duty as God gave him the
light to see that duty. Goodbye.

DOUGLAS MACARTHUR (1880–1964),
U.S. general. Address to a joint meeting of
Congress, 19 April 1951, in *Lend Me Your
Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William
Safire (1992).

- 6 What I was really hanging around
for, I was trying to feel some kind
of a good-by. I mean I've left
schools and places I didn't even
know I was leaving them. I hate
that. I don't care if it's a sad good-

by or a bad good-by, but when I
leave a place I like to *know* I'm
leaving it. If you don't, you feel
even worse.

J. D. SALINGER (b. 1919), U.S. author.
The Catcher in the Rye (chapter 1) (1951).

- 7 It is easy to see the beginnings of
things, and harder to see the ends.

JOAN DIDION (b. 1934), U.S. author.
"Goodbye to All That" (1967), in *Slouching to-
wards Bethlehem* (1968).

Didion writes about falling in and out of love
with New York City.

- 8 Farewells and separations never, I
find, quite live up to the drama
they promise to afford. Human be-
ings (I find again) have a tendency
to feel the wrong quantity of emo-
tion, or indeed the wrong emotion,
so that life is an endless procession
of liquid being poured into and ex-
changed between badly designed
containers, the wrong color, the
wrong shape, the wrong size.

JOHN LANCHESTER, English novelist and
journalist. *The Debt to Pleasure* (section "Au-
turnn," subsection "An Omelette") (1996).

Concluding a Deal

- 1 But the olde saying is, hast maketh
waste, and bargains made in speede,
are commonly repented at leisure.

GEORGE PETTIE (c. 1548–1589), En-
glish author. "Cephalus and Procris," *A Petite
Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure* (1576).

- 2 In dealing with cunning persons,
we must ever consider their ends,
to interpret their speeches; and it is
good to say little to them, and that
which they least look for. In all ne-
gotiations of difficulty, a man may
not look to sow and reap at once,

but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. “Of Negotiating,” *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 3 The most eminent negotiators have always been the politest and best-bred men in company; even what the women call the *prettiest men*. For God’s sake, never lose view of these your two capital objects; bend everything to them, try everything by their rules, and calculate everything by their purposes.

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD (1694–1773), English statesman and author. Letter, 26 September 1752 OS, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. John Bradshaw, vol. 2 (1929).

- 4 Win/Win is a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. Win/Win means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial, mutually satisfying. With a Win/Win solution, all parties feel good about the decision and feel committed to the action plan.

STEPHEN R. COVEY (b. 1932), U.S. author. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic* (“Habit 4: Principles of Interpersonal Leadership”) (1989).

- 5 The worst thing you can possibly do in a deal is seem desperate to make it. That makes the other guy smell blood, and then you’re dead. The best thing you can do is deal from strength, and leverage is the biggest strength you can have. Leverage is having something the other guy wants.

DONALD J. TRUMP, U.S. businessman. *The Art of the Deal* (chapter 2, “Trump Cards: The Elements of the Deal”) (1982).

Thanks

- 1 Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee’s collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music’s melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of Gratitude.
THOMAS GRAY (1716–1771), English poet. “Ode for Music.”
- 2 Gratitude is a fruit of great cultivation; you do not find it among gross people.
JAMES BOSWELL (1740–1795), Scottish author. *Boswell’s Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, 20 September 1773 (1785).
Boswell attributes the remark to Samuel Johnson.
- 3 I suppose all phrases of mere compliment have their turn to be true. A man is occasionally grateful when he says “Thank you.”
GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1890), English author. *The Mill on the Floss* (book 6, “The Great Temptation”; chapter 2, “First Impressions”) (1860).
- 4 For all the gifts you give
Me, dear, each day you live,
Of thanks above
All thanks that could be spoken
Take not my song in token,
Take my love.
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837–1909), English poet. “A Child’s Battles.”
- 5 God give you pardon from gratitude
and other mild forms of servitude—

and make peace for all of us
with what is easy.

ROBERT CREELEY (b. 1926), U.S. poet.
"Song ['God give you pardon from grati-
tude']."

- 6 A talent for receiving gifts is far, far
more rare than a talent for giving
them—one concedes so much
more, in the act of reception,
whereas to be in the position of the
giver is to retain all the psychic ap-
purtenances of power, patronage,
and control.

JOHN LANCHESTER, English novelist and
journalist. *The Debt to Pleasure* (section
"Spring," subsection "Roast Lamb") (1996).

Apology

- 1 The commonest way of softening
the hearts of those we have of-
fended, when, vengeance in hand,
they hold us at their mercy, is by
submission to move them to com-
miseration and pity. However, au-
dacity and steadfastness—entirely
contrary means—have sometimes
served to produce the same effect.
- MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE**
(1533–1589), French essayist. "By Diverse
Means We Arrive at the Same End," book 1,
essay 1 (1578–1580), *The Complete Essays of
Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976;
originally published 1958).
- 2 Reconciliations are the cement of
friendship. Therefore friends should
quarrel to strengthen their attach-
ment, and offend each other for the
pleasure of being reconciled.
- MARIA EDGEWORTH** (1768–1849),
Irish author. "The Noble Science of Self-Justifi-
cation," *Letters for Literary Ladies* (1795).
- 3 *Apologizing*. —A very desperate
habit,—one that is rarely cured.
Apology is only egotism wrong side
- out. Nine times out of ten, the first
thing a man's companion knows of
his shortcoming is from his apol-
ogy. It is mighty presumptuous on
your part to suppose your small
failures of so much consequence
that you must make a talk about
them.
- OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES** (1809–
1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Profes-
sor at the Breakfast-Table* (chapter 6).
- 4 All of us . . . are subject to making
mistakes; so that the chief art of
life, is to learn how best to remedy
mistakes. Now one remedy for mis-
takes is honesty.
- HERMAN MELVILLE** (1819–1891), U.S.
author. *Israel Potter* (chapter 7, "After a Cur-
ious Adventure Upon the *Pont Neuf*, Israel En-
ters the Presence of the Renowned Sage, Dr.
Franklin, Whom He Finds Right Learnedly and
Multifariously Employed") (1855).
- Advice attributed to Benjamin Franklin.
- 5 APOLOGIZE, v. to lay the founda-
tion for a future offense.
- AMBROSE BIERCE** (1842–?1914), U.S.
author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).
- 6 He also told me that a hostess
should never apologise for any fail-
ure in her household arrangements,
if there is a hostess there is insofar
as there is a hostess no failure.
- GERTRUDE STEIN** (1874–1946), U.S.
author. *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*
(chapter 1, "Before I Came to Paris") (1933).
- This sentiment is attributed to Alice's father
who is described as "a quiet man who took
things quietly."
- 7 Never apologize and never ex-
plain—it's a sign of weakness.
- LAURENCE STALLINGS** (1894–1968),
U.S. screenwriter. *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*
(1949).
- Spoken by John Wayne.

- 8 Anybody who has ever tried to rectify an injustice or set a record straight comes to feel that he is going mad. And from a social point of view, he *is* crazy, for he is trying to undo something that is finished, to unravel the social fabric.

MARY MCCARTHY (1912–1989), U.S. author. “My Confession,” *On the Contrary* (1976).

Praise

- 1 Certainly nothing gratifies us like . . . applause. But you can’t live on applause; praise alone won’t pay the rent. We need something a bit more solid; the best hand people can give us is a hand with cash in it.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–1673), French dramatist. *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* 1.1 (1670), in *Eight Plays by Molière*, trans. Morris Bishop (1957).

A music teacher tells a dancing teacher that he appreciates their pupil M. Jourdain, a Parisian merchant, because he pays well, although he has little taste or ability.

- 2 Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The Rambler* (6 June 1751).

- 3 Praise everybody: . . . never be squeamish, but speak out your compliment both point-blank in a man’s face, and behind his back, when you know there is a reasonable chance of his hearing it again. Never lose a chance of saying a kind word.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811–1863), English novelist. *Vanity Fair* (chapter 19, “Miss Crawley at Nurse”) (1847–48).

- 4 Flattery iz like ice-cream—to relish good we want it a little at a time, and often. The more yu praze a man who don’t deserve it, the more yu abuze him. Yu kan’t flatter a truly wize man—he knows just how much praze iz due him; that he takes, and charges over all the balance tew the proffit and loss ackount.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW) (1818–1885), U.S. humorist. “Fust Impresshuns,” *The Complete Works of Josh Billings* (1899).

- 5 I don’t go in for that stuff. . . . Compliments to women about their looks. I never met a woman that didn’t know if she was good-looking or not without being told, and some of them give themselves credit for more than they’ve got.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS (1914–1983), U.S. dramatist. *A Streetcar Named Desire* (scene 2) (1947).

This is Stanley Kowalski’s response when his sister-in-law Blanche DuBois informs him that she has been “fishing for a compliment.”

Forgiving

- 1 The quality of mercy is not strained.
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Merchant of Venice* 4.1.184–87.

In a discussion with Shylock and Antonio about the nature of the law, Portia reflects on the quality of mercy.

- 2 If thou hast done an injury to another, rather own it than defend it.

One way thou gainest forgiveness;
the other thou doublest the wrong
and reckoning.

WILLIAM PENN (1644–1718), English philosopher and statesman. *The Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (part 1), “Reparation,” no. 121 (1693).

- 3 To Err is Humane; to Forgive, Divine.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. *An Essay on Criticism* (line 525).

- 4 We are taught to believe that forgiveness is never denied to sincere repentance.

ANN RADCLIFFE (1764–1823), English author. *A Sicilian Romance* (chapter 1) (1821).

The consolation of Madame de Menon to Vincent, who seeks to unburden himself of a guilt “beyond remedy in this world, . . . and without pardon in the next.”

- 5 If we should deal out justice only,
in this world, who would escape?
No, it is better to be generous, and
in the end more profitable, for it
gains gratitude for us, and love.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*, vol. 1 (1925).

- 6 Nothing human disgusts me unless
it’s unkind, violent.

TENNESSEE WILKINS (1914–1983), U.S. dramatist. *The Night of the Iguana* (act 3) (1961).

Spoken by Hannah Jelkes to Reverend Shannon.

Vowing

- 1 Give me chastity and continence,
but not just now.

SAINT AUGUSTINE (AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS) (354–430), theologian, bishop

of Hippo, and doctor of the Roman Catholic Church. *Confessions* (8.7) (397–401).

- 2 ‘Tis not the many oaths that makes
the truth,
But the plain single vow that is
vow’d true.

What is not holy, that we swear not
by,

But take the High’st to witness.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *All’s Well That Ends Well* 4.2.21–24.

Diana tries to educate Bertram, whom she mistrusts, in the proper way of swearing and keeping a vow.

- 3 I hate to promise; what we do then
is expected from us and wants
much of the welcome it finds when
it surprises.

SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE (1634?–1691), English dramatist. *The Man of Mode; or Sir Fopling Flutter* 5.2.183 (1676).

- 4 Rarely promise; but if lawful, constantly perform.

WILLIAM PENN (1644–1718), English philosopher and statesman. *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (part 1), “Promising,” no. 186 (1693).

- 5 Any overt act, above all, is felt to be
alchemic in its power to change. A
drunkard takes the pledge; it will be
strange if that does not help him.
For how many years did Mr. Pepys
continue to make and break his little
vows? And yet I have not heard
that he was discouraged in the end.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), English author. “*Virginibus Puerisque II*,” *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

- 6 I’m going to live through this, and
when it’s all over, I’ll never be hungry
again—no, nor any of my

folks!—if I have to lie, steal, cheat
or kill! As God is my witness, I'll
never be hungry again!

SIDNEY HOWARD, U.S. screenwriter. *Gone with the Wind* (1939).

Praying

- 1 Only that man's prayer is answered
who lifts his hands with his heart in
them.

Tannit 8a, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 O ye who believe! When ye rise up
for prayer, wash your faces, and
your hands up to the elbows, and
lightly rub your heads and (wash)
your feet up to the ankles. And if
ye are unclean, purify yourselves.
. . . Allah would not place a burden
on you, but He would purify you
and would perfect His grace upon
you, that ye may give thanks.

Qur'an 5.6; The Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation by Marmaduke Pickthall (1930; reprint 1992).

- 3 From needing danger to be good,
From owing thee yesterday's tears
today,
From trusting so much to thy
blood
That in that hope we wound our
souls away,
From bribing thee with alms to
excuse
Some sin more burdensome,
.
. . . Lord, deliver us.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet, clergyman, and courtier. "A Litany" (stanza 16).

- 4 Teach me to feel another's Woe;
To hide the Fault I see;
That Mercy I to others show,
That Mercy show to me.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. "The Universal Prayer" (lines 37–40).

Printed as a pendant to the *Essay on Man*.

- 5 Work as if you were to live a hundred years,
Pray as if you were to die tomorrow.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790), U.S. statesman, scientist, and author. *Poor Richard's Almanac*, May 1757.

- 6 To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), English poet and artist. "The Divine Image," *Songs of Innocence* (1789).

- 7 He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (part 7, lines 613–16).

- 8 I own that I am disposed to say
grace upon twenty other occasions
in the course of the day besides my
dinner. I want a form for setting
out upon a pleasant walk, for a
moonlight ramble, for a friendly
meeting, or a solved problem. Why
have we none for books, these spir-
itual repasts—a grace before Mil-
ton—a grace before Shakespeare—a
devotional exercise proper to be
said before reading *The Fairie
Queene*?

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. “Grace Before Meat,” *London Magazine* (1821) and *Essays of Elia* (1823).

- 9 Almost every human being, however vague his notions of the Power addressed, is capable of being lifted and solemnized by the exercise of public prayer.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* (chapter 7) (1872).

- 10 Prayer is often an argument of laziness: “Lord, my temper gives me a vast deal of inconvenience, and it would be a great task for me to correct it; and wilt thou be pleased to correct it for me, that I may get along easier?” If prayer was answered under such circumstances, independent of action of natural laws, it would be paying a premium on indolence.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. *Lecture Room Talks: Answers to Prayers*, in *Beecher as a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

- 11 Prayer draws us near to our own souls, and purifies our thoughts.

HERMAN MELVILLE (1819–1891), U.S. author. *Mardi and A Voyage Thither* (chapter 111, “The Visit the Lake of Yammo”) (1849).

- 12 There’s something in it when a body like the widow or the parson prays, but it don’t work for me, and I reckon it don’t work for only just the right kind.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (chapter 8) (1885).

- 13 PRAY, v. To ask that the laws of the universe be annulled in behalf of a

single petitioner confessedly unworthy.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil’s Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 14 I added that he said we ought to pray for things we needed and that I needed the humming top a great deal more than I did the conversion of the heathen or the restitution of Jerusalem to the Jews, two objects of my nightly supplication which left me very cold.

EDMUND GOSSE (1849–1928), English author. *Father and Son* (chapter 2) (1907).

Gosse here expresses his confusion as a child about his parents’ belief that God answers all needs.

- 15 Prayer, among sane people, has never superseded practical efforts to secure the desired end.

GEORGE SANTAYANA (1863–1952), American (Spanish-born) philosopher and poet. *The Life of Reason: Reason in Religion* (chapter 4) (1905–1906).

- 16 Prayer is not an old woman’s idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action. . . .

. . . Prayer is the first and the last lesson in learning the noble and brave art of sacrificing self in the various walks of life culminating in the defence of one’s nation’s liberty and honour.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI (1869–1948), Indian political and spiritual leader. *Non-Violence in Peace and War* (vol. 2, section 77) (1949).

- 17 Scientific research is based on the idea that everything that takes place is determined by laws of nature, and therefore this holds for the actions of people. For this reason, a research scientist will hardly be in-

clined to believe that events could be influenced by a prayer, i. e. by a wish addressed to a supernatural Being.

ALBERT EINSTEIN (1879–1955), American (German-born) theoretical physicist. Letter to Phyllis Wright, 24 January 1936, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Einstein responds to Wright, a sixth-grader, who wrote to ask if scientists pray.

- 18 Peter said “Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.” It is the most natural and most human and most agonizing prayer in the gospels, and I think it is the foundation prayer of faith.

FLANNERY O’CONNOR (1925–1964), U.S. author. Letter to Alfred Corn, 30 May 1962, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

O’Connor responds to Corn, a college freshman, who had heard the author speak at the University of Atlanta and wrote to tell her about his crisis of faith.

- 19 You know I ain’t never prayed before
‘Cause it always seemed to me
That prayin’s the same as beggin’
Lord,
I don’t take no charity.

STEVE EARLE, U.S. songwriter. “Tom Ames’ Prayer” (1994).

The young prince here vows ultimately to throw off the unrestrained life of Falstaff and Eastcheap and to take on the duties of his kingdom.

- 2 Give me women, wine, and snuff
Until I cry out “hold, enough!”
You may do so sans objection
Till the day of resurrection.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet. “Give Me Women, Wine and Snuff.”

Confessing

- 1 Boldness in sinning is somewhat compensated and bridled by boldness in confession. Whoever would oblige himself to tell all, would oblige himself not to do anything about which we are constrained to keep silent.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1592), French essayist. “On Some Verses of Virgil,” book 3, essay 5 (1585–88), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 2 There is a luxury in self-reproach. When we blame ourselves we feel that no one else has a right to blame us. It is the confession, not the priest, that gives us absolution.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 8) (1891).

Celebrating

- 1 If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;
But when they seldom come, they
wish’d for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The First Part of Henry IV* 1.2.198–201.

Winning

- 1 All successful men have agreed in one thing,—they were causationists. They believed that things went not by luck, but by law; that there was not a weak or a cracked link in the chain that joins the first and last of things.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Power,” *The Conduct of Life* (1860).

- 2 A minute's success pays the failure of years.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889), English poet. "Apollo and the Fates."

- 3 Success is counted sweetest
By those who ne'er succeed.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830–1886), U.S. poet. "Success is Counted Sweetest."

- 4 Nothing succeeds like excess.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *A Woman of No Importance* (act 3) (1893).

- 5 I dread success. To have succeeded is to have finished one's business on earth, like the male spider, who is killed by the female the moment he has succeeded in his courtship. I like a state of continual becoming, with a goal in front and not behind.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950), Irish dramatist and critic. Letter to Ellen Terry, 28 August 1896, *Collected Letters*, ed. Dan H. Laurence, vol. 1 (1965).

- 6 People are utterly wrong in their slant upon things. They see the successes that men have made and somehow they appear to be easy. But that is a world away from the facts. It is failure that is easy. Success is always hard. A man can fail in ease; he can succeed only by paying out all that he has and is. It is this which makes success so pitiable a thing if it be in lines that are not useful and uplifting.

HENRY FORD (1863–1947), U.S. industrialist. In *My Life and Work* (1922; reprint 1973) and reprinted in *Ford on Management: Harnessing the American Spirit* (chapter 8, "Why Charity?") (1991).

- 7 I had trouble as a competitor because I kept wanting to fight the other player every time I started to

lose a match. . . . After a while I began to understand that you could walk out on the court like a lady, all dressed up in immaculate white, be polite to everybody, and still play like a tiger and beat the liver and lights out of the ball.

ALTHEA GIBSON DARBEN (b. 1927), U.S. tennis player. *I Always Wanted to Be Somebody* (chapter 2, "Between Two Worlds"), ed. Ed Fitzgerald (1958).

- 8 To be a great champion you must believe you are the best. If you're not, pretend you are.

MUHAMMAD ALI (b. 1942), U.S. boxer. Quoted in Eric V. Copage, *Black Pearls: Daily Meditations, Affirmations, and Inspirations for African-Americans* ("February 17") (1993).

Losing

- 1 I would prefer even to fail with honor
than win by cheating.

SOPHOCLES (c. 496–406 B.C.), Greek dramatist. *Philoctetes* (lines 92–93), trans. David Grene, in *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Grene and Richard Lattimore, vol. 2 (1957).

- 2 One is always more vexed at losing a game of any sort by a single hole or ace, than if one has never had a chance of winning it.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778–1830), English essayist and critic. "On Great and Little Things," *Literary Remains* (1836).

- 3 There is not a fiercer hell than the failure in a great object.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821), English poet. *Endymion* (preface).

- 4 The *probability* that we may fall in the struggle *ought not* to deter us from the support of a cause we be-

lieve to be just; it *shall not* deter me.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865), U.S. president. “Speech on the Sub-Treasury” (26 December 1839), *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy Prentice Basler (1953, 1990).

- 5 The victor shall soon be the vanquished, if he relax in his exertion; and that the vanquished this year, may be victor the next, in spite of all competition.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809–1865), U.S. president. “Address Before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, Milwaukee, Wisconsin” (30 September 1859), *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy Prentice Basler (1953, 1990).

- 6 Failure after long perseverance is much grander than never to have a striving good enough to be called a failure.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Middlemarch* (book 2, “Old and Young”; chapter 22) (1872).

- 7 In all failures, the beginning is certainly the half of the whole.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Middlemarch* (book 3, “Waiting for Death”; chapter 31) (1872).

- 8 How fascinating all failures are!

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. Letter to Julia Ward Howe, 6 July 1882, *The Letters of Oscar Wilde*, ed. Rupert Hart-Davis (1962).

Wilde refers specifically to the American soldier and statesman Jefferson Davis.

- 9 Do not mistake your objection to defeat for an objection to fighting, your objection to being a slave for an objection to slavery, your objection to not being as rich as your neighbor for an objection to pov-

erty. The cowardly, the insubordinate, and the envious share your objections.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950), Irish dramatist and critic. “Maxims for Revolutionists,” *The Revolutionist’s Handbook in Man and Superman* (1903).

- 10 There may be a few things about a success that haint generally known, but ther’s never no secrets about a failure.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. *Fifty-Two Weeks of Abe Martin* (1924).

- 11 Look, victory and defeat ain’t bound to be same for the big shots up top as for them below, not by any means. Can be times the bottom lot find a defeat really pays them. Honour’s lost, nowt else. . . . As a rule you can say victory and defeat both come expensive to us ordinary folk. Best thing for us is when politics get bogged down solid.

BERTOLT BRECHT (1898–1956), German poet and dramatist. *Mother Courage and Her Children* (scene 3) (1941), trans. John Willett (1994).

- 12 I coulda had class! I coulda been a contender! I coulda been somebody! Instead of a bum which is what I am! Let’s face it! . . . He gets the title shot outdoors in the ball park and whadda I get? A one-way ticket to Palookaville.

BUD SCHULBERG, U.S. screenwriter. *On the Waterfront* (1954).

Spoken by Marlon Brando, blaming his brother (Rod Steiger) for an abortive boxing career. The film was directed by Elia Kazan and written by Bud Schulberg.

- 13 In a game, just losing is almost as satisfying as just winning. . . . In life the loser’s score is always zero.

W. H. AUDEN (1907–1973), Anglo-American poet. "Postscript: The Frivolous and the Earnest," *The Dyer's Hand* (1962).

- 14 All men are mortal, and therefore
all men are losers; our profoundest
loyalty goes out to the failed.

JOHN UPDIKE (1932–), U.S. author. "The Boston Red Sox, As of 1986," *Odd Jobs* (1991).

Reconciliation

- 1 There are more quarrels smothered
by just shutting your mouth, and
holding it shut, than by all the wis-
dom in the world.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. "Sermon: Peaceable Living," *Beecher As a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

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Once in a Lifetime

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Birth

- 1 Whate'er is Born of Mortal Birth
Must be consumed with the Earth
To rise from Generation free.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827), English poet and artist. "To Tirzah," *Songs of Experience*.

"Tirzah" in Blake's cosmology approximates Mother Nature. Here she figures as the mother of "my Mortal part," by which Blake means particularly the five senses.

