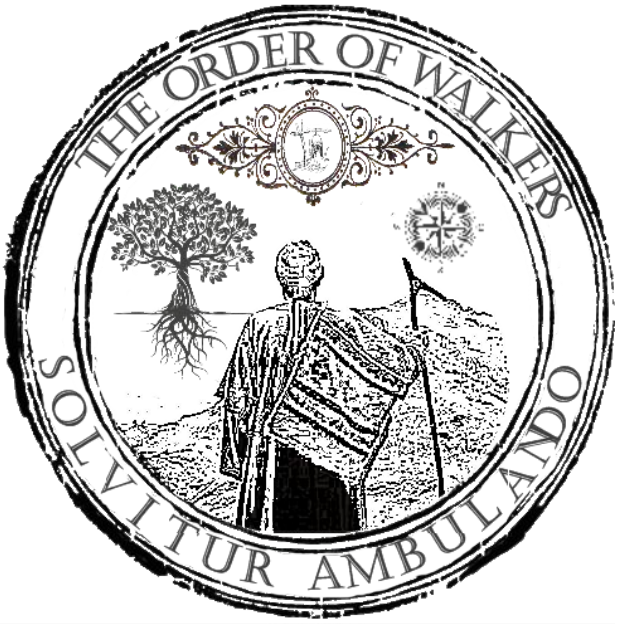

Readings: Volume 1

"But the beauty is in the walking — we are betrayed by destinations." – Gwyn Thomas

The Order Of Walkers


EX-LIBRIS
ANNE M. DANIELSEN

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Prefatory Notes

As a novice or veteran walker there is much study to do at your desk by lamp light. We look to previous generations of walkers who have chronicled their own fascination and enduring love of pedestrianism so that we might find our way.

Readings: Volume 1, is an anthology of public domain literature pertaining to the outdoor life, journey and walking. It draws upon historical and contemporary texts that may offer an insight for today. As a people, we are at great risk of losing our way if we do not consider the lessons learned from the past. Annotate, vandalise and doodle these pages to your heart's content. The provenance is yours.

Taking the time to stop and read whilst walking either solo or in a group will enhance your walking practice. This volume can offer you many tangents to philosophical thought or it can just quiet your hurried mind. It can be a springboard for further excursions and open a door to a simpler existence.

The fruits of a walking journey are abundant. We are afforded the luxury of boredom and the invitation to mystery.

I encourage group reading at your luncheon break when walking all day or at your evening briefing when on a multiday journey. Taking turns reading aloud creates a bond between the listener and the reader. The party enters a respectful space where active listening can be practised, heartbeats lowered and one’s mind can be “turned out to play”.

It's your choice as to whether to indulge discussion. These things will sort themselves when you are walking on the track. You will be saddling your charges with deep layered memories that will resonate long after the muscle pain has diminished.

The group reading practice is important to Order of Walkers formation. Lay your stick down, loosen the straps, untie the laces, pour a cup of tea and read.

E.V. Lucas published “The open road…a little book for wayfarers” in 1909. This appears at the front of the book and is relevant for this anthology.

EXPLANATION

THIS little book aims at nothing but providing companionship on the road for city-dwellers who make holiday. It has no claims to completeness of any kind: it is just a garland of good or enkindling poetry and prose fitted to urge folk into the open air, and, once there, to keep them glad they came—to slip easily from the pocket beneath a tree or among the heather, and provide lazy reading for the time of rest, with perhaps a phrase or two for the feet to step to and the mind to brood on when the rest is over.

E. V. L.

April, 1899.

Anthony Kost June 2026

Perge movere

The Journey

I speak of journeys because of course we are all on a journey ourselves. The comparison of life to a road is a very ancient one, and you and I are travelers along that road whether we think of it that way or not, traveling from the unknown into the unknown...

When we are on a journey, what is real is not so much the role we play, the mask we wear in the place that we are leaving, and not even the role we will soon be called to play. Instead, what comes increasingly real as we travel along is something much closer to the actual face that lies behind all the masks and that gives a kind of relative unity to all the different parts that our life demands that we play. In other words, travel can be a very unmasking experience, bringing us suddenly face to face with ourselves – as when we are gazing out of a train window at the endless line of telegraph poles whipping by, and we find that part of what we are looking at is our own reflection.

- Unknown author

Safety : In Perspective

"Walk" is the annual magazine of the Melbourne Bushwalkers that was produced between 1949 to 1987. This is the editorial from the 1964 edition.

Flying and walking might seem to be at opposite poles, but a recent article in a gliding magazine proved that they have one thing in common: to be responsible without being inhibited. This need is basic to all activities. It is particularly acute when there are obvious dangers, especially if the activity is confined to relatively few people. Recent happenings have highlighted this need. Last June three 15-year-olds walking in the Lerderderg Gorge were in the headlines almost before they realized they were overdue; in August there was the Hume Weir canoeing tragedy. The anxieties and personal loss associated with such events as the latter can be appreciated only by those who have suffered them, and words are certainly inadequate to convey our sympathy.

However, all too often after these occurrences there arise demands that such activities should be banned, or at least severely regulated. This is a natural reaction. It demands that we consider the matter of safety, and the right of the individual to decide for himself whether the flame is worth the candle; and included in the cost of the candle must be the worry and effort demanded of others if things happen to come unstuck - and that even then there are limits beyond which risks should not be taken. Our gliding author maintained, however, that one of the Freedoms worth fighting for was the freedom of an adult human to risk his or her own neck; and that modern society in its fullest sense is only workable on the assumption that this is so. There is no such thing as absolute safety. The best that can be done is to quote the odds against any event happening, and then to accept or reject those odds. We have to accept the fact that even life is given a value.

These are accepted facts in scientific circles although apparently as yet little known to the popular press. They are seldom made obvious, but the case is quoted of an inquiry into the cost of equipping all airliner passengers with parachutes. It turned out to be £29 million per life

saved. Airliners still do not carry parachutes! In this case, the passengers know that all the risks have been assessed, and they consider them to be acceptable when balanced against the fares that they are prepared to pay. And so does the third party to the deal: the community.

Aircraft occasionally crash on homes, factories and schools, but flying is never banned in consequence. It is one of the very things which make the richness of texture of present-day living. And despite the dangers attached to their use, so are such things as the motor car, electricity, ships; and even eating and drinking. In our society the acceptance of a personal risk almost invariably involves the community. It is the duty of us all to see that we do not take too much upon ourselves. We must assess the risks as well as we can, and do everything within reason to minimize them. This applies to everything: walking, gliding, motoring, or what-have-you. It means that we should adequately train and equip ourselves, and that we must learn our limitations and not be stunters or show-offs. But surely it does not mean that we should never accept any challenge; that we should be afraid to pit ourselves against natural obstacles. If it does, then nothing but decadence lies ahead of us.

