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AN OUTLINE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
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STORIES FROM MANY LANDS
TELEVISION PLAN
TURNING WHEELS
WAYS OF THE WORLD

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6. In a Balloon

Men used to travel a long way in balloons. A man once flew 1,890 miles in a balloon. He did this in February 1914, before the first great war.

On November 18th, 1908, three other men went up in a balloon. They started early in London. The captain was Auguste Gaudron, and the other two men were Tannar and Maitland. They had a big balloon, and they had planned to go a long way.

Soon they heard the sea below them. They were carrying the usual rope, and it was hanging down from the basket of the balloon. At the bottom of the rope they had fixed a metal cylinder. This could hold water, or it could be empty. So they were able to change its weight. It was for use over the sea. They were also carrying some bags of sand.

When they heard the sea, they sent the cylinder down. It soon hit the water below. A strong wind was blowing, and the balloon was travelling quite fast. It was moving at a speed of 30 miles an hour. As soon as the cylinder touched the sea, water filled it. It tried to pull the water of the sea with it. It was moving at a high speed; so this almost stopped the balloon. The cylinder suddenly pulled the balloon's rope, and it acted like a powerful brake. The balloon came down very low; it almost touched the sea. The men threw a lot of sand out, to make the balloon's weight less.

A lot of rope was in the sea; so the balloon was not carrying all the weight of the rope. Without the weight of the rope and the sand, it rose suddenly into the sky. It went up to 7,000 feet. It continued moving towards the east. The three men reached Belgium and watched the sun set near Ostend. Then they went on over Holland and Germany. It was dark now, and they noticed some bright lights not far away. When they reached the lights, they recognized the city of Berlin. Then the tired men slept in the balloon.

After the sun rose, the balloon went higher. It went up to 10,000 feet, and the air was very cold. The water in the balloon began to freeze. Snow fell past the men's basket, and they could see more snow on the ground. There was also some frozen snow on the balloon, and that made it very heavy. It began to go down towards the ground. The men tried to throw out some more sand; but it was frozen and hard. They tried to break the frozen sand with their knives, but it was not easy. The work was slow and they were still falling; so they had to drop some complete bags of sand. One of them fell on a frozen lake below and made a black hole in the ice.

Then the cylinder at the bottom of the rope hit the ground. It began to act as a brake again. It hit a building, and the balloon started to dance up and down. They threw out some more sand and pulled the rope up. It was hard work, and their hearts were beating loudly. The air was thin and there was not much oxygen; so it was hard to breathe. At last they pulled the cylinder into the basket. It was still snowing; so
they climbed to escape from the snow. They rose to 17,000 feet! Everything froze; even their thermometer froze. They were so cold that they decided to land. They came down in Poland heavily but safely. They had travelled 1,117 miles from London!

EXERCISES

1. Put one of the given words in each space:
   rope; cylinders; speed; brake; frozen.
   (a) The train was moving at a high —.
   (b) The boy climbed up the — and reached the window safely.
   (c) They drove several motor-cars across the — lake.
   (d) The engine of this car has four —.
   (e) Peter put the — on, and tried to stop the car.

2. Answer these questions very shortly:
   (a) Several men flew more than a thousand miles in balloons. Give the name of one of them.
   (b) What was hanging at the end of the rope?
   (c) Why did the men throw some sand out?
   (d) Where were the men when the sun set?
   (e) What made a hole in the ice?

3. Put the right word in each space:
   (a) We shall go away — July.
   (b) The word nicotina comes — the name of Jean Nicot.
   (c) They heard the sea — the balloon.
   (d) The balloon was moving — a high speed.
   (e) It went up suddenly — the sky.
   (f) They had travelled about 1,800 kilometres — London.
   (g) The galaxy contains millions — stars.
   (h) The sun was setting; and its red rays lit up the balloon — Ostend.
   (i) The balloon fell — the ground, and some of the ice melted.
   (j) The rope hung — the basket of the balloon.

THE NINE PLANETS

4. Notice: At the bottom of the rope they had fixed a cylinder. Had fixed: This part of to fix shows that they did it before. Another example: I went to Peter's house, but he had gone out. (He went out before I arrived.)
   Put the right forms of the words:
   (a) Gaudron was not the first man who flew. Other men (fly) before him.
   (b) As soon as they (hear) the sea, they dropped the rope.
   (c) After the sun (set), it was dark.
   (d) They returned safely to London. They told us that they (see) Berlin.
   (e) Peter said that he (never use) a telescope before.

5. Notice: They threw sand out to make the weight less. (To make tells us why.)
   Complete these sentences:
   (a) Peter went to the cinema to . . .
   (b) They used hydrogen to . . .
   (c) They climbed higher to escape from . . .
   (d) They got their knives to . . .
   (e) Peter put the brake on to . . .