- 2 But when I saw it on its mother's
arm,
And hanging at her bosom (she
the while
Bent o'er its features with a tear-
ful smile)
Then I was thrill'd and melted, and
most warm
Impressed a father's kiss.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. "Sonnet: To a Friend Who Asked, How I Felt When the Nurse First Presented My Infant to Me."

- 3 Out of the dark sweet sleep
Where no dreams laugh or
weep
Borne through bright gates of
birth
Into the dim sweet light
Where day still dreams of
night
While heaven takes form on
earth
White rose of spirit and flesh, and
lily of love,
What note of song have we
Fit for the birds and thee,
Fair nestling couched beneath the
mother-dove?

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837–1909), English poet. "Birth-Song: For Olivia Frances Madox Rossetti, Born September 20, 1875."

- 4 Birth, and copulation, and death.
I've been born, and once is enough.
You dont remember, but I remem-
ber,
Once is enough.

T. S. ELIOT (1888–1965), Anglo-American poet. "Sweeney Agonistes."

- 5 I woke up out of the ether with an
utterly abandoned feeling, and
asked the nurse right away if it was
a boy or a girl. She told me it was a
girl, and so I turned my head away
and wept. "All right," I said, "I'm
glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be
a fool—that's the best thing a girl
can be in this world, a beautiful lit-
tle fool."

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (1896–1940), U.S. author. *The Great Gatsby* (chapter 1) (1925).

Spoken by Daisy Buchanan.

- 6 The cradle rocks above an abyss,
and common sense tells us that our
existence is but a brief crack of
light between two eternities of
darkness. Although the two are
identical twins, man, as a rule,
views the prenatal abyss with more
calm than the one he is heading for
(at some forty-five hundred heart-
beats an hour).

VLADIMIR NABOKOV (1899–1977), American (Russian-born) novelist. *Speak, Memory: An Autobiography Revisited* (chapter 1, part 1) (1951).

- 7 And I was fascinated to discover
that far from being "ten times
worse than the worst pain you ever
had" (as our childless woman doc-
tor had told us in college) or
"worse than the worst cramps you
ever had, but at least you get some-
thing out of it" (as my mother had

said), the pains of childbirth were altogether different from the enveloping effects of other kinds of pain. These were pains one could follow with one's mind; they were like a fine electric needle outlining one's pelvis.

MARGARET MEAD (1901–1978), U.S. anthropologist. *Blackberry Winter* ("Catherine, Born in Wartime") (1972).

- 8 Your birth is not an accident; G-d chooses each of us to fulfill a specific mission in this world, just as a composer arranges each musical note. Take away even one note, and the entire composition is affected. Each person matters; each person is irreplaceable.

MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON (1902–1994), U.S. rabbi. *Toward a Meaningful Life: The Wisdom of the Rebbe* (chapter 2, "Birth: The Mission Begins") (1995).

- 9 Women perceive the child's first movement with varied feelings, this kick delivered at the portals of the world, against the uterine wall that shuts him off from the world. One woman is lost in wonder at this signal announcing the presence of an independent being; another may feel repugnance at containing a stranger.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Second Sex* (part 5, "Situation"; chapter 17, "The Mother") (1949); trans. H. M. Parshley (1979).

Later in the text, Beauvoir notes, "Every woman wants to give birth to a hero, a genius; but all the mothers of actual heroes and geniuses have at first complained that their sons were breaking their hearts."

- 10 We are *not to talk about* having babies, because that is not part of the experience of men and so nothing to do with reality, with civilization,

and no concern of art.—A rending scream in another room.

URSULA K. LEGUIN (b. 1929), U.S. author. Commencement address at Brywn Mawr College (1986); in *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women and Places* (1987).

First Baby

- 1 I wish him good and constant health,
His father's learning, but more wealth,
And that to use, nor hoard; a purse
Open to bless, not shut to curse.
May he have many and fast friends,
Meaning good will, not private ends,
Such as scorn to understand
When they name love, a piece of land.

WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT (1611–1643), English poet and dramatist. "To Mr. W. B., at the Birth of his First Child."

- 2 If in the whole course of a woman's sensitive life there is one moment of happiness more keen, blissful, bright, than another, it is that in which the husband of her choice thanks her for his firstborn child.

EMILY EDEN (1797–1869), English author. *The Semi-Detached House* (chapter 18) (1859).

- 3 Tew look upon the trak that life takes—tew see the sunshine and shower—tew plead for the best, and shrink from the wust—tew shudder when sickness steals on, and tew be chastened when death comes—tiz this—oh! tiz this that makes the fust baby a hope upon arth, and a gem up in heaven.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW) (1818–1885), U.S. humorist. “The Fust Baby,” *The Complete Works of Josh Billings* (1876).

Shaw also notes the way a new father sees his wife differently after the birth of a child: “Tew find the pale Mother again bi yure side, more luvly than when she was wooed—tew see a new tenderness in her eye, and tew hear the chastened sweetness of her laff, as she tells you something new about ‘Willie’—tew luv her far more than ever, and tew find oftimes a prayer on yure lips—tiz this that makes the first baby a fountain or sparkling plezure.”

- 4 For some reason the most important thing to me was actually seeing the baby come out of you yourself and making sure it was yours. I thought if you had to have all that pain anyway you might just as well stay awake. I had always imagined myself hitching up on to my elbows on the delivery table after it was all over—dead white, of course, with no makeup and from the awful ordeal, but smiling and radiant, with my hair down to my waist, and reaching out for my first little squirmy child and saying its name, whatever it was.

SYLVIA PLATH (1932–1963), U.S. author. *The Bell Jar* (chapter 6) (1962).

The nineteen-year-old narrator’s reaction to seeing birth first-hand.

- 5 Oh, I wish I could completely explain how I feel about having a baby. It’s that procreation is the greatest miracle of all, and you are participating in it, contributing to it—as animals must do, as the grizzly bears must do because they kill to protect their cubs. You feel an affinity with all the vast things in the world since time began. And you feel so small. Procreation is like the tide, it’s like the planets it’s like everything inexplicable. And yet it’s so utterly personal.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR (b. 1932), U.S. (English-born) actress. *Elizabeth Taylor: An Informal Memoir* (chapter 3) (1965).

Second Baby

- 1 Most innovations in science, especially radical ones, have been initiated and championed by laterborns. Firstborns tend to reject new ideas, especially when the innovation appears to upset long-accepted principles.

FRANK J. SULLOWAY, U.S. historian of science. *Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics, and Creative Lives* (chapter 2, “Birth Order and Scientific Revolutions”) (1996).

- 2 It is so difficult to anticipate bringing home an invader of the love affair that one has created with the first child.

T. BERRY BRAZELTON (b. 1918), U.S. pediatrician and author. *Touchpoints: The Essential Reference* (chapter 36) (1992).

Third Baby

- 1 Studies made on first children say they’re not all that bad. They are usually shy, serious and sensitive, are academically superior and are more likely to be an Einstein. Second children, on the other hand, are relaxed, independent, cheerful, learn toward creativity and are more likely to be Picasso. No one has had the courage to find—let alone study—child Number 3 and the ones who follow, whom I call et ceteras.

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. “Third Child” (5 November 1981), in *Forever, Erma: America’s Best-Loved Writing from America’s Favorite Humorist* (1996).

Death of a Child

- 1 Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;
Then, have I reason to be fond of grief?
Fare you well! Had you such a loss as I,
I could give better comfort than you do.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Life and Death of King John* 3.4.93–100.

Constance speaks about her son Arthur.

- 2 More fool than I to look on that was lent,
As if mine own, when thus impermanent.

ANNE BRADSTREET (1612?–1672), U.S. (English-born) poet. "In Memory of My Dear Child, Anne Bradstreet."

- 3 Oh tell, rude stone! the passer by,
That here the pretty babe doth lie,
Death sang to sleep with Lullaby.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834), English poet and critic. "Epitaph on an Infant."

- 4 Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say, that Nature blind
Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finish'd pattern without fault?

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "On an Infant Dying As Soon As Born."

- 5 Still mine! maternal rights serene
Not given to another!
The crystal bars shine faint between
The souls of child and mother.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806–1861), English poet. "A Child's Grave at Florence (A. A. E. C. Born July 1848. Died November 1849)."

- 6 One young life lost, two happy
young lives blighted,
With earthward eyes we see;
With eyes uplifted, keener, farther-sighted,
We look, O Lord, to Thee.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894), English poet. "A Death of a First-Born."

- 7 Perfect little body, without fault or stain on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full and fair!
Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain on thee.

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–1930), English poet. "On a Dead Child."

- 8 For the old, it is a never-ending grief to lose those who are younger than themselves and whom they associate with their own future, above all if they are their children, or if they have brought them up: the death of a child, of a small child, is the sudden ruin of a whole undertaking; it means that all the hopes and sacrifices centred upon him are pointless, utterly in vain.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Coming of Age* (part 2, "The Being in the World"; chapter

6, "Time, Activity, History") (1970), trans. Patrick O'Brian (1972).

First Day of School

- 1 Those that do teach young babes
Do it with gentle means and easy
tasks.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Othello* 4.2.112–13.

Desdemona is not speaking of sending a child to school, but the words may reassure young pupils or their caretakers.

- 2 A good village primary school
ought to be a cross between a nursery and a play-room; and the
teacher ought to be playmate,
nurse, and mother, all combined.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. "Going to School," *Star Papers; or, Experiences of Art and Nature*, new edition (1873), and reprinted in *Beecher As a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

- 3 And this was the cause of my suffering when I was sent to school.
For all of a sudden I found my world vanishing from around me, giving place to wooden benches and straight walls staring at me with the blank stare of the blind. But the legend is that eating of the fruit of knowledge is not consonant with dwelling in paradise. Therefore men's children have to be banished from their paradise into a realm of death dominated by the decency of a tailoring department. So my mind had to accept the tight-fitting encasement of the school which, being like the shoes of a mandarin woman, pinched and bruised my nature on all sides and at every movement.

- 4 Why, she asked, pressing her chin on James's head, should they grow up so fast? Why should they go to school? She would have liked always to have had a baby.

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882–1941), English novelist. *To the Lighthouse* ("The Window," section 10) (1927).

The thoughts of Mrs. Ramsay, a 50-year-old woman who has had eight children. She is not specifically sending a child off to school but captures the feeling of many parents in doing so.

- 5 The idea of entering upon a life of my own intoxicated me. Until now I had been growing up on the fringe of adult life, as it were; from now on I should have my satchel, my textbooks, my exercise books and my homework.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (part 1) (1958), trans. James Kirkup (1959).

This is Beauvoir's memory of her first day of school at the age of five.

- 6 I don't remember my first day at school, who the teacher was, or how I behaved. It was only during my second year that school and books and a beautiful teacher named Mary Lee Hall, brought it all alive. I loved it all because I thought she did.

OSSIE DAVIS (b. 1917), U.S. actor. *With Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together* ("The Way Cross Years") (1998).

Davis and his wife, actress Ruby Dee, take turns in this memoir writing about their experiences before and after they met. Davis indicates that the first day is not so important as one good experience.

- 7 Surely there were other important Julys scattered throughout those many years. For instance, that month of my fifth year was when I realized I had to go to school in September. It was a prospect I dreaded, believing in my heart that I was already sufficiently educated by Central Park, by the books I had read since I was three and a half, and by the disruptive arrival that year of a baby sister who taught me terrible lessons in displacement, resentment, hatred.

DORIS GRUMBACH (b. 1918), U.S. novelist and memoirist. *Coming into the End Zone* (1991).

Grumbach here remembers “Julys,” other than the one of her seventieth birthday, that were significant to her.

- 8 What if they mispronounce my last name and everyone laughs?
What if my teacher doesn’t make her D’s like Mom taught me?
What if I spend the whole day without a friend?

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. “The First Day of School” (3 September 1981), in *Forever, Erma: America’s Best-Loved Writing from America’s Favorite Humorist* (1996).

- 9 we pray
you will learn easily
in this new place
you will laugh and share
loving people other than us.

LUCY TAPAHANSO, U.S. poet. “For Misty Starting School,” in *Multicultural Voices: Literature from the United States* (1995).

Puberty

- 1 There are three things the gentleman should guard against. In youth when the blood and *ch’i* are still

unsettled he should guard against the attraction of feminine beauty. In the prime of life when the blood and *ch’i* have become unyielding, he should guard against bellicosity. In old age when the blood and *ch’i* have declined, he should guard against acquisitiveness.

CONFUCIUS (551?–479 B.C.), Chinese philosopher. *Analects* (Lun yü), book 16, section 7, trans. D. C. Lau (1979).

- 2 I would there were no age between ten and three-and-twenty, or that you would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The Winter’s Tale* 3.3.59–63.

One of the shepherds complains of young men scaring away his sheep.

- 3 The happiest time in my life was when I was twelve years old. I was just old enough to have a good time in the world, but not old enough to understand any of its troubles.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* (“Sundry Observations”; chapter 1, “Autobiographical”; section 5 [1930]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

Edison also noted the downside of adolescence when he commented: “Somewhere between the ages of eleven and fifteen, the average child begins to suffer from this atrophy, the paralysis of curiosity and the suspension of the power to observe” (“Sundry Observations”; section 19, “Education and Work: The Habit of Forgetting” [1921]).

- 4 Don’t laugh at a youth for his affections; he’s only trying on one face after another till he finds his own.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Age and Death,” *After-*

thoughts (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 5 The principal of our adolescents' difficulties are the presence of conflicting standards and the belief that every individual should make his or her own choices, coupled with a feeling that choice is an important matter.

MARGARET MEAD (1901–1978), U.S. anthropologist. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation* (chapter 14, "Education for Choice") (1928).

- 6 Anything can happen in adolescence. It is always a risky time. Ugly ducklings can sometimes change into swans. The reverse is equally possible. The best-brought-up child is taken over by powers as divorced from daily habits as earthquakes.

AGNES DE MILLE (1909–1993), U.S. dancer and choreographer. *Dance to the Piper* (chapter 10, "Adolescence") (1952).

- 7 My body was changing, and my life was changing too: my past was being left behind.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (part 2) (1958), trans. James Kirkup (1959).

- 8 When Jeffrey turned fourteen and Matilda twelve, they had begun to change; to grow rude, coarse, selfish, insolent, nasty, brutish, and tall. It was as if she were keeping a boarding house in a bad dream, and the children she had loved were turning into awful lodgers—lodgers who paid no rent, whose leases could not be terminated.

ALISON LURIE (b. 1926), U.S. author. *The War Between the Tates* (chapter 1) (1974).

- 9 The curse had come upon me. My friend Isobel said I would die if I had a bath. I got pulsating spots on my chin, my back was solid with acne, and you had to buy sanitary towels from men in chemists. How did St. Joan manage? All that armour. How did Pavlova, when she danced *Swan Lake* in that plate-like tutu? Who invented tampons? Have they been knighted?

PHYLLIDA LAW (b. 1932), English (Scottish-born) actress. "Much Thanks," *A Certain Age: Reflecting on the Menopause*, ed. Joanna Goldsworthy (1993).

- 10 Are you there God? It's me, Margaret. I just told my mother I want a bra. Please help me grow God. You know where. I want to be like everyone else.

JUDY BLUME (b. 1938), U.S. author. *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret* (1970).

- 11 If you are a girl, worry that your breasts are too round. Worry that your breasts are too pointed. Worry that your nipples are the wrong color. Worry that your breasts point in different directions. If you are a boy, worry that you will get breasts.

. . . If you are a boy, worry that you'll never be able to grow a mustache. . . .

If you are a girl, worry that you have a mustache.

DELIA EPHRON (b. 1944?), U.S. humorist. *Teenage Romance; or How to Die of Embarrassment* ("How to Worry") (1981).

- 12 There is perhaps, for all concerned, no period of life as unpleasant, so unappealing, so downright unpalatable, as that of adolescence. And while pretty much everyone who comes into contact with him is dis-

agreeably affected, certainly no one is in for a ruder shock than the actual teenager himself. Fresh from twelve straight years of uninterrupted cuteness, he is singularly unprepared to deal with the harsh consequences of inadequate personal appearance.

FRAN LEBOWITZ (b. 1950), U.S. author. "Tips for Teens," *Social Studies* (1981).

Lebowitz adds: "Remember that as a teenager you are at the last stage in your life when you will be happy to hear that the phone is for you."

- 13 My adolescence progressed normally: enough misery to keep the death wish my usual state, an occasional high to keep me from actually taking the gas-pipe.

FAYE MOSKOWITZ (b. 1930), U.S. essayist and teacher. *And the Bridge Is Love: Life Stories* (1991).

- 14 Something dramatic happens to girls in early adolescence. Just as planes and ships disappear mysteriously into the Bermuda Triangle, so do the selves of girls go down in droves. They crash and burn in a social and developmental Bermuda Triangle.

MARY PIPHER (b. 1948), U.S. author. *Re-viving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls* (chapter 1, "Saplings in the Storm") (1994).

High School

- 1 **ACADEME**, n. An ancient school where morality and philosophy were taught.

ACADEMY, n. (from academe). A modern school where football is taught.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 2 It's full of phonies, and all you do is study so that you can learn enough to be smart enough to be able to buy a goddam Cadillac some day, and you have to keep making believe you give a damn if the football team loses, and all you do is talk about girls and liquor and sex all day, and everybody sticks together in these dirty little goddam cliques.

J. D. SALINGER (b. 1919), U.S. author. *The Catcher in the Rye* (chapter 17) (1951).

Holden Caulfield describes a boys' school.

- 3 In this quiet little pond, encouraged by doting teachers, we felt successful and shining in *some* way, but once graduated we would disappear into the crowd of faceless adults and be like everyone else, old, a little tired, disappointed, and things not work out. College would be too hard and flunk us; the Army would unmask us as cowards; marriage would turn sour and love would die. One way or another, we would find disgrace, as others had.

GARRISON KEILLOR (b. 1942), U.S. author and radio personality. *Lake Wobegon Days* (1985).

Turning 16

- 1 A man at sixteen, will prove a child at sixty.

THOMAS FULLER (1608–1661), English clergyman and author. *Gnomologia: Adages and Proverbs, Wise Sentences, and Witty Sayings. Ancient and Modern, Foreign and British*, no. 273 (1660).

- 2 People are, in general, what they are made, by education and company, from fifteen to five-and-twenty.

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD (1694–1773), English statesman and author. Letter to his son, 1 April 1748 OS, *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. John Bradshaw, vol. 1 (1929).

- 3 To look *almost* pretty is an acquisition of higher delight to a girl who has been looking plain the first fifteen years of her life than a beauty from her cradle can ever receive.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Northanger Abbey* (chapter 1) (1818).

- 4 Although I was sixteen years of age, and although I was treated with indulgence and affection, I was still but a bird fluttering in the network of my Father's will and incapable of the smallest independent action.

EDMUND GOSSE (1849–1928), English author. *Father and Son* (chapter 12) (1907).

- 5 You are sixteen, going on seventeen,
Baby, it's time to think!
Better beware, be canny and careful,
Baby, you're on the brink!

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN (1895–1960), U.S. lyricist and librettist. "Sixteen Going on Seventeen," from the musical *The Sound of Music* (1959).

- 6 Most people . . . fix the prime of a man's life somewhere about thirty or thirty-five. Personally . . . I should place it at between fifteen and sixteen. It is then, it always seems to me, that his vitality is at its highest; he has greatest sense of the ludicrous and least sense of dignity. After that time, decay begins to set in. Possibly he attains to the "un-gainly wisdom" of the Sixth Form and in that languorous atmosphere drinks deep of the opiate of spe-

cialization; possibly he attains to some abnormal form of muscular development and in his gyrations upon the football field loses his sense of the ludicrous; possibly he attains to an official position in the school and loses that still greater gift, his sense of humor.

EVELYN WAUGH (1903–1966), English author. Debate at Lancing School, September 1920, *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. Michael Davie (1976).

Waugh was 16 at the time he advanced these arguments.

- 7 After sixteen—this is it—for life.
The chances are good you won't like it.

AGNES DE MILLE (1909–1993), U.S. dancer and choreographer. *Dance to the Piper* (chapter 10, "Adolescence") (1952).

- 8 American youth attributes much more importance to arriving at driver's-license age than at voting age.

MARSHALL MCLUHAN (1911–1980), Canadian author and educator. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964).

- 9 You're sixteen,
you're beautiful
and you're mine.

RICHARD M. SHERMAN (b. 1928) and **ROBERT B. SHERMAN** (b. 1925), songwriters. "You're Sixteen" (1960), in *The World's Greatest Fake Book*, ed. Chuch Sher (1983).

- 10 I hope you come to find that which gives life a deep meaning for you . . . something worth living for, maybe even worth dying for . . . something that energizes you, enthruses you, enables you to keep moving ahead.

ITA FORD (1940–1980), U.S. nun and missionary in El Salvador. Letter to her niece, 18 August 1980, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Ford wrote this letter for her niece, Jennifer Sullivan (living in Brooklyn), on her sixteenth birthday. She explains the importance of finding purpose and commitment in one's life whether one lives in a war-torn country like El Salvador or in Brooklyn. Three months after writing this letter, Ford and three other American nuns were found murdered.

- 11 Sweet sixteen ain't that peachy
keen.

BOB GELDOF (b. 1954), Irish singer and songwriter. "I Don't Like Mondays" (1980).

Geldof and the Boomtown Rats based their song "I Don't Like Mondays" on the experiences of 16-year-old Brenda Spencer, who, shooting into a crowd at her high school, killed two people and injured eight others.

Coming Out (Socially)

- 1 Give a girl an education, and introduce her properly into the world, and ten to one but she has the means of settling well, without farther expense to anybody.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Mansfield Park* (vol. 1, chapter 1) (1814).

- 2 What causes young people to "come out," but the noble ambition of matrimony? What sends them trooping to watering-places? What keeps them dancing till five o'clock in the morning through a whole mortal season? . . . What causes respectable parents to take up their carpets, set their houses topsy-turvy, and spend a fifth of their year's income in ball suppers and iced champagne? Is it sheer love of their species, and an unadulterated wish to see young people happy

and dancing? Psha! they want to marry their daughters.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811–1863), English novelist. *Vanity Fair* (chapter 3, "Rebecca is in Presence of the Enemy") (1848).

- 3 In Victorian days, when young girls up to the age of about eighteen were closely guarded at home, their debuts or formal introduction to their parents' friends in society had real meaning. . . . Today, however, with most girls going on to college, the debut when it occurs is merely a break in the educational procedure. It is rather meaningless now as an announcement that the girl is on the marriage market, for with four years ahead of her of increasingly difficult college courses, the girl, if she is sensible, awaits the completion of her education before marrying.

AMY VANDERBILT (1908–1974), U.S. author. *Amy Vanderbilt's Etiquette* (chapter 2, "Debuts") (1971).

College

- 1 When first the college rolls receive
his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease
for fame;
Through all his veins the fever of
renown
Burns from the strong contagion of
the gown.
.
Deign on the passing world to turn
thine eyes,
And pause awhile from letters, to
be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's
life assail,

Toil, envy, want, the patron, and
the jail.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. “The Vanity of Human Wishes: The Tenth Satire of Juvenal Imitated” (lines 135–38, 157–60).

- 2 An assemblage of learned men,
zealous for their own sciences, and
rivals of each other, are brought, by
familiar intercourse and for the
sake of intellectual peace, to adjust
together the claims and relations of
their respective subjects of investi-
gation. They learn to respect, to
consult, to aid each other. Thus is
created a pure and clear atmo-
sphere of thought, which the stu-
dent also breathes, though in his
own case he only pursues a few sci-
ences out of the multitude.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801–1890), English author and Roman Catholic cardinal, founder of the Oxford Movement. *The Idea of a University* (discourse 5, part 1) (1873).