Most outdoor activities can at times entail some risk. Occasionally these get to headline proportions; but let's keep them in perspective. There may be some form of craziness that should be banned, but bushwalking and gliding and canoeing for that matter are not among them. All who take part in them must, as we said in the beginning, retain a sense of responsibility without becoming inhibited. Let's hope that in return others will continue to talk safety: in perspective.

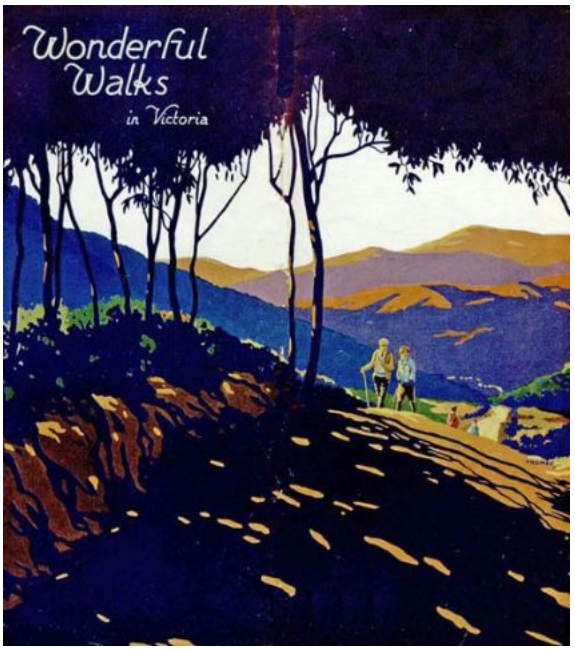
Fernando Pessoa

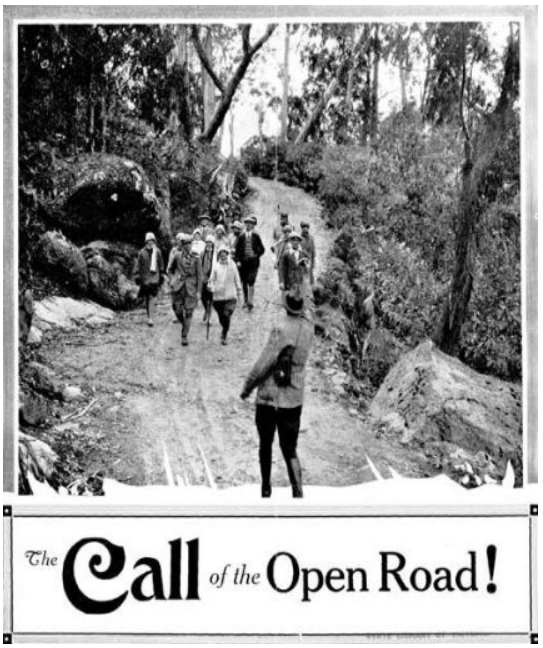
“There is a time when it is necessary to abandon the used clothes, which already have the shape of our body, and to forget our paths, which take us always to the same places. This is the time to cross the river: and if we don’t dare to do it, we will have stayed forever beneath ourselves.”

Wonderful Walks in Victoria

By The Betterment and Publicity Board. Victorian Railways

Published August 1931





Walking for health and pleasure is increasing in popularity in Victoria every year. In recent times the rare beauty of much of Victoria's countryside, and the splendid grandeur and rich luxuriance of the mountains and valleys of this State have become better and better known. No holiday season passes without innumerable parties of healthy, enthusiastic boys and men, and, in these days of energetic womanhood, young women, too, taking the road for health and pleasure—pleasure which no other form of travel can give.

Of all forms of exercise, there is, perhaps, none better or more convenient than that of walking. Walking brings us out into the open, where the air is purest.

It increases respiration, bringing greater supplies of pure oxygen to the lungs, and ensuring a pure blood stream, without which we cannot feel fit and well.

It makes the heart beat firmer, and it clears the brain, giving a feeling of exhilaration and well-being which, alone, makes this exercise well

worthwhile. As a recreation, walking is not easily surpassed. As an exercise it is known by all health authorities and students of physical culture to be one of the best which the human being can enjoy.

The walker is master of his own destiny. He may stop where he will and proceed as he likes; he may loiter amid the forest to boil his billy in a delightful spot by the stream; he may diverge as he wishes to enjoy more thoroughly the glories for which our magnificent mountain areas are so notable.

Victoria is splendidly suited to the needs of the walker. There are fine mountain routes with beautiful scenic views; there are valleys full of infinite charm.

The railways give ready access to every point to which the walker's attention is here directed, and the railway ticket facilities are such that there is no difficulty in the way of leaving a train at one point and joining another at a remotely distant station, after spending unforgettable days revelling in the rare beauty or the splendid majesty of the intervening wilds.

Expedition Behavior

The Finer Points by Howard Tomb. from the 1994 Book "The Cool of the Wild: An Extremist's Guide to Adventure Sports". This is an excerpt.

A good expedition team is like a powerful, well-oiled, finely-tuned marriage. Members cook meals together, carry burdens together, face challenges together, and finally go to bed together. A bad expedition, on the other hand, is an awkward, ugly, embarrassing thing characterized by bickering, filth, frustration, and crispy macaroni.

Nearly all bad expeditions have one thing in common: poor expedition behavior (EB). This is true even if team members follow the stated rules, such as Don't Step on the Rope, Separate Kerosene and Food, No Soap in the River, No Raccoons in the Tent, Keep your Ice Axe Out of My Eye, etc.

Unfortunately, too many rules of expedition behavior remain unspoken. Some leaders seem to assume that their team members already have strong and generous characters like their own. But judging from a few of the campers we've encountered, more rules ought to be spelled out. Here are ten of them.

RULE #1

Get the hell out of bed. Suppose your tent mates get up early to fetch water and fire up the stove while you lie comatose in your sleeping bag. As they run an extensive equipment check, coil ropes and fix your breakfast, they hear you start to snore. Last night you were their buddy; now they're drawing up lists of things about you that make them want to spit.

They will devise cruel punishments for you. You have earned them. The team concept is now defunct. Had you gotten out of bed, nobody would have had to suffer.

RULE #2

Do not be cheerful before breakfast. Some people wake up perky and happy as fluffy bunny rabbits. They put stress on those who wake up mean as rabid wolverines. Exhortations such as “Rise and shine, sugar!” and “Greet the dawn, pumpkin!” have been known to provoke pungent expletives from wolverine types. These curses, in turn, may offend fluffy bunny types. Indeed, they are issued with the sincere intent to offend. Thus, the day begins with flying fur and hurt feelings. The best early-morning EB is simple: Be quiet.

