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# The Road to Wigan Pier

George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier

## PART I

Highlight(yellow) - I > Page 8 · Location 51

I used to get to know individual crumbs by sight and watch their progress up and down the table from day to day.

Highlight(yellow) - III > Page 45 · Location 581

This business of petty inconvenience and indignity, of being kept waiting about, of having to do everything at other people's convenience, is inherent in working-class life. A thousand influences constantly press a working man down into a passive rôle. He does not act, he is acted upon. He feels himself the slave of mysterious authority and has a firm conviction that 'they' will never allow him to do this, that and the other.

Highlight(yellow) - III > Page 45 · Location 587

A person of bourgeois origin goes through life with some expectation of getting what he wants, within reasonable limits. Hence the fact that in times of stress 'educated' people tend to come to the front; they are no more gifted than the others and their 'education' is generally quite useless in itself, but they are accustomed to a certain amount of deference and consequently have the cheek necessary to a commander. [#education](#) [#liberal-arts](#) [#aristocracy](#)

Highlight(yellow) - IV > Page 62 · Location 823

(where did that expression come from? Peas have great individuality)

Highlight(yellow) - V > Page 76 · Location 1036

Because to write books you need not only comfort and solitude—and solitude is never easy to attain in a working-class home—you also need peace of mind. You can't settle to anything, you can't command the spirit of hope in which anything has got to be created, with that dull evil cloud of unemployment hanging over you. [#writing](#) [This is why I had such a hard time writing when we were first married and lived in South Bend.]

Highlight(yellow) - V > Page 82 · Location 1126

Trade since the war has had to adjust itself to meet the demands of underpaid, underfed people, with the result that a luxury is nowadays almost always cheaper than a necessity. [Truly, there's nothing new under the sun. This is the exact problem that afflicts millennials, according to some Instagram expert.]

Highlight(yellow) - V > Page 83 · Location 1129

And above all there is gambling, the cheapest of all luxuries. Even people on the verge of starvation can buy a few days' hope ('Something to live for', as they call it) by having a penny on a sweepstake. [Again, in my limited experience with poverty, this strikes me as very true. It's easy to imagine getting into a mindset of "just this one indulgence."]

Highlight(yellow) - V > Page 84 · Location 1145

rulers. It is quite likely that fish and chips, art-silk stockings, tinned salmon, cut-price chocolate (five two-ounce bars for sixpence), the movies, the radio, strong tea and the Football Pools have between them averted revolution. Therefore we are sometimes told that the whole thing is an astute manoeuvre by the governing class—a sort of 'bread and circuses' business—to hold the unemployed down. What I have seen of our governing class does not convince me that they have that much intelligence.

intelligence.

Highlight(yellow) - VI > Page 85 · Location 1164

accustomed. Yet it is curious how seldom the all-importance of food is recognised. You see statues everywhere to politicians, poets, bishops, but none to cooks or bacon-curers or market-gardeners. The Emperor Charles V is said to have erected a statue to the inventor of bloaters, but that is the only case I can think of at the moment.

Highlight(yellow) - VI > Page 89 · Location 1233

And the peculiar evil is this, that the less money you have, the less inclined you feel to spend it on wholesome food. A millionaire may enjoy breakfasting off orange juice and Ryvita biscuits; an unemployed man doesn't. Here the tendency of which I spoke at the end of the last chapter comes into play. When you are unemployed, which is to say when you are underfed, harassed, bored and miserable, you don't want to eat dull wholesome food. You want something a little bit 'tasty'. There is always some cheaply pleasant thing to tempt you. Let's have three pennorth of chips! Run out and buy us a twopenny ice-cream! Put the kettle on and we'll all have a nice cup of tea! That is how your mind works when you are at the PAC level. White bread-and-marg. and sugared tea don't nourish you to any extent, but they are nicer (at least most people think so) than brown bread-and-dripping and cold water. Unemployment is an endless misery that has got to be constantly palliated, and especially with tea, the Englishman's opium. A cup of tea or even an aspirin is much better as a temporary stimulant than a crust of brown bread.

Highlight(yellow) - VI > Page 92 · Location 1272

We may find in the long run that tinned food is a deadlier weapon than the machine gun.