- 3 Colleges . . . have their indispens-
able office,—to teach elements. But
they can highly serve us when they
aim not to drill, but to create; when
they gather from far every ray of
various genius to their hospitable
halls, and by the concentrated fires,
set the hearts of their youth on
flame.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “The American Scholar” (31 August 1837).

- 4 There is only one valid reason for
sending a boy to college, and that
is, so he can discover for himself
that there is nothing in it. A college
degree, as matters now stand, is like
a certificate of character—useful
only to those who need it. How-

ever, there must surely come a time
when degrees will be given only to
those who can earn a living—and
this degree will be signed by the
young man’s employer.

ELBERT HUBBARD (1856–1915), U.S. author, founder of the Roycroft community. *The Philosophy of Elbert Hubbard* (“His Thoughts about Business”) (1930).

- 5 And we all praise famous men—
Ancients of the College;
For they taught us common
sense—
Tried to teach us common sense—
Truth and God’s Own Common
Sense
Which is more than knowledge!

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865–1936), English author. “A School Song.”

- 6 Would I send a boy to college?
Well, at the age when a boy is fit to
be in college I wouldn’t have him
around the house.

PHILIP DUNNE (1867–1936), U.S. humorist. “Some Observations by Mr. Dooley,” *Mr. Dooley Remembers: The Informal Memoirs of Finley Peter Dunne* (1963).

- 7 The function of the Negro college,
then, is clear: it must maintain the
standards of popular education, it
must seek the social regeneration of
the Negro, and it must help in the
solution of problems of race con-
tact and co-operation. And finally,
beyond all this, it must develop
men. . . . There must come a loftier
respect for the sovereign human
soul that seeks to know itself and
the world about it; that seeks a
freedom for expansion and self-de-
velopment; that will love and hate
and labor in its own way, untram-
meled alike by old and new.

W. E. B. DU BOIS (1868–1963), U.S. civil-rights leader and author. *The Souls of Black Folk* (chapter 6, “Of the Training of Black Men”) (1903).

- 8 What an Oxford tutor does is to get a little group of students together and smoke at them. Men who have been systematically smoked at for four years turn into ripe scholars. If anybody doubts this, let him go to Oxford and he can see the thing actually in operation. A well-smoked man speaks and writes English with a grace that can be acquired in no other way.

STEPHEN LEACOCK (1869–1944), Canadian (English-born) humorist. *My Discovery of England* (“Oxford As I See It”) (1922).

Later in the essay Leacock notes that if he were founding a university he would create first a smoking room, then a dorm.

- 9 The old college is no doubt gone and we could not bring it back if we would. But it would perhaps be well for us if we could keep alive something of the intimate and friendly spirit that inspired it.

STEPHEN LEACOCK (1869–1944), Canadian (English-born) humorist. “The Old College and the New University,” *College Days* (1923).

- 10 I approached the idea of college with the expectation of taking part in an intellectual feast. . . . In college, in some way that I devoutly believed in but could not explain, I expected to become a person.

MARGARET MEAD (1901–1978), U.S. anthropologist. *Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years* (1972).

Mead’s expectations of college life were disappointed when she discovered at DePauw University an emphasis on snobbery and affectation instead of intellectual feasting. She found a better banquet later at Barnard College.

- 11 I learned three important things in college—to use a library, to memorize quickly and visually, to drop asleep at any time given a horizontal surface and fifteen minutes. What I could not learn was to think creatively on schedule.

AGNES DE MILLE (1909–1993), U.S. dancer and choreographer. *Dance to the Piper* (chapter 11, “Decision”) (1952).

Although it took her away from her intensive training as a dancer, De Mille loved college. She writes: “I was intoxicated by all the learning available and regularly signed up for more courses than I was permitted.”

- 12 College ain’t so much where you been as how you talk when you get back.

OSSIE DAVIS (b. 1917), U.S. actor. *Purlie Victorious* (act 1, scene 1) (1961).

- 13 People will come up to you on the street and say, “Does a paramecium beat its flagella?” or “How many wheels has a fiacre?” or “When does an oryx mate?” and if you have not been to college, you simply cannot answer them.

MAX SHULMAN (1919–1988), U.S. author. *Barefoot Boy with Cheek* (chapter 3) (1943).

Faculty advisor Mr. Ingelbretsvold gives this advice to the novel’s hero, Asa Hearthrug, on his first day at college. This comment on the value of a college education follows Ingelbretsvold’s story of a friend who took a job straight out of high school and made \$75 million but was embarrassed when he could not name the eighth avatar of Vishnu.

- 14 Demand of your teachers and yourself not merely information but a way of learning that you can use every day for the rest of your life. It is what we professors promise, and sometimes even deliver: the secret of how to learn by discovering

things on your own—learn not by asking but by finding out on your own.

JACOB NEUSNER (b. 1932), U.S. educator. Speech at the convocation for incoming students, Elizabethtown College, Penn., 25 September 1991, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 15 When I climbed down from the bus in front of the Student Union I realized that there were 30,000 students at the University of Michigan and I did not know one.

RUTH REICHL (b. 1948), U.S. author and restaurant critic. *Tender at the Bone* ("Serafina") (1999).

Graduation

- 1 You have but to hold forth in cap and gown, and any gibberish becomes learning, all nonsense passes for sense.

MOLIÈRE (JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN) (1622–1673), French dramatist. *The Hypochondriac* (La malade imaginaire) 3.4 (1673), in *The Plays of Molière in French*, trans. A. R. Waller, vol. 8 (1926).

The hypochondriac's brother here discusses the privilege accorded to physicians by deferential patients, but graduates may hope to enjoy the same privilege.

- 2 The great object of Education should be commensurate with the object of life. It should be a moral one; to teach self-trust: to inspire the youthful man with an interest in himself; with a curiosity touching his own nature; to acquaint him with the resources of his mind, and to teach him that there is all his strength, and to inflame him with a piety towards the Grand Mind in which he lives. Thus would educa-

tion conspire with the Divine Providence.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Education," *Lectures and Biographical Sketches* (1883).

- 3 Gambol and song and jubilee are done,
Life's motley pilgrimage must be begun;—
Another scene is crowding on the last,—
Perhaps a darkened picture of the past;
And we, who leave Youth's fairy vales behind,
Where Joy hath hailed us on the summer wind,
Would fain, with fond delay, prolong the hour,
Which sternly strikes at Friendship's golden power.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "Valedictory Poem" (delivered 17 July 1821, at Harvard College Class Day).

- 4 Remember that a man is valuable in our day for what he *knows* and that his company will always be desired by others in exact proportion to the amount of intelligence and instruction he brings with him.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. Letter to his 14-year-old nephew Charlie, 11 June 1849, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

- 5 Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

MARK TWAIN (SAMUEL CLEMENS) (1835–1910), U.S. author. *Pudd'nhead Wilson* ("Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar" at chapter 5) (1894).

- 6 For the development of the race depends on the development of the individual, and where self-culture has ceased to be the ideal, the intellectual standard is instantly lowered, and, often, ultimately lost. If you meet at dinner a man who has spent his life in educating himself—a rare type in our time, I admit, but still one occasionally to be met with—you rise from table richer, and conscious that a high ideal has for a moment touched and sanctified your days.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. “The Critic as Artist,” *Intentions* (1891).

Wilde’s comments suggest the importance of continuing education after the time of graduation.

- 7 For it must be known, Reader, that when the Gentle Youth break out of High School they not only Launch on the Tempestuous Sea, but they also begin to climb the ladder of Fame and hike up the toilsome Mountain-side and go into the waiting Harvest Field, all at the same time. . . .

I will now ask you to come up and get your Sheepskins. Take this precious Certificate home and put it in a Dark, Cool Place. A few Years hence when you are less Experienced, it will give you a Melancholy Pleasure to look at it and Hark back to the Time when you knew it all. Just one Word in Parting. Always count your Change, and if you can’t be Good, be Careful.

GEORGE ADE (1866–1944), U.S. humorist and journalist. “The Fable of the Last Day of School and the Tough Trustee’s Farewell to the Young Voyagers,” *Forty Modern Fables* (1902).

The first passage reflects the typical commencement address that speakers are expected

to give. The second represents the impromptu speech of a “political boss.”

- 8 Year after year stereotyped, perfunctory commencements which are projects of the administration rather than of the graduates themselves point to the schools that are not utilizing the unique opportunity presented by the commencement season to bring secondary education to an inspiring climax. That the seniors do not comprehend the full significance of their graduation is revealed by their questioning the application of the word “Commencement” to an event which, to them, symbolizes something completed and terminated.

GERTRUDE JONES, U.S. educator. *Commencement* (1929).

- 9 The mistake that others make, and that I trust you will never make, is to treat education as a chore instead of a joy; to treat graduation as an end of education rather than as a beginning.

ARTHUR BURNS (1904–1987), U.S. (Austrian-born) economist. Commencement address, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 6 July 1970, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 10 Now, I could have said something very profound today, but you would have forgotten it in ten minutes; so I chose to give this kind of speech instead so that in twenty years from now when your children ask you what you did on graduation day, you can proudly say, “I laughed.”

ART BUCHWALD (b. 1925), U.S. humorist and journalist. Commencement address at Columbus School of Law, Catholic University,

Washington, D.C., 7 May 1977, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 11 “Commencement speakers,” said Father Flynn, “should think of themselves as the body at an old-fashioned Irish wake. They need you in order to have the party, but nobody expects you to say very much.”

MARIO CUOMO (b. 1932), U.S. politician, former governor of New York. Commencement address, Iona College, New Rochelle, N.Y., 3 June 1984, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 12 Summing up, it is clear the future holds great opportunities. It also holds pitfalls. The trick will be to avoid the pitfalls, seize the opportunities, and get back home by six o'clock.

WOODY ALLEN (b. 1935), U.S. filmmaker, actor, and author. “My Speech to the Graduates,” *Side Effects* (1980).

- 13 The commencement oratory which floods the land every June may be an effective anesthetic which youth may take at its second birth, out of the solid, unyielding, factual environment of childhood and of books, out of the substantial fabric of the curriculum with its sure reward of grade, class standing, and satisfying compensation, into the bewildering, hazy and altogether ironic mockeries that we call, in humorous euphony, real life.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE (1868–1944), U.S. journalist. Commencement address, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., June 1936, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 14 You're leaving college now, and going out into real life. And you have

to realize that real life is not like college. Real life is like high school.

MERYL STREEP (b. 1949), U.S. actress. Speech to the graduating class of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; quoted by Roy Blount Jr., *Be Sweet: A Conditional Love Story* (1998).

First Sex

- 1 I find it much easier to bear a suit of armor all one's life than a virginity; and the vow of virginity is the most noble of all vows, as being the hardest.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1592), French essayist. “On Some Verses of Virgil,” book 3, essay 5 (1585–1588), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 2 It is not politic in the commonwealth of nature to preserve virginity. Loss of virginity is rational increase, and there was never virgin got till virginity was first lost. That you were made of is metal to make virgins. Virginity by being once lost may be ten times found; by being ever kept, it is ever lost. ‘Tis too cold a companion; away with ‘t!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *All's Well That Ends Well* 1.1.126–28.

Parolles's answer to the young Helena, who has asked how women might set up barricades when men assault their virginity.

- 3 Against diseases here the strongest fence
Is the defensive vertue, Abstinence.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. “Abstinence.”

- 4 So putting the Purse into my Bosom, I made no more Resistance to him, but let him do just what he

pleas'd; and as often as he pleas'd;
and thus I finish'd my own De-
struction at once, for from this Day,
being forsaken of my Virtue, and
my Modesty, I had nothing of
Value left to recommend me, either
to God's Blessing, or Man's Assis-
tance.

DANIEL DEFOE (1660?–1731), English
author. *Moll Flanders* (1722).

- 5 No, no; for my virginity,
When I lose that, says Rose, I'll
die:
Behind the elms, last night, cried
Dick,
Rose, were you not extremely
sick?

MATTHEW PRIOR (1664–1721), English
poet. "A True Maid."

- 6 Have you the assurance to pretend,
that when a lady demeans herself to
throw aside the rules of decency, in
order to honour you with the high-
est favour in her power, your virtue
should resist her inclination? That
when she had conquer'd her own
virtue, she should find an obstruc-
tion in yours?

HENRY FIELDING (1707–1754), English
author. *Joseph Andrews* (book 1, chapter 8)
(1742).

The amorous and experienced widow Lady
Booby chides her footman Joseph Andrews for
refusing her favors and trying to protect his
own chastity.

- 7 A little still she strove, and much
repented,
And whispering, "I will ne'er con-
sent"—consented.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON
(1788–1824), English poet. *Don Juan* (canto
1, stanza 117).

- 8 Instruction in sex is as important as
instruction in food; yet not only are
our adolescents not taught the
physiology of sex, but never warned
that the strongest sexual attraction
may exist between persons so in-
compatible in tastes and capacities
that they could not endure living
together for a week much less a
lifetime.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–
1950), Irish dramatist and critic. *Everybody's
Political What's What* (chapter 21) (1944).

- 9 Too chaste an adolescence makes
for a dissolute old age. It is doubt-
less easier to give up something one
has known than something one
imagines. It is not what one has
done that one regrets here; but
rather what one has not done and
might have done.

ANDRÉ GIDE (1869–1951), French au-
thor. *Journals 1889–1949* ("21 January 1929"),
trans. and ed. Justin O'Brien (1967).

- 10 This majesty of passion is possessed
by nearly every man once in his
life, but it is usually an attribute of
youth and conduces to the first suc-
cessful mating.

THEODORE DREISER (1871–1945), U.S.
author. *Sister Carrie* (chapter 23) (1900).

It is said of Hurstwood, an older suitor at-
tracted to the younger Carrie, that he lacks this
"majesty of passion."

- 11 The whole edifice of female govern-
ment is based on that foundation
stone; chastity is their jewel, their
centre piece, which they run mad
to protect, and die when ravished
of.

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882–1941), English
novelist. *Orlando* (chapter 4) (1928).

Orlando, in this fantastic journey through time
and personalities, has been transformed from a

man into a woman. Having “been a man for thirty years or so, and an Ambassador into the bargain,” the character has a “very complicated” start on the issue of preserving virginity.

- 12 He closed his eyes, surrendering himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world but the dark pressure of her softly parting lips. They pressed upon his brain as upon his lips, as though they were the vehicle of a vague speech, and between them he felt an unknown and timid pressure, darker than the swoon of sin, softer than sound or odour.

JAMES JOYCE (1882–1941), Irish author. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (section 2) (1916).

Joyce describes Stephen’s first sexual encounter, with a prostitute.

- 13 We had read so many books written by the sex specialists of the 1920s, who believed that sex was a matter of proper technique—that men should learn to play on women’s bodies as if they were musical instruments, but without including in their calculations the idea that women must be very good musical instruments in order to please the men who played on them.

MARGARET MEAD (1901–1978), U.S. anthropologist and writer. *Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years* (chapter 10, “Student Marriage and Graduate School”) (1972).

Although Mead does not say in her autobiography whether or not she and her husband had had sex before their marriage, this comment indicates that her firsthand experience was not extensive.

- 14 However deferential and polite the man may be, the first penetration is always a violation. Because she desires caresses on lips or breasts, or even longs for a known or imag-

ined pleasure more specifically sexual, what happens is that a man’s sex organ tears the young girl and penetrates into regions where it has not been desired.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Second Sex* (part 4, “The Formative Years”; chapter 14, “Sexual Initiation”) (1949), trans. H. M. Parshley (1979).

- 15 In my first year at Annie Wright Seminary, I lost my virginity. I am not sure whether this was an “educational experience” or not. The act did not lead to anything and was not repeated for two years. But at least it dampened my curiosity about sex and so left my mind free to think about other things.

MARY MCCARTHY (b. 1912), U.S. author. *How I Grew* (chapter 3) (1986).

- 16 If you really want to know the truth, I’m a virgin. I really am. I’ve had quite a few opportunities to lose my virginity and all, but I’ve never got around to it yet. Something always happens.

J. D. SALINGER (1919–), U.S. author. *The Catcher in the Rye* (chapter 13) (1951).

- 17 Boys and girls in America have such a sad time together; sophistication demands that they submit to sex immediately without proper preliminary talk. Not courting talk—real straight talk about souls, for life is holy and every moment is precious.

JACK KEROUAC (1922–1969), U.S. author. *On the Road* (part 1, chapter 10) (1957).

- 18 Sexual intercourse began
In nineteen sixty-three
(Which was rather late for me)—

Between the end of the *Chatterley*
ban

And the Beatles' first LP.

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English poet and critic. "Annus Mirabilis."

- 19 They lay as if paralyzed by what they had done. Congealed in sin, frozen with delight. Charles—no gentle postcoital sadness for him, but an immediate and universal horror—was like a city struck out of a quiet sky by an atom bomb. All lay razed; all principle, all future, all faith, all honorable intent. Yet he survived, he lay in the sweetest possession of his life, . . . but already the radioactivity of guilt crept, crept through his nerves and veins.

JOHN FOWLES (b. 1926), English author. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (chapter 47) (1969).

The passage describes the mixed feelings of Charles after having his first sexual encounter, with Sarah Woodruff, a woman he believed to be experienced and discovers to be a virgin. Although the novel is set in Victorian times, the passage's reference to atomic explosions reflects the anachronistic imagery that characterizes the work.

- 20 Love is understanding someone, caring for him, sharing his joys and sorrows. This eventually includes physical love. You've shared something, given something away and received something in return, whether or not you're married, whether or not you have a baby. Losing your virtue doesn't matter, as long as you know that for as long as you live you'll have someone at your side who understands you, and who doesn't have to be shared with anyone else!

ANNE FRANK (1929–1945), Dutch diarist. *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive*

Edition (Thursday, 2 March 1944) trans. Susan Massotty (1995).

- 21 Virginity is now a mere preamble or waiting room to be got out of as soon as possible; it is without significance.

URSULA K. LE GUIN (b. 1929), U.S. author. "The Space Crone" (1976), *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places* (1989).

- 22 Instead of the world being divided up into Catholics and Protestants or Republicans and Democrats or white men and black men or even men and women, I saw the world divided into people who had slept with somebody and people who hadn't, and this seemed the only really significant difference between one person and another. I thought a spectacular change would come over me the day I crossed the boundary line. I thought it would be the way I'd feel if I ever visited Europe. I'd come home, and if I looked closely into the mirror I'd be able to make out a little white Alp at the back of my eye. Now I thought that if I looked into the mirror tomorrow I'd see a doll-size Constantin sitting in my eye and smiling out at me.

SYLVIA PLATH (1932–1963), U.S. author. *The Bell Jar* (chapter 7) (1962).

Plath's 19-year-old narrator describes her anticipation of her first sexual experience.

- 23 I have never fully shaken that adolescent boy's insecurity that there was more to it than I could ever imagine, and that I needed a full-time instructress. For my first sexual experiences, in fact, I chose older women.

PHILLIP LOPATE (b. 1943), U.S. essayist. "Against Joie de Vivre," in *The Art of the Persona Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Phillip Lopate (1994).

- 24 He talks to me very softly, and when he enters my body, I feel a single moment of sharp pain. But it is not the old terrible agony of the locked door and the banging crowbar.

JOYCE MAYNARD (b. 1953), U.S. author. *At Home in the World* (1998).

Maynard had been unable to consummate an affair with J. D. Salinger and sought medical treatment for her sexual dysfunction. Here she describes her first successful sexual intercourse (with a man other than Salinger).

- 25 I kept telling myself, He's been with other women, he knows what he's doing—relax, trust him. But when he got down to it, there were no bells, no stars, no flashing lights, no colors, and not a lot of affection or skill, either.

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA (b. 1956), Czech tennis player. *Martina* ("First Boy-friend") (1985).

Navratilova expresses regret that she did not wait until she was in love to have sex, but denies that this first experience had any effect on her sexual preference.

- 26 You don't need me to tell you, I'm sure, that you don't learn about sex from doing it with boys, but from talking about it with girls.

SUZANNE MOORE (b. 1958), English journalist. "Labour of Love," *Guardian* (1995), and reprinted in *The Idler's Companion: An Anthology of Lazy Literature*, ed. Tom Hodgkinson and Matthew De Abaitua (1997).

In this passage, Moore talks about her friend Janice initiating her into the aphrodisiac power of the singer Barry White. Moore continues to wonder whether the more appropriate approach to sex is "lying on your back and thinking of England."

First Car

- 1 So he bought the automobile, and Boon found his soul's lily maid, the virgin's love of his rough and innocent heart. It was a Winton Flyer.

WILLIAM FAULKNER (1897–1962), U.S. author. *The Reivers* (chapter 2) (1962).

Boon Hogganbeck drives one of the very few cars in this small Mississippi town in the early part of the century.

- 2 There is talk of lowering the driving age. It might be a good idea. There was a time when I had more patience. But whoever heard of a five-year-old behind the wheel of a car?

ERMA BOMBECK (1927–1996), U.S. humorist and newspaper columnist. "Daughter Learning to Drive" (18 July 1969), in *Forever, Erma: America's Best-Loved Writing from America's Favorite Humorist* (1996).

- 3 I happen to feel an almost visceral connection to the cars of my youth, a passionate nostalgia for certain models that carry very personal meanings—automobile as autobiography, you might say. A road sighting of a 1948 Dodge with Fluid Drive gives me palpitations because I *know* the car, I know the dials on the dashboard and the smell of the upholstery and where I was in life the last time I rode in one. It's the car in which I learned to drive.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey* (part 2, "Keeping Time"; chapter 5, "Forgetting and Remembering") (1996).

First Love

- 1 In her first passion Woman loves her lover
In all others, all she loves is Love.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON
(1788–1824), English poet. *Don Juan* (canto 3, stanza 3).

- 2 We are all very much alike when we
are in our first love.

**GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR
MARIAN EVANS)** (1819–1880), English
author. *Adam Bede* (chapter 26, “The Dance”)
(1859).

- 3 Men always want to be a woman’s
first love. That is their clumsy vanity.
We women have a more subtle
instinct about things. What we like
is to be a man’s last romance.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish au-
thor. *A Woman of No Importance* (act 2)
(1893).

- 4 First love is only a little foolishness
and a lot of curiosity.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–
1950), Irish dramatist and critic. *John Bull’s
Other Island* (act 4) (1904).

- 5 I whispered, “I am too young”
And then, “I am old enough”;
Wherefore I threw a penny
To find out if I might love.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865–1939),
Irish poet. “Brown Penny.”

- 6 At twenty a man is rash in love,
and again, perhaps at fifty; a man
of middle-age enamoured of a
young girl is capable of sublime fol-
lies. But the man of thirty who
loves for the first time is usually the
embodiment of cautious discretion.
He does not fall in love with a vio-
lent descent, but rather lets himself
gently down, continually testing the
rope. His social value, especially if
he have achieved worldly success, is
at its highest, and, without conceit,
he is aware of it. He has lost many

illusions concerning women; he had
seen more than one friend wrecked
in the sea of foolish marriage; he
knows the joys of a bachelor’s free-
dom, without having wearied of
them; he perceives risks where the
youth perceives only ecstasy, and
the oldster only a blissful release
from solitude. Instead of searching,
he is sought for; accordingly he is
selfish and exacting. All these things
combine to tranquillize passion at
thirty.

ARNOLD BENNETT (1867–1931), English
novelist and dramatist. *Anna of the Five Towns*
(chapter 10, “The Isle”) (1902).

The successful 30-year old potter Mynors feels
this very qualified sort of love for the miser’s
daughter Anna.

- 7 But that mimosa grove—the haze
of stars, the tingle, the flame, the
honeydew, and the ache remained
with me, and that little girl with her
seaside limbs and ardent tongue
haunted me ever since—until at
last, twenty-four years later, I broke
her spell by incarnating her in an-
other.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV (1899–1977),
U.S. (Russian-born) novelist. *Lolita* (part 1,
chapter 5) (1958).