RULE #3

Do not complain. About anything. Ever. It’s ten below zero, visibility is four inches and wind-driven hailstones are embedding themselves in your face like shotgun pellets. Must you mention it? Do you think your friends haven’t noticed the weather? Make a suggestion. Tell a joke. Lead a prayer. Do not lodge a complaint. Your pack weighs 87 pounds and your cheap backpack straps are actually cutting into your flesh. Were you promised a personal sherpa? Did somebody cheat you out of a mule team? If you can’t carry your weight, get a motorhome.

RULE #4

Learn to cook at least one thing right. One expedition trick is so old that it is no longer amusing: on the first cooking assignment, the clever cook prepares a meal that resembles, say, Burnt Sock In Toxic Waste Sauce. The cook hopes to be relieved permanently from cooking duties. This is a childish approach to a problem that has been with us since people first started throwing lizards on the fire. Tricks are not a part of a team spirit. If you don’t like to cook, say so. Offer to wash dishes and to prepare the one thing you do know how to cook. Even if it is only tea. Remember that talented camp cooks sometimes get invited to join major expeditions in Nepal, all expenses paid.

RULE #5

Either a) Shampoo, or b) Do not remove your hat for any reason. After a week or so on the trail, without shampooing, hair forms angry little

clumps and wads. These leave the person beneath looking like an escapee from a mental ward. Such an appearance could shake a team's confidence in your judgment. If you can't shampoo, pull a wool hat down over your ears and leave it there, night and day, for the entire expedition.

RULE #6

Do not ask if anybody's seen your stuff. Experienced adventurers have systems for organizing their gear. They very rarely leave it strewn around camp or lying back on the trail. One of the most damning things you can do is ask your teammates if they've seen the tent poles you thought you packed 20 miles ago. Even in the unlikely event you get home alive, you will not be invited on the next trip.

Should you ever leave the tent poles 20 miles away, do not ask if anyone's seen them. Simply announce— with a good natured chuckle—that you are about to set off in the dark on a 40-mile hike to retrieve them, and that you are sorry. It's unprofessional to lose your spoon or your toothbrush. If something like this happens, don't mention it to anyone.

RULE #7

Never ask where you are. If you want to know where you are, look at the map. Try to figure it out yourself. If you're still confused, feel free to discuss the identities of landmarks around you and how they correspond to the cartography. If you a) suspect that a mistake has been made; and b) have experience in interpreting topographical maps; and c) are certain that your group leader is a novice or on drugs, speak up. Otherwise, follow the group like sheep.

RULE #8

Always carry more than your fair share. When the trip is over, would you rather be remembered as a rock or a sissy? Keep in mind that a pound or two of extra weight in your pack won't make your back hurt

any more than it already does. In any given group of flatlanders, somebody is bound to bicker about weight. When an argument begins, take the extra weight yourself. Then shake your head and gaze with pity at the slothful one. This is the mature response to childish behavior. On the trail that day, during a break, load the tenderfoot's pack with 20 pounds of gravel.

RULE #9

Do not get sunburned. Sunburn is not only painful and unattractive—it's also an obvious sign of inexperience. Most greenhorns wait too long before applying sunscreen. Once you're burned on an expedition, you may not have a chance to get out of the sun. Then the burn gets burned, skin peels away, blisters sprout on the already swollen lips...Anyway, you get the idea. Wear zinc oxide. You can see exactly where and how thickly it's applied and it gives you just about 100% protection. It does get on your sunglasses, all over your clothes, and in your mouth. But that's OK. Unlike sunshine, zinc oxide is non-toxic.

RULE #10

Do not get killed. Suppose you make the summit of K2 solo, chain-smoking Gitanes and carrying the complete works of Hemingway in hardcover. Pretty macho, huh? Suppose now that you take a vertical detour down a crevasse and never make it back to camp. Would you still qualify as a hero? And would it matter? Nobody's going to run any fingers through your new chest hair. The worst thing to have on your outdoor resume is a list of the possible locations of your body. Besides, your demise might distract your team members from enjoying what's left of their vacation. All expedition behavior really flows from this one principle: Think of your team—the beautiful machine—first. You are merely a cog in that machine. If you have something to prove, forget about joining an expedition. Your team will never have more than one member.

What Every Walker Knows !

Any experienced walker can tell you of tight spots that he has been in. The time when he found the creek flowing the wrong way and had to sit down and re-orientate himself. The time when the weather went bad on him and he had to use all he knew to keep warm and dry and find his way. At such times the walker must muster all the skill and experience that he has accumulated over the years to get himself and his party safely home again. Under such conditions there is extra stress on equipment. The urgent battle through exuberant vegetation, the penetrating wet, the bitter cold, the necessity for cooked food. All these exact a toll of skill and energy.

If at such times there is a failure of equipment then the burden is made greater and lives are endangered.

THE WISE WALKER USES **"PADDYMADE"** GEAR AND SEES THAT IT IS KEPT IN GOOD REPAIR. THEN HE KNOWS THAT HE CAN RELY ON HIS EQUIPMENT.

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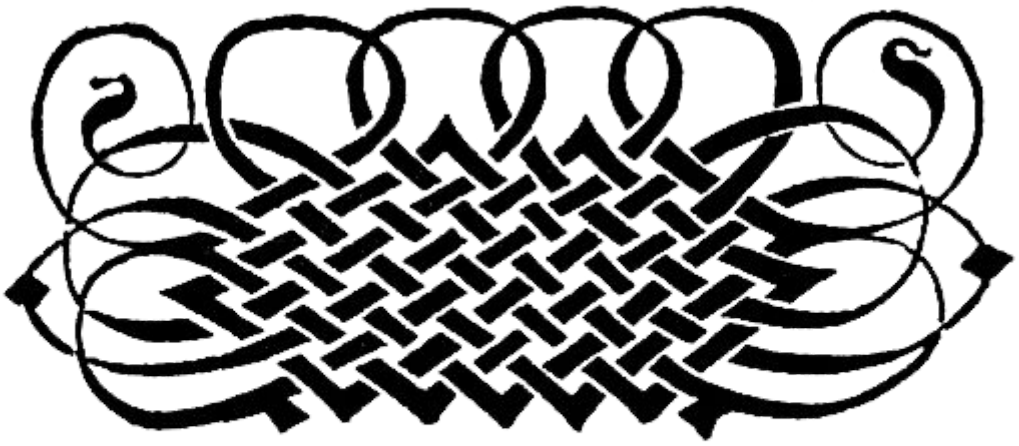


Stephen Graham

“The less you carry the more you will see, the less you spend the more you will experience. In tramping you are not earning a living, but earning a happiness. There is perhaps no greater test of friendship than going on a long tramp. You discover to one another all the egoisms and selfishnesses you possess.”

- Stephen Graham. The Gentle Art of Tramping

On the origins of human restlessness.

