Unit 9

ON THE RULE OF THE ROAD
- A. G. GARDINER

: STRUCTURE :

9.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall learn

- one of the thought provoking essays by A. G. Gardiner.
- a prose lyric that appeals to the reader's emotions.
- theme, style, tone and critical analysis of the essay.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

9.1.1 About the Author

Alfred George Gardiner was a British Journalist, essayist and editor. He wrote his essay under the pen name 'Alpha of the Plough'. He was born in 1865 and died in 1946. He was born in Chelmsford. His father was a cabinet maker and alcoholic. As a boy, he worked at the Chelmsford chronicle. In 1887, he joined the Northern Daily Telegraph. In 1899, he was appointed as the editor of the Blackburn Weekly Telegraph. In 1902, he was appointed as the editor of 'Daily News' Under Gardiner's editorship the circulation of the Journal rose remarkably making it one of the leading English journals.

From 1915, Gardiner contributed to *The Star* under the pseudonym 'Alpha of the plough'. He chose the pseudonym that refers to the brightest star (alpha) in the constellation called 'The Plough'. Gardiner's major works include *Prophets, Priests and Kings* (1908), *Pillars of Society* (1913) *Pebbles On the Shore* (1916), *Leaves in The Wind* (1920) etc.

Gardiner's essays are graceful and humorous. He wrote essays on variety of subjects and focused on teaching the basic truths of life in an amusing manner. A. G. Gardiner was a liberal democrat who believed that personal liberty should be curtailed in order to bring about social harmony. Gardiner raised the standard of journalistic prose adding literary flavor to it. Some of his most popular essays are- *On Saying Please*, *On Superstitions*, *On Habits On the Rule of the Road*, *On Shaking hands* etc. Gardiner's style is full of charm, grace and picturesqueness.

9.1.2 About the Essay

A.G. Gardiner is one of the major English essayists of modern times. He was a journalist, editor and writer. He was a prolific writer and his contribution to the modern essay is remarkable. His essays are personal and chatty in nature. He deals with variety of subjects driving home some important philosophical or social message. In the essay *On the Rule of the Road*, he discusses a very relevant subject of personal liberty versus universal liberty Gardiner says that liberty is not a personal affair, it is a social contract. We can enjoy certain liberty but we need to curtail some of our liberties to provide liberties to other people.

A.G. Gardiner gives a very apt example to elucidate his point. A fat old lady was walking down in the middle of a street in Petrograd. She cause a lot of confusion in the traffic when she was asked why she walked in the middle of the street, she replied that as a free citizen, she had liberty to walk wherever she liked. Gardiner points out that if the pedestrian walked in the middle of the street, the cabdriver would drive his cab on the pavement. Naturally, if all people behaved as they liked, there would be universal chaos. We often see such sights on our roads. The author here points out that such kind of individual liberty would result into social anarchy. The rule of the road teaches us that to preserve individual liberty, one has to curtail and adjust his or her own liberties. When a policeman stops us on the crossing of the road, he is not violating our liberty. In fact, he is helping us to use our liberty in a reasonable manner. If the policeman would not interfere, no one would be able to cross the road safely. Curtailment of private liberty is a precondition to enjoy social order and harmony. Our liberty becomes a reality only when it is adjusted with the liberty of others.

There are certain things in which we don't require other people's permissions. For example, having a long hair, walking barefoot, dyeing on hair going to bed early or late etc. But if one practices playing in a trombone from midnight to morning, people in the neighborhood could not sleep and they would remind the person that his liberty to play on the musical instrument interferes with their liberty to have a quiet sleep. A. G. Gardiner describes his own experience in a railway carriage. He started reading blue book but some men were talking loudly. The author closed the book and looked out of window. Gardiner says that the rights of quiet people are as important as the rights of the minorities or small nationalities. We can listen to gramophone or play on trombone but without disturbing others.