The narrator Humbert Humbert describes his
first trysting place, in his adolescence, with his
first love.

- 8 In first love a choice is seldom and
blinding.

ROBERT LOWELL (1917–1977), U.S.
poet. “First Love.”

First Job

- 1 Lao said, “The Master said, ‘I have
never been proved in office. That is
why I am a Jack of all trades.’”

CONFUCIUS (551?–479 B.C.), Chinese philosopher. *Analects* (Lun yǔ), book 9, section 7, trans. D. C. Lau (1979).

- 2 A man should pray for the welfare of him who gives him employment.

Tanhuma, Wayyesheb 13, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 3 Our work keeps us free of three great evils: boredom, vice, and poverty.

VOLTAIRE (FRANÇOIS-MARIE AROUET) (1694–1778), French philosopher and author. *Candide* (chapter 30, “Conclusion”) (1759), trans. Lowell Bair (1959).

Candide and his philosophical entourage consult an old man about tragedies in the world; he claims to want to know about nothing except cultivating his 20 acres of land.

- 4 Employment is a source of happiness, especially when you are usefully employed. An industrious person is always a happy person, provided he is not obliged to work too hard; and even where you have cause for unhappiness, nothing makes you forget it so soon as an occupation.

FREDERICK MARRYAT (1792–1848), English author and naval captain. *Masterman Ready* (vol. 2, chapter 6) (1842).

- 5 A little integrity is better than any career.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Behavior,” *The Conduct of Life* (1860).

- 6 I have found out that whatever a man is during the first six weeks after he gets a job, he will be the same after 60 years and no amount of advice will have any effect whatsoever in changing him. When he is 21 years of age, he is set for life and

if a dullard then he will continue so through life. The main quality for success in my estimation is ambition and a will for work.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* (“Sundry Observations”; chapter 19, “Education and Work”; section 24, “The Will to Work” [1922]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

- 7 No, I don’t like work. I had rather laze about and think of all the fine things that can be done. I don’t like work—no man does—but I like what is in work—the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know.

JOSEPH CONRAD (1858–1924), English (Polish-born) novelist. *The Heart of Darkness* (section 1) (1902).

- 8 Most of us are doing two things—that by which the body is kept alive, and that by which the higher part of our nature lives. We go to the job to pay expenses and then we indulge ourselves in what we like to do and maybe are meant to do. The whole secret of a successful life is to find out what it is one’s destiny to do, and then do it.

HENRY FORD (1863–1947), U.S. industrialist. *My Philosophy of Industry: An Authorized Interview by Fay Leone Faurotes* (1929).

- 9 The natural thing to do is to work—to recognize that prosperity and happiness can be obtained only through honest effort. Human ills flow largely from attempting to escape from this natural course. . . . I take it for granted that we must work. All that we have done comes as the result of a certain insistence that since we must work it is better

to work intelligently and beforehand; that the better we do our work the better off we shall be.

HENRY FORD (1863–1947), U.S. industrialist and automobile manufacturer. In *My Life and Work* (1922; reprint 1973) and reprinted in *Ford on Management: Harnessing the American Spirit* (“Introduction: What Is the Idea?”) (1991).

- 10 The test of a vocation is the love of the drudgery it involves.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Arts and Letters,” *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 11 Nearly all young people who go into the world in order to exchange their talents for a livelihood begin as employees. And most of them remain employees to the end of their working days. That is to say, the great majority of us are dependent upon the approval and the goodwill of somebody else for the safety of our existence in that dangerous and shifting piece of human mechanism we call society.

ARNOLD BENNETT (1867–1931), English author. *How to Make the Best of Life* (chapter 4, “Starting in Life”) (1923).

- 12 I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up. Shipping clerk, salesman, business of one kind or another. And it’s a measly manner of existence. To get on that subway on the hot mornings in summer. To devote your whole life to keeping stock, or making phone calls, or selling or buying. To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two-week vacation, when all you really desire is to be outdoors, with your shirt off. And always to have to get ahead of the

next fella. And still—that’s how you build a future.

ARTHUR MILLER (b. 1915), U.S. dramatist. *The Death of a Salesman* (act 1) (1949).

Biff describes the difficulty of making his way in the world, feeling, at age 34, that since he is not married or in business he is “like a boy.”

- 13 I don’t think earning a living is half as difficult as going to school, doing homework, and getting through college. By the time you’ve survived growing up and educating your parents on how to raise children, just going out and earning a living is a comparative breeze, the freedom exhilarating.

MALCOLM FORBES (?–1990), U.S. businessman. *More Than I Dreamed* (chapter 1) (1989).

- 14 A corporation prefers to offer a job to a man who already has one, or doesn’t immediately need one. The company accepts you if you are already accepted. To obtain entry into paradise in terms of employment, you should be in a full state of grace.

ALAN HARRINGTON (1919–1997), U.S. author. *Life in the Crystal Palace* (chapter 4, “The Tyranny of Forms”) (1959).

Marriage (First)

- 1 Every man receives the wife he deserves.

Sotah 2, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 And of His signs is this: He created for you helpmeets from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy.

Qur'an 30.21; *The Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation* by Marmaduke Pickthall (1930; reprint 1992).

- 3 *Bachelers boast, how they will teach their wives good;
But many a man speaketh of Robin Hood,
That never shot in his bow. When all is sought,
Bachelers wives, and maides children bee well taught.
And this with this I also begin to gather,
Every man can rule a shrew, save he that hath her.*

JOHN HEYWOOD (1497?–?1580), English author and musician. *The Proverbs of John Heywood* (part 2, chapter 6) (1874; originally published 1564).

- 4 A good marriage, if there be such, rejects the company and conditions of love. It tries to reproduce those of friendship. It is a sweet association in life, full of constancy, trust, and an infinite number of useful and solid services and mutual obligations.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1592), French essayist. “On Some Verses of Virgil,” book 3, essay 5 (1585–1588), *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 5 In this stately state of Matrimonie, there is nothing fearefull, nothing fayned, all things are done faithfully without doubting, truely without doublyng, willingly without constraint, joyfully without complaint.

GEORGE PETTIE (c. 1548–1589), English author. “Sinorix and Camma,” *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure* (1576).

- 6 Marrye whyle you are young, that you may see your fruite florish be-

fore your selves fade, that you bee not in doubt or dispayre of having children, or in daunger of your lyves in having children, that you may have great tyme to rid a great many of husbandes, that no day may passe without dalliance, that you be not thought unwise in refusing good offers . . .

GEORGE PETTIE (c. 1548–1589), English author. “Coriatius and Horatia,” *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure* (1576).

- 7 Wives are young men’s mistresses; companions for middle age; and old men’s nurses. So as a man may have a quarrel to marry when he will.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. “Of Marriage and Single Life,” *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

“Quarrel” in this case means a “reason” or “pretext.”

- 8 When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Much Ado About Nothing* (2.3.234–35).

Benedick has railed against marriage throughout the play, but is finally won by the charms of the beautiful and witty Beatrice.

- 9 Men are April when they woo, December when they wed. Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* (4.1.140–42).

Rosalind here speaks in the disguise of Ganymede and discusses marriage with Orlando, the man she will eventually wed.

- 10 It is the Man and Woman united that make the compleat human Being. Separate, she wants his Force of Body and Strength of Reason; he, her Softness, Sensibility and acute Discernment. Together they are more likely to succeed in the World. A single Man . . . resembles the odd Half of a Pair of Scissors. If you get a prudent, healthy Wife, your industry in your Profession, with her good Economy, will be a Fortune sufficient.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790), U.S. statesman, scientist, and author. “Advising a Young Man as to the Selection of a Mistress,” 1745, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Caroll (1997).

In the same letter Franklin advises men to choose older women as wives because “They are so grateful!”

- 11 Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (chapter 26, “The Princess Continues Her Remarks Upon Private Life”) (1759).

- 12 Wedded love supplies the want of every other blessing in life; and as no condition can be truly happy without it, so none can be absolutely miserable with it.

CHARLOTTE LENNOX (1720–1804), Anglo-American author. *Henrietta* (chapter 1) (1758).

- 13 It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817), English novelist. *Pride and Prejudice* (vol. 1, chapter 1; opening lines) (1813).

- 14 What is marriage, but the most sordid of bargains, the most cold and

slavish of all the forms of commerce?

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK (1785–1866), English author. *Melincourt* (chapter 7) (1817).

- 15 Marriage is . . . a lottery, and the less choice and selection a man bestows on his ticket the better; for if he has incurred considerable pains and expense to obtain a lucky number, and his lucky number proves a blank, he experiences not a simple, but a complicated disappointment; the loss of labour and money being superadded to the disappointment of drawing a blank, which, constituting simply and entirely the grievance of him who has chosen his ticket at random, is, from its simplicity, the more endurable.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK (1785–1866), English author. *Nightmare Abbey* (chapter 1) (1818).

- 16 Marriage means tyranny on one side and deceit on the other.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815–1882), English novelist. *Barchester Towers* (chapter 15, “The Widow’s Suitors”) (1857).

This comment is part of a debate between the sisters Madeleine and Charlotte about the nature of marriage.

- 17 Two pure souls fused into one by an impassioned love—friends, counselors—a mutual support and inspiration to each other amid life’s struggles, must know the highest human happiness;—this is marriage; and this is the only cornerstone of an enduring home.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON (1815–1902), U.S. suffragist. *History of Woman Suffrage* (1881).

- 18 Thare aint no resipee for a perfekt wife, enny more than there iz for a

perfekt husband. There iz just az
menny good wifes az thare iz good
husbands, and i never knew two
people, married or single, who were
determined tew make themselves
agreeable to each other, but what
they suckceeded.

JOSH BILLINGS (HENRY W. SHAW)
(1818–1885), U.S. humorist. “How to Pick
Out a Wife,” *The Complete Works of John Bill-*
ings (1899).

- 19 What greater thing is there for two
human souls, than to feel that they
are joined for life—to strengthen
each other in all labor, to rest on
each other in all sorrow, to minister
to each other in all pain, to be one
with each other in silent unspeakable
memories at the moment of the
last parting?

**GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR
MARIAN EVANS)** (1819–1890), English
author. *Adam Bede* (chapter 54, “The Meeting
on the Hill”) (1859).

- 20 My bride hath need of no dis-
guise.—
But rather, let her come to me
In such a form as bent above
My pillow when, in infancy,
I knew not anything but love.—
O let her come from out the lands
Of Womanhood—not fairy isles,
And let her come with Woman’s
hands
And Woman’s eyes of tears and
smiles,—
With Woman’s hopefulness and
grace
Of patience lighting up her face.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY (1849–
1916), U.S. poet. “My Bride That Is To Be.”

The speaker here imagines the perfect woman.

- 21 For there is something in marriage
so natural and inviting, that the

step has an air of great simplicity
and ease; it offers to bury forever
many aching preoccupations; it is
to afford us unfailing and familiar
company through life; it opens up a
smiling prospect of the blest and
passive kind of love, rather than the
blessing and active; it is approached
not only through the delights of
courtship, but by a public perfor-
mance and repeated legal signa-
tures. A man naturally thinks it will
go hard with him if he cannot be
good and fortunate and happy
within such august circumvalla-
tions.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–
1894), Scottish author. “*Virginibus Puerisque*
II,” *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

- 22 The one charm of marriage is that
it makes a life of deception abso-
lutely necessary for both parties.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish au-
thor. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 1)
(1891).

Lord Henry to Basil.

- 23 Men marry because they are tired;
women, because they are curious:
both are disappointed.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish au-
thor. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 4)
(1891) and *A Woman of No Importance* (act 3)
(1893).

- 24 Marriage is popular because it
combines the maximum of tempta-
tion with the maximum of oppor-
tunity.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–
1950), Irish dramatist and critic. “Maxims for
Revolutionists,” *The Revolutionist’s Handbook*
in *Man and Superman* (1903).

- 25 It is the duty of every man, who
has sufficient means, to maintain a
wife. The life of unmarried women

is a wretched one; every man who is able ought to save one of them from that fate.

GEORGE GISSING (1857–1903), English author. *The Odd Women* (chapter 9, “The Simple Faith”) (1893).

An older man, who has waited to attain a respectable income for marriage, advises a younger man, who is more privileged and has declared his intention not to marry.

- 26 If they lost the incredible conviction that they can change their wives or their husbands, marriage would collapse at once.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Other People,” in *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 27 A man wants a wife who sits still, and not only still but on the same chair every day so that he knows where to find her should he happen to want anything.

MARY ANNETTE (BEAUCHAMP) RUSSELL, COUNTESS RUSSELL (MARY ANNETTE BEAUCHAMP) (1866–1941), English novelist. *The Caravanners* (chapter 14) (1909).

This passage conveys the sentiments of Baron Von Ottringel, a Prussian army officer, reflecting on the merits of his first wife.

- 28 O my love O my love we dance under the chuppah standing over us like an animal on its four legs, like a table on which we set our love as a feast, like a tent under which we work not safe but no longer solitary in the searing heat of our time.

MARGE PIERCY (b. 1936), U.S. author. “The Chuppah,” *The Art of Blessing the Day: Poems with a Jewish Theme* (1999).

- 29 You must make it plain to your husband right at the start what you

expect of him. That is what a wife is for—to scold her husband into becoming a good man.

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON (b. 1940), U.S. author. *The Woman Warrior* (1976).

- 30 Our marriage was the recognition that we suited one another remarkably well as company—could walk and talk and share insights all day, work side by side like Chinese peasants, read silently together like graduate students, tease each other like brother and sister, and when at night we found our bodies tired, pull the covers over ourselves and become lovers.

PHILLIP LOPATE (b. 1943), U.S. essayist. “Against Joie de Vivre,” in *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Phillip Lopate (1994).

First Home

- 1 Through wisdom is an house builded, and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

Proverbs 24.3–4.

- 2 Eat less than you can afford, dress less fittingly, but have a fine dwelling.

Bereshit Rabbah 20.12, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 3 Houses are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses, for beauty only, to the enchanted palaces of the poets; who build them with small cost.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, essayist, and statesman. “Of Building,” *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 4 Lord, Thou hast given me a cell
Wherein to dwell;
And little house, whose humble
Roof
Is weather-proof.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), English poet and clergyman. “A Thanksgiving to God, for His House.”

- 5 Ah! happy is the man whose early
lot
Hath made him master of a fur-
nished cot.

JOANNA BAILLIE (1762–1851), Scottish poet and dramatist. “A Reverie” (stanza 3) (1790).

- 6 We need not power or splendor;
Wide hall or lordly dome;
The good, the true, the tender,
These form the wealth of home.

SARAH JOSEPHA HALE (1788–1879), U.S. author and editor. “Home.”

- 7 A house, like a person, invites by
amiable reserves, as if it loved to be
introduced in perspective and
reached by courteous approaches.
Let it show bashfully behind shrub-
beries, screen its proportions deco-
rously in plain tints, not thrust it-
self rudely, like an inn, upon the
street at cross-roads. A wide lawn
in front, sloping to the road grace-
fully, gives it the stately air and
courtly approach.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT (1799–1888), U.S. philosopher and educator. “April: My House,” *Concord Days* (1872).

- 8 I was married when I was twenty-
five years old to a man rich in
Greek and Hebrew, Latin and Ara-

bic, and, alas! rich in nothing else.
When I went to housekeeping, my
entire stock of china for parlor and
kitchen was bought for eleven dol-
lars. That lasted very well for two
years, till my brother was married
and brought his bride to visit me. I
then found, on review, that I had
neither plates nor teacups to set a
table for my father’s family; where-
fore I thought it best to reinforce
the establishment by getting me a
tea-set that cost ten dollars more,
and this, I believe, formed my
whole stock in trade for some years.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE (1811–1896), U.S. author. Letter to Mrs. Follen, apparently a writer of children’s books, 16 February 1853, in *A Second Treasury of The World’s Great Letters*, ed. Wallace Brockway and Bart Keith Winer (1941).

Stowe recounts the details of her life to an Englishwoman, emphasizing the details of her household; elsewhere in the letter she refers to her work, recently begun, on *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

- 9 Let a little preliminary exultation of
a new man in a new place be for-
given, ye who are now established!
Remember your own household
fervor on first setting up, while we
recount our economic joy, and an-
ticipations of modern conveniences
that would take away all human
care, and speed life upon a down-
hill path, where it was to be easier
to move than to stand still!

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. “Modern Conveniences,” *Eyes and Ears* (1866).

These remarks are included in a description of the headaches caused by the “conveniences” of a modern house.

- 10 People are not expected to be large
in proportion to the houses they
live in, like snails.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *The Mill on the Floss* (book 6, “The Great Temptation”; chapter 2, “First Impressions”) (1860).

Maggie Tulliver counsels her cousin Lucy, who worries that after her marriage she will shrink into insignificance by moving into a grand house.

- 11 Let us celebrate the soil. Most men toil that they may own a piece of it; they measure their success in life by their ability to buy it. It is alike the passion of the *parvenu* and the pride of the aristocrat. Broad acres are a patent of nobility; and no man but feels more of a man in the world if he have a bit of ground that he can call his own. However small it is on the surface, it is four thousand miles deep; and that is a very handsome property.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER (1829–1900), U.S. author. *My Summer in a Garden* (“Preliminary”) (1870).

- 12 HOUSE, n. A hollow edifice erected for the habitation of man, rat, mouse, beetle, cockroach, fly, mosquito, flea, bacillus, and microbe.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil’s Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 13 Is the house not homely yet?
There let pleasant thoughts be set:
With bright eyes and hurried feet,
There let severed friendships meet,
There let sorrow learn to smile,
And sweet talk the nights beguile.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “The New House.”

- 14 The home should offer to the individual rest, peace, quiet, comfort, health, and that degree of personal expression requisite; and these conditions should be maintained by the best methods of the time. The

home should be to the child a place of happiness and true development; to the adult a place of happiness and that beautiful reinforcement of the spirit needed by the world’s workers.

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN (1860–1935), U.S. author. *The Home: Its Work and Influence* (chapter 1, “Introductory”) (1903).

- 15 Man is but mildly interested in his immediate surroundings because he can find self-expression in projects. Whereas woman is confined within the conjugal sphere; it is for her to change that prison into a realm.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Second Sex* (part 5, “Situation”; chapter 16, “The Married Woman”) (1949), trans. H. M. Parshley (1971).

Beauvoir sees the homemaker as one who collects knickknacks, who “eagerly seeks self-realization in what she *has*” because “she *does nothing*.”

- 16 An old house is a nuisance, but it is obviously intended for men and women to live in. Much modern housing would be better called *ken-neling*.

ROBERTSON DAVIES (1913–1995), Canadian author. “Of Modern Houses,” *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949).

- 17 Willy: To weather a twenty-five-year mortgage is—
Linda: It’s an accomplishment.

ARTHUR MILLER (b. 1915), U.S. dramatist. *Death of a Salesman* (act 2) (1949).

Willy and Linda are one payment away from paying off their house.

Baptism

- 1 Reason in no way contributes to faith. Nay, in that children are des-

titute of reason, they are all the more fit and proper recipients of baptism. For reason is the greatest enemy that faith has. . . . If God can communicate the Holy Ghost to grown persons, he can, *a fortiori*, communicate it to young children. Faith comes of the Word of God, when this is heard; little children hear that Word when they receive baptism, and therewith they receive also faith.

MARTIN LUTHER (1483–1546), German leader of the Protestant Reformation. *The Table Talk of Martin Luther*, no. 303, trans. W. Hazlitt (1848), ed. Thomas Kepler (1952).

- 2 Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New-Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.

The Book of Common Prayer (article 27) (Episcopal Church, 1945).

- 3 Hee says that prayer with great devotion, where God is thanked for calling us to the knowledge of his grace, Baptisme being a blessing, that the world hath not the like. He willingly and cheerfully crosseth the child, and thinketh the Ceremony not onely innocent, but reverend. He instructeth the God-fathers, and God-mothers, that it is no complementall or light thing to sustain

that place, but a great honour, and no less burden, as being done both in the presence of God, and his Saints, and by way of undertaking for a Christian soul. He adviseth all to call to minde their Baptism often; for if wise men have thought it the best way of preserving a state to reduce it to its principles by which it grew great; certainly, it is the safest course for Christians to meditate on the Baptisme often (being the first step into their great and glorious calling) and upon what termes, and with what vowes they are Baptized.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. “The Parson in Sacraments,” *A Priest to the Temple, or The Country Parson* (1632).

- 4 When the Child is Christened, you may have God-fathers enough.

JOHN TRUSLER (1735–1820), English clergyman. *Proverbs Exemplified and Illustrated by Pictures from Real Life* (1790).

Trusler explains that “The moment a man is independent of the favours of the world, that moment he will find it more ready to bestow them; when we no longer need a friend, we find enough ready to assist us.”

- 5 Array’d—a half-angelic sight—
In vests of pure Baptismal white,
The Mother to the Font doth bring
The little helpless nameless thing,
With hushes soft and mild caressing,
At once to get—a name and blessing.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. “The Christening.”

- 6 A few calm words of faith and prayer,
A few bright drops of holy dew,
Shall work a wonder there

Earth's charmers never
knew.

JOHN KEBLE (1792–1866), English clergyman and poet. “Holy Baptism,” *The Christian Year* (1827).

- 7 Now to christen the infant Kilmansegg,

For days and days it was quite a plague,

To hunt the list in the Lexicon:
And scores were tried like coin by the ring,

Ere names were found just the proper thing

For a minor rich as a Mexican.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. “Her Christening,” *Miss Kilmansegg and Her Precious Leg*

The poem pursues the notion that a name “has more than nominal worth, / And belongs to good or bad luck at birth.”

- 8 Though little Paul was said, in nursery phrase, “to take a deal of notice for his age,” he took as little notice of all this as of the preparations for his christening on the next day but one. . . . Neither did he, on the arrival of the appointed morning, show any sense of its importance; being, on the contrary, unusually inclined to sleep, and unusually inclined to take it ill in his attendants that they dressed him to go out.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870), English author. *Dombey and Son* (chapter 5) (1847–48).

Little Paul is the heir of a wealthy and unfeeling head of a shipping house. His mother has died in childbirth. The elder Dombey places all his hope and love in the son, who unfortunately dies while away at school.

- 9 Under my platform in Brooklyn I have a baptistery; and if anybody's son or daughter, brought up in Baptist ideas, wants to be im-

mersed, you won't catch me reasoning with them: I baptize them. So it is that I immerse, I sprinkle, and I have in some instances poured; and I never saw there was any difference in the Christianity that was made.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887), U.S. clergyman. Address to the London Congregational Board, *Beecher as a Humorist: Selections from the Published Works*, ed. Eleanor Kirk (1887).

- 10 Tess then stood erect with the infant on her arm beside the basin, the next sister held the Prayer-Book before her, as the clerk at church held it before the parson; and thus the girl set about baptizing her child.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English author. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles, A Pure Woman* (Phase the Second, “Maiden No More”; chapter 14) (1891).

Tess's child Sorrow is born out of wedlock. Since the church will not recognize the child, Tess sets out to care for its immortal soul by baptizing the child herself.

- 11 BAPTISM, n. A sacred rite of such efficacy that he who finds himself in heaven without having undergone it will be unhappy forever. It is performed with water in two ways—by immersion, or plunging, and by aspersion, or sprinkling.

But whether the plan of immersion

Is better than simple aspersion

Let those immersed

And those aspersed

Decide by the Authorized Version,

And by matching their agues tertian. (G.J.)

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil's Dictionary* (1881–1911).

Many of Bierce's definitions include “poems” by the fictitious Father Gassalasca Jape, S.J.