The Songlines is a 1987 book written by British novelist and travel writer Bruce Chatwin about the songs of Aboriginal Australians and their connections to nomadic travel. A roman à clef that combines novel, travelogue, and memoir, Chatwin blends elements of fiction and non-fiction to describe a trip to Australia's Northern Territory in search of a better understanding of Aboriginal culture and religion, the Aboriginal land rights movement, and the Australian Outback more generally. This is an excerpt.

I had a presentiment that the “traveling” phase of my life might be passing. I felt, before the malaise of settlement crept over me, that I should reopen those notebooks. I should set down on paper a résumé of the ideas, quotations and encounters which had amused and obsessed me; and which I hoped would shed light on what is, for me, the question of questions: the nature of human restlessness.

Pascal, in one of his gloomier pensées, gave it as his opinion that all our miseries stemmed from a single cause: our inability to remain quietly in a room. Why, he asked, must a man with sufficient to live on feel drawn to divert himself on long sea voyages? To dwell in another town? To go off in search of a peppercorn? Or to go off to war and break skulls?

Later, on further reflection, having discovered the cause of our misfortunes, he wished to understand the reason for them. He found one very good reason: namely, the natural unhappiness of our weak mortal condition; so unhappy that when we gave to it all our attention, nothing could console us.

One thing alone could alleviate our despair, and that was “distraction” (divertissement): yet this was the worst of our misfortunes, for in distraction we were prevented from thinking about ourselves and were gradually brought to ruin.

Could it be, I wondered, that our need for distraction, our mania for the new, was, in essence, an instinctive migratory urge akin to that of birds in autumn?

All the Great Teachers have preached that Man, originally, was a "wanderer in the scorching and barren wilderness of this world"—the words are those of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor—and that to rediscover his humanity, he must slough off attachments and take to the road.

My two most recent notebooks were crammed with jottings taken in South Africa, where I had examined, at first hand, certain evidence on the origin of our species. What I learned there—together with what I now knew about the Songlines—seemed to confirm the conjecture I had toyed with for so long: that Natural Selection has designed us—from the structure of our brain-cells to the structure of our big toe—for a career of seasonal journeys on foot through a blistering land of thorn-scrub or desert. If this were so; if the desert were "home"; if our instincts were forged in the desert; to survive the rigors of the desert—then it is easier to understand why greener pastures pall on us; why possessions exhaust us, and why Pascal's imaginary man found his comfortable lodgings a prison

Walking

Henry David Thoreau, the naturalist, philosopher, and author of such classics as Walden and "Civil Disobedience," contributed a number of writings to *The Atlantic* in its early years. The month after his death from tuberculosis, in May 1862, the magazine published "Walking," one of his most famous essays, which extolled the virtues of immersing oneself in nature and lamented the inevitable encroachment of private ownership upon the wilderness.

The complete essay wanders in all directions. This is an excerpt of the first eight pages which has some direct focus on pedestrianism.

I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil—to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society. I wish to make an extreme statement, if so I may make an emphatic one, for there are enough champions of civilization: the minister and the school committee and every one of you will take care of that.

I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks—who had a genius, so to speak, for *sauntering*, which word is beautifully derived "from idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked charity, under pretense of going *a la SainteTerre*," to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, "There goes a *Sainte-Terrer*," a Saunterer, a Holy-Lander. They who never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as they pretend, are indeed mere idlers and vagabonds; but they who do go there are saunterers in the good sense, such as I mean.

Some, however, would derive the word from *sans terre* without land or a home, which, therefore, in the good sense, will mean, having no particular home, but equally at home everywhere. For this is the secret of successful sauntering.

He who sits still in a house all the time may be the greatest vagrant of all; but the saunterer, in the good sense, is no more vagrant than the

meandering river, which is all the while sedulously seeking the shortest course to the sea. But I prefer the first, which, indeed, is the most probable derivation. For every walk is a sort of crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit in us, to go forth and reconquer this Holy Land from the hands of the Infidels.

It is true, we are but faint-hearted crusaders, even the walkers, nowadays, who undertake no persevering, never-ending enterprises. Our expeditions are but tours, and come round again at evening to the old hearthside from which we set out. Half the walk is but retracing our steps. We should go forth on the shortest walk, perchance, in the spirit of undying adventure, never to return, prepared to send back our embalmed hearts only as relics to our desolate kingdoms. If you are ready to leave father and mother, brother and sister, and wife and child and friends, and never see them again—if you have paid your debts, made your will, and settled all your affairs, and are a free man—then you are ready for a walk.

To come down to my own experience, my companion and I, for I sometimes have a companion, take pleasure in fancying ourselves knights of a new, or rather an old, order—not Equestrians or Chevaliers, not Ritters or Riders, but Walkers, a still more ancient and honorable class, I trust.

The Chivalric and heroic spirit which once belonged to the Rider seems now to reside in, or perchance to have subsided into, the Walker—not the Knight, but Walker, Errant. He is a sort of fourth estate, outside of Church and State and People.

We have felt that we almost alone hereabouts practiced this noble art; though, to tell the truth, at least if their own assertions are to be received, most of my townsmen would fain walk sometimes, as I do, but they cannot. No wealth can buy the requisite leisure, freedom, and independence which are the capital in this profession. It comes only by the grace of God. It requires a direct dispensation from Heaven to become a walker. You must be born into the family of the Walkers. *Ambulator nascitur, non fit.* Some of my townsmen, it is true, can

remember and have described to me some walks which they took ten years ago, in which they were so blessed as to lose themselves for half an hour in the woods; but I know very well that they have confined themselves to the highway ever since, whatever pretensions they may make to belong to this select class. No doubt they were elevated for a moment as by the reminiscence of a previous state of existence, when even they were foresters and outlaws.

I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least—and it is commonly more than that—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements. You may safely say, A penny for your thoughts, or a thousand pounds. When sometimes I am reminded that the mechanics and shopkeepers stay in their shops not only all the forenoon, but all the afternoon too, sitting with crossed legs, so many of them—as if the legs were made to sit upon, and not to stand or walk upon—I think that they deserve some credit for not having all committed suicide long ago.

I, who cannot stay in my chamber for a single day without acquiring some rust, and when sometimes I have stolen forth for a walk at the eleventh hour, or four o'clock in the afternoon, too late to redeem the day, when the shades of night were already beginning to be mingled with the daylight, have felt as if I had committed some sin to be atoned for—I confess that I am astonished at the power of endurance, to say nothing of the moral insensibility, of my neighbors who confine themselves to shops and offices the whole day for weeks and months, aye, and years almost together.

I know not what manner of stuff they are of, sitting there now at three o'clock in the afternoon, as if it were three o'clock in the morning. Bonaparte may talk of the three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage, but it is nothing to the courage which can sit down cheerfully at this hour in the afternoon over against one's self whom you have known all the morning, to starve out a garrison to whom you are bound by such strong ties of sympathy.