PART II

Highlight(yellow) - VIII > Page 145 · Location 1593

You lived, so to speak, at two levels simultaneously. Theoretically you knew all about servants and how to tip them, although in practice you had one or, at most, two resident servants. Theoretically you knew how to wear your clothes and how to order a dinner, although in practice you could never afford to go to a decent tailor or a decent restaurant. Theoretically you knew how to shoot and ride, although in practice you had no horses to ride and not an inch of ground to shoot over. It was this that explained the attraction of India (more recently Kenya, Nigeria, etc.) for the lower-upper-middle class. The people who went there as soldiers and officials did not go there to make money, for a soldier or an official does not make money; they went there because in India, with cheap horses, free shooting, and hordes of black servants, it was so easy to play at being a gentleman.

Highlight(yellow) - VIII > Page 150 · Location 1667

Mr Somerset Maugham's On a Chinese Screen.

Highlight(yellow) - IX > Page 158 · Location 1773

When I was fourteen or fifteen I was an odious little snob, but no worse than other boys of my own age and class. I suppose there is no place in the world where snobbery is quite so ever-present or where it is cultivated in such refined and subtle forms as in an English public school. Here at least one cannot say that English 'education' fails to do its job. You forget your Latin and Greek within a few months of leaving school—I studied Greek for eight or ten years, and now, at thirty-three, I cannot even repeat the Greek alphabet—but your snobbishness, unless you persistently root it out like the bindweed it is, sticks by you till your grave.

Note - IX > Page 160 · Location 1810

Curious that he and Lewis were contemporaries

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Highlight(yellow) - IX > Page 161 · Location 1820

Moreover, they had been at war and were coming home with the soldier's attitude to life, which is fundamentally, in spite of discipline, a lawless attitude.

Highlight(yellow) - X > Page 173 · Location 1987

Nothing is easier than to be bosom pals with a pickpocket, if you know where to look for him; but it is very difficult to be bosom pals with a bricklayer.

Highlight(yellow) - X > Page 176 · Location 2031

Here you come upon the important fact that every revolutionary opinion draws part of its strength from a secret conviction that nothing can be changed.

Note - X > Page 177 · Location 2044

His description here of class difference sounds almost exactly like the racism that people love to talk about today. In so many ways, Orwell reminds me of Daniel Southwell.

Highlight(yellow) - X > Page 181 · Location 2100

Scratch the average pacifist and you find a jingo.

Highlight(yellow) - X > Page 182 · Location 2113

The modern English literary world, at any rate the highbrow section of it, is a sort of poisonous jungle where only weeds can flourish. It is just possible to be a literary gent and to keep your decency if you are a definitely popular writer—a writer of detective stories, for instance; but to be a highbrow, with a footing in the snootier magazines, means delivering yourself over to horrible campaigns of wire-pulling and backstairs-crawling. In the highbrow world you 'get on', if you 'get on' at all, not so much by your literary ability as by being the life and soul of cocktail parties and kissing the bums of verminous little lions.

Highlight(yellow) - X > Page 186 · Location 2172

If you want to make an enemy of a man, tell him that his ills are incurable.

Highlight(yellow) - XI > Page 188 · Location 2208

every empty belly is an argument for Socialism—

Highlight(yellow) - XI > Page 191 · Location 2250

the food-crank is by definition a person willing to cut himself off from human society in hopes of adding five years onto the life of his carcase; that is, a person out of touch with common humanity.

Note - XII > Page 206 · Location 2468

Machines

Highlight(yellow) - XII > Page 206 · Location 2475

[Quoting John Beevers] Work is a nuisance. We work because we have to and all work is done to provide us with leisure and the means of spending that leisure as enjoyably as possible. [#leisure](#)

Highlight(yellow) - XII > Page 211 · Location 2544

There are in fact very few activities which cannot be classed either as work or play according as you choose to regard them.

Note - XII > Page 214 · Location 2585

Travel

The sensitive person's hostility to the machine is in one sense unrealistic, because of the obvious fact that the machine has come to stay. But as an attitude of mind there is a great deal to be said for it. The machine has got to be accepted, but it is probably better to accept it rather as one accepts a drug—that is, grudgingly and suspiciously. Like a drug, the machine is useful, dangerous and habit-forming. The oftener one surrenders to it the tighter its grip becomes. You have only to look about you at this moment to realise with what sinister speed the machine is getting us into its power.

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