- 12 Writer or painter god-parents are notoriously unreliable. That is, there is certain before long to be a cooling of friendship.

GERTRUDE STEIN (1874–1946), U.S. author. *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (chapter 7, “After the War—1919–1932”) (1933).

Alice B. Toklas and Stein were asked to be godmothers (“an English war comrade of Hemingway was to be godfather”) of Ernest Hemingway’s son, baptized in the Episcopal Church.

- 13 It should be kept in mind that this is a celebration in honor of the baby, following a formal religious ceremony. It has a character quite different from a cocktail party and should be kept on such a plane that even the most conservative baby could not object to the behavior and bearing of his elders.

AMY VANDERBILT (1908–1974), U.S. author. *Amy Vanderbilt’s Etiquette* (chapter 1, “Christenings”) (1971).

Vanderbilt urges decorum at the party following the religious ceremony of christening.

Confirmation

- 1 Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made, or that was made in your name, at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which ye then undertook or your Sponsors then undertook for you?

“The Order of Confirmation or Laying on of Hands Upon Those That Are Baptized, and Come to Years of Discretion,” *The Book of Common Prayer* (Episcopal Church, 1945).

- 2 I allowed myself to be prepared for confirmation, and confirmed, and to make my first Communion, in

total disbelief, acting a part, eating and drinking my own condemnation. As Johnson points out, where courage is not, no other virtue can survive except by accident. Cowardice drove me into hypocrisy and hypocrisy into blasphemy. It is true that I did not and could not then know the real nature of the thing I was doing; but I knew very well that I was acting a lie with the greatest possible solemnity.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *Surprised by Joy* (chapter 10, “Fortune’s Smile”) (1955).

- 3 Mr. O’Dea’s eyes roll in his head when he tells us that with Confirmation we will become part of Divinity. We will have the Gifts of the Holy Ghost: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, the Fear of the Lord. Priests and masters tell us Confirmation means you’re a true soldier of the church and that entitles you to die and be a martyr in case we’re invaded by Protestants or Mahommedans or any other class of a heathen.

FRANK MCCOURT, U.S. (Irish-born) memoirist. *Angela’s Ashes* (chapter 8) (1996).

- 4 You got a nice white dress and a party on your Confirmation. You got a brand new soul and a cross of gold.

BILLY JOEL (b. 1949), U.S. singer and songwriter. “Only the Good Die Young” (1974).

First Communion

- 1 The Lord Jesus himself declares: “This is my body” (Matt. 26.26). Before the blessing of heavenly words occurs it is a different thing that is

referred to, but after the consecration it is called a body. He himself says that it is his blood (cf. Matt. 26-28). Before the consecration it has another name, but after the consecration it is designated blood. And you say: "Amen," which means: "It is true." What the mouth speaks, let the mind confess within: what the word says, let love acknowledge.

SAINT AMBROSE (340?–397), bishop of Milan and doctor of the Roman Catholic Church. "On the Mysteries" (4th century), trans. Boniface Ramsey (1997).

- 2 The time of every ones first receiving is not so much by yeers, as by understanding: particularly, the rule may be this: When any one can distinguish the Sacramentall from common bread, knowing the Institution, and the difference, hee ought to receive of what age soever. Children and youths are usually deferred too long, under pretence of devotion to the Sacrament, but it is for want of Instruction; their understandings being ripe enough for ill things, and why not then for better? But Parents and Masters should make hast in this, as to a great purchase for their children, and servants, which while they deferr, both sides suffer; the one, in wanting many excitings of grace; the other, in being worse served and obeyed.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. "The Parson in Sacraments," *A Priest to the Temple, or the Country Parson* (1632).

- 3 Welcome sweet, and sacred feast;
welcome life!
Dead I was, and deep in trouble;
But grace, and blessings came with
thee so rife,

That they have quickened even dry
stubble.

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622–1695), English (Welsh-born) poet. "The Holy Communion."

- 4 The little children sweetly grouped
Before the altar rail;
Yea, even the ancient saints, aligned
In shadows vaguely dim
Beneath the cumbering dust of
years,
In silence seemed to smile!

JOSÉ ASUNCIÓN SILVA (1865–1896), Colombian poet. "First Communion," *The Catholic Anthology: The World's Great Catholic Poetry*, ed. Thomas Walsh (1947).

Translated from the Spanish by Thomas Walsh.

- 5 The day of your first communion
was the happiest day of your life.
And once a lot of generals had
asked Napoleon what was the happiest day of his life. They thought he would say the day he won some great battle or the day he was made an emperor. But he said:
—Gentlemen, the happiest day
of my life was the day on which I
made my first holy communion.

JAMES JOYCE (1882–1941), Irish author. *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (section 1) (1916).

- 6 It stood to reason that a fellow confessing after seven years would have more to tell than people that went every week. The crimes of a lifetime.

FRANK O'CONNOR (MICHAEL O'DONOVAN) (1903–1966), Irish author. "First Confession," *The Stories of Frank O'Connor* (1952).

This story describes a young man's fear of his first confession and communion and his relief at finding a sympathetic priest.

- 7 At the Cours Désir, on the eve of our First Communion, we were exhorted to go and cast ourselves at our mothers' feet and ask them to forgive our faults; not only had I not done this, but when my sister's turn came I persuaded her not to do so either.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (part 2) (1958), trans. James Kirkup (1959).

- 8 When I was still a teenager, I received Christ. The scripture says that he clothed me in a robe of righteousness because of the cross, and when God looks at me, he does not see my sins. He sees the blood of Christ, and we celebrate that blood when we take communion.

BILLY GRAHAM (b. 1918), U.S. evangelist. Sermon in Novosibirsk (in Siberia), U.S.S.R., 18 September 1984, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 9 He tells us that next to a relic of the True Cross the Communion wafer is the holiest thing in the world and our First Communion is the holiest moment in our lives. Talking about First Communion makes the master all excited. He paces back and forth, waves his stick, tells us we must never forget that the moment the Holy Communion is placed on our tongues we become members of that most glorious congregation, the One, Holy, Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church, that for two thousand years men, women, and children have died for the Faith, that the Irish have nothing to be ashamed of in the martyr department.

FRANK MCCOURT, U.S. (Irish-born) memoirist. *Angela's Ashes* (chapter 4) (1996).

- 10 When the priest actually placed the round wafer on my outstretched tongue, it was almost redundant. I had already received my first communion. My mother was my priest, the flowers were my Eucharist, and I was the stumbling, sorry recipient, overwhelmed at my own unworthiness, shaky in my faith, but loved completely in spite of it.

MARTHA MANNING (b. 1952), U.S. author. *Chasing Grace: Reflections of a Catholic Girl, Grown Up* ("Eucharist: Lilies of the Valley") (1996).

Having had a run-in with a nun during preparations for her First Holy Communion, Manning is lovingly prepared for the ceremony by her mother, who gives her a homemade bouquet and gold religious medals.

Bar, Bat Mitzvah

- 1 Today you have joined the covenant of God and our people. You are taking upon yourself the holy duty of keeping the words of this Torah and walking in the path of your parents and forefathers. You have chosen it willingly. May you follow it all the days of your life.

A. A. KABAK, *Solomon Molkho* ("Bar Mitzvah in Spain") (1927), trans. Sora I. Eisenberg (1952).

The author describes the bar mitzvah of a young man during the fifteenth century, the time of the Spanish Inquisition, which had made the ceremony punishable by death.

- 2 When I place my hands upon your head in benediction, I will be the humble instrument through which will flow the stream of history and memories of the great and the good in Israel, the ideals and aspirations of our people, the strength and the

life of our faith. It is something which places upon you a solemn responsibility to be worthy of its precepts, to be loyal to its ideals, and to express them in a life of service.

PHILIP BERNSTEIN (b. 1901), U.S. rabbi and advisor on Jewish affairs to the American military government. *What the Jews Believe* (1950).

The author addresses his son Stephen, in 1947, at the first bar mitzvah in Frankfurt, Germany, since 1940.

- 3 My God, God of my fathers, in truth and single-heartedness I lift my eyes to Thee on this great and solemn day. I have been a Jew from my birth, but on this day I voluntarily reenter Thy community of Israel. Henceforth it is my duty to keep Thy commandments, and I now become responsible for my own actions and I alone am answerable for them to Thee.

HAHAM BENJAMIN ARTOM, In *Book of Prayer*, ed. David de Sola Pool (1941).

- 4 I was signaled to step forward to a place below the bimah [synagogue platform] at a very respectable distance from the scroll of the Torah, which had already been rolled up and garbed in its mantle. I pronounced the first blessing and from my own humash [Five Books of Moses] read the selection which Father had chosen for me, continued with the reading of the English translation, and concluded with the closing brachah [blessing]. That was it. The scroll was returned to the ark with song and procession, and the service was resumed. No thunder sounded, no lightning struck. The institution of Bat Mitzvah had

been born without incident and the rest of the day was all rejoicing.

JUDITH KAPLAN EISENSTEIN, U.S.; first woman to have a bas mitzvah (1922); daughter of Mordechai M. Kaplan, founder of the Reconstructionist movement. Quoted in *Judaism: The Key Spiritual Writings of the Jewish Tradition*, ed. Arthur Herzberg, rev. edition (1991).

- 5 This religion was a masculine thing . . . and Seth was coming into his own. The very Hebrew had a rugged male sound to it, all different from the bland English comments of the rabbi.

HERMAN WOOL (b. 1915), U.S. author. *Marjorie Morningstar* (chapter 9, "The Bar-Mitzva") (1955).

These are the reflections of the novel's title character at her brother Seth's bar mitzvah.

- 6 The Dickensian Christmas is the nearest thing in literature I know to an American bar-mitzva. It has in much the same degree the fantastic preparations, the incredible eating, the enormous wassailing, the swirl of emotions and of family mixups, all superimposed with only partial relevance on a religious solemnity. Christmas in the books of Dickens bursts with extravagant vitality, and so does our bar-mitzva.

HERMAN WOOL (b. 1915), U.S. author. *This is My God: The Jewish Way of Life* (chapter 10, "Birth and Beginnings") (1988).

- 7 It has been said, with the kind of wry humor which contains a kernel of truth, that the modern Bar Mitzvah is celebrated with too much Bar and too little Mitzvah.

ERWIN L. HERMAN, U.S. rabbi. Introduction to *Bar Mitzvah with Ease*, by Hattie Eisenberg (1966).

- 8 I didn't feel like a man, really, or know how I was supposed to feel, but it was nice for a thirteen-year-old boy to hear others say that I was a man now.

ELI N. EVANS (b. 1936), U.S. historian and foundation president. *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (chapter 11, "Mr. Jew") (1997).

- 9 It was vulgar, crass, thoroughly unspiritual, and my parents spent far too much money for all the wrong reasons. And yet—something happened in spite of that. Through the long process of preparing for my bar mitzvah, I learned that I was Jewish and received the barest taste of what that might mean. Years later, I would come to know more, much more.

HOWARD BERKOWITZ (b. 1948), U.S. psychiatrist. Quoted in Eric A. Kimmel, *Bar Mitzvah: A Jewish Boy's Coming of Age* (1995).

- 10 Stretching back centuries and deeply rooted in history, bar mitzvah constituted an enduring link with the past; moreover, it seemed to provide an organically Jewish opportunity for sentimental expression and ritual celebration.

JENNA WEISSMAN JOSELIT, U.S. author. *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture 1880–1950* (1994).

- 11 Where the male puberty rite, an established tradition of long standing, needed a jolt of consumerism, some "Hollywood ballyhoo," to render it attractive and meaningful to American Jews of the interwar years, its female analogue satisfied on its own modest terms. Mediating between the need of the folk, the mandate of the clergy, the plas-

ticity of Jewish ritual and the rigidity of gender, the new female puberty rite fit perfectly with the tenor of the times.

JENNA WEISSMAN JOSELIT, U.S. author. *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture: 1880–1950* (chapter 3, "Red Letter Days") (1994).

Bat mitzvah is a twentieth-century invention, in part a way to provide an equivalent to bar mitzvah.

- 12 In Jewish law, a boy becomes an adult, responsible for carrying out the *mitzvot* (religious commandments) at thirteen years and a day old. A girl reaches the same status, although she has far fewer positive commandments to carry out, traditionally speaking, at twelve years old.

JULIA NEUBERGER (b. 1950), English author and rabbi. *On Being Jewish* (chapter 1) (1995).

- 13 I have met women in their seventies who still cry because they were denied the chance to study Torah, or prepare for Bat Mitzvah as young girls, or become rabbis though it was clearly their calling. My Bat Mitzvah was not only for me, but for generations of females denied permission or encouragement to do this.

NINA PERLMUTTER, U.S. teacher. "Better Late than Early: A Forty-Eight-Year-Old's Bat Mitzvah Saga"; in Rachel Josefowitz Siegel and Ellen Cole, eds., *Celebrating the Lives of Jewish Women: Patterns in a Feminist Sampler* (1997).

- 14 As the bar mitzvah grew in importance in affluent post-World War II America, the accompanying meal did as well, all too often turning into an excessive and pretentious affair, stereotyped in popular cul-

ture by chopped liver sculptures, exotic dancers and marching bands.

GIL MARKS (b. 1952), U.S. author. *The World of Jewish Entertaining* (1998).

Coming Out

- 1 At some point I believe one has to stop holding back for fear of alienating some imaginary reader or real relative or friend, and come out with personal truth.

MAY SARTON (1912–1995), U.S. author. *Journal of a Solitude* ("January 5th") (1973).

- 2 The passion of debating ideas with women was an erotic passion for me, and the risking of self with women that was necessary in order to win some truth out of the lies of the past was also erotic.

ADRIENNE RICH (b. 1929), U.S. poet. "Split at the Root" (1982), in *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Phillip Lopate (1997).

Rich writes about the process of coming to terms with being what she calls a "Jewish lesbian raised to be a heterosexual gentile."

- 3 I am both gay and conservative and don't find a contradiction. There shouldn't be any "shame" in being gay. Moreover, the conservative view, based as it is on the inherent rights of the individual over the state, is the logical political home of gay men and women. The conservative movement must reject the bigots and the hypocrites and provide a base for gays as well as others.

MARVIN LIEBMAN (1923–1997), U.S. author and editor. Letter, *National Review* (9 July 1990), and reprinted in *Coming Out Conservative: An Autobiography* (1992.)

Liebman had worked for conservative publications for years and was a longtime friend of

William F. Buckley Jr., the editor of the *National Review*. Buckley published the letter and replied that, while the magazine would not condone "gay bashing," they could not support the "repeal of convictions that are more, much more, than mere accretions of bigotry."

- 4 In Czechoslovakia they call male homosexuals "warm people," which is not as nice as it sounds, and I don't even think they have a word for lesbians. Women just don't come out of the closet. In Czechoslovakia they think that all lesbians are women who are so ugly they can't get a man. I tried to tell my parents it's a bit more complex than that.

MARTINA NAVRATILOVA (b. 1956), Czech tennis player. *Martina* ("Family Visit") (1985).

- 5 I think one of the greatest things we have to do still is just to increase the ability of Americans who do not yet know that gays and lesbians are their fellow Americans in every sense of the word to feel that way.

BILL CLINTON (b. 1946), U.S. president. Speech at a dinner honoring actress Ellen DeGeneres, 8 November 1997; quoted by Andrew Tobias, *The Best Little Boy in the World Grows Up* (1998).

- 6 Unlike losing your virginity, coming out is something you can do over and over. Not because you want to bore the world to tears, but because there always seems to be a new audience to whom it remains, even today, unexpected.

ANDREW TOBIAS (JOHN REID) (b. 1947), U.S. author. *The Best Little Boy in the World Grows Up* (1998).

- 7 I *planned* to tell my parents I was gay, and I *expected* they'd say that as far as they were concerned, I was still the best little boy in the world.

ANDREW TOBIAS (JOHN REID) (b. 1947), U.S. author. *The Best Little Boy in the World Grows Up* (1998).

- 8 As the university's pastor and preacher, as a Christian, and as a homosexual, I decided to reclaim by proclaiming a vision of the gospel that was inclusive rather than exclusive, and to do so as a Christian who was more than the sum of the parts of which I was made. I did so. I did so because I wanted all and sundry, but particularly these young homosexuals and their polemic antagonists, to see that there was more than one way to read the Bible and to understand the imperatives of the Christian faith.

PETER J. GOMES (b. 1942), U.S. clergyman and theologian. *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Heart and Mind* (chapter 8, "The Bible and Homosexuality: The Last Prejudice") (1996).

Gomes describes coming out at a rally, in Harvard Yard, to defend gays against attacks made by an undergraduate publication.

- 9 Coming out has been described as an earthquake that shakes the world not only of the person coming out but of everyone around him or her. It has also been described as less a declaration of sexuality to the rest of the world than a personal act of self-love. It is, without a doubt, a discovery of self and a rite of passage that should be celebrated—not only because your daughter or son has taken this courageous step toward being her or his own person, but because you are being given an opportunity to do the same. Coming out is a gift.

BETTY DeGENERES, U.S. author. *Love, Ellen: A Mother/Daughter Journey* (prologue) (1999).

DeGeneres is the mother of actress Ellen DeGeneres, who announced her homosexual-

ity and incorporated it into the plot of her TV show.

- 10 I am the woman who lost herself but now is found, the lesbian, outside the law of church and man, the one who has to love herself or die. If you are not as strong as I am, what will we make together? I am all muscle and wounded desire, and I need to know how strong we both can be.

DOROTHY ALLISON (b. 1949), U.S. author. *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure* (1995).

Allison is not coming out here, but she clearly defines her position in relation to her society and to her lover.

- 11 There's something I've been wanting to tell you for a while. I am a L-L-L-L-Lawrence Welk fan.

K. D. LANG (b. 1961), Canadian singer and songwriter. Concert (26 August 1992) at Radio City Music Hall, New York City; reported in the *New York Times* (28 August 1992).

Turning 18

- 1 "Just wait till we can vote," I said, bursting with 10-year-old fervor, ready to fast, freeze, march and die for peace and freedom as Joan Baez, barefoot, sang "We Shall Overcome." Well, now we can vote, and we're old enough to attend rallies and knock on doors and wave placards, and suddenly it doesn't seem to matter any more.

JOYCE MAYNARD (b. 1953), U.S. author. "An 18-Year-Old Looks Back at Life," *New York Times Magazine* (23 April 1972).

Turning 20 or 21

- 1 If you're a child at twenty, you're a jackass at twenty-one.

Jewish proverb, in Leo Rosten, *Leo Rosten's Treasury of Jewish Quotations* (1972).

- 2 In delay there lies no plenty,
Then come kiss me, sweet and
twenty.

Youth's a stuff will not endure.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Twelfth Night* (2.3.50–52).

This is the song of the clown Feste.

- 3 He that is not handsome at 20, nor
strong at 30, nor rich at 40, nor
wise at 50, will never be hand-
some, strong, rich, or wise.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 349 (1640).

- 4 Long-expected one and twenty
Ling'ring year at last is flown;
Pomp and Pleasure, Pride and
Plenty,

Great Sir John, are all your
own.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. "A Short Song of Congratulation."

- 5 How swift have flown
To me thy girlish times, a woman
grown
Beneath my heedless eyes! in vain I
rack

My fancy to believe the almanac,
That speaks thee Twenty-One.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "To a Young Friend: On Her Twenty-First Birthday."

- 6 To justify the festive cup
What horrors here are conjured up!
What things of bitter bite and sup,
Poor wretched Twenty-One's!
No landed lumps, but frumps and
humps,
(Discretion's Days are far from
trumps)

Domestic discord, dowdies, dumps,
Death, dockets, debts, and duns!

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English poet. "Stanzas on Coming of Age."

The speaker notes that, while a rich man's son may look forward to coming to his majority, the poor man turning 21 is required to recognize his lowly place in the world of men.

- 7 The lad who talks at twenty as men
should talk at thirty, has seldom
much to say worth the hearing
when he is forty; and the girl who
at eighteen can shine in society
with composure, has generally
given over shining before she is a
full-grown woman.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE (1815–1882), English novelist. *He Knew He Was Right* (chapter 97, "Mrs. Brooke Burgess") (1869).

The narrator praises late bloomers, noting that "The flower that blows the quickest is never the sweetest. The fruit that ripened tardily has ever the finest flavour."

- 8 The youth of twenty-one who has
health, hope, ambition, and anima-
tion is not to be pitied. Poverty is
only for the people who think pov-
erty.

ELBERT HUBBARD (1856–1915), U.S. author, founder of the Roycroft community. *The Philosophy of Elbert Hubbard* ("His Thoughts about Business") (1930).

- 9 When a man is tired of life at 21 it
indicates that he is rather tired of
something in himself.

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (1896–1940), U.S. author. Letter, 29 November 1940, *Scott Fitzgerald: Letters to His Daughter*, ed. Andrew Turnbull (1965).

- 10 One's life has a natural defining
frame. One knows who one is; in
childish egotism, one supposes peo-
ple have a relationship only with
oneself. But after the age of twenty,
the frame is uncertain, change is

hard to pin down, one is less and less sure of who one is, and other egos with their court of adherents invade one's privacy with theirs. One's freedom is inhibited by their natural insistence on themselves.

V. S. PRITCHETT (b. 1905), English author. *The Midnight Oil* (chapter 1) (1971).

- 11 That's a hell of a good age to be. I wish I was that age again. Because Ben, you'll never be young again.

BUCK HENRY (B. ZUCKERMAN) (b. 1930), U.S. actor and screenwriter. *The Graduate* (1967).

The comments of Mr. Robinson to Benjamin Braddock, his wife's 21-year-old lover.

Second Marriage / Remarriage

- 1 A man can find contentment only in his first wife.

Yebamot 63, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 If a man's wife has died, and she has left him grown-up children, he should not take another wife before he has married off his children.

Bereshit Rabbah 60, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 3 Marry a widow before she leave mourning.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633), English poet and Anglican priest. *Outlandish Proverbs*, no. 252 (1640).

- 4 A good season for courtship is, when the widow returns from the funeral.

THOMAS FULLER (1608–1661), English clergyman and author. *Gnomologia: Adages and Proverbs, Wise Sentences, and Witty Say-*

ings. Ancient and Modern, Foreign and British, no. 175 (1660).

- 5 After all this, to marry a widow, a kind of chewed meat! What a fantastical stomach hast thou, that canst not eat of a dish till another man hath cut of it! Who would wash after another, when he might have fresh water enough for asking?

SIR JOHN SUCKLING (1609–1642), English courtier and writer. "A letter to a friend to dissuade him from marrying a widow which he formerly had been in love with, and quit-*ted*" (1758), in *Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry*, 2d. ed., ed. Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke (1963).

- 6 Torments of suspicion will often follow on a second marriage.

JEAN RACINE (1630–1699), French dramatist. *Phédre* (2.5) (1677), trans. Paul Landis (1931).

Hippolytus says this to Phaedra, who worries about the effect of her marriage on her children.

- 7 Marriage is always bad then [when one chooses the wrong man], first or second. Priority is a poor recommendation in a husband if he has got no other. I would rather have a good second husband than an in-different first.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARY ANN OR MARIAN EVANS) (1819–1880), English author. *Middlemarch* (book 6, "The Widow and the Wife"; chapter 55) (1872).

- 8 Marriage will not content me, nor will single life. . . . I have tried both, and I cannot recommend either. It is a choice between two evils, and one does not know to say which is the least.

JOHN W. DEFORD (1826–1906), U.S. author. *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* (chapter 13) (1867).

Words of a widow to a man who is considering her as a possible wife.

- 9 When a woman marries again, it is because she detested her first husband. When a man marries again, it is because he adored his first wife. Women try their luck; men risk theirs.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapter 15) (1890).