I wonder that about this time, or say between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, too late for the morning papers and too early for the evening ones, there is not a general explosion heard up and down the street, scattering a legion of antiquated and house-bred notions and whims to the four winds for an airing—and so the evil cure itself.

How womankind, who are confined to the house still more than men, stand it I do not know; but I have ground to suspect that most of them do not *stand* it at all. When, early in a summer afternoon, we have been shaking the dust of the village from the skirts of our garments, making haste past those houses with purely Doric or Gothic fronts, which have such an air of repose about them, my companion whispers that probably about these times their occupants are all gone to bed.

Then it is that I appreciate the beauty and the glory of architecture, which itself never turns in, but forever stands out and erect, keeping watch over the slumberers.

No doubt temperament, and, above all, age, have a good deal to do with it. As a man grows older, his ability to sit still and follow indoor occupations increases. He grows vespertinal in his habits as the evening of life approaches, till at last he comes forth only just before sundown, and gets all the walk that he requires in half an hour.

But the walking of which I speak has nothing in it akin to taking exercise, as it is called, as the sick take medicine at stated hours—as the Swinging of dumb- bells or chairs; but is itself the enterprise and adventure of the day. If you would get exercise, go in search of the springs of life. Think of a man's swinging dumbbells for his health, when those springs are bubbling up in far-off pastures unsought by him!

Moreover, you must walk like a camel, which is said to be the only beast which ruminates when walking. When a traveler asked Wordsworth's servant to show him her master's study, she answered, “Here is his library, but his study is out of doors.”

Living much out of doors, in the sun and wind, will no doubt produce a certain roughness of character—will cause a thicker cuticle to grow over some of the finer qualities of our nature, as on the face and hands, or as severe manual labor robs the hands of some of their delicacy of touch. So staying in the house, on the other hand, may produce a softness and smoothness, not to say thinness of skin, accompanied by an increased sensibility to certain impressions.

Perhaps we should be more susceptible to some influences important to our intellectual and moral growth, if the sun had shone and the wind blown on us a little less; and no doubt it is a nice matter to proportion rightly the thick and thin skin. But methinks that is a scurf that will fall off fast enough—that the natural remedy is to be found in the proportion which the night bears to the day, the winter to the summer, thought to experience. There will be so much the more air and sunshine in our thoughts. The callous palms of the laborer are conversant with finer tissues of self-respect and heroism, whose touch thrills the heart, than the languid fingers of idleness. That is mere sentimentality that lies abed by day and thinks itself white, far from the tan and callus of experience.

When we walk, we naturally go to the fields and woods: what would become of us, if we walked only in a garden or a mall? Even some sects of philosophers have felt the necessity of importing the woods to themselves, since they did not go to the woods. “They planted groves and walks of Platanes,” where they took *subdiales ambulationes* in porticos open to the air. Of course it is of no use to direct our steps to the woods, if they do not carry us thither. I am alarmed when it happens that I have walked a mile into the woods bodily, without getting there in spirit. In my afternoon walk I would forget all my morning occupations and my obligations to Society. But it sometimes happens that I cannot easily shake off the village. The thought of some work will run in my head and I am not where my body is—I am out of my senses. In my walks I would return to my senses. What business have I in the woods, if I am thinking of something out of the woods? I suspect myself, and cannot help a shudder when I find myself so

implicated even in what are called good works—for this may sometimes happen.

My vicinity affords many good walks; and though for so many years I have walked almost every day, and sometimes for several days together, I have not yet exhausted them. An absolutely new prospect is a great happiness, and I can still get this any afternoon. Two or three hours' walking will carry me to as strange a country as I expect ever to see. A single farmhouse which I had not seen before is sometimes as good as the dominions of the King of Dahomey. There is in fact a sort of harmony discoverable between the capabilities of the landscape within a circle of ten miles' radius, or the limits of an afternoon walk, and the threescore years and ten of human life. It will never become quite familiar to you.

Nowadays almost all man's improvements, so called, such as the building of houses and the cutting down of the forest and of all large trees, simply deform the landscape, and make it more and more tame and cheap.

A people who would begin by burning the fences and let the forest stand! I saw the fences half consumed, their ends lost in the middle of the prairie, and some worldly miser with a surveyor looking after his bounds, while heaven had taken place around him, and he did not see the angels going to and fro, but was looking for an old post-hole in the midst of paradise. I looked again, and saw him standing in the middle of a boggy Stygian fen, surrounded by devils, and he had found his bounds without a doubt, three little stones, where a stake had been driven, and looking nearer, I saw that the Prince of Darkness was his surveyor.

I can easily walk ten, fifteen, twenty, any number of miles, commencing at my own door, without going by any house, without crossing a road except where the fox and the mink do: first along by the river, and then the brook, and then the meadow and the woodside.

There are square miles in my vicinity which have no inhabitant. From many a hill I can see civilization and the abodes of man afar. The farmers and their works are scarcely more obvious than woodchucks and their burrows. Man and his affairs, church and state and school, trade and commerce, and manufactures and agriculture, even politics, the most alarming of them all—I am pleased to see how little space they occupy in the landscape. Politics is but a narrow field, and that still narrower highway yonder leads to it. I sometimes direct the traveler thither. If you would go to the political world, follow the great road, follow that market-man, keep his dust in your eyes, and it will lead you straight to it; for it, too, has its place merely, and does not occupy all space. I pass from it as from a bean field into the forest, and it is forgotten.

In one half-hour I can walk off to some portion of the earth's surface where a man does not stand from one year's end to another, and there, consequently, politics are not, for they are but as the cigar-smoke of a man.

The village is the place to which the roads tend, a sort of expansion of the highway, as a lake or a river. It is the body of which roads are the arms and legs—a trivial or quadrivial place, the thoroughfare and ordinary of travelers. The word is from the Latin *villa* which together with *via*, a way, or more anciently *ved* and *vella*, Varro derives from veho, to carry, because the villa is the place to and from which things are carried. They who got their living by teaming were said *vellaturam facere*. Hence, too, the Latin word *vilis* and our vile, also *villain*. This suggests what kind of degeneracy villagers are liable to. They are wayworn by the travel that goes by and over them, without traveling themselves.

Some do not walk at all; others walk in the highways; a few walk across lots. Roads are made for horses and men of business. I do not travel in them much, comparatively, because I am not in a hurry to get to any tavern or grocery or livery-stable or depot to which they lead. I am a good horse to travel, but not from choice a roadster. The landscape-painter uses the figures of men to mark a road. He would not

make that use of my figure. I walk out into nature such as the old prophets and poets, Menu, Moses, Homer, Chaucer, walked in. You may name it America, but it is not America; neither Americus Vespueius, nor Columbus, nor the rest were the discoverers of it. There is a truer amount of it in mythology than in any history of America, so called, that I have seen.

