

Atomic Energy Education Society, Mumbai

Book: Honeycomb; Chapter: 9

A Bicycle in good repair

-Jerome K Jerome



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'THE SECOND HALF' – WHAT IS THERE TO READ?

- Now, came the turn of the gear case as the author's friend got busy in taking off the gear-case. The author warned him not to meddle with the gear-case, but his friend said that nothing was easier as taking off the gear-case. It was really easy taking it off but had while fixing it back to its place, the whole world turned topsy-turvy for him.
- Until now, his bicycle which was in good condition, lay scattered, divided in many parts. The Author, almost on the verge of losing his consciousness, wanted to stop his friend from causing further troubles, but he admitted that he could not hurt the feelings of others. This was followed by the tightening of the chain which he tightened to an extent that it stopped moving. He then loosened it until it became twice as loose as it was before.



'THE SECOND HALF' – WHAT IS THERE TO READ?

- After applying all his efforts and experiments at length, the author's friend seemed to be contended and now wanted to put all the pieces back into their place. This also required a lot of time and a great effort. The man was inexperienced and knew nothing about the mechanism of a bicycle. After struggling for many hours, his friend was somehow able to fix the different parts of the bicycle. The author took him to his back kitchen where his friend cleaned himself and then the author sent him back to his home.



He then said that while he was about it he would see to the chain for me, and at once began taking off the gear-case. I did try to dissuade him from that. I told him what an experienced friend of mine once said to me solemnly: "If anything goes wrong with your gear-case, sell the machine and buy a new one; it comes cheaper."

He said, "People talk like that who understand nothing about machines. Nothing is easier than taking off a gear-case."

I had to confess he was right. In less than five minutes he had the gear-case in two pieces, lying on the path, and was grovelling for screws. He said it was always a mystery to him the way screws disappeared.

Common sense continued to whisper to me: 'Stop him, before he does any more mischief. You have a right to protect your own property from the ravages of a lunatic. Take him by the scruff of the neck, and kick him out of the gate!'

But I am weak when it comes to hurting other people's feelings, and I let him muddle on.

DIFFICULT WORDS & MEANINGS

SL NO	WORDS/PHRASAL VERB	MEANINGS
1.	TAKING – OFF	TO REMOVE
2.	DISSUADE	DISCOURAGE
3.	CONFESS	ADMIT
4.	GROVELLING	CRAWL FACING DOWNWARDS
5.	MYSTERY	PUZZLE
6.	MISCHIEF	PRANK
7.	RAVAGES	RUINS
8.	LUNATIC	MAD PERSON
9.	SRUFF	BACK OF NECK

He gave up looking for the rest of the screws. He said screws had a knack of turning up when you least expected them, and that now he would see to the chain. He tightened it till it would not move; next he loosened it until it was twice as loose as it was before. Then he said we had better think about getting the front wheel back into its place again. I held the fork open, and he worried with the wheel. At the end of ten minutes I suggested he should hold the fork, and that I should handle the wheel; and we changed places.

At length we did get the thing into position; and the moment it was in position he burst out laughing. I said, "What's the joke?" He said, "Well, I am an ass!"

It was the first thing he had said that made me respect him. I asked him what had led him to the discovery. He said, "We've forgotten the balls!" . I looked for my hat; it was lying topsy-turvy in the middle of the path. He was of a cheerful disposition. He said, "Well, we must put back all we can find, and trust to providence."

DIFFICULT WORDS & MEANINGS

SL NO	WORDS	MEANINGS
1	GAVE UP	STOPPED DOING SOMETHING
2	KNACK	FLAIR
3	FORK	PART OF A BICYCLE HOLDING THE FRONT WHEEL
4	WORRIED	ANXIOUS
5	AT LENGTH	AFTER A LONG TIME
6	TOPSY-TURVY	UPSIDE DOWN
7	CHEERFUL	HAPPY
8	DISPOSITION	TEMPERAMENT
9	PROVIDENCE	FATE

We found eleven. We fixed six on one side and five on the other, and half an hour later the wheel was in its place again. It need hardly be added that it really did wobble now; a child might have noticed it. He said it would do for the present. I said, "Watching you do this is of real use to me. It is not only your skill that fascinates me, but it is your cheery confidence in yourself, your inexplicable hopefulness, that does me good."

DIFFICULT WORDS & MEANINGS

SL NO	WORDS	MEANINGS
1	ENCOURAGED	UPLIFT
2	REFIX	FIX IN POSITION AGAIN
3	OFF SIDE	THE SIDE OF THE FIELD WHICH THE BATSMAN IS FACING TO RECEIVE THE BALL, OPPOSITE OF ON SIDE. HERE, THE UNFAVOURABLE SIDE
4	DOUBLED	BECAME TWICE
5	SLID	SLIPPED



Then he lost his temper and tried bullying the thing. The bicycle, I was glad to see, showed spirit; and the subsequent proceedings degenerated into little else than a rough-and-tumble fight between him and the machine. One moment the bicycle would be on the gravel path, and he on top of it; the next, the position would be reversed—he on the gravel path, the bicycle on him. Now he would be standing flushed with victory, the bicycle firmly fixed between his legs. But his triumph would be short-lived. By a sudden, quick movement it would free itself and, turning upon him, hit him sharply over the head with one of its handles.

DIFFICULT WORDS & MEANINGS

SL NO	WORDS	MEANINGS
1	TEMPER	TEMPERAMENT
2	BULLYING	HARMING OR THREATENING OR INSULTING
3	SPIRIT	ENTHUSIASM
4	SUBSEQUENT	FOLLOWING
5	PROCEEDINGS	ACTIVITIES
6	DEGENERATED INTO	REDUCED TO
7	ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE	STRUGGLE
8	REVERSED	TURNUED BACKWARD
9	FLUSHED	THRILLED
10	FIRMLY	STRONGLY

DIFFICULT WORDS & MEANINGS

At a quarter to one, dirty and dishevelled, cut and bleeding, he said, "I think that will do", and rose and wiped his brow.

The bicycle looked as if it also had had enough of it. Which had received most punishment it would have been difficult to say. 1 took him into the back kitchen where, so far as was possible, he cleaned himself. Then 1 sent him home.

SL NO	WORDS	MEANINGS
1	DISHEVELLED	UNTIDY
2	WIPED	CLEANED