- 10 Many a man owes his success to his first wife, and his second wife to his success.

JIM BACKUS (1913–1989), U.S. actor. *Morrow's International Dictionary of Contemporary Quotations*, ed. Jonathon Green (1982).

- 11 When the bride is a widow and the groom is a widower; when the former has lived in Our Great Little Town for hardly two years, and the latter for hardly a month; when Monsieur wants to get the whole damned thing over with as quickly as possible, and Madam gives in with a tolerant smile; then, my reader, the wedding is generally a “quiet affair.” The bride may dispense with a tiara of orange blossoms securing her finger-tip veil, nor does she carry a white orchid in a prayer book.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV (1899–1977), U.S. (Russian-born) novelist. *Lolita* (part 1, chapter 18) (1955).

Humbert Humbert describes his hasty marriage to Charlotte Haze, his landlady and the mother of his beloved Lolita.

this was not a little owing to her good management; for she had left such a well plenished house, that her successor said, we had nothing to do but to contribute to one another's happiness.

JOHN GALT (1779–1839), Scottish author. *Annals of the Parish* (1821).

Turning 30

- 1 It has . . . been asserted, by some naturalists, that men do not attain their full growth and strength till thirty; but that women arrive at maturity by twenty. I apprehend that they reason on false ground, led astray by the male prejudice, which deems beauty the perfection of woman . . . whilst male beauty is allowed to have some connection with the mind. Strength of body, and that character of countenance, which the French term a *physionomie*, women do not acquire before thirty, any more than men. The little artless tricks of children, it is true, are particularly pleasing and attractive; yet, when the pretty freshness of youth is worn off, these artless graces become studied airs, and disgust every person of taste.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (1759–1797), English writer and feminist. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (chapter 4, “Observations on the State of Degradation to Which Woman is Reduced by Various Causes”) (1792).

- 2 After thirty a man wakes up sad every morning excepting perhaps five or six until the day of his death.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1 August 1835 (vol. 5, 1835–38), ed. Merton M. Sealts (1965).

Third Marriage

- 1 We were married as soon as a twelvemonth and a day had passed from the death of the second Mrs. Balwhidder; and neither of us have had occasion to rue the bargain. It is, however, but a piece of justice due to my second wife to say, that

- 3 In America, Newman reflected, lads of twenty-five and thirty have old heads and young hearts, or at least young morals; here [in Europe] they have young heads and very aged hearts, morals the most grizzled and wrinkled.

HENRY JAMES (1843–1916), U.S. author. *The American* (chapter 7) (1877).

- 4 The age of thirty is, for the workingman, just the beginning of a period of some stability, and as such one feels young and full of energy. But, at the same time, a period of life has passed, which makes one melancholy, thinking that some things will never come back.

VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853–1890), Dutch painter. Letter to his brother Theo, 8 February 1883, *Dear Theo: The Autobiography of Vincent Van Gogh*, ed. Irving Stone (1946.)

- 5 I have never admitted that I am more than twenty-nine, or thirty at the most. Twenty-nine when there are pink shades, thirty when there are not.

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), Irish author. *Lady Windermere's Fan* (act 4) (1892).

Mrs. Erylne comments on the embarrassment of claiming her 21-year-old daughter, since that would destroy the image of relative youth that she has upheld.

- 6 One's thirtieth birthday and one's seventieth are days that press their message home with iron hand. With his seventieth milestone past, a man feels that his work is done, and dim voices call to him from across the Unseen. His work is done, and so illy, compared with what he had wished and expected! But the impressions made upon his heart by the day are no deeper than those his thirtieth birthday inspires. At thirty, youth, with all it palliates

and excuses, is gone forever. The time for mere fooling is past; the young avoid you, or else look up to you and tempt you to grow reminiscent. You are a man and must give an account of yourself.

ELBERT HUBBARD (1856–1915), U.S. author, founder of the Roycroft community. *The Philosophy of Elbert Hubbard* ("His Thoughts about Business") (1930).

- 7 Thirty-one or fifty-one is much the same for a woman who has made up her mind to live alone and work steadily for a definite object.

GEORGE GISSING (1857–1903), English author. *The Odd Women* (chapter 4, "Monica's Majority") (1893).

- 8 Is your own character, at thirty, the same as it was when you were ten years younger? It will be better or worse in the measure that you have believed that disloyalty, wickedness, hatred and falsehood have triumphed in life, or goodness, and truth, and love.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK (1862–1949), Belgian author. *Wisdom and Destiny* (section 19) (1898), trans. Alfred Sutro (1910).

- 9 people in their thirties, and the older ones, have gotten
bad inside, like fruit
that nobody eats and nobody
wants, so it rots, but is not forgotten.

D. H. LAWRENCE (1885–1930), English author. "Beware, O My Dear Young Men."

Lawrence's speaker disdains the "small obscenities and village-idiot minds of young men in their 20s and 30s."

- 10 Thirty—the promise of a decade of loneliness, a thinning list of single men to know, a thinning briefcase of enthusiasm, thinning hair.

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (1896–1940),
U.S. author. *The Great Gatsby* (chapter 7)
(1925).

The reflections of Nick Carraway, the narrator
of the story, on his thirtieth birthday.

- 11 Miranda in Miranda's sight
Is old and gray and dirty;
Twenty-nine she was last night;
This morning she is thirty.

OGDEN NASH (1902–1971), U.S. poet.
"A Lady Thinks She is Thirty."

- 12 It was my thirtieth
Year to heaven stood there then in
the summer noon
Though the town below lay leaved
with October blood.
O may my heart's truth
Still be sung
On this high hill in a year's turn-
ing.

DYLAN THOMAS (1914–1953), Welsh
poet. "Poem in October."

- 13 I believe that as many women over
thirty marry out of fear of being
alone someday—not necessarily
now but *some* day—as for love of
or compatibility with a particular
man. The plan seems to be to get
someone while the getting's good
and by the time you lose your looks
he'll be too securely glued to you to
get away. Isn't it silly? A man can
leave a woman at fifty (though it
may cost him some dough) as
surely as you can leave dishes in the
sink. . . . Then you have it all to do
over again as if you hadn't gobbled
him up in girlish haste.

HELEN GURLEY BROWN (b. 1922),
U.S. author and editor. *Sex and the Single Girl*
(chapter 1, "Women Alone? Oh Come Now!")
(1962).

- 14 I am only thirty.
And like the cat I have nine times
to die.

SYLVIA PLATH (1932–63), U.S. author.
"Lady Lazurus."

This poem was written after Plath's third sui-
cide attempt.

- 15 Impatient with devoting ourselves
to the "shoulds," a new vitality
springs from within as we approach
30. Men and women alike speak of
feeling too narrow and restricted.
They blame all sorts of things, but
what the restrictions boil down to
are the outgrowth of career and
personal choices of the twenties.
They may have been choices per-
fectly suited to that stage. But now
the fit feels different. Some inner
aspect that was left out is striving to
be taken into account. Important
new choices must be made, and
commitments altered or deepened.
The work involves great change,
turmoil, and often crisis—a simul-
taneous feeling of rock bottom and
the urge to bust out.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *Pas-
sages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life* (part 1,
"Mysteries of the Life Cycle"; chapter 2, "Pre-
dictable Crises of Adulthood") (1976).

- 16 Looking at ourselves in cold, hard
evolutionary terms, we are all rela-
tively useless after 30. All a species
needs to survive is to reproduce it-
self, which is easily possible at the
age of 15, and fifteen years more to
raise the next generation to repro-
ductive age. Certainly by 40, when
both the male testes and the female
ovaries begin to show the changes
of age, we are, from an evolution-
ary point of view, thoroughly dis-
posable.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *Pas-sages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life* (part 6, "Deadline Decade"; chapter 22, "The Sexual Diamond") (1976).

- 17 I remember the day I turned thirty. I was getting out of the shower and I stood in front of the mirror and stared at myself for a long time. I examined every inch of my body and appreciated the fact that I finally looked like a grown woman. I also assumed that this was how I was going to look for the rest of my life. The way I saw it, I was never going to *age*; I'd just look up one day and be old.

TERRY McMILLAN (b. 1951), U.S. author. *Waiting to Exhale* (1992).

Turning 40

- 1 Food is better for a man up to the age of forty; after forty drink is better.

Shabbat 152, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 When Nature first created man, monkey, and bull, she endowed the man with forty years of life, the monkey with forty, and the bull with twenty. The man wanted more, and the monkey and the bull volunteered to help him out. "Twenty's enough for me," said the monkey. "Man can have my other twenty." "And I'll give him ten of mine," said the bull. And thus it came about that man's life runs to seventy years, on the average, and is divided into these three periods: first forty years, normal living; next twenty, monkey business; last ten, shooting the bull.

ANONYMOUS. *Anything for a Laugh: A Collection of Jokes and Anecdotes That You, Too, Can Tell and Probably Have*, ed. Bennett Cerf (1946).

- 3 When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tattered weed, of small worth held.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. Sonnet 2.

- 4 I am resolved to grow fat, and look young till forty, and then slip out of the world, with the first wrinkle, and the reputation of five-and-twenty.

JOHN DRYDEN (1631–1700), English poet and dramatist. *The Maiden Queen* (act 3) (1667).

- 5 A woman, till five and thirty, is only looked upon as a raw girl, and can possibly make no noise in the world till about forty. I don't know what your ladyship may think of this matter, but 'tis a considerable comfort to me to know there is upon earth such a paradise for old women, and I am content to be insignificant at present, in the design of returning when I am fit to appear nowhere else.

MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU (1689–1762), English author. Letter to Lady Rich, 20 September 1716, *Letters [Lady Mary Wortley Montagu]*, ed. Clare Brant (1992).

The author refers to Vienna as a paradise for the middle-aged woman.

- 6 At twenty years of age, the will reigns, at thirty, the wit; and at forty, the judgment.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790), U.S. statesman, scientist, and author. *Poor Richard's Almanac*, May 1733.

- 7 The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated as forty years.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissina* (chapter 4, “The Prince Continues to Grieve and Muse”) (1759).

- 8 After his fortieth year, any man of merit, anyone who is not just one of five-sixths of humanity so grievously and miserably endowed by nature, will hardly be free from a certain touch of misanthropy. For, as is natural, he has inferred the characters of others from his own and has gradually become disappointed.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER (1788–1860), German philosopher. *Parerga and Paralipomena* (chapter 6, “On the Different Periods of Life”) (1851), trans. E. F. J. Payne (1974).

- 9 When life, once past its fortieth year,
Wheels up its evening hemisphere,
The mind's own shadow, which the boy
Saw onward point to hope and joy,
Shifts round, irrevocably set
Tow'rd morning's loss and vain regret,
And, argue with it as we will,
The clock is unconverted still.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891), U.S. author. “A Familiar Epistle to a Friend.”

- 10 I'm now forty, and after all forty is an entire lifetime, it really is extreme old age. It isn't done to live beyond forty, it's vulgar and immoral. Who lives beyond forty, give me an honest answer? I'll tell you

who does: fools and good-for-nothings. . . . I've got the right to speak thus because I myself will live to be sixty. I'll live to be seventy! I'll live to be eighty!

FEDOR DOSTOEVSKY (1821–1881), Russian novelist. *Notes from the Underground* (chapter 1) (1864), trans. Jane Kentish (1991).

The comments of a man who opens his narrative by declaring himself sick, spiteful, unattractive, and possibly suffering from a liver ailment.

- 11 At the age of forty, men that love love rootedly. If the love is plucked from them, the life goes with it.

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828–1909), English author. *The Tragic Comedians: A Study in a Well-Known Story* (chapter 16) (1898).

- 12 To hold the same views at forty as we hold at twenty is to have been stupefied for a score of years, and take rank, not as a prophet, but as an unteachable brat, well birched and none the wiser.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “Crabbed Age and Youth” (1878), *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

- 13 As if a man's soul were not too small to begin with, they have dwarfed and narrowed theirs by a life of all work and no play; until here they are at forty, with a listless attention, a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another, while they wait for the train.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “An Apology for Idlers,” (1877), *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

- 14 Every man over 40 is a scoundrel.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950), Irish dramatist and critic. “Maxims for Revolutionists,” *The Revolutionist's Handbook* in *Man and Superman* (1903).

- 15 Men at forty
Learn to close softly
The doors to rooms they will not
be
Coming back to.
- DONALD JUSTICE** (b. 1925), U.S. poet.
"Men at Forty."
- Justice describes this period of transition when men are "more fathers than sons themselves," as they live out their lives in their "mortgaged houses."
- 16 The womb is not a clock
nor a bell tolling,
but in the eleventh month of its life
I feel the November
of the body as well as of the calendar.
In two days it will be my birthday
and as always the earth is done
with its harvest.
- ANNE SEXTON** (1928–1974), U.S. poet.
"Menstruation at Forty."
- 17 It is almost universal to have a
hurry-up feeling as we hit 40. The
first little fissures appear in our
physical shells. Damn, why is the
type in the phone book so small?
Students start calling you "mister."
(Behind your back you know
they're probably calling you "that
old fart.")
- GAIL SHEEHY** (b. 1937), U.S. author.
New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time
(part 2, "The Flourishing Forties"; chapter 2,
"The Vietnam Generation Hits Middlescence")
(1995).
- 18 If life really begins at 40, it's be-
cause that's when women finally get
it. The guts to take back their lives.
Seize the day. Glorify the season
and seasoning.
- LAURA B. RANDOLPH** (b. 1957), U.S.
journalist. "The Top 40," *Ebony* (August 1997).

This quotation appears in an article about television personality Oprah Winfrey on her fortieth birthday.

- 19 Thanks to modern medical ad-
vances such as antibiotics, nasal
spray, and Diet Coke, it has become
routine for people in the civilized
world to pass the age of 40, some-
times more than once.
- DAVE BARRY** (b. 1947), U.S. humorist
and newspaper columnist. *Dave Barry Turns
40* (chapter 2, "Your Disintegrating Body")
(1990).
- 20 When they used to say "Life begins
at forty," I did the same "yeah,
right" that you, if you're under
forty, still do. But of course if you
play your cards right (study hard!
work hard! buy in bulk! live be-
neath your means!) and if you have
your share of good luck—it's true.
- ANDREW TOBIAS (JOHN REID)** (b.
1947), U.S. author. *The Best Little Boy in the
World Grows Up* (1998).

Middle Age

- 1 If the characteristic feature of the
first half of life is an unsatisfied
longing for happiness, that of the
second is a dread of misfortune.
- ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER** (1788–
1860), German philosopher. *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays* (chapter 6, "On the Different Periods of Life") (1851), trans. E. F. J. Payne (1974).
- 2 The useful man never leads the
easy, sheltered, knockless, un-
shocked life. At thirty-six he ought
to be prepared to deal with realities
and after about that period in his
life, until he is sixty, he should be
able to handle them with a steadily
increasing efficiency. Subsequently,
if he has not injured his body by

excess indulgence in any of the narcotics (and by this term I mean, here, liquor, tobacco, tea, and coffee), and if he has not eaten to excess, he very likely may continue to be achievingly efficient up to his eightieth birthday and in exceptional cases until ninety.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* ("Sundry Observations"; chapter 6, "Man and Machine"; section 34, "Age and Achievement" [1927]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

- 3 We advance in years somewhat in the manner of an invading army in a barren land; the age that we have reached, as the saying goes, we but hold with an outpost, and still keep open communications with the extreme rear and first beginnings of the march.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. "Virginibus Puerisque II," *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

- 4 Beyond doubt, other things being equal, a man will turn to a woman of twenty-five rather than to a woman of thirty-five, and to a woman of thirty-five rather than to a woman of forty-five—even though the one is by miracle as attractive as the other. You may protest that it is unjust. It may be, but it is so.

ARNOLD BENNETT (1867–1931), English author. *How to Make the Best of Life* (chapter 9, "Not for the Young") (1923).

- 5 Cares seem to crowd on us—so much to do;
New fields to conquer, and time's on the wing.
Grey hairs are showing, a wrinkle or two;

Somehow our footstep is losing its spring.

Pleasure's forsaken us, Love ceased to smile;

Youth has been funeralled; Age travels fast.

Sometimes we wonder: is it worth while?

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian author. "A Song of Success."

- 6 She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway.

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882–1941), English novelist. *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925).

- 7 You are not half so beautiful
Since middle-age befell you;
But since this is your birthday
I suppose I mustn't tell you.

ALINE KILMER (1888–1941), U.S. poet. "For the Birthday of a Middle-Aged Child."

- 8 Middle age is when you go to bed at night and think you're going to feel better in the morning. Old age is when you go to bed at night and hope you wake up in the morning.

GROUCHO MARX (1890?–1977), U.S. comic and actor. Quoted in Arthur Marx, "Still the Best Player at the Club," in *The Courage to Grow Old*, ed. Phillip C. Berman (1989).

Arthur Marx is Groucho's son.

- 9 How to put an age label on true middle age is a hot potato. Working-class men describe themselves as middle-aged at 40 and old by 60.

Business executives and professionals, by contrast, do not see themselves as reaching middle age until 50, and old age means 70 to them.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *Pas-
sages: Predictable Crises* (part 6, "Deadline
Decade"; chapter 18, "You Are in Good Com-
pany") (1976).

- 10 The old write memoirs, the young
do résumés. In midlife we keep a
kind of diary that always begins
with a discussion of the weather.
The present is where we live, equi-
distant from our birth and death.

THOMAS LYNCH (b. 1948), U.S. under-
taker and author. *The Undertaking: Life Studies
from the Dismal Trade* ("Sweeney") (1997).

Turning 50

- 1 Said Nestor, to his pretty wife, quite
sorrowful one day,
"Why, dearest, will you shed in
pearls those lovely eyes away?
You ought to be more fortified;"
"Ah, brute, be quiet, do,
I know I'm not so fortyfied, nor fif-
tyfied, as you!"

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845), English
poet. "December and May."

The wife is a tradesman's widow who agreed to
marry an old man after taking him at his
word that he would "die" for her. She weeps
because he has not kept his promise soon
enough.

- 2 Love is lame at fifty years.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English
author. "The Revisitation" [poem].

- 3 . . . now that I have come to fifty
years
I must endure the timid sun.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865–1939),
Irish poet. "Lines Written in Dejection."

- 4 When she looked in the glass and
saw her hair grey, her cheek sunk,
at fifty, she thought, possibly she
might have managed things bet-
ter—her husband; money; his
books. But for her own part she
would never for a single second re-
gret her decision, evade difficulties,
or slur over duties.

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882–1941), English
novelist. *To the Lighthouse* ("The Window,"
section 1) (1927).

- 5 What changed her was what
changes all women at fifty: the
transfer from the active service of
life—with a pension or the honors
of war, as the case may be—to the
mere passive state of a looker-on. A
weight fell away from her; she flew
up to a higher perch and cackled a
little. Her fortune helped her only
in so far as it provided the puff of
air under her wings that enabled
her to fly a little higher and cackle a
little louder, although it also did
away with all criticism from her
surroundings. In her laughter of
liberation there certainly was a little
madness.

**ISAK DINESEN (KAREN CHRISTENCE
DINESEN, BARONESS BLIXEN-FINE-
CKE)** (1885–1962), Danish author. "The
Deluge at Nordenerney," *Seven Gothic Tales*
(1934).

- 6 All normal children (however much
we discourage them) look forward
to growing up. "Except ye become
as little children," except you can
wake on your fiftieth birthday with
the same forward-looking excite-
ment and interest in life that you
enjoyed when you were five, "ye
cannot see the Kingdom of God."
One must not only die daily, but
every day one must be born again.

DOROTHY L. SAYERS (1893–1957), English author. “Strong Meat,” *Creed or Chaos?* (1949).

Sayers argues that Christ’s exhortation to “become as little children” is too often “quoted to justify the flight into infantilism.” She sees Christianity as “a religion for adult minds.”

- 7 Norma, you’re a woman of 50.
Now, grow up! There’s nothing
tragic about being 50—not unless
you try to be 25.

CHARLES BRACKETT, D. M. MARSHMAN JR., and BILLY WILDER, screenwriters. *Sunset Boulevard* (1950).

Spoken by a young hack screenwriter, played by William Holden, to Norma Desmond, a faded silent-film star played by Gloria Swanson. The film was directed by Wilder.

- 8 I spent my second quarter-century
Losing what I had learnt at univer-
sity

And refusing to take in what had
happened since.

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English poet and critic. “The Winter Palace.”

- 9 Be glad you’re fifty—and
That you got there while things
were nice,
In a world worth looking at twice.
So here’s wishing you many more
years,
But not all that many. Cheers!

KINGSLEY AMIS (1922–1995), English author. “Ode to Me.”

- 10 This turning point of fifty, I had
become convinced, ought to form
as vital a milestone in a woman’s
life as graduation, promotion, mar-
riage or the birth of a child. At
fifty, I had concluded, a woman
might celebrate a rite of passage, a
ritual as regularly marched as a
confirmation.

CAROLYN G. HEILBRUN (b. 1926), U.S. author. *The Last Gift of Time: Life Beyond Sixty* (1997).

- 11 Fifty was the end of this long famil-
iar plateau that you enter at 13—
you know, the country of the fe-
male stereotype. And when I got to
50, which is the edge of this terri-
tory—indeed the edge used to be
35, 40, we’ve *pushed* it to 50—then
it was like falling off a cliff. There
was no map. Now it’s true that I
had been fighting with the map.
But you’re enmeshed in it either
way, whether you’re obeying it or
fighting with it.

GLORIA STEINEM (b. 1934), U.S. author and feminist. Interview with Cynthia Gorney in *Mother Jones* (November–December 1995).

- 12 The age of 50 seems to represent a
sort of tollgate, beyond which, hav-
ing chosen the route and the travel-
ing companions, one expects to be
on the same road for a long, long
time. Thus people who find them-
selves approaching 50, unat-
tached—either divorced or never
married—are particularly prone to
playing out a perpetual middle-
cence.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time* (part 2, “The Flourishing Forties”; chapter 6, “Perpetual Middlecence”) (1995).

“Middlecence” is a sort of middle-aged adolescence.

- 13 An attractive woman friend con-
fided that when she turned 50, she
felt like one of those park statues
that turn green, weather-streaked,
and crumbly, the kind that no one,
not even the people on the benches
right in front of it, notices any-
more.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time* (part 4, "Flaming Fifties: Women"; chapter 8, "Women: Pits to Peak") (1995).

- 14 Irreparable physical damage aside, being fifty or sixty is surely no more of a "problem" than being ten, twenty, thirty or forty. However old you are, you're mortal. Isn't that exactly what makes life as interesting, precious, cruel, unjust and altogether extraordinary as it is?

SHEILA MACLEOD (b. 1939), English (Scottish-born) author. "Drunken Drowning," in *A Certain Age: Reflecting on the Menopause*, ed. Joanna Goldsworthy (1993).

- 15 "Fifty is halftime," said Joe Namath when his big birthday rolled around. I appreciate sports metaphors as much as the next guy, but this one won't make the cut. Few fifty-year-olds can expect to play two more full quarters of the game of life.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey* (chapter 2, "Feeling Out Fifty") (1996).

- 16 If someone could guarantee that I'll live to be a healthy, vigorous ninety, I'm not sure I'd have been so upset about turning fifty, but without that assurance I felt vulnerable and pressed for time. Suddenly, death seemed imminent and eminently possible.

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey* (chapter 2, "Feeling Out Fifty") (1996).

- 17 It happens in America about eleven thousand times a day now—someone turning 50—far outstripping

the casualty rate for hunting accidents and car wrecks combined.

BILL GEIST (b. 1945), U.S. journalist. *The Big Five-Oh!: Fearing, Facing, and Fighting Fifty* ("The Birthday") (1999).