At present, in this vicinity, the best part of the land is not private property; the landscape is not owned, and the walker enjoys comparative freedom. But possibly the day will come when it will be partitioned off into so-called pleasure-grounds, in which a few will take a narrow and exclusive pleasure only—when fences shall be multiplied, and man-traps and other engines invented to confine men to the public road, and walking over the surface of God's earth shall be construed to mean trespassing on some gentleman's grounds.

To enjoy a thing exclusively is commonly to exclude yourself from the true enjoyment of it. Let us improve our opportunities, then, before the evil days come.

What is it that makes it so hard sometimes to determine whether we will walk? I believe that there is a subtle magnetism in Nature, which, if we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright. It is not indifferent to us which way we walk. There is a right way; but we are very liable from heedlessness and stupidity to take the wrong one.

We would fain take that walk, never yet taken by us through this actual world, which is perfectly symbolical of the path which we love to travel in the interior and ideal world; and sometimes, no doubt, we find it difficult to choose our direction, because it does not yet exist distinctly in our idea.

When I go out of the house for a walk, uncertain as yet whither I will bend my steps, and submit myself to my instinct to decide for me, I find, strange and whimsical as it may seem, that I finally and inevitably settle southwest, toward some particular wood or meadow or deserted pasture or hill in that direction. My needle is slow to settle, varies a few

degrees, and does not always point due southwest, it is true, and it has good authority for this variation, but it always settles between west and south-southwest. The future lies that way to me, and the earth seems more unexhausted and richer on that side. The outline which would bound my walks would be, not a circle, but a parabola, or rather like one of those cometary orbits which have been thought to be non-returning curves, in this case opening westward, in which my house occupies the place of the sun. I turn round and round irresolute sometimes for a quarter of an hour, until I decide, for a thousandth time, that I will walk into the southwest or west. Eastward I go only by force; but westward I go free. Thither no business leads me. It is hard for me to believe that I shall find fair landscapes or sufficient wildness and freedom behind the eastern horizon. I am not excited by the prospect of a walk thither; but I believe that the forest which I see in the western horizon stretches uninterruptedly toward the setting sun, and there are no towns nor cities in it of enough consequence to disturb me. Let me live where I will, on this side is the city, on the wilderness, and ever I am leaving the city more and more, and withdrawing into the wilderness.

I should not lay so much stress on this fact, if I did not believe that something like this is the prevailing tendency of my countrymen. I must walk toward Oregon, and not toward Europe. And that way the nation is moving, and I may say that mankind progress from east to west. Within a few years we have witnessed the phenomenon of a southeastward migration, in the settlement of Australia; but this affects us as a retrograde movement, and, judging from the moral and physical character of the first generation of Australians, has not yet proved a successful experiment.

The Further One Goes

Paul Stewart. 2010

As the car made its way up the tarmac ribbon that runs from Harrietville to the top of Mt Hotham, the setting sun filtered its way through the trees. One of the intrepid hikers aboard took a moment to enjoy the comfort he would leave behind for the next few days. He closed his eyes and smiled, enjoying the disrhythmic dance of light and shade being performed upon his eyelids.

In time the car climbed above the snowline and disgorged its occupants. They stood on the slopes of the broad mountain looking across the ridge to the north, the left hand side of their faces painted a gentle orange by the hazy orb that hung so low in the sky it seemed beneath them.

The Razorback - the ridge upon which they would be walking was well named as each undulation that rose along it bore an undeniable resemblance to the lumbar joint of a giant. The spine of this sleeping titan stretched far out into the distance, crowned by a steep conical peak ten kilometres away - Mt Feathertop.

With nary of word said among them, the group of five shouldered their packs and set off down the track that led along the ridge. Such was the ethereal calm that soon fell over the party that conversation seemed an unnecessary ornament to the occasion. In the distance the occasional cry of an unseen bird was all that could be heard beyond the crunching footfall of the five men.

The world - the other world, full of demands and denials - became hard to perceive, hidden behind the veil of nature that had been drawn around them. Payrolls and pay rises seemed inconsequential as the soft light of dusk gave way to the clarity of night. To the west the sun fell below the horizon as a hunter's moon rose in the east. Up the centre of the celestial equilibrium walked the hikers, each man in his own headspace, interpreting the outlook in his own way.

The stars came out so slowly, no-one was sure when they had first appeared. Of course, they had always been there, even in the daytime, staring down dispassionately from the heavens. But they did not seem indifferent to the walkers - they were as benevolent as the maternal moon which lit the way across shards of granite and mounds of loam that lay across the track.

In the cooling alpine air, a faint umbra encircled the moon, a halo upon the head of the walkers' guide. The line of men stretched out and the distance between the fastest and slowest walker grew to half an hour. And yet despite this space, there was a unity that had enveloped the group. A unity of purpose and of place. They had separated themselves from bricks and steel of the city and were now a part of the sublime architecture of the Australian bush. Although the path ahead could be seen for miles - literally - each step taken uncovered a unique perspective upon the land before them. Subtle changes in

mountainscape rewarded their labours: little moonlit dells and wooded enclaves were glimpsed at; an unseen brook played a delicate tune somewhere beyond a copse of thin, dark trees; a line of rocks resembling hunched trolls appeared and disappeared like Celtic spirits.

And whilst they walked across this surreal stage, each man's thoughts gradually turned inward, persuaded there by the peace that lay upon the land. Their ruminations, they kept to themselves - it was not their way to share such things - but one thing was clear by the time the last man walked into the campsite below Mt Feathertop - all had found that special peace known to people who venture out into the wilderness. Without articulating it, each man had been reminded of the secret that all hikers know - the further one goes out into the natural world, the more he travels towards himself.

Winter Sunshine

Excerpt from II. THE EXHILARATIONS OF THE ROAD

For companion I should want a veteran of the war! Those marches put something into him I like. Even at this distance his mettle is but little softened. As soon as he gets warmed up, it all comes back to him. He catches your step and away you go, a gay, adventurous, half-predatory couple. How quickly he falls into the old ways of jest and anecdote and song! You may have known him for years without having heard him hum an air, or more than casually revert to the subject of his experience during the war. You have even questioned and cross-questioned him without firing the train you wished. But get him out on a vacation tramp, and you can walk it all out of him. By the camp-fire at night, or swinging along the streams by day, song, anecdote, adventure, come to the surface, and you wonder how your companion has kept silent so long.

It is another proof of how walking brings out the true character of a man. The devil never yet asked his victims to take a walk with him. You will not be long in finding your companion out. All disguises will fall away from him. As his pores open his character is laid bare. His deepest and most private self will come to the top. It matters little with whom you ride, so he be not a pickpocket; for both of you will, very likely, settle down closer and firmer in your reserve, shaken down like a measure of corn by the jolting as the journey proceeds. But walking is a more vital copartnership; the relation is a closer and more sympathetic one, and you do not feel like walking ten paces with a stranger without speaking to him.

