ten poems supporting Clinton instead of Obama as her Presidential candidate. I guess, for a woman, one's own sex is thicker than one's own kind and colour; but really, writing a poem for Hilary as if she were the saviour? I say! Well, I hope the American people learn, in spite of their inbuilt learning disability in matters political, that when politicians arrive at the hot seat of power, some chemical is released into human bloodstream turning even the noblest woman's feet to clay. Still, at least women politicians have prettier feet, I say.

Talking about feet or rather about idols with feet of clay, I have been told that no one reads a writer that I enjoyed and admired some decades ago: Somerset Maugham. I am told, no one reads him any more because he is considered either unfashionable or old-fashioned, which are not the same things since Jane Austen from an older era has become newly 'popular' while poor Maugham gathers dust in the attic. I am wondering whether I should re-read 'The Moon and Six-pence,' 'Of Human Bondage,' 'The Razor's Edge' or 'Liza of Lambeth' to find out what brought about this vote of no-confidence against him? But where is the time? As it is, I read half a dozen books at the same time. My list might comprise, an award winning current book; an old favourite; a book that is about to become a film; a reference book or critical work; a Bangla book; a book of poetry, a book for laughs; and a classic that I missed out reading when I was growing up or that I started and never finished. About the last, I can only say that Mark Twain was not off the mark when he said that classics are what everyone wants to have read but nobody does.

Talking about classics, I must admit, that in spite of every intention of improving myself yearly by continuing to dip into the 'classics' section, I still end up never finishing them. In this list, I regret to inform, languishes my copy of 'War and Peace' because midway, I discovered that life is too short and that I would rather re-read Pasternak's slimmer 'Doctor Zhivago.' In this same list, to my ignominy as a student of English literature and an admirer of the Irish literary contingent, also gathers cobwebs my copy of James Joyce's 'Ulysses', which I confess to skimming, and finally giving up for that particular year. Come next Bloomsday, June 16, the day the novel deals with, I will make another valiant stab at it. And say what you will, I will do so fortified by the hilariously summarised and abbreviated cartoon internet version called 'Ulysses for Dummies'.

Talking about dummies, well, what can one say? Lord Acton said, "A wise person does at once, what a fool does at last. Both do the same thing; only at different times." Okay, okay, I get it. Where is that damn copy of...?

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