- 18 Fifty is not "just another birthday." It is a reluctant milepost on the way to wherever it is we are meant to wind up. It can be approached in only two ways. First, it can be a ball of snakes that conjures up immediate thoughts of mortality and accountability. ("What have I done with my life?") Or, it can be a great excuse to reward yourself for just getting there. ("He who dies with the most toys wins.") I instinctively choose door number two.

JIMMY BUFFETT (b. 1946), U.S. singer and songwriter. *A Pirate Looks at Fifty* (section 1, "Questions and Answers") (1998).

Losing a Parent

- 1 The Master said: "Observe what a man has in mind to do when his father is living, and then observe what he does when his father is dead. If, for three years, he makes no changes to his father's ways, he can be said to be a good son."

CONFUCIUS (551?–479 B.C.), Chinese philosopher. *Analects* (Lun yǔ), book 1, section 12, trans. D. C. Lau (1979).

- 2 I have now lost my barrier between me and death; God grant I may live to be as well prepared for it, as I confidently believe her to have been! If the way to Heaven be through piety, truth, justice and charity, she is there.

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745), Anglo-Irish author. *Miscellaneous and Autobiographical Pieces, Fragments and Marginalia in Prose*

Works of Jonathan Swift (10 May 1710), vol. 5 (1962)

Swift reflects on his mother's death.

- 3 I imbibed commiseration, remorse, and an unmanly gentleness of mind, which has since ensnared me into ten thousand calamities; and from whence I can reap no advantage, except it be, that, in such a humour as I am now in, I can the better indulge myself in the softnesses of humanity, and enjoy that sweet anxiety which arises from the memory of past afflictions.

RICHARD STEELE (1672–1729), Anglo-Irish author. "An Hour or Two Sacred to Sorrow," in *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Phillip Lopate (1994).

Steele describes the effects of losing his father at the age of 5 and growing up around a mournful mother.

- 4 With my mother's death all settled happiness, all that was tranquil and reliable, disappeared from my life. There was to be much fun, many pleasures, many stabs of Joy; but no more of the old security. It was sea and islands now; the great continent had sunk like Atlantis.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (chapter 1, "The First Years") (1955).

- 5 *No one glancing into our car can possibly imagine my grief. In a few hours, people at the funeral will hug me and say how sorry they are, but no one will ever know how it feels for this child to lose this mother. I am alone. My mother is dead. And life has dared to go on without me.*

LETTY COTTIN POGREBIN (b. 1939), U.S. author. *Getting Over Getting Older: An Intimate Journey* (chapter 5, "Forgetting and Remembering") (1996).

Reassessing her life at the age of 50, Pogrebin recalls the loss of her mother, 35 years earlier, as one of her first "frozen moments."

- 6 I was forty-two when . . . my mother died and it felt as though I had been left in the world alone. Although I was myself a mother, although I had a husband, two sons, two brothers and many friends, with whom my relations were passionate and often complicated, my relation to my mother was the most passionate and complicated of all. So intense was our bond that I was never sure what belonged to whom, where I ended, and she began.

HELEN EPSTEIN (b. 1947), U.S. author. *Where She Came From: A Daughter's Search for Her Mother's History* (chapter 1) (1997).

Losing a Spouse

- 1 The widower lives in a darkened world.

Sanhedrin 22a, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 My wife, my wife! What wife? I have no wife.
O insupportable! O heavy hour!
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon, and that th' af-frighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Othello* (5.2.101–105).

Othello's grief is particularly intense because he is responsible for his wife's death.

- 3 From those bright regions of eternal day,
Where now thou shin'st amongst thy fellow saints,

Array'd in purer light, look down
on me!
In pleasing visions and delusive
dreams.
O! sooth my soul, and teach me
how to lose thee.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *Irene* (written in 1736, first performed in 1749).

In his *Life of Johnson*, James Boswell cites this passage as proof that, long before Johnson's wife died, in 1752, Johnson had considered the "state of mind in which a man must be upon the death of a woman whom he sincerely loves" ("17 March 1752").

- 4 Although he probably was not often in the wrong than she was, in the little disagreements which sometimes troubled his married state, during which, he owned to me, that the gloomy irritability of his existence was more painful to him than ever, he might very naturally, after her death, be tenderly disposed to charge himself with slight omissions and offences, the sense of which would give him much uneasiness.

JAMES BOSWELL (1740–1795), Scottish author. *Life of Johnson* ("17 March 1752") (1791).

Boswell describes Johnson's distress after losing his wife.

- 5 Ay, go to the grave of buried love and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience for every past benefit unrequited—every past endearment unregarded, of that departed being, who can never, never, never return to be soothed by thy contrition.

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859), U.S. author. "Rural Funerals," *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819–20).

- 6 I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809–1892), English poet. *In Memoriam A.H.H.* 27 (1850).

Although Tennyson does not mourn a spouse here, many critics have noted that he treats the death of Arthur Henry Hallam as if it were the death of a beloved woman.

- 7 Woman much missed, how you call
to me, call to me,
Saying that now you are not as you
were
When you had changed from the
one who was all to me,
But as at first, when our day was
fair.

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928), English author. "The Voice."

"The Voice" is one of a series of poems (*Poems of 1912–13*) that Hardy composed soon after the death of his first wife, Emma.

- 8 Masses of flowers
loaded the cherry branches
and color some bushes
yellow and some red
but the grief in my heart
is stronger than they
for though they were my joy
formerly, today I notice them
and turned away forgetting.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1883–1963), U.S. poet and physician. "The Widow's Lament in Springtime."

Williams wrote this poem in tribute to his mother.

- 9 There is one place where her absence comes locally home to me, and it is a place I can't avoid. I mean my own body. It had such a different importance while it was

the body of H.'s lover. Now it's like an empty house.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *A Grief Observed* (chapter 1) (1961).

- 10 Bereavement is not the truncation of married love but one of its regular phases—like the honeymoon. What we want is to live our marriage well and faithfully through that phase too. If it hurts (and it certainly will) we accept the pains as a necessary part of this phase. . . . We were one flesh. Now that it has been cut in two, we don't want to pretend that it is whole and complete.

C. S. LEWIS (1898–1963), English author. *A Grief Observed* (chapter 3) (1961).

- 11 Most widows want their loss acknowledged, not glossed over, and the name of their dead husband spoken, not avoided. They would like to tell callers not to bother if they are going to talk about the weather or how terribly funny their new poodle puppy is.

GENEVIEVE DAVIS GINSBURG (1917–1996), U.S. author. *To Live Again: Rebuilding Your Life After You've Become a Widow* ("The Dumb Things People Say") (1987).

Menopause

- 1 In this country it is more despicable to be married and not fruitful, than it is with us to be fruitful before marriage. They have a notion, that, whenever a woman leaves off bringing children, it is because she is too old for that business, whatever her face says to the contrary, and this opinion makes the ladies here so ready to make proofs of their youth . . . that they do not

content themselves with using the natural means, but fly to all sorts of quackeries, to avoid the scandal of being past child-bearing, and often kill themselves by them.

MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU (1689–1762), English author. Letter to Mrs. Thistlethwayte, 4 January 1718 OS, *Letters* [Mary Wortley Montagu], ed. Clare Brant (1992).

Montagu's letter suggests that the fear of menopause (or of seeming to be no longer of child-bearing age) is a universal one.

- 2 The crisis of the menopause rudely cuts the life of woman in two; the resulting discontinuity is what gives woman the illusion of a "new life"; it is *another* time that opens before her, so she enters upon it with the fervor of a convert; she is converted to love, to the godly life, to art, to humanity; in these entities she loses herself and magnifies herself.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Second Sex* (part 5, "Situation"; chapter 20, "From Maturity to Old Age") (1949), trans. H. M. Parshley (1971).

- 3 Menopause Manor is not merely a defensive stronghold. . . . It is a house or household, fully furnished with the necessities of life. In abandoning it, women have narrowed their domain and impoverished their souls. There are things the Old Woman can do, say, and think that the Woman cannot do, say, or think. The Woman has to give up more than her menstrual periods before she can do, say, or think them. She has got to change her life.

URSULA K. LEGUIN (b. 1929), U.S. author. "The Space Crone" (1976), *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places* (1989).

- 4 Menopause would be celebrated as a positive event, the symbol that men had accumulated enough years of cyclical wisdom to need no more.

GLORIA STEINEM (b. 1934), U.S. author and feminist. "If Men Could Menstruate," *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions* (1983).

Steinem lists changes that would occur in attitudes toward menstruation if menstruation were a male phenomenon.

- 5 In the South of my childhood, no woman could weather the "Change" completely unscathed; it was femininity's Appomattox and you had to milk it for every possible drop of theater.

FLORENCE KING (b. 1936), U.S. author. *Lump or Leave It* ("Fifty something") (1990).

- 6 Menopause—word used as an insult:
a menopausal woman, mind or poem
as if not to leak regularly or on the caprice
of the moon, the collision of egg and sperm,
were the curse we first learned to call that blood.

MARGE PIERCY (1936–), U.S. author. "Something to look forward to."

Piercy concludes the poem by saying that she "will secretly dance / and pour out a cup of wine on the earth / when time stops that leak permanently."

- 7 The best gift for making a conscious, disciplined trip through menopause is *postmenopausal zest*. This is a special, buoyant sort of energy, fueled in part by the change in ratio of testosterone to estrogen. . . . Once a woman has come through the menopausal passage, she can say good-bye to pregnancy fears and monthly mood swings.

Now that she is no longer confined by society's narrow definition of woman as sex object and breeder, she is freer to integrate the masculine and feminine aspects of her nature. She can now claim the license to *say what she truly thinks*.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time* (part 4, "Flaming Fifties: Women"; chapter 9, "Wonder Woman Meets Menopause") (1995).

Sheehy explains that Margaret Mead coined the term "postmenopausal zest" and observed its presence in women in different cultures.

- 8 The central myth is that menopause is a time in a woman's life when she goes batty for a few years—subject to wild rages and deep depressions—and after it she mourns her lost youth and fades into the woodwork. In truth, menopause is a bridge to the most vital and liberated period in a woman's life.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *The Silent Passage: Menopause* (1998).

- 9 Though there is no public rite of passage for the woman approaching the end of her reproductive years, there is evidence that women devise their own private ways of marking the irrevocability of the change. . . . The climacteric is a time of stock-taking, of spiritual as well as physical change, and it would be a pity to be unconscious of it.

GERMAINE GREER (b. 1939), Australian author and feminist. *The Change: Women, Ageing and the Menopause* (introduction) (1991).

- 10 To be precise, the word "menopause" applies to a non-event, the menstrual period that does not happen. It is the invisible Rubicon

that a woman cannot know she is crossing until she has crossed it.

GERMAINE GREER (b. 1939), Australian author and feminist. *The Change: Women, Ageing and the Menopause* (chapter 1, "The Undescribed") (1991).

- 11 Menopause is a time when, if we have not already done so, we should learn to take as good care of ourselves as we do of others. Many women become more self-confident and assertive and less interested in pleasing others. Increasingly, women are writing about the change of life, or menopause, as a time of preparing for later life through emotional and spiritual transformation. . . .

. . . Women at midlife may be subject to overtreatment when physicians view the normal changes of menopause as a deficiency disease requiring medication, or they may suffer from undertreatment and misdiagnosis of real symptoms of disease. Some physicians attribute to menopause almost anything reported by women at midlife, overlooking what might be symptoms of gallbladder disease, hypertension, and other serious conditions.

PAULA B. DORESS-WORTERS and **DIANA LASKIN SIEGAL**, U.S. authors. *The New Ourselves, Growing Older: Women Aging with Knowledge and Power*, ed. Paula B. Doress-Worters and Diana Laskin Siegal (chapter 10, "Experiencing Our Change of Life: Menopause") (1994).

Doress-Worters and Siegal have served as project coordinators for the Boston Women's Health Book Collective and the Greater Boston Older Women's League.

- 12 Pregnancy and childbirth are pretty rotten jokes to play on the female, but I cannot help suspecting that the menopause may be nature's

last—and most outrageous—grand belly laugh.

ELIZABETH BUCHAN (b. 1948), English author and editor. "Rite of Passage," in *A Certain Age: Reflecting on the Menopause*, ed. Joanna Goldsworthy (1993).

Turning 60

- 1 Spring still makes spring in the mind,
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. "The World-Soul" (1847).

- 2 You've got t' be fifty-nine years ole t'believe a feller is at his best at sixty.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. *Abe Martin's Primer* (1914).

- 3 Picasso once said, "One starts to get young at the age of sixty, and then it's too late."

HENRY MILLER (1891–1980), U.S. author. "On Turning 80" (1972), *A Henry Miller Reader*, ed. John Calder (1985).

Miller in his essay writes about his friendship with Picasso and the artist's continuing vitality.

- 4 It comes as a surprise, even at first almost a feeling of guilt: after a long time of being afraid, of not wanting to think about it, of pretending everything's the same, the delight, the sheer excitement of coming into a new place after sixty, after it's all supposed to be over. And it may not have come easily.

BETTY FRIEDAN (b. 1921), U.S. author and feminist. *The Fountain of Age* (chapter 10, "Coming into a New Place") (1993).

Friedan also notes (chapter 18, "Age as Adventure") that, despite her final sense of excitement at turning 60, she and her "feminist women friends" had a hard time coming up with a ceremony or ritual to commemorate the milestone birthdays after 60. She said they tried to create a celebration but "somehow couldn't get beyond the discomfort and the rage: 'When Sleeping Beauty woke up, she was sixty years old!'"

- 5 For those of us over sixty, high on the list of gratitude should be that we are still alive! Even if it hurts. Even if we feel thirty-five inside of our heads and can no longer even count the wrinkles.

EDA LESHAN (b. 1922), U.S. author. *It's Better to Be Over the Hill Than Under It: Thoughts on Life Over Sixty* ("Thanksgiving Thoughts") (1997).

- 6 I'm sixty years of age. That's 16 Celsius.

GEORGE CARLIN (b. 1937), U.S. comic and author. *Brain Droppings* (1997).

Turning 65

- 1 Let others Sing of Youth and Spring, still will it seem to me
The golden time's the olden time,
some time round Sixty-five.

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian poet. "A Song of Sixty-Five."

- 2 I determined that at sixty-five business properly speaking should know me no more. On my sixty-fifth birthday—or, to put it more correctly, on my sixty-sixth—I woke a free man. For my practice had always been a discipline rather than an inclination.

VICTORIA (OR VITA) SACKVILLE-WEST (1892–1962), English novelist and poet. *All Passion Spent* (part 1) (1931).

While Mr. Bucktrout now avoids any activity that breaks his repose and retirement, he argues that, in his day, he was "fierce," quickly realizing that in business "modesty, moderation, consideration, and nicety" never pay.

- 3 At sixty-five one is not merely twenty years older than one was at forty-five. One has exchanged an indefinite future—and one had a tendency to look upon it as infinite—for a finite future. In earlier days we could see no boundary-mark upon the horizon: now we do see one.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Coming of Age* (part 2, "The Being-in-the-World"; chapter 6, "Time, Activity, History") (1970), trans. Patrick O'Brian (1972).

- 4 I discovered when I began to look into the whole question of retirement, our society exactly pinpoints the onset of that decline at age sixty-five. No one would presume to date so precisely the onset of childhood, adolescence, or adulthood, and reward—or punish—those who don't arrive or depart on time.

BETTY FRIEDAN (b. 1921), U.S. author and feminist. *The Fountain of Age* (chapter 6, "The Retirement Paradox") (1993).

- 5 Presents and parties disappear,
The cards grow fewer year by year,
Till, when one reaches sixty-five,
How many care we're still alive?

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English poet and critic. "Dear CHARLES, My Muse, Asleep or Dead."

Retirement

- 1 He may not do what the young men are doing, but he is really do-

ing much greater and better things: great affairs are not accomplished by strength or speed or swiftness of bodies, but by planning, authority, deliberation, things which old age is not deprived of, but which even then increase.

CICERO, MARCUS TULLIUS (106–43 B.C.), Roman author, orator, and statesman. *De Senectute* (On Old Age) (c. 44 B.C.), trans. Harry G. Edinger (1967).

- 2 . . . 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business
from our age,
Conferring them on younger
strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *King Lear* 1.1.38–41.
- 3 Great men have a dark chimerical
prospect of retiring, which their
circumstances will seldom permit
them to execute, till they are forced
to it.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and author. *Maxims* ("Retire") (1750), in *The Works of George Savile, Marquis of Halifax*, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 3 (1989).
- 4 The love of Retirement has, in all
ages, adhered closely to those
minds which have been most en-
larged by knowledge, or elevated by
genius. Those who enjoyed every
thing generally supposed to confer
happiness have been forced to seek
it in the shades of privacy.

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784), English author. *The Rambler* (10 April 1750).

- 5 Nothing is more incumbent on the
old, than to know when they shall
get out of the way, and relinquish

to younger successors the honors
they can no longer earn and the
duties they can no longer perform.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743–1826), U.S. president. Letter to John Vaughan, 5 February 1815, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Memorial edition, ed. Andrew A. Lipscomb et al. (1903–1904).

- 6 It was like passing out of Time into
Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity
for a man to have his Time all to
himself.

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834), English essayist. "The Superannuated Man" *London Magazine* (1825) and *Last Essays of Elia* (1833).
- 7 When you will have worked hard
and faithfully, there will come a day
when you will wish to rest, when
you will wish to give to her whom
you love and whom you will love
the more as years pass, your own
time, your own self, that you two
may go hand in hand into the win-
ter, unafraid and unburdened by
cares and sorrows.

CHARLES ADAMS, Letter to his son Ansel Adams, 30 January 1928, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Adams offers advice on the occasion of Ansel's marriage.
- 8 I noticed a tendency among many
men in business to feel that their
lot was hard—they worked against
a day when they might retire and
live on an income—get out of the
strife. Life to them was a battle to
be ended as soon as possible. That
was another point I could not un-
derstand, for as I reasoned, life is
not a battle except with our own
tendency to sag with the downpull
of "getting settled." . . . Life, as I see

it, is not a location, but a journey. Even the man who most feels himself “settled” is not settled—he is probably sagging back. Everything is in flux, and was meant to be. Life flows. We may live at the same number of the street, but it is never the same man who lives there.

HENRY FORD (1863–1947), U.S. industrialist and automobile manufacturer. *My Life and Work* (1922), and reprinted in *Ford on Management: Harnessing the American Spirit* (chapter 2, “What I Learned About Business”) (1991).

- 9 The argument for retirement is an erroneous one. It assumes that our goal in life is to amass the right amount of wealth so that we can shut down our productivity at a certain age and revel in our material success and free time. . . . We should never abandon the world of work and productivity for a world of inactivity, a world that doesn’t challenge us, a world that isolates us from our spiritual quest.

MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON (1902–1994), U.S. rabbi. *Toward a Meaningful Life: The Wisdom of the Rebbe* (chapter 13, “Aging and Retirement: Regeneration and Dignity”) (1995).

- 10 Ages of compulsory retirement are fixed at point varying from 55 to 75, all being equally arbitrary and unscientific. Whatever age has been decreed by accident and custom can be defended by the same argument. Where the retirement age is fixed at 65 the defenders of this system will always have found, by experience, that the mental powers and energy show signs of flagging at the age of 62. This would be a most useful conclusion to have reached had not a different phe-

nomenon been observed in organizations where the age of retirement has been fixed at 60. There, we are told, people are found to lose their grips, in some degree, at the age of 57.

C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON (1909–1993), historian, journalist, and novelist. *Parkinson’s Law, and Other Studies in Administration* (chapter 10, “Pension Point or the Age of Retirement”) (1958).

- 11 Soon, I think, public-relations offices will find a new word for “retirement.” This new word will undoubtedly project the image of continuing activity and participation in life on a person’s own terms, rather than the image of rest (white-thatched oldster fishing) that we still have before us today.

ALAN HARRINGTON (1919–1997), U.S. author. *Life in the Crystal Palace* (chapter 11, “Life Begins at 65”) (1959).

- 12 Early retirement is . . . sound, to take care of people who, like ’51 and ’54 vintages, didn’t work out.

ROBERT TOWNSEND (b. 1920), U.S. author. *Up the Organization* (“Retirement, Mandatory”) (1970).

- 13 You can’t put off being young until you retire.

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English poet and critic. “Money” [poem].

- 14 It is a time when we can, by default, live a passive and inactive life. But there is a wonderful, if riskier, alternative. We can take advantage of our newfound freedom and embark on new and exciting adventures. We now have time to fulfill some earlier ambitions. If we make a mistake, there are plenty of fallbacks. We need not be too cautious.

JIMMY CARTER (b. 1924), U.S. president. *The Virtues of Aging* (chapter 10, "What is Successful Aging?") (1998).

- 15 We do not actually know how competent and industrious people between seventy and eighty years old can be in our society. In an agricultural economy, when they are healthy, they are able to bear a considerable portion of the necessary workload. Old men and women have continued to perform their customary chores until they were physically unable to do so. They sometimes did so of necessity, but more often they seem to have done so by choice. They not only felt useful and needed but actually were.

ERIK H. ERIKSON (1902–1990), U.S. (German-born) psychoanalyst; **JOAN M. ERIKSON** (1902–1997), U.S. artist and therapist; and **HELEN Q. KIVNICK**, psychologist, *Vital Involvement in Old Age* (section 4, "Old Age in Our Society, 'Retirement'") (1986).

The authors go on to say that it is "responsible" to care for retired people in "organized ways" but that "entertaining them with bingo games and concerts is . . . patronizing."

- 16 People who were never too crazy about their jobs look forward to retirement, as do people who know exactly what they'd like to do, at long last. People who have no idea what they will do with retirement dread it. And then there are the rest of us, who had this crazy idea that we would have enough money to quit working at sixty or sixty-five and could then pick up all the unfulfilled dreams of things we'd always longed to do.

EDA LESHAN (b. 1922), U.S. author. *It's Better To Be Over the Hill Than Under It* ("The No Retirement Blues") (1990).

- 17 Retirement used to be the square that one landed on in the playing board of life roughly five years before one expired, the reward for thirty-five or more years of hard work, when a pencil pusher could enjoy a paid mortgage, a cruise or two, and a golden wedding anniversary while waiting around to die. Today the question is not so much *when* is ideal retirement age as how does one *define* retirement.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time* (part 6, "Passage to the Age of Integrity"; chapter 17, "Men: Make My Passage") (1995).

- 18 Like many men, he gave up his identity along with his job. One day he was a boss at the factory, with a brass plate on his door and a reputation to uphold; the next day he was a nobody at home.

SCOTT RUSSELL SANDERS (b. 1945), U.S. essayist. "Under the Influence" (1989), in *The Art of the Personal Essay: An Anthology from the Classical Era to the Present*, ed. Philip Lopate (1994).

Sanders writes here about his alcoholic father.

- 19 We want retirement to mean that we have chosen to leave paid work for something else, and not survival on a pittance because we are no longer welcome at work.

EDITH STEIN, PAULA B. DORESS-WORTERS, and **MARY D. FILMORE**, U.S. authors. *The New Ourselves, Growing Older: Women Aging with Knowledge and Power*, ed. Paula B. Doress-Worters and Diana Laskin Siegal (chapter 13, "Work and Retirement") (1994).

- 20 Retirement places more time on your hands. Indeed, it is one of the enjoyments of retirement that you are able to drift through the day at your own pace, easy in the knowl-

edge that you have put hard work
and achievement behind you.

KAZUO ISHIGURO (b. 1954), *An Artist of the Floating World* ("October 1948") (1986).

Old Age

- 1 Cast me not off in the time of my
old age; forsake me not when my
strength faileth.

Psalms 71.9.