Finally, the author concludes the essay by saying that we need to be the combination of both anarchist and socialist. We must preserve individual liberty and social liberty. How we observe the simple rules of the road determines whether we are civilized or uncivilized. Little habits of social adjustment are

far more important than great sacrifices. Such little habits sweeten the journey of our life. Gardiner says that we often see the faults of others conniving at our own. He says that consideration of rights of others is the foundation of social discipline and harmony which makes an ideal society.

9.2 TEXT OF THE ESSAY

That was a jolly story which Mr. Arthur Ransome told the other day in one of his messages from Petrograd. A stout old lady was walking with her basket down the middle of a street in Petrograd to the great confusion of the traffic and with no small peril to herself. It was pointed out to her that the pavement was the place for foot-passengers, but she replied: "I'm going to walk where I like. We've got liberty now." It did not occur to the dear old lady that if liberty entitled the foot-passenger to walk down the middle of the road it also entitled the cab-driver to drive on the pavement, and that the end of such liberty would be universal chaos. Everybody would be getting in everybody else's way and nobody would get anywhere. Individual liberty would have become social anarchy.

There is a danger of the world getting liberty-drunk in these days like the old lady with the basket, and it is just as well to remind ourselves of what the rule of the road means. It means that in order that the liberties of all may be preserved the liberties of everybody must be curtailed. When the policeman, say, at Piccadilly Circus steps into the middle of the road and puts up his hand, he is the symbol not of tyranny, but of liberty. You may not think so. You may, being in a hurry and seeing your motor-car pulled up by this insolence of office, feel that your liberty has been outraged. How dare this fellow interfere with your free use of the public highway? Then, if you are a reasonable person, you will reflect that if he did not, incidentally, interfere with you he would interfere with no one, and the result would be that Piccadilly Circus would be a maelstrom that you would never cross at all. You have submitted to a curtailment of private liberty in order that you may enjoy a social order which makes your liberty a reality.

Liberty is not a personal affair only, but a social contract. It is an accommodation of interests. In matters which do not touch anybody else's liberty, of course, I may be as free as I like. If I choose to go down the Strand in a dressing-gown, with long hair and bare feet, who shall say me nay? You have liberty to laugh at me, but I have liberty to be indifferent to you. And if I have a fancy for dyeing my hair, or waxing my moustache (which heaven forbid), or wearing a tall hat, a frock-coat and sandals, or going to bed late or getting up early, I shall follow my fancy and ask no man's permission. I shall not inquire of you whether I may eat mustard with my mutton. I may like mustard with my mutton. And you will not ask me whether you may be a Protestant or a Catholic, whether you may marry the dark lady or the fair lady, whether you may prefer Ella Wheeler Wilcox to Wordsworth, or champagne to shandygaff.

In all these and a thousand other details you and I please ourselves and ask no one's leave. We have a whole kingdom in which we rule alone, can do what we choose, be wise or ridiculous, harsh or easy, conventional or odd. But directly we step out of that kingdom our personal liberty of action becomes qualified by other people's liberty. I might like to practise on the trombone from midnight till three in the morning. If I went on to the top of Helvellyn

to do it I could please myself, but if I do it in my bedroom my family will object, and if I do it out in the streets the neighbours will remind me that my liberty to blow the trombone must not interfere with their liberty to sleep in quiet. There are a lot of people in the world, and I have to accommodate my liberty to their liberties.

We are all liable to forget this, and unfortunately we are much more conscious of the imperfections of others in this respect than of our own.

I got into a railway carriage at a country station the other morning and settled down for what the schoolboys would call an hour's "swot" at a Blue-book. I was not reading it for pleasure. The truth is that I never do read Blue-books for pleasure. I read them as a barrister reads a brief, for the very humble purpose of turning an honest penny out of them. Now, if you are reading a book for pleasure it doesn't matter what is going on around you. I think I could enjoy "Tristram Shandy" or "Treasure Island" in the midst of an earthquake.

