Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

Monday 4 November 2019

Morning (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes) | Paper Reference **1EN0/01**

English Language

Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing
Section A: Reading Text Insert

Reading Text

Do not return this Reading Text Insert with the Question Paper.

Advice

- Read the text before answering the questions in Section A of the Question Paper.

Turn over ▶

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Read the text below and answer Questions 1–4 on the Question Paper.

In this extract Miss Margaret Hale is visiting Mr. Thornton, a mill owner. A dangerous and angry mob of poor workers marches to the mill demanding higher wages. Mr. Thornton has sent for soldiers to break up the crowd.

***North and South*: Elizabeth Gaskell**

'Had you not better go upstairs, Miss Hale?'

Margaret's lips formed a 'No!'—but he could not hear her speak, for the tramp of innumerable steps right under the very wall of the house, and the fierce growl of low deep angry voices that had a ferocious murmur of satisfaction in them, more dreadful than their baffled cries not many minutes before.

'Never mind!' said he, thinking to encourage her. 'I am very sorry you should have been entrapped into all this alarm; but it cannot last long now; a few minutes more, and the soldiers will be here.'

'Oh, God!' cried Margaret, suddenly; 'there is Boucher. I know his face, though he is livid with rage,—he is fighting to get to the front—look! look!'

'Who is Boucher?' asked Mr. Thornton, coolly, and coming close to the window to discover the man in whom Margaret took such an interest. As soon as they saw Mr. Thornton, they set up a yell,—to call it not human is nothing,—it was as the demonic desire of some terrible wild beast for the food that is withheld from his ravening*. Even he drew back for a moment, dismayed at the intensity of hatred he had provoked.

'Let them yell!' said he. 'In five minutes more—. Keep up your courage for five minutes, Miss Hale.'

'Don't be afraid for me,' she said hastily. 'But what in five minutes? Can you do nothing to soothe these poor creatures? It is awful to see them.'

'The soldiers will be here directly, and that will bring them to reason.'

'To reason!' said Margaret, quickly. 'What kind of reason?'

'The only reason that does with men that make themselves into wild beasts. By heaven! they've turned to the mill-door!'

'Mr. Thornton,' said Margaret, shaking all over with her passion, 'go down this instant, if you are not a coward. Go down and face them like a man. Speak to your workmen as if they were human beings. Speak to them kindly. Don't let the soldiers come in and cut down poor creatures who are driven mad. I see one there who is. If you have any courage or noble quality in you, go out and speak to them, man to man.'

He turned and looked at her while she spoke. A dark cloud came over his face while he listened. He set his teeth as he heard her words.

'I will go. Perhaps I may ask you to accompany me downstairs, and bar the door behind me; my mother and sister will need that protection.'

'Oh! Mr. Thornton! I do not know—I may be wrong—only—'

But he was gone; he was downstairs in the hall; he had unbarred the front door; all she could do, was to follow him quickly, and fasten it behind him, and clamber up the stairs again with a sick heart and a dizzy head. Again she took her place by the farthest window. He was on the steps below; she saw that by the direction of a thousand angry eyes; but she could neither see nor hear anything save the savage satisfaction of the rolling angry murmur. She threw the window wide open. Many in the crowd were mere boys; cruel and thoughtless,—cruel because they were thoughtless; some were men, gaunt** as wolves, and mad for prey. She knew how it was; they were like Boucher, with starving children at home—relying on ultimate success in their efforts to get higher wages, and enraged beyond measure at discovering that men were to be brought in to rob their little ones of bread. Margaret knew it all; she read it in Boucher's face, forlornly desperate and livid with rage. If Mr. Thornton would but say something to them—let them hear his voice only—it seemed as if it would be better than this wild beating and raging against the stony silence.

*ravening** – violently hunting for food
*gaunt*** – very thin, especially because of sickness or hunger

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