- 2 Old age puts more wrinkles in our
minds than on our faces; and we
never, or rarely, see a soul that in
growing old does not come to smell
sour and musty.

MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE (1533–1589), French essayist. "Of Repentance," book 3, essay 2 (1585–88), in *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (1976; originally published 1958).

- 3 If you will be cherished when you
be old, be curteous while you be
young; if you look for comfort in
your hoary hairs, be not coy when
you have your golden locks.

JOHN LYLY (1554?–1606), English author. *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578).

- 4 If to be old and merry be a sin,
then many an old host that I know
is damn'd.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *The First Part of King Henry IV* 2.4.466.

Falstaff tries to justify himself to the Prince.

- 5 Though I look old, yet I am strong
and lusty,
For in my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my
blood,
Nor did not with unbashful fore-
head woo

The means of weakness and debil-
ity.

Therefore my age is as a lusty win-
ter,

Frosty, but kindly.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *As You Like It* 2.3.47–52.

Spoken by Adam, one of the servants of Oliver, one of the sons of Sir Rowland de Boys.

- 6 . . . when thou art old and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection,
limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Measure for Measure* 3.1.36–38.

The Duke addresses Claudio, urging him to "be absolute for death," since life is a good that "none but fools would keep."

- 7 I have liv'd long enough. My way of
life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow
leaf,
And that which should accompany
old age,
As honor, love, obedience, troops of
friends,
I must not look to have.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Macbeth* 5.3.22.

Spoken by Macbeth as his crimes close in on him.

- 8 When a man cometh by age to bee
of no use, the respect given to him
is only out of compassion, which is
a very slender tenure in this ill na-
tured Age. When a man is no more
usefull to the world, the respect
given him is a kind of almes; hee
must not clayme it.

GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUIS OF HALIFAX (1633–1695), English courtier and writer. *Maxims* ("Age") (1750), in *The Works of*

George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, ed. Mark N. Brown, vol. 3 (1989).

- 9 Many a man is seen to the best advantage in old age when he is more lenient and indulgent because he is more experienced, unruffled, and resigned.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER (1788–1860), German philosopher. *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays* (chapter 6, “On the Different Periods of Life”) (1851), trans. E. F. J. Payne (1974).

- 10 The surest sign of age is loneliness. While one finds company in himself and his pursuits, he cannot be old, whatever his years may number.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT (1799–1888), U.S. philosopher and educator. “Fellowship,” *Tablets* (1868).

- 11 We have settled when old age begins. Like all Nature’s processes, it is gentle and gradual in its approaches, strewed with illusions, and all its little griefs are soothed by natural sedatives. But the iron hand is not less irresistible because it wears the velvet glove.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (chapter 7) (1858).

- 12 What is it to grow old?

.
It is to spend long days
And not once feel that we were ever
young;
It is to add, immured
In the hot prison of the present,
month
To month with weary pain.

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888), English poet and critic. “Growing Old.”

- 13 Love is always young and fair.
What to us is silver hair,
Faded cheeks or steps grown slow,
To the heart that beats below?

EBEN E. REXFORD (1848–1916), U.S. poet and editor. “Silver Threads among the Gold.”

In *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*, ed. Margaret Bradford Boni (1952), Boni notes that H. P. Dunks, who composed the music for this song, bought a number of poems from Rexford for three dollars apiece.

- 14 There’s many a good tune played
on an old fiddle.

SAMUEL BUTLER (1835–1902), British author. *The Way of All Flesh* (chapter 61) (1903).

Mrs. Jupp, a talkative woman, responds to an insensitive comment about her age.

- 15 AGE, n. That period of life in
which we compound for the vices
that we still cherish by reviling
those that we have no longer the
enterprise to commit.

AMBROSE BIERCE (1842–?1914), U.S. author. *The Devil’s Dictionary* (1881–1911).

- 16 Oh, dear, this living and eating and
growing old; these doubts and
aches in the back, and want of in-
terest in Nightingales and Roses . . .
[and]

Growing old is no gradual decline, but a series of tumbles, full of sorrow, from one ledge to another. Yet when we pick ourselves up we find that our bones are not broken; while not unpleasing is the new terrace which lies unexplored before us.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1856–1946), U.S. humorist. “Last Words,” *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 17 There are people who, like houses, are beautiful in dilapidation.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Age and Death,” *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 18 Many a man that couldn’t direct you to the drugstore on the corner when he was thirty will get a respectful hearing when age has further impaired his mind.

FINLEY PETER DUNNE (1867–1936), U.S. humorist. “Some Observations by Mr. Dooley,” *Mr. Dooley Remembers: The Informal Memoirs of Finley Peter Dunne* (1963).

- 19 It seems like th’ only way t’ reach a ripe an’ peaceful ole age is just t’ be downright an’ everlastin’ly worthless.

KIN HUBBARD (1868–1930), U.S. humorist. *Fifty Weeks of Abe Martin* (1924).

- 20 Yes, the truth is that unless old men possess some deep interior life of their own they are almost bound to hang like millstones round the necks of their children and their children’s children. Nor is it to be supposed, though he possesses all the natural vanity in the world, that this state of things can be completely concealed from an old man. He is really alone in an unsympathetic world and in his heart he knows that he is. He knows that in spite of all the care that surrounds him his death will be a relief if not an unspeakable comfort to his survivors.

JOHY COWPER POWYS (1872–1963), English author. *The Art of Growing Old* (chapter 9, “Old Age and Literature”) (1974).

- 21 Age wins and one must learn to grow old. As I learnt with the loss

of a nurse to put childish things behind me, as I learnt when the joys of dependence were over to embrace with fear the isolation of independence, so now I must learn to walk this long unlovely wintry way, looking for spectacles, shunning the cruel looking-glass, laughing at my clumsiness before others mistakenly condole, not expecting gallantry yet disappointed to receive none, apprehending every ache of shaft of pain, alive to blinding flashes of mortality, unarmed, totally vulnerable.

LADY DIANA COOPER (1892–1986), English author, actor, and nurse. *Trumpets from the Steep* (chapter 8, “Winter and Journey’s End”) (1860).

- 22 I have never come across one single woman, either in life or in books, who has looked upon her own old age cheerfully.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (1908–1986), French author and philosopher. *The Coming of Age* (part 2, “The Being-in-the-World”; chapter 5, “The Discovery and Assumption of Old Age: The Body’s Experience”) (1970); trans. Patrick O’Brian (1972).

- 23 If we face now the reality, at sixty-five or seventy, seventy-five, eighty, ninety, that we will indeed, sooner or later, die, then the only big question is how are we going to *live* the years we have left, however many or few they may be? What adventures can we now set out on to make sure we’ll be alive when we die? Can age itself be such an adventure?

BETTY FRIEDAN (b. 1921), U.S. author and feminist. *The Fountain of Age* (chapter 17, “Dying with Life”) (1993).

- 24 Continuing to live—that is, repeat A habit formed to get necessities—

Is nearly always losing, or going
without.

PHILIP LARKIN (1922–1985), English poet and critic. “Continuing to Live.”

Turning 70

- 1 The Master said, “At fifteen I set my heart on learning; at thirty I took my stand; at forty I came to be free from doubts; at fifty I understood the Decree of Heaven; at sixty my ear was attuned; at seventy I followed my heart’s desire without overstepping the line.”

CONFUCIUS (551?–479 B.C.), Chinese philosopher. *Analects* (Lun yǔ), book 2, section 4, trans. D. C. Lau (1979).

- 2 Approaching, nearing, curious,
Thou dim, uncertain spectre—
bringest thou life or death?
Strength, weakness, blindness, more
paralysis and heavier?
Or placid skies and sun?

WALT WHITMAN (1819–1892), U.S. poet. “Queries to My Seventieth Year.”

- 3 I have been asked what a man over seventy can do to keep occupied. The trouble is, that a man who can’t keep busy didn’t take interest in a great number of things when he was mentally active in his younger years. If he had done so, he would find plenty to occupy his time in reading, observing and watching people. There are a great many hobbies he can work with and keep busy until his death. . . .
. . . Men are not as active at seventy as they were at fifty because they hurt their machinery too much. If they like a certain thing, they will overdo it. They eat too much, or drink too much, or if

they like sleeping they will sleep too much.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847–1931), U.S. inventor. *The Diary and Sundry Observations of Thomas Alva Edison* (“Sundry Observations”; chapter 1, “Autobiographical”; section 4 [1927]), ed. Dagobert D. Runes (1948).

Edison claimed he would be unwilling to retire from work until “the doctor brings in the oxygen cylinder.”

- 4 I can scarcely, nowadays, endure the company of anybody under seventy. Young people compel one to look forward on a life full of effort. Old people permit one to look backward on a life whose effort is over and done with. That is reposeful.

VICTORIA (OR VITA) SACKVILLE-WEST (1892–1962), English novelist and poet. *All Passion Spent* (part 1) (1931).

Mr. Bucktrout comments to Lady Slade that most people do not appreciate or achieve repose until old age “imposes” it upon them, and even then “half of them still sigh for the energy which once was theirs.”

- 5 This is the year of my seventieth birthday, a fact that bewilders me. I find it hard to believe. I understand now the look of affront I often saw in my father’s face after this age and that I see in the faces of my contemporaries. We are affronted because, whatever we may feel, time has turned us into curiosities in some secondhand shop. We are haunted by the suspicion that the prayers we did not know we were making have been only too blatantly answered.

V. S. PRITCHETT (b. 1905), English author. *The Midnight Oil* (chapter 1) (1971).

- 6 Being over seventy is like being engaged in a war. All our friends are going or gone and we survive

amongst the dead and the dying as on a battlefield.

MURIEL SPARK (b. 1918), Scottish author. *Memento Mori* (chapter 4) (1959).

- 7 To realize that I've touched seventy was absolutely devastating. [*Very long pause.*] I'm disturbed by my concern in undertaking new commitments—as if my time is limited. I never had that feeling before. I don't want to take responsibility for something that I may not be able to complete. It's a very worrisome thing. Being seventy made me angry. Being sixty-nine did not. [*Laughs.*]

JUDITH VLADEK (b. 1925), U.S. lawyer. Interview with Studs Terkel in *Coming of Age: The Story of Our Century by Those Who've Lived It* (1995).

Vladek speaks here as senior partner in a 30-member law firm and as someone who still meets daily with clients.

- 3 By the time a man gets to be eighty he learns that he is compassed by limitations, and that there has been a natural boundary set to his individual powers. As he goes on in life, he begins to doubt his ability to destroy all evil and to reform all abuses, and to suspect that there will be much left to do after he has done.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER (1829–1900), U.S. author. *My Summer in a Garden* ("What I Know About Gardening") (1870).

- 4 . . . they who nobly fail will find
The peace of the heroic mind,
Will taste life's sacred joy, the joy
Earth cannot give nor earth destroy.
These things I see as the cloud
clears,
Here at the height of eighty years.

EDWIN MARKHAM (1852–1940), poet. "At Eighty Years."

Turning 80

- 1 When Rabbi Hanina was eighty years old, he was still able to stand on one foot and remove the shoe from the other. He said: "My strength in old age comes from the frequent warm baths and anointing in oil given my body during infancy."

Hullin 24, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 2 I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour
more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *King Lear* 4.7.62–65.

King Lear in a poignant understatement.

- 5 If at eighty you're not a cripple or an invalid, if you have your health, if you still enjoy a good walk, a good meal (with all the trimmings), if you can sleep without first taking a pill, if birds and flowers, mountains and sea still inspire you, you are a most fortunate individual and you should get down on your knees morning and night and thank the good Lord for savin' and keepin' his power.

HENRY MILLER (1891–1980), U.S. author. "On Turning 80," *A Henry Miller Reader*, ed. John Calder (1985).

- 6 The new octogenarian feels as strong as ever when he is sitting back in a comfortable chair. He ruminates, he dreams, he remembers. He doesn't want to be disturbed by others. It seems to him that old age

is only a costume assumed for those others; the true, the essential self is ageless. In a moment he will rise and go for a ramble in the woods, taking a gun along, or a fishing rod, if it is spring. Then he creaks to his feet, bending forward to keep his balance, and realizes that he will do nothing of the sort. The body and its surroundings have their messages for him, or only one message: “You are old.”

MALCOLM COWLEY (1898–1989), U.S. author and literary critic. *The View From 80* (chapter 1), (1980).

- 7 Once you reach 80, everyone wants to carry your baggage and help you up the steps. If you forget your name or anybody else’s name, or an appointment, or your own telephone number, or promise to be three places at the same time, or can’t remember how many grandchildren you have, you need only explain that you are 80.

FRANK LAUBACH, U.S. “Life Begins at 80,” quoted in Ann Landers, *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee! Advice, Wisdom and Uncommon Good Sense* (1996).

Turning 90

- 1 A man over ninety is a great comfort to all his elderly neighbors: he is a picket-guard at the extreme outpost; and the young folks of sixty and seventy feel that they enemy must get by him before he can come near their camp.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *The Guardian Angel* (chapter 2, “Great Excitement”) (1895).

- 2 The riders in a race do not stop short when they reach the goal.

There is a little finishing canter before coming to a standstill. There is time to hear the kind voices of friends and to say to oneself, “The work is done.” But just as one says that, the answer comes: “The race is over, but the work never is done while the power to work remains.” The canter that brings you to a standstill need not be only coming to rest. It cannot be, while you still live. For to live is to function. That is all there is to living.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1841–1935), U.S. Supreme Court justice. Speech at his ninetieth-birthday tribute, 7 March 1931, in *Lend Me Your Ear: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

Turning 100

- 1 Grandpa Cartmell was celebrating his 100th birthday and everybody complimented him on how athletic and well preserved he appeared. “I will tell you the secret of my success,” he cackled. “My wife and I were married 75 years ago. On our wedding night we made a solemn pledge that whenever we had a fight, the one who was proved wrong would go out and take a walk. Gentlemen, I have been in the open air practically continuously for 75 years.”

ANONYMOUS. *Anything For a Laugh: A Collection of Jokes and Anecdotes That You, Too, Can Tell and Probably Have*, ed. Bennett Cerf (1946).

- 2 I shouldn’t mind . . . living to my hundredth year, like Fontenelle, who never wept nor laughed, never lost his temper; to whom all the science of his day was known, but who all his life adored three things—music, painting and

women—about which he said he understood absolutely nothing.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH (1865–1946), U.S. humorist. “Myself,” *Afterthoughts* (1931) and *All Trivia: Trivia, More Trivia, Afterthoughts, Last Words* (1945).

- 3 A parrot nears a hundred years (or so the legend goes),
So were I he this century I might see to its close.
Then I might swing within my ring while revolutions roar,
And watch a world to ruin hurled—and find it all a bore.

ROBERT W. SERVICE (1874–1958), Canadian author. “Longevity.”

- 4 Turning one hundred was the worst birthday of my life. I wouldn’t wish it on my worst enemy. Turning 101 was not so bad. Once you’re past that century mark, it’s just not as shocking.

A. ELIZABETH DELANY (1891–1995), U.S. author. *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters’ First 100 Years* (section 32, “Outliving the Rebbly Boys” (1993).

The remark is attributed to Bessie; the book was written with her sister Sarah.

- 5 Other characteristics of healthy centenarians, garnered from a number of studies, are these: Most have high native intelligence, a keen interest in current events, a good memory, and few illnesses. They tend to be early risers, sleeping on average between six and seven hours. Most drink coffee, follow no special diets, but generally prefer diets high in protein, low in fat. There is no uniformity in their drinking habits, but they use less medication in their lifetimes than many old people use in a week. They prefer living in the present,

with changes, and are usually religious in the broad sense.

GAIL SHEEHY (b. 1937), U.S. author. *New Passages: Mapping Your Life Across Time* (part 6, “Passage to the Age of Integrity”; chapter 19, “Two Species of Aging”) (1995).

Death

- 1 Lord, make me to know mine end,
and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.

Psalm 39.4.

- 2 The mystics conceived of the body as an encumbering garment which falls away at death and leaves the true man free to rise into the light of the heavenly life.

Zohar to Terumah, in *The Talmudic Anthology: Tales and Teachings of the Rabbis*, ed. Louis I. Newman (1947).

- 3 To be dead is the same as never to have been born,
And better far than living on in wretchedness.
The dead feel nothing; evil then can cause no pain.

EURIPIDES (c. 485–406 B.C.), Greek dramatist. *The Women of Troy* (lines 634–36).

Andromache, Hector’s widow, speaks, tr. Philip Vellacott (1972).

- 4 No one knows whether death is really the greatest blessing a man can have, but they fear it is the greatest curse, as if they knew well.

PLATO (427–347 B.C.), Greek philosopher. *The Apology*, in *Great Dialogues of Plato*, trans. W. H. D. Rouse and ed. Eric H. War-mington and Philip G. Rouse (1956).

- 5 My ancestors are turned to clay,
And many of my mates are gone,
My youngers daily drop away,

And can I think to 'scape alone?
No, no, I know that I must die,
And yet my life amend not I.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL (1561–1595), English poet, Jesuit priest, and martyr. "Upon the Image of Death."

Gardner indicates that the attribution of this poem to Southwell is frequent and traditional but disputed by modern scholars.

- 6 It is as natural to die as to be born;
and to a little infant, perhaps, the
one is as painful as the other. He
that dies in an earnest pursuit, is
like one that is wounded in hot
blood; who for the time scarce feels
the hurt; and therefore a mind
fixed and bent upon somewhat that
is good, doth aver the dolours of
death.

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626), English philosopher, statesman, and essayist. "Of Death," *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), and reprinted in *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, ed. John Pitcher (1985).

- 7 . . . they say the tongues of dying
men
Enforce attention like deep har-
mony.
Where words are scarce, they are
seldom spent in vain,
For they breathe truth that breathe
their words in pain.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist. *Richard II* 2.1.5–8.

- 8 Death, be not proud, though some
have callèd thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art
not so;
For those whom you think'st thou
dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst
thou kill me.

JOHN DONNE (1572–1631), English poet, clergyman, and courtier. *Holy Sonnets* 10.

- 9 Though since thy first sad entrance
by
Just Abel's blood,
'Tis now six thousand years well
nigh,
And still thy sovereignty holds
good:
Yet by none art thou understood.

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622–1695), Welsh-born English poet. "Death."

- 10 Death in itself is nothing; but we
fear,
To be we know not what, we know
not where.

JOHN DRYDEN (1631–1700), English poet and dramatist. *Aureng-Zebe* 4.1 (1676).

- 11 Vital spark of heav'nly flame!
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744), English poet. "The Dying Christian to His Soul, Ode," *Adaptations of the Emperor Hadrian*.

- 12 Life is sweet, let me tell you, and
never sweeter than when we are
near losing it.

HENRY FIELDING (1707–1754), English novelist. *Amelia* (book 1; chapter 10, "Table Talk" Consisting of a Facetious Discourse that Passed in the Prison") (1751).

- 13 The death of a dear friend, wife,
brother, lover, which seemed noth-
ing but privation, somewhat later
assumes the aspect of a guide or
genius; for it commonly operates
revolutions in our way of life, ter-
minates an epoch of infancy or of
youth which was waiting to be
closed, breaks up a wonted occupa-
tion, or a household, or style of liv-
ing, and allows for the formation of

new ones more friendly to the growth of character.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Compensation,” *Essays: First Series* (1841).

- 14 It is the secret of the world that all things subsist and do not die, but only retire from sight and afterwards return again.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882), U.S. author. “Nominalist and Realist,” *Essays, Second Series* (1844).

- 15 So far as I have observed persons nearing the end of life, the Roman Catholics understand the business of dying better than Protestants. They have an expert by them, armed with spiritual specifics, in which they both, patient and priestly ministrant, place implicit trust. Confession, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction,—these all inspire a confidence which without this symbolism is too apt to be wanting in over-sensitive natures.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894), U.S. author and physician. *Over the Tea Cups* (chapter 10) (1891).

- 16 God waits only the separation of spirit from flesh to crown us with a full reward. Why, then, should we ever sink overwhelmed with distress, when life is soon over, and death is so certain an entrance to happiness—to glory?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816–1855), English author. *Jane Eyre* (chapter 8) (1847).

Helen Burns tries to console the young Jane here after she has been publicly called a liar.

- 17 Death is beautiful when seen to be a law, and not an accident—It is as common as life.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817–1862), U.S. author. Letter to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 11 March 1842, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Thoreau wrote after the unexpected deaths, within two weeks, of Thoreau's brother John and Emerson's son Waldo.

- 18 We've wholly forgotten how to die. But be sure you do die nevertheless. Do your work, and finish it. If you know how to begin, you will know when to end.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817–1862), U.S. author. “A Plea for John Brown” (1859).

- 19 . . . to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

WALT WHITMAN (1819–1892), U.S. poet. “Song of Myself” (section 6).

- 20 Every life, no matter if its hour is rich with love and every moment jewelled with joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

ROBERT GREEN INGERSOLL (1833–1899), U.S. orator, known as the “great agnostic.” Tribute to his brother Clark at his death, 1879, in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (1992).

- 21 Old and young, we are all on our last cruise.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894), Scottish author. “Crabbed Age and Youth” (1878), *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

- 22 Life does not cease to be funny when people die any more than it ceases to be serious when people laugh.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856–1950), Irish dramatist and critic. *The Doctor's Dilemma* (act 5) (1906).

- 23 Upon the eyes, the lips, the feet,
On all the passages of sense,
The atoning oil is spread with sweet
Renewal of lost innocence.

ERNEST DOWSON (1867–1900), English poet. “Extreme Unction.”

- 24 Death has been treated too much as
a subject for melancholy reflection,
or as an occasion for self-discipline,
or as a rather hazy theological entity. . . . What we have to do is to
see it in its true context, see it as an
active reality, as one more phase, in
a world and a “becoming” that are
those of our own experience.

PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN (1881–1955), French philosopher, paleontologist, and Jesuit priest. “The Making of a Mind” (written 1916), trans. René Hague (1974), and included in *On Suffering* (1974).

- 25 Hooray for the last grand adventure!
I wish I had won, but it was
worthwhile anyway.

AMELIA EARHART (1897–1937), U.S. aviator. “Popping Off Letter,” 20 May 1928, in *Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters*, ed. Andrew Carroll (1997).

Earhart wrote the letter to her father and requested that it be opened in the event that she died in her attempt to be the first woman passenger on a transatlantic crossing. In 1937, Earhart’s plane disappeared during her attempt at a solo flight around the world.

- 26 Do not go gentle into that good
night,
Old age should burn and rave at
close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the
light.

DYLAN THOMAS (1914–1953), Welsh poet. “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night.”

- 27 This is the end, the redemption
from Wilderness, way for the
Wanderer, House sought for All,
black handkerchief washed clean
by weeping.

ALLEN GINSBERG (1926–1998), U.S. poet. “Kaddish” (section 1).

- 28 What is it about death that bothers
me so much? Probably the hours.
Melnick says the soul is immortal
and lives on after the body drops
away, but if my soul exists without
my body, I am convinced all my
clothes will be loose-fitting.

WOODY ALLEN (b. 1935), U.S. film director, writer, and actor. *Without Feathers* (“Selections from the Allen Notebooks”) (1975).

- 29 Being dead is one—the worst, the
last—but only one in a series of calamities that afflicts our own and
several other species. The list may
include, but is not limited to, gingivitis, bowel obstruction, contested
divorce, tax audit, spiritual vexation, cash flow problems, political
upheaval, and on and on and on
some more. There is no shortage of
misery.

THOMAS LYNCH (b. 1948), U.S. author and undertaker. *The Undertaking: Life Studies from the Dismal Trade* (“The Undertaking”) (1997).

Lynch here explains the undertaker’s relation to death, arguing that undertakers have no more stomach for death or other miseries than anyone else does.

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