

Edinburgh's celebrated International Festival takes place for three weeks at the end of the summer each year. It is one of the widely attended festivals in Europe. It is distinct because it not only has its own performances but has no hesitation in inviting artists from other countries to perform in the festival. The genuine theatrical centerpiece of the festival is the splendidly colourful military tattoo held on the floodlit Esplanade of the castle. The turrets and parapets looking down give the place a romantic and majestic atmosphere. Another spectacular entertainment on the Esplanade is the traditional and colourful ceremony of Beating the Retreat.

## Here and there in England & Scotland



Edinburgh Castle.



Dr Goutam Sen  
CTVS Surgeon  
Traveller  
Story teller

### #TRAVELOGUE

he summer of 1892 was passing away quickly. Jayant and Rahul's vacation ended they should have an exposure of the country (United Kingdom) that they had visited. We continued to take them to nearby places. There was abundance of majestic houses and castles surrounding us wherever we went. The English have the ability to make visitors pay through their nose to see all these well preserved Castles and Palaces.

One of our earliest visits was to Temple Newsam, a palatial building with extensive lawns close to Leeds. It was ideal for a day trip. The building built in 1500-1520 was well maintained and is now a property of Leeds City Council. There was abundance of richly tapestried and carpeted rooms. The place houses a huge sculpture gallery of the creations of Henry Moore, one of the famous sons of Yorkshire. The rooms are now gradually being restored to show the impressive interiors in different centuries. It has become a museum of forty rooms full of treasure worth Chippendale furniture, silver, ceramics and fine art. The gardens have gone through many modifications and now one can roam around 1500 acres of stunning woodland, parkland gardens landscaped by the famous 18th century gardener Capability Brown.

One of the delightful day trips on a long summer day that we made

was to the city of Edinburgh. Due to constraints of time and pocket we had to limit museums and the botanical garden. Edinburgh Castle, the most famous of all Scottish castles, dominates the city from its commanding position on the 'Rock' where the old town is also situated. Because of many wars most of the buildings have been destroyed. St Margaret's Chapel is the oldest that stands from the fourteenth Century. It is also called the foundation stone of Edinburgh. The Palace courtyard has many loosely connected buildings, and the whole area is called the Citadel. A large sixteenth century building which was initially the seat of the Scottish Parliament, now houses a museum of weapons and armoury. The National War museum is dedicated to 200,000 odd Scots who died in World War II. As we wandered through the halls the Indian connection became visible in one of the glass cabinets. There was a large cup etched Bharatpore Cup. It was a cup from the late 19th Century when Polo ruled supreme as a competitive sport in Rajaputana.

#### Time Reminding

The half-moon Battery or Great Half Bastion Round was constructed in 1574. Since 1851 the daily one o'clock gun has been fired from this position. This idea of a 'time reminding' gun was borrowed from a similar exercise in Paris. The joke however was, that in most places the gun is fired at Noon. The Scots in their parsimonious manner thought firing of one shot at one o'clock would be cheaper than firing twelve shots at noon. Incidentally such a firing was a part of Jaipur rituals when a cannon was fired from Nahargarh

at noon during the princely rule. Edinburgh's celebrated International Festival takes place for three weeks at the end of the summer each year. It is one of the widely attended festivals in Europe. It is distinct because it not only has its own performances but has no hesitation in inviting artists from other countries to perform in the festival. The genuine theatrical centerpiece of the festival is the splendidly colourful military tattoo held on the floodlit Esplanade of the castle. The turrets and parapets looking down give the place a romantic and majestic atmosphere. Another spectacular entertainment on the Esplanade is the traditional and colourful ceremony of Beating the Retreat in which the Bag-Pipe bands take part. There are varied collection of artistic efforts performed by the 'Fringe' groups. These are organised by amateurs, enthusiasts and societies of all kinds. The Scottish Fife bands and their jazz performances are one of the favourite items. Recently the Festival has had invites from Jaipur too. The brass band (I think it was the Jaipur Band) of Jaipur has performed with deep appreciation in the festival. A group of Manganyars too were invited to perform few years ago.

One of the touching stories is about 'Greyfriars Bobby'. A small bronze statue has been erected at the Greyfriars Kirkyard in the



Bharatpore Cup.



Greyfriars Bobby.



Clifford's Tower.

memory of this devoted terrier who became a familiar figure in Edinburgh. He was seen guarding the grave of his master, a shepherd, for fourteen years.

One principle Nirmal and I always maintain is that if one has to enjoy a visit to a place of historical interest the only satisfactory way to do so is to stroll through it. Not only should one be knowledgeable about the place prior to the visit but should be able to use a map to locate the places of interest. After descending from the castle we did walk down to the 'New Town'.