Hence the fastidiousness of the professional walker in choosing or admitting a companion, and hence the truth of a remark of Emerson, that you will generally fare better to take your dog than to invite your neighbor. Your cur-dog is a true pedestrian, and your neighbor is very likely a small politician. The dog enters thoroughly into the spirit of the enterprise; he is not indifferent or preoccupied; he is constantly sniffing adventure, laps at every spring, looks upon every field and wood as a new world to be explored, is ever on some fresh trail, knows

something important will happen a little farther on, gazes with the true wonder-seeing eyes, whatever the spot or whatever the road finds it good to be there,—in short, is just that happy, delicious, excursive vagabond that touches one at so many points, and whose human prototype in a companion robs miles and leagues of half their power to fatigue.

Persons who find themselves spent in a short walk to the market or the post-office, or to do a little shopping, wonder how it is that their pedestrian friends can compass so many weary miles and not fall down from sheer exhaustion; ignorant of the fact that the walker is a kind of projectile that drops far or near according to the expansive force of the motive that set it in motion, and that it is easy enough to regulate the charge according to the distance to be traversed. If I am loaded to carry only one mile and am compelled to walk three, I generally feel more fatigue than if I had walked six under the proper impetus of preadjusted resolution. In other words, the will or corporeal mainspring, whatever it be, is capable of being wound up to different degrees of tension, so that one may walk all day nearly as easy as half that time, if he is prepared beforehand. He knows his task, and he measures and distributes his powers accordingly. It is for this reason that an unknown road is always a long road.

We cannot cast the mental eye along it and see the end from the beginning. We are fighting in the dark, and cannot take the measure of our foe.

Every step must be preordained and provided for in the mind. Hence also the fact that to vanquish one mile in the woods seems equal to compassing three in the open country. The furlongs are ambushed, and we magnify them.

Then, again, how annoying to be told it is only five miles to the next place when it is really eight or ten! We fall short nearly half the distance, and are compelled to urge and roll the spent ball the rest of the way. In such a case walking degenerates from a fine art to a mechanic art; we walk merely; to get over the ground becomes the one serious and engrossing thought; whereas success in walking is not to let your right foot know what your left foot doeth. Your heart must

furnish such music that in keeping time to it your feet will carry you around the globe without knowing it. The walker I would describe takes no note of distance; his walk is a sally, a bonmot, an unspoken jeu d'esprit; the ground is his butt, his provocation; it furnishes him the resistance his body craves; he rebounds upon it, he glances off and returns again, and uses it gayly as his tool.

I do not think I exaggerate the importance or the charms of pedestrianism, or our need as a people to cultivate the art. I think it would tend to soften the national manners, to teach us the meaning of leisure, to acquaint us with the charms of the open air, to strengthen and foster the tie between the race and the land. No one else looks out upon the world so kindly and charitably as the pedestrian; no one else gives and takes so much from the country he passes through.

Next to the laborer in the fields, the walker holds the closest relation to the soil; and he holds a closer and more vital relation to nature because he is freer and his mind more at leisure.

Man takes root at his feet, and at best he is no more than a potted plant in his house or carriage till he has established communication with the soil by the loving and magnetic touch of his soles to it. Then the tie of association is born; then spring those invisible fibres and rootlets through which character comes to smack of the soil, and which make a man kindred to the spot of earth he inhabits.

The roads and paths you have walked along in summer and winter weather, the fields and hills which you have looked upon in lightness and gladness of heart, where fresh thoughts have come into your mind, or some noble prospect has opened before you, and especially the quiet ways where you have walked in sweet converse with your friend, pausing under the trees, drinking at the spring,—henceforth they are not the same; a new charm is added; those thoughts spring there perennial, your friend walks there forever.

We have produced some good walkers and saunderers, and some noted climbers; but as a staple recreation, as a daily practice, the mass of the people dislike and despise walking. Thoreau said he was a good horse, but a poor roadster. I chant the virtues of the roadster as well. I sing of the sweetness of gravel, good sharp quartz-grit. It is the proper condiment for the sterner seasons, and many a human gizzard would

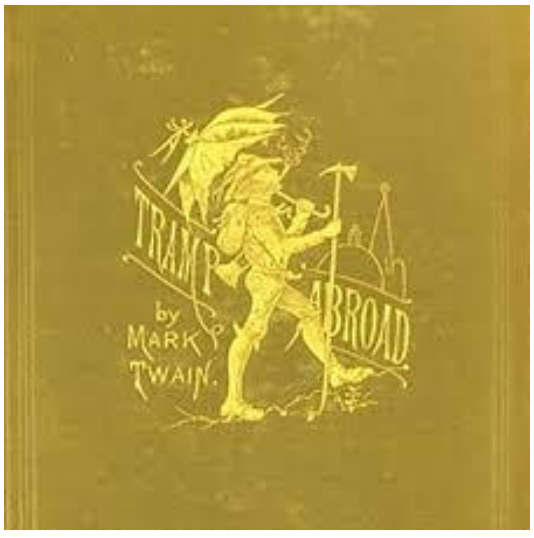
be cured of half its ills by a suitable daily allowance of it. I think Thoreau himself would have profited immensely by it. His diet was too exclusively vegetable. A man cannot live on grass alone. If one has been a lotus-eater all summer, he must turn gravel-eater in the fall and winter. Those who have tried it know that gravel possesses an equal though an opposite charm.

It spurs to action. The foot tastes it and henceforth rests not. The joy of moving and surmounting, of attrition and progression, the thirst for space, for miles and leagues of distance, for sights and prospects, to cross mountains and thread rivers, and defy frost, heat, snow, danger, difficulties, seizes it; and from that day forth its possessor is enrolled in the noble army of walkers.

A Tramp Abroad

Originally published in 1880 A Tramp Abroad is a work of travel literature, including a mixture of autobiography and fictional events, by American author Mark Twain.

“Now, the true charm of pedestrianism does not lie in the walking, or in the scenery, but in the talking. The walking is good to time the movement of the tongue by, and to keep the blood and the brain stirred up and active; the scenery and the woodsy smells are good to bear in upon a man an unconscious and unobtrusive charm and solace to eye and soul and sense; but the supreme pleasure comes from the talk. It is no matter whether one talks wisdom or nonsense, the case is the same, the bulk of the enjoyment lies in the wagging of the gladsome jaw and the flapping of the sympathetic ear. And what motley variety of subjects a couple of people will casually rake over in the course of a day's tramp! There being no constraint, a change of subject is always in order, and so a body is not likely to keep pegging at a single topic until it grows tiresome. We discussed everything we knew, during the first fifteen or twenty minutes, that morning, and then branched out into the glad, free, boundless realm of the things we were not certain about.”