But when you are reading a thing as a task you need reasonable quiet, and that is what I didn't get, for at the next station in came a couple of men, one of whom talked to his friend for the rest of the journey in a loud and pompous voice. He was one of those people who remind one of that story of Home Tooke who, meeting a person of immense swagger in the street, stopped him and said, "Excuse me, sir, but are you someone in particular?" This gentleman was someone in particular. As I wrestled with clauses and sections, his voice rose like a gale, and his family history, the deeds of his sons in the war, and his criticisms of the generals and the politicians submerged my poor attempts to hang on to my job. I shut up the Blue-book, looked out of the window, and listened wearily while the voice thundered on with themes like these: "Now what French ought to have done..." "The mistake the Germans made..." "If only Asquith had..." You know the sort of stuff. I had heard it all before, oh, so often. It was like a barrel-organ groaning out some banal song of long ago.

If I had asked him to be good enough to talk in a lower tone I daresay he would have thought I was a very rude fellow. It did not occur to him that anybody could have anything better to do than to listen to him, and I have no doubt he left the carriage convinced that everybody in it had, thanks to him, had a very illuminating journey, and would carry away a pleasing impression of his encyclopædic range. He was obviously a well-intentioned person. The thing that was wrong with him was that he had not the social sense. He was not "a clubbable man."

A reasonable consideration for the rights or feelings of others is the foundation of social conduct. It is commonly alleged against women that in this respect they are less civilised than men, and I am bound to confess that in my experience it is the woman—the well-dressed woman—who thrusts herself in front of you at the ticket office. The man would not attempt it, partly because he knows the thing would not be tolerated from him, but also because he has been better drilled in the small give-and-take of social relationships. He has lived more in the broad current of the world, where you have to learn to accommodate yourself to the general standard of conduct, and his school life, his club life, and his games have in this respect given him a training that women are only now beginning to enjoy.

I believe that the rights of small people and quiet people are as important to preserve as the rights of small nationalities. When I hear the aggressive, bullying horn which some motorists deliberately use, I confess that I feel something boiling up in me which is very like what I felt when Germany came trampling like a bully over Belgium. By what right, my dear sir, do you go along our highways uttering that hideous curse on all who impede your path? Cannot you announce your coming like a gentleman? Cannot you take your turn? Are you someone in particular or are you simply a hot gospeller of the prophet Nietzsche? I find myself wondering what sort of a person it is who can sit behind that hog-like outrage without realising that he is the spirit of Prussia incarnate, and a very ugly spectacle in a civilised world.

And there is the more harmless person who has bought a very blatant gramophone, and on Sunday afternoon sets the thing going, opens the windows and fills the street with "Keep the Home Fires Burning" or some similar banality. What are the right limits of social behaviour in a matter of this sort? Let us take the trombone as an illustration again. Hazlitt said that a man who wanted to learn that fearsome instrument was entitled to learn it in his own house, even though he was a nuisance to his neighbours, but it was his business to make the nuisance as slight as possible. He must practise in the attic, and shut the window. He had no right to sit in his front room, open the window, and blow his noise into his neighbours' ears with the maximum of violence. And so with the gramophone. If you like the gramophone you are entitled to have it, but you are interfering with the liberties of your neighbours if you don't do what you can to limit the noise to your own household. Your neighbours may not like "Keep the Home Fires Burning." They may prefer to have their Sunday afternoon undisturbed, and it is as great an impertinence for you to wilfully trespass on their peace as it would be to go, unasked, into their gardens and trample on their flower beds.

There are cases, of course, where the clash of liberties seems to defy compromise. My dear old friend X., who lives in a West End square and who is an amazing mixture of good nature and irascibility, flies into a passion when he hears a street piano, and rushes out to order it away. But near by lives a distinguished lady of romantic picaresque tastes, who dotes on street pianos, and attracts them as wasps are attracted to a jar of jam. Whose liberty in this case should surrender to the other? For the life of me I cannot say. It is as reasonable to like street pianos as to dislike them—and vice versa. I would give much to hear Sancho Panza's solution of such a nice riddle.