#### Georgian Character

The need to expand the city was urgently felt in the mid eighteenth century. In an effort to create a planned 'New Town' a competition was announced. James Craig, a young architect, proposed to build it in a 'grid-iron' pattern with the two squares at each end of the principle streets running parallel to each other. The Charlotte square at one end had the finest residential buildings. Very few of the original buildings remain. At the other end, Andrew Square (named after the patron Saint of Scotland) is probably the most affluent square consisting of various financial organisations, banks and headquarters of insurance companies. George Street, the main central street was named after the king who had approved the grid-iron plan.

Incidentally Jaipur City was also designed with the same 'grid-iron' pattern a hundred years before Edinburgh and both the towns have been able to sustain the increasing traffic and population even after such a long time. The Queen Street, named after his consort lay north of this. On the south side the now world famous Princes Street was named after the Prince of Wales and completed by 1805. Although Princes Street was intended merely as the southern fringe of the new town it soon became the main street of the expanding town. The beauty of it is that despite the expansion the Georgian character of the buildings has been retained even now after multiple renovations.



Stags at Highland Park.

The Scott Monument in east Princes Street Gardens is one of the best known landmarks in Edinburgh. Erected in the memory of great Scottish novelist, it was designed by George Meikle Kemp and was installed in 1846.

One of the many attractive features of Edinburgh is that even though the countryside is not too far away from the heart of the city. The Royal Botanical Gardens situated on the north side of the city at Inverleith Row was laid out between 1820 and 1823. A 'Physic Garden' existed in that area as early as 1670. The present garden covers 75 acres containing library, laboratory and an exhibition hall. Many rare and



### Invention Of Ice Pops

Ice pops were invented by an 11-year-old. In 1905, the boy named Frank Epperson left soda powder and water mixture outside overnight with its wooden stirrer still in the cup that had frozen in the chilly night-time weather, and so the Epsicle was born. He sold the treat around his neighbourhood and at nearby amusement park and even patented the recipe. Years later, he changed the name to Popsicle because that's what his kids called their pop's concoction.



Walled city of York.



Floral clock Princes Street.

beautiful specimens thrive on the southern slopes. In the nearby hot house tropical plants of all kinds are to be found. The variety is comparable to the famous Kew gardens in London. A notable feature is the rockery, with its comprehensive collection of Alpine plants. The National Gallery of Modern Art was installed in the centre of Gardens in 1960.

As we were walking down the street we saw a quaint shop which was offering a 'bottomless' pot of Darjeeling tea. This was very inviting as we were parched and hungry. The accompanying bakery items, fresh scones with whipped cream and muffins were tempting and we had them in plenty. I clearly recall buying my first Hush Puppies from a sale in an adjoining shoe shop. The shoe lasted for nearly ten years. There is so much more to see and appreciate in Edinburgh that it certainly requires many more visits.

#### Indelible Picture

Some of us foreign doctors working at Leeds organised a car trip to the west coast of Scotland towards Fort William. On the way the first stop was to see the crumbling Hadrian's Wall that the Romans had constructed to prevent the invasion of the Scottish hordes. We had heard a lot about Gretna Green where all eloping couples used to get married in the earlier days. It is said that the local blacksmith was authorised to conduct the marriages. There is a small shack with a large anvil where such marriages were allegedly conducted. It has now become a tourist spot. Mock marriages and photo-ops are a prime attraction. Even a gaudily printed marriage certificate is available at a cost.

That was our first opportunity to stay in a caravan park near the Loch Linne. These caravans are parked in a neatly patterned area near the shore of the Loch. Electricity and water connections are already available. Chemical toilets are installed. The children were fascinated by the bunk beds. Nirmal was happy with cooking area. A small gas oven and

The beauty of the landscape is in its pristine condition. Nothing has changed in these areas for centuries. The Queen's View overlooking the Loch Tummel has left an indelible picture in my mind.

two additional flames were very compactly placed in the gallery. Rahul, having heard the tales about 'Nessie' the monster in the Loch Ness, was fascinated by the thought. He woke up early and went to the lake shore to look for it through the early morning mist. He forced Jayant to join him to take a photograph.

From the camping area the road led to Ben Nevis, UK's highest peak (1345 metres) and Glen Nevis valley. It was near the Highland sanctuary we sighted the large stags of Scotland. This area is also famous for its reputed whiskey distilleries. The car drive through the hills and valleys gave us an understanding of how rugged Scotland is. The beauty of the landscape is in its pristine condition. Nothing has changed in these areas for centuries. The Queen's View at the edge of a cliff overlooking the Loch Tummel has left an indelible picture in my mind. The placid waters of the Loch below were a wonderful opportunity to take pictures. It is said that it was Queen Victoria's favourite spot when she visited Scotland (1866) particularly during her prolonged bereavement after the death of Prince Albert, her consort.