Paul Theroux

An Excerpt from “The Happy Isles of Oceania”. It is a travel book written by Paul and published in 1992. It is an account of a trip taken through the Pacific Islands shortly after the break-up of his first marriage. Starting in New Zealand, he travels to Australia and Papua New Guinea and then follows the clusters of islands throughout the Pacific Ocean, passing through Easter Island and finishing his trip in Hawaii.

"There is an intense but simple thrill in setting off in the morning on a mountain trail, knowing that everything you need is on your back. It is a confidence in having left the inessentials behind and of entering a world of natural beauty that has not been violated, where money has no value, and possessions are a dead weight. The person with the fewest possessions is the freest. Thoreau was right."

Leslie Stephen

An excerpt from “In Praise of Walking.”

“When you have made an early start, followed the coastguard track on the slopes above the cliffs, struggled through the gold and purple carpeting of gorse and heather on the moors, dipped down into quaint little coves with a primitive fishing village, followed the blinding white ness of the sands round a lonely bay, and at last emerged upon a headland where you can settle into a nook of the rocks, look down upon the glorious blue of the Atlantic waves breaking into foam on the granite, and see the distant sea-levels glimmering away till they blend imperceptibly into cloudland ; then you can consume your modest sandwiches, light your pipe, and feel more virtuous and thoroughly at peace with the universe than it is easy even to conceive yourself elsewhere. I have fancied myself on such occasions a felicitous blend of poet and saint which is an agreeable sensation. What I wish to point out, however, is that the sensation is confined to the walker.

Edward Abbey

“Walking takes longer… than any other known form of locomotion except crawling. Thus it stretches time and prolongs life. Life is already too short to waste on speed.”

Of Men and Mountains

Of Men and Mountains is a book of personal adventure and discovery of William O. Douglas. It is an account of the way Douglas and other men found a richer life in the mountains and how they found something else besides. In such country Douglas has noted, "Men can find deep solitude and under conditions of grandeur that are startling, he can come to know both himself and God."

I learned early that the richness of life is found in adventure. Adventure calls on all the faculties of mind and spirit. It develops self-reliance and independence. Life then teems with excitement. But man is not ready for adventure unless he is rid of fear. For fear confines him and limits his scope. He stays tethered by strings of doubt and indecision and has only a small and narrow world to explore. This book may help others to use the mountains to prepare for adventure.

They, if they are among the uninitiated, may be inspired to search out the high alpine basins and fragile flowers that flourish there. They may come to know the exhilaration of wind blowing through them on rocky pinnacles. They may recognize the music of the conifers when it comes both in whispered melodies and in the fullness of the wind instruments. They may discover the glory of a blade of grass and find their own relationship to the universe in the song of the willow thrush at dusk.

They may learn to worship God where pointed spires of balsam fir turn a mountain meadow into a cathedral.

Discovery is adventure. There is an eagerness, touched at times with tenseness, as man moves ahead into the unknown. Walking

the wilderness is indeed like living. The horizon drops away, bringing new sights, sounds, and smells from the earth. When one moves through the forests, his sense of discovery is quickened. Man is back in the environment from which he emerged to build factories, churches, and schools. He is primitive again, matching his wits against the earth and sky. He is free of the restraints of society and free of its safeguards too.

Boys, perhaps more deeply than men, know this experience. Eleanor Chaffee has expressed that concept poignantly:

“Who but a boy would wander into the night
Against the sensible advice of those much older,
Where silent shadows cut the moon’s thin light
And only maples lean to touch his shoulder?
What does he hope to find, what fever stirs his blood
and guides his feet to walk alone?
He will return, his sweater stuck with burrs
And in his hand a useless, shapeless stone,
But something in his face, secret, withdrawn
Will go with him upstairs, and to his sleep.
He is as furtive now as a young wild fawn:
His eyes are darker now, and large and deep.
Who but a boy can find such subtle magic
In the world his elders find so grave, so tragic? “

Walking Alone

The poet Michael R Anderson wrote the poem “Walking Alone” as a response to: "Alone", by Edgar Allan Poe. This is the final stanza.

"Singing the same song at a different tone, In thoughts, destined to die, unknown. Born unto a world not of our own, We walked together, walking alone."

The Footpath Way

Hilaire Belloc wrote the introduction for an anthology for walkers "The footpath way". It was published by Sidgwick and Jackson LTD in 1911. This is an excerpt.

This is what happens when a man walks: first of all he is in stable equilibrium, though the arc of stability is minute. If he stands with his feet well apart, his centre of gravity (which is about half way up him or a little more) may oscillate within an arc of about five degrees on either side of stability and tend to return to rest. But if it oscillates beyond that five degrees or so, the stability of his equilibrium is lost, and down he comes. Men have been known to sleep standing up without a support, especially on military service, which is the most fatiguing thing in the world; but it is extremely rare, and you may say of a man so standing, even with his feet well spread, that he is already doing a fine athletic feat.

But wait a moment: he desires to go, to proceed, to reach a distant point, and instead of going on all fours, where equilibrium would indeed be stable, what does he do? He deliberately lifts one of his supports off the ground, and sends his equilibrium to the devil; at the same time he leans a little forward so as to make himself fall towards the object he desires to attain. You do not know that he does this, but that is because you are a man and your ignorance of it is like the ignorance in which so many really healthy people stand to religion, or the ignorance of a child who thinks his family established forever in comfort, wealth and security.

What you really do, man, when you want to get to that distant place (and let this be a parable of all adventure and of all desire) is to take an enormous risk, the risk of coming down bang and breaking something: you lift one foot off the ground, and, as though that were not enough, you deliberately throw your centre of gravity forward so that you begin to fall.

That is the first act of the comedy.

The second act is that you check your fall by bringing the foot which you had swung into the air down upon the ground again.
That you would say was enough of a bout. Slide the other foot up, take a rest, get your breath again and glory in your feat. But not a bit of it! The moment you have got that loose foot of yours firm on the earth, you use the impetus of your first tumble to begin another one. You get your centre of gravity by the momentum of your going well forward of the foot that has found the ground, you lift the other foot without a care, you let it swing in the fashion of a pendulum, and you check your second fall in the same manner as you checked your first; and even after that second clever little success you do not bring your feet both firmly to the ground to recover yourself before the next venture: you go on with the business, get your centre of gravity forward of the foot that is now on the ground, swinging the other beyond it like a pendulum, stopping your third catastrophe, and so on; and you have come to do all this so that you think it the most natural thing in the world!

A Lot Of Walking Away Will Do Your Life Good

Dodinsky

Walk away from arguments that lead you to anger and nowhere.

Walk away from people who deliberately put you down.

Walk away from the practice of pleasing people who choose to never see your worth.

Walk away from any thought that undermines your peace of mind.

Walk away from judgmental people, they do not know the struggle you are facing and what you have been through.

All away from your mistakes and fear, they do not determine your fate.

The more you walk away from things that poison your soul, the healthier your life will be.