I suppose the fact is that we can be neither complete anarchists nor complete Socialists in this complex world—or rather we must be a judicious mixture of both. We have both liberties to preserve—our individual liberty and our social liberty. We must watch the bureaucrat on the one side and warn off the anarchist on the other. I am neither a Marxist, nor a Tolstoyan, but a compromise. I shall not permit any authority to say that my child must go to this school or that, shall specialize in science or arts, shall play rugger or soccer. These things are personal. But if I proceed to say that my child shall have no education at all, that he shall be brought up as a primeval savage, or at Mr. Fagin's academy for pickpockets, then Society will politely but firmly tell me that it has no use for primeval savages and a very stern objection to pickpockets, and that my child must have a certain minimum of education whether

I like it or not. I cannot have the liberty to be a nuisance to my neighbours or make my child a burden and a danger to the commonwealth.

It is in the small matters of conduct, in the observance of the rule of the road, that we pass judgment upon ourselves, and declare that we are civilised or uncivilised. The great moments of heroism and sacrifice are rare. It is the little habits of commonplace intercourse that make up the great sum of life and sweeten or make bitter the journey. I hope my friend in the railway carriage will reflect on this. Then he will not cease, I am sure, to explain to his neighbour where French went wrong and where the Germans went ditto; but he will do it in a way that will permit me to read my blue-book undisturbed.

9.3 KEY WORDS

Jolly	: happy, cheerful
Stout	: fat, plump
Petrograd	: Leningrad (formerly St. Peters burg)
Peril	: Risk
Pavement	: Footpath
Entitled	: qualified for
Curtail	: restrict, limit, cut down
Preserve	: Maintain, protect, conserve
Insolence	: rudeness, impudence
Piccadilly circus	: London thoroughfare
Accommodation	: Arrangement
Bare	: open, naked, barren church
Protestant	: Related to Protestant
Catholic	: Old Roman Catholic Christianity
Ella Wheeler Wilcox	: American author
Conventional	: Traditional, old
Odd	: Strange, new, uneven
Helvellyn	: Second highest mountain
trombone	: Musical instrument
Conscious	: Aware
Imperfection	: Shortcoming, defect
Swot	: Strategic planning
Blue book	: A Book of Government report
Home Tooke	: English politician
Gale	: Strong wind, outburst of laughter
Swagger	: arrogant manner
submerge	: Deluge, engulf, drown
Wearily	: With extreme tiredness
Illuminating	: Full of light brightness
Encyclopedic	: Comprehensive, in depth
Allege	: Claim, assert, charge, accuse

Tolerate	:	undergo, bear, endure
Current	:	Stream, flow
Aggressive	:	Hostile, combative, ready to attack
Bullying	:	oppressive, tyrannizing
Nietzsche	:	A German philosopher
Strand	:	edge of the sea or river
Incarnate	:	Embodied in human from
Gospeller	:	One who professes faith in gospel
Spectacle	:	scene , sight
Blatant	:	Shameless, unabashed
Impertinence	:	Rudeness, lack of respect
Trespass	:	intrude , encroach
Trample	:	Crush, tread stamp
Defy	:	openly resist, protest
Sancho panza	:	A character in Don Quixote
Bureaucrat	:	Officer official
Mr. Fagin's Academy	:	Pick pocketing school
Intercourse	:	Communication
Ditto	:	the same, as above
Civilized	:	cultured, refined
Nuisance	:	Annoyance, inconvenience
Maelstrom	:	Utter confusion

9.4 SUMMARY OF THE ESSAY

A. G. Gardiner's essay *On the Rule of the Road* is highly relevant in modern times, particularly in a country like India. India is a democratic country where people enjoy personal liberty. However people do not care for the liberty and rights of other people. This kind of attitude creates chaotic condition in the country. A. G. Gardiner says that liberty and freedom are watch words of the people in modern society. They claim that they have freedom to do whatever they like. They forget that other people too have the liberty of the same kind. If liberties of the people confront, there would be nothing but chaos.

A. G. Gardiner begins his essay with an anecdote of a fat old lady who was walking the middle of the road. Naturally, the traffic was confused and the condition became chaotic. When someone asked her, she said that she had freedom to walk wherever she liked. She did not understand the simple fact that other people also had the freedom to walk. If pedestrians walked in the middle of the road, where would the cabs, car, and taxies go? Can they be driven on the footpath?

A. G. Gardiner says that there are limits to personal liberty. In modern times, people have become liberty-drunk. He says that to preserve personal liberty, liberties of all have to be preserved and to do so, individual liberty must be curtailed. Many people think that traffic police is a nuisance but in fact, he is a blessing. If everybody drove or walked wherever they wanted, there would be utter chaos and nobody would ever reach their destination. Therefore

make liberty a reality, personal liberty must be restricted. The author introduces liberty as a social contract. He says that it is an adjustment that everyone has to accommodate. He says that there are several private liberties for which we need no permission from others. One can eat, wear or live privately as he wants. But once, a person comes out in the open street he must follow the rules of the society. If one wants to play on trombone, one can do it on a lonely mountain but he cannot play it at midnight disturbing the sleep of the neighbors. People should remember that they are not the only people in the world. There are others with whom they should adjust and accommodate. Gardiner says that adjustment is the key to liberty and harmony.

Gardiner says that people are prone to see the faults of others ignoring their own shortcomings. We should always remember that consideration of others rights or feelings is the foundation of social harmony. We do not require great sacrifices in day-to-day life but small acts of adjustment determine whether we are civilized or not.

9.5 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ESSAY

A. G. Gardiner was one of the most popular essayists of 20th century. E. V. Lucas, A. G. Gardiner and Robert Lynd were the trio who wrote beautiful essays on variety of relevant topics. A. G. Gardiner's essay *On the Rule of the Road* is an essay on personal liberty versus social liberty. The topic is highly relevant in modern times particularly in a country like India. The essay was the part of the book "Leaves in the Wind".

A. G. Gardiner says that liberty is not a personal affair but a social contract. It is an accommodation of the interests of other people. Gardiner says that if there were no rules of the road, there would have been chaotic situation on the public roads. A stout lady walked in the middle of the street, claiming that she had right to walk wherever she liked. She did not understand a simple rule that other people also had the same rights and if they walked or drove wherever they liked, there would be such a chaos that no one would ever reach their destination. People would die on the road due to accidents.

A traffic policeman is not a nuisance but the promise of safety and security. People often think that the traffic police man is an annoyance but if he did not stop the drivers at the cross-roads, all drivers would push their vehicles and create confusion. We often see such sights on the cross roads in big cities. We should therefore obey the rules of the road to smoothen the traffic and avoid accidents and chaos.

A. G. Gardiner says that we have certain private liberties and we do not require permissions of the other people in such private matters. We can choose our food, clothes and hobbies. However as soon as we come out in public, we need to follow social rules and consider the rights and freedom of other people. There is an anecdote that a man was walking moving his hand wildly. His hand hit the nose of a fellow pedestrian. When he was asked to walk properly, he replied that he had a freedom to walk as he wanted. The man said, "Yes you have the freedom but your freedom ends where my nose begins". This means that personal liberties have to be accommodated with social liberties.

A. G. Gardiner gives the example of playing on a trombone. He says that one can blow it on a lonely mountain but not his home at midnight because it would disturb other people's sleep. If parents say that their child will have no

education and hewill be taught how to pick-pocket, society can interfere because the child would become a criminal and harm society in the long run. A.G. Gardiner says that some people talk loudly in a train or public places. They disturb other people. They do not understand that they are a nuisance for social peace and order. At the end of the essay, Gardiner says that in our day-to-day life, there is no need for sacrifices or heroism. Our small acts of curtailing our personal freedom and adjustment with the freedom of other parole determine how civilized we are. The rights of simple, quiet people are as important as the rights of small nationalities and minorities. We should be neither complete anarchists nor socialists.

We should preserve personal liberty and also maintain social liberty. One cannot force the parent of a child to send his child to certain school only or make him study certain subjects compulsorily. However if the parents deprive the child of education he would turn into a savage and in such a case, society can interfere in one's personal liberty. We must also discriminate between whose personal liberties we should respect and whose personal liberties should be defied. Good tranquil music should be respected but loud deafening music must be rejected if it disturbs general public. In India, DJ music during wedding procession or on certain festivals is a great nuisance.

In this essay literally, A. G. Gardiner refers to the rule of the road but symbolically, it is about personal liberty and social liberty. Gardiner uses the traffic rules as a metaphor for the rules for social harmony and social discipline. The rules of the road are the rules of adjustment acceptance of other people's liberty and curtailment of one's personal liberty for social liberty. A harmonious combination of personal liberty and social liberty. A harmonious combination of personal liberty and social liberty is the foundation of sound democracy and sane, healthy society.

9.6 TONE OF THE ESSAY

A. G Gardiner's essay *On the Rule of the Road* has a serious message given in a lighter vein. Gardiner was an advocate of freedom with responsibility. The tone of the essay is didactic and reflective. However, Gardiner deals with the serious theme of personal and social liberty in a humorous manner. He gives an example of old fat woman who walks in the middle of the street creating traffic jam and chaos. He gives another example of a loud-mouthed passenger in the train who disturbed all other fellow passengers with his swagger and loud voiced talk. The essay is about personal liberty versus social liberty. He conveys the message that liberty is not a personal affair but a social contract.

The overall tone of the essay is didactic, argumentative and serious but A.G. Gardiner's treatment of the subject is quite light humorous and witty.

9.7 THEME OF THE ESSAY

Essay has been defined is the loose sally of mind. Its themes and subject range from dust to the star. A.G. Gardiner was an essayist who wrote reflective essay in a light manner. The theme of the essay *The Rule of the Road* is personal liberty versus social liberty. A. G. Gardiner discusses the theme of personal liberty in the context of social liberty. He has used the title *On the Rule of the Road* to symbolize adjustment of personal freedom with freedom

of other people.

Liberty and responsibility are inseparable. We have certain areas in which we are completely tree. Personal responsibility cannot exist without liberty and liberty cannot endure without responsibility. The survival of liberty requires personal responsibility. Liberty and responsibility towards others are the two sides of a coin. A. G. Gardiner highlights the fact that to enjoy personal liberty it needs to be curtailed. Liberty is not a monopoly; it is a sharing. There are certain things in which we require no permission of other people. For example we can eat the food we like, put on clothes of our choice etc. However when we come out of our private world, we have to think of other people and their freedom. While walking on the road, we have to obey the rules of the road. These rules are not difficult to follow. They are small acts and not great sacrifices. If we follow them, life would be smoother and easier for all. If we do not follow them, there would be anarchy.

That is the reason why we must choose the middle path. We must be neither complete anarchists nor complete socialists. We must preserve out personal liberty but also maintain the liberties of the society in general. Individual rights are connected inseparably with the liberties of all people in the society. The theme of the essay is highly relevant in modern context. We must remember that we are all part and parcel of the society. We are like islands but we are connected by the ocean around us. Each individual is a part of a larger community. Family, village, city, state, region and country form a larger community. All members of society have certain responsibilities towards society,

Individual liberty should not be suppressed by the state or society but it must not be misused. Very often we find that in free societies, there is a constant tension between rights and responsibilities. In order to bring harmony and peace in the society, all individuals should be responsible towards society. They must curtail their freedom so that others can also enjoy their liberties. Common good is attainable only through mutual accommodation and adjustment.

9.8 A.G. GARDINER'S STYLE AND DICTION

A.G. Gardiner belongs to the school of Montaigne and Lamb. He was a prolific waiter who wrote essays on various subjects ranging from serious topics like personal liberty and civil liberty to mosquito. His greatness as an essayist lies in the fact that he brought out profound significance of the most ordinary or petty things. He communicated knowledge and wisdom in a delightful and humorous manner. His essays are personal and conversational in nature.

Gardiner's style is clear, simple, lucid and flexible. His prose is reflective and full of minute observation of day-to-day life. A. G. Gardiner was a liberal minded democrat who emphasized on curtailment of personal liberty for liberty for all. His vocabulary is drawn from everyday speech. However his language is quite dignified and solemn. His words are full of beauty, mystery and picturesqueness. The images he presents in his essays are vivid and concrete.

A.G. Gardiner always avoided mannerism and verbal pomposity. He referred to history, politics and contemporary events in his essays. Primarily, he was a journalist and therefore his language has a journalistic touch.Simplicity is the key feature of his style. His economy of words makes his essays compact and

packed with highly effective ideas. He also uses anecdotes and illustrations to elucidate his views. His essays often contain terse and wisdom packed quotes. Like Bacon, his style is sometimes epigrammatic and aphoristic.

Check Your Progress: 1

9.9 ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. What does A.G. Gardiner say about personal liberty?

……

……

……

……

……

……

2. What created chaos on the street in Petrograd?

……

……

……

……

……

……

3. What did the old fat lady say about freedom?

……

……

……

……

……

……

4. What would happen if all people drove or walked as they wanted?

……

……

……

……

……

……

5. Why does A.G. Gardiner call people liberty-drink?

……

……

……

……

……

……

6. Why should personal liberty be curtailed?

……

……

……

……

……

……

7. Is a traffic police symbol of tyranny?

……

……

……

……

……

……

8. "Liberty is a social contract" Explain the statement.

……

……

……

……

……

……

9. What are the personal liberties where we require no permission from other?

……

……

……

……

……

……

10. "When we step out of our personal world, our personal liberty is qualified by other people's liberty" Explain the statement in brief.

……

……

……

……

……

……

11. Why can one not blow the trombone at midnight ?

……

……

……

……

……

……

12. "A reasonable consideration for the right or feelings of others is the foundation of social conduct" Explain the statement.

……

……

……

……

……

……

13. What determines whether we are civilized or not?

……

……

……

……

……

……

14. Justify the title *On the Rule of the Road.*

……

……

……

……

……

……

Check Your Progress: 2

9.10 CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. A.G. Gardiner was an _____ essayist.

   (a) American (b) English

   (c) Asian (d) Argentinian

2. The pen name of A.G. Gardiner was_____

   (a) Alpha (b) Alpha of the Star

   (c) Alpha of the Plough (d) Alpha of literature

3. Alpha of the plough suggests_____
   (a) the biggest star in the cluster
   (b) the brightest star in the cluster
   (c) the smallest star in the cluster
   (d) the nearest star in the cluster
4. Alpha in Greek means_____
   (a) the last letter in alphabet. (b) the first letter in alphabet
   (c) the 10th letter in alphabet (d) the 20th letter in alphabet
5. A.G. Gardiner was the editor of
   (a) Daily News (b) Washington Post
   (c) New York Times (d) Time Magazine
6. A.G. Gardiner's father was
   (a) a lawyer (b) a journalist
   (c) a writer (d) a wood-worker
7. A.G. Gardiner was on essayist of _____
   (a) Victorian Age (b) Augustan Age.
   (c) Modern Age. (d) Romantic Age.
8. According to A.G. Gardiner, liberty is not a _____
   (a) personal affair (b) universal affair
   (c) social affair (d) political affair
9. A traffic policeman is not a _____
   (a) promise of safety (b) promise of security
   (c) promise of discipline (d) symbol of nuisance and tyranny
10. A fat old lady walked in the middle of the road in _____
   (a) London (b) Petrograd
   (c) Moscow (d) Paris
11. Fagin Academy represents _____
   (a) modern education' (b) training of pick pocketing
   (d) artistic activity (d) journalistic activity
12. In order to provide liberties to all, individual liberty should be
   (a) eliminated (b) implemented
   (c) curtailed (d) enhanced
13. Trombone is a _____
   (a) machine (b) musical instrument
   (c) educational tool (d) vehicle

9.11 MODERN ESSAY AND A.G.GARDINER'S CONTRIBUTION TO IT

The essay continued to flourish in modern age as a part of journalistic writing. It attained vigor, charm and variety during the 20th century. During this age, there were many dailies magazines and periodicals which provide unlimited scope for essay. There were major essayists like E.V. Lucas, Robert Lynd, G.K. Chesterton, A.G. Gardiner, Hilaire Belloc, J. B. Priestley, George Orwell

and Max Beerbohm etc. The following are the characteristics of modern essay.

(i) Modern essays are often personal in nature. Many essayists followed personal essays of Charles Lamb who revealed his life and reminiscences in his essays. In modern essays, many essayists reveal their feelings and thoughts before the readers. Modern essay is chatty and conversational in nature.

(ii) Modern essay can be called prose lyric as it is fall of personal feelings, imagination and lyrical writing style. A. G. Gardiner's style is often poetical and lucid.

(iii) Modern essay deals with a variety of themes ranging from political themes to day-to-day topics. A. G. Gardiner wrote an essay on 'Mosquito' in a reflective manner. A. G. Gardiner's essays are often thought-provoking and contemplative.

(iv) Modern essay like true literature is a criticism of life. There is a spirit of questioning in modern essays. The essayists do not take things for granted but think profoundly and search for meaning of life. A.G. Gardiner often dealt with current issues like liberty, freedom, discipline, fear, defense of ignorance, clothes, early rising, word magic, sleep and thoughts etc. His range of themes is quite wide and full of variety.

(v) Modern essayists employed simple, journalistic style. They presented their views in such a language that even ordinary readers can understand them. A.G. Gardiner often employed funny examples, anecdotes and humorous stories to elucidate his views.

(vi) Modern essayists used simple and effective prose style. They avoided pompous ornamental style. They used languages of day-to-day speech. Wit and humour in modern essays enhance their appeal A.G. Gardiner's keen observation made his essays very appealing. Gardiner belonged to the school of Montaigne and Charles Lamb who popularized personal essays. They laid bare their hearts before the readers like close friends. Gardiner's essays also have personal touch that makes them reader friendly.

9.12 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we studied A.G. Gardiner famous essay *On the Rule of the Road*. It is about personal liberty versus social liberty. Liberty is not just a personal affair, it is accommodation of personal liberty with public liberty and social order. The essay is relevant in modern context as people often take their liberties as monopoly neglecting other people rights, liberties and interests. The essay teaches us that in order to provide liberties to all, personal liberties have to be curtailed.

Gardiner's essay are contemplative and yet entertaining. You are advised to read some of his popular essays which you will find in project Gutenberg (free e-books). This essay *On the Rule of the Road* is included in Gutenberg famous collection of essays titled *Leaves in the Wind*.

9.13 BOOKS SUGGESTED

Hugh Walker, The English Essay and Essayists (1915)

Gardiner, Alferd George, 1865-1946. Author and Journalist

Works by Alfred George Gardiner at Project Gutenberg. (2009)

Alfred George Gardiner: Wikipedia.org.

On the Rule of the Road by A.G.Gardiner.www.enotes.com

A.G.Gardiner: https://open library.org

Answers

1. (b), 2. (c), 3. (b), 4. (b), 5. (a), 6. (d), 7. (a), 8. (a), 9. (a & b), 10. (b), 11. (b), 12. (c), 13. (b)