Soon it was time to return home. London and York had been left for the last. That is another days tale!

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One o'clock cannon.

### #COVID-19

By tracking the infants' eye movements the researchers recorded how often and how quickly the infants followed the person's gaze.

### Pandemic Babies Follow Gaze Just As Well



Parents and caregivers are enough to mitigate the pandemic's negative effects on the social development of babies, researchers discovered. To study whether infants born during the pandemic exhibit different social behaviour than same-aged infants before the pandemic, researchers focused on the children's ability to follow another person's gaze.

"This ability is fundamental for engaging in social interactions, building relationships and developing language skills," says Stephanie Wermelinger, who researches developmental psychology in infants and children in the Psychology Department at the University of Zurich. If this ability is impaired, it can hamper a person's ability to interact with society.

The study included 80 infants between the age of 12 and 15 months. They saw different videos in which a person was gazing at one of two objects. By tracking the infants' eye movements, the researchers



recorded how often and how quickly the infants followed the person's gaze. They then compared their data with eye movement data from 133 children using the same method before the pandemic.

The study reveals no significant behavioural differences between the children born during and before the pandemic. Children born during the pandemic followed the person's gaze just as often and quickly as the children in the pre-pandemic group. Although the pandemic meant that the children saw fewer people overall and interacted with more people who were wearing masks, they don't seem to be developing any differently to children who didn't experience any pandemic-related changes.

"We believe the unchanged social interactions with parents and caregivers at home are enough to mitigate any influence the COVID-19 pandemic might have had on infants," says Wermelinger. These contacts could be sufficient to provide infants with the social input they need to develop social and emotional skills such as gaze following.

### #MENTAL-WELLNESS

## Quiet the Anxiety in Your Head

Calm your mind with these tips to stop any downward spiral of thoughts.



Everyone knows that thinking before acting is wise but when does our thinking actually become debilitating? With too much thinking, negative thoughts can begin creeping in that shed doubt and promote fear. Our thinking becomes negative when we begin to focus on all of the what-if scenarios or we begin to fear a bad outcome with our plans.

Since there is no way to predict the future, a person can begin to feel totally out of control. This only intensifies the downward spiral of thoughts. Then our insecurities and lack of confidence can take hold and squish all of our original good ideas and plans.

To be sure, part of the negative thought's come from knowing of someone who did have a

are quiet and we can let our minds go we are more apt to form positive plans and ideas. It's a good idea to start by meditating on something positive like scripture or a calming mantra. This in turn leads to more positive thoughts to deal with a current situation. But watch out when your mind begins to let in any fear or doubt, it's time for a distraction. Recognize that your initial thoughts are good and will allow you to take action and call out the creeping fear or doubt as a lie.

from yourself to another person. There is no time to think of your own situation when you are focusing on someone else. Plus, when you help someone else it always feels good emotionally. It can even give you a better perspective on your own life when you see what others are going through.

#### Breathe Deeply

Overthinking brings up a lot of anxiety which also leads to physical symptoms like a racing heart. Take time to breathe deeply. Take at least ten deep breaths counting slowly as you go. Concentrate on your breaths until you feel your body responding. This deep breathing gives a sense of calm that can alleviate stress symptoms.

#### Count Your Blessings

It's always good to think about all of the positive things that you have or are going on in your life. Start with the basics first. Food, shelter and clothes are of the utmost importance but tend to be forgotten in the grand scheme of things. This might then progress to thinking about other blessings like friends, family, a good job or even a huge success. Our realities are often better than what our own negative thoughts tell us.

#### Forgive and Forget

Sometimes overthinking comes from not letting go of our mistakes that happened in the past. Was a lesson learned from the mistake? Then it's time to forgive yourself and move on with self-compassion. It's not healthy to keep rehashing what should have been done. Instead, look at the present and toward the future with your updated mindset.

While forgiving yourself, sometimes you need to forgive another person who has hurt you. Once you forgive someone make sure to also truly forget. It doesn't help anyone to hold onto grudges and negative thoughts that come with it.



#### Go for a Walk

Physical exercise is good for stress in general as it can be a way to clear your head. A nice side benefit is that walking releases feel-good endorphins so you will start to feel better with the first step. Walking is also a distraction that gets you away from your current situation and can allow productive thoughts to enter in. If you don't like walking try another healthy hobby like gardening. The key is to get out of your normal routine.

#### Do a Reality Check

How accurate is your thought really? You can acknowledge the worst-case scenario but then put it to the test. For example, maybe you fear getting fired because you want to bring up an idea for changing a difficult procedure. How likely is that to really get you fired? Is it possible your boss may like your idea? Has your boss fired others for bringing up suggestions? If your idea isn't accepted would you want to quit? If so, that fear of being fired kind of blows right out the window.

#### Think Productively

If you are an over thinker it probably doesn't make any sense to take more time to think. But it does if you do it right. Often our thoughts come flying at us in the middle of chaotic times when we can't process them effectively. If we set aside time when things

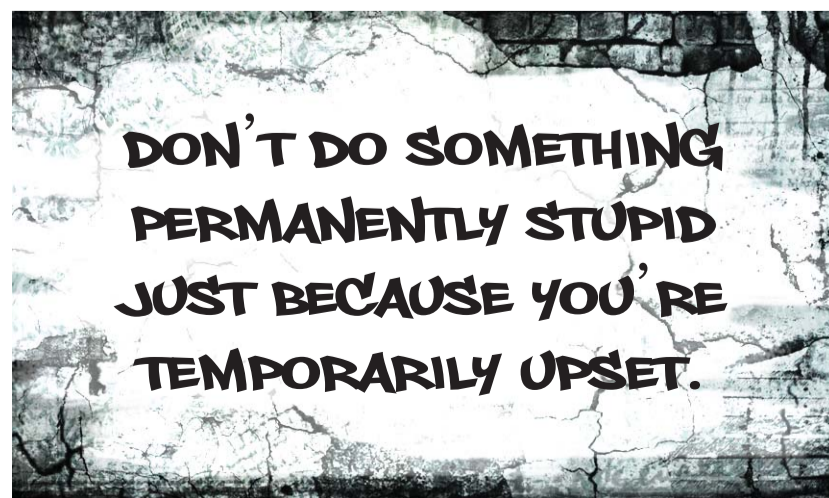


### Surprising Facts About Coral Reefs

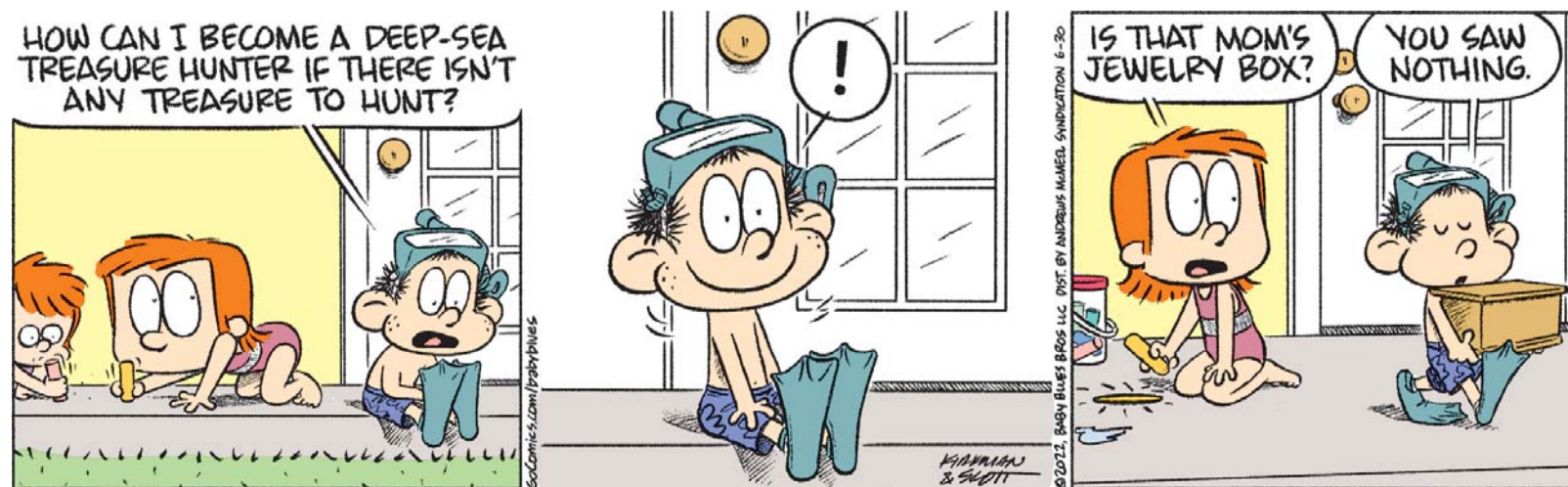
- Coral reefs make up a fraction of the ocean - less than 1% - but they provide a home to around 25% of all the world's marine life.
- Over 4,000 different species of fish rely on coral reefs.
- A common misconception is that corals are plants or rocks but, in actual fact, they are animals. There are hard and soft varieties of coral which live together in large groups called colonies.
- Coral reefs provide food for a variety of fish which in turn provide food for humans.
- It's estimated that around 500 million people in the world consume the fish found on coral reefs.



### THE WALL



### BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

### ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman