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Measurement of pupil interest in types of selections at grade 9 level by ballot method to determine pupil preference.

Colavita, Philomena M
Boston University

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Thesis

MEASUREMENT OF PUPIL INTEREST IN TYPES OF
SELECTIONS AT GRADE 9 LEVEL BY BALLOT
METHOD TO DETERMINE PUPIL PREFERENCE

Submitted by

Philomena M. Colavita

(A. B., Pembroke College in Brown
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Second Reader: Donald D. Durrell, Professor of Education
Appreciation is extended to Helen B. Sullivan, Professor of Education at Boston University, for her helpful suggestions in the planning of this study, and to Miss Hazel G. Gibson and Mrs. Lillian R. Reardon, who added to the value of this study by conducting surveys in their individual classrooms.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND PROBLEMS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Order of Preferences for Narrative Selections for Total Population of 254 cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>Comparison of Boys' and Girls' Expressed Opinion of Narrative Selections Based on 254 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Comparison of Boys' and Girls' Expressed Preferences of Narrative Selections Based on 254 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Order of Preferences of Boys for Narrative Selections Based on 115 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Order of Preferences of Girls for Narrative Selections Based on 139 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Order of Preference of the Upper Quartile in Intelligence for Narrative Selections Based on 64 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>Order of Preference of the Lower Quartile in Intelligence for Narrative Selections Based on 64 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Comparison of Preferences of Total Population of 254 Cases for Three Types of Narrative Selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Comparison of Preferences of Boys and Girls for Three Narrative Types Based on 254 Cases</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Comparison of Preferences of Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Three Narrative Types Based on 128 Cases</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. Order of Preference for Informational Selections for Total Population of 254</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. Comparison of Boys' and Girls' Expressed Opinion of Informational Selections Based on 254 Cases</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. Comparison of Boys' and Girls' Expressed Preferences of Informational Selections Based on 254 Cases</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. Order of Preference of Boys for Informational Selections Based on 115 Cases</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. Order of Preference of Girls for Informational Selections Based on 139 Cases</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. Order of Preference of the Upper Quartile in Intelligence for Informational Selections Based on 64 Cases</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII.</td>
<td>Order of Preference of the Lower Quartile in Intelligence for Informational Selections Based on 64 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII.</td>
<td>Comparison of Preferences of Total Population of 254 Cases for Three Types of Informational Selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX.</td>
<td>Comparison of Preferences of Boys and Girls for Three Types of Informational Selections Based on 254 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX.</td>
<td>Comparison of Preferences for Three Types of Informational Selections Based on 128 Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI.</td>
<td>Order of Preference for All Types of Selections for the Total Population Based on 254 Cases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Distribution of Types of Narrative Selections</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>Distribution of Types of Informational Selections</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Summary Sheet for Reports of Preferences of Selections</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Graph | Page
--- | ---
A. Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of Total Population of 254 for Narrative Selections | 42
B. Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of Boys and Girls for Narrative Selections Based on 254 Cases | 45
C. Comparison of Preferences of the Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Narrative Selections Based on 128 Cases | 50
D. Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of the Total Population for Three Narrative Types | 52
E. Comparison of the Percentages of the Preferences of Boys and Girls for Three Narrative Types Based on 254 Cases | 54
F. Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of the Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Three Types of Narrative Selections Based on 128 Cases | 56

viii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graph</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of Total Population of 254 for Informational Selections</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of Boys and Girls for Informational Selections Based on 254 Cases</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Comparison of Preferences of the Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Informational Selections Based on 128 Cases</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of the Total Population for Three Informational Types</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Comparison of the Percentages of the Preferences of Boys and Girls for Three Informational Types Based on 254 Cases</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of the Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Three Types of Informational Selections Based on 128 Cases</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
M. Order of Enthusiastic Preference for All Types of Selections for the Total Population

Based on 254 Cases

Page 74
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

I. INTRODUCTION

In discussing the role of interest and motivation in the guiding of children's reading, Bond and Wagner stated:

"Nevertheless that reading program which does not develop a high level of interests and tastes has not made the complete contribution to the lives of the children that it should. Facts are soon forgotten, but interests and attitudes persist."

It is agreed that reading is the most important tool subject and that it is the most effective means by which wholesome and desirable attitudes, habits, tastes, and interests may be developed and stimulated. William S. Gray had this to say:

"If people are to learn and to continue to read, they must be interested in their reading. If we accept this view, one of the major concerns in a reading program in general education is the discovery of the dominant interests of young people and adults. This is not to say that a person's immediate interests should determine all of his reading. On the contrary, the schools must create and stimulate, through the reader's present interests, new interests which are socially desirable. This implies, furthermore, the development of reading tastes, that is, increasing powers to discern and appreciate whatever constitutes excellence in reading materials."


II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this investigation was (1) to discover the preferences of ninth grade boys and girls for narrative selections, (2) to compare the preferences of boys and girls for the individual narrative selections, (3) to compare the preferences of boys and girls for three types of narrative selections, (4) to compare the preferences of children of upper and lower quartiles in intelligence for narrative selections, (5) to discover the preferences of boys and girls at grade nine level for informational selections, (6) to compare the preferences of boys and girls for individual informational selections, (7) to compare the preferences of boys and girls for three types of informational selections, and (8) to compare the preferences of children of upper and lower quartiles in intelligence for the informational selections.

Importance of study. Interest determines how much and what kind of reading will be done by our pupils. Bond and Bond ¹ referred to interest as an important factor in reading in this way:

"Studies of reading interests of high school students indicated that reading interests are limited and immature. An individual should develop sustaining interests in a variety of fields of human relationships. One of the most challenging tasks of the teacher of a content subject is guiding students so that they may develop many new and vital interests."

Witty and Kopel \(^1\) made this statement in regard to interest in reading:

"Thus it is important to identify children's interests, the development of which gives direction and purpose to their activity, and integrity to their experience. The utilization of interests, moreover, assures a condition in which learning may take place economically."

In order to guide students in their reading and to elevate and broaden their tastes, objective and accurate information concerning the nature of pupils' actual reading interests and preferences is needed. Knowledge concerning the types of stories, books, magazines, and newspapers liked or disliked by children of all ages is essential for the teacher who hopes to make reading for them a fundamental part of adult life and an effective means for enjoyable leisure time activity and for intelligent living.

One of the first responsibilities of the teacher, therefore, is to discover the individual interests of the children in various types of reading matter. This investigation was undertaken to record further information on the expressed preferences of boys and girls at a ninth grade level. These young people expressed by ballot method their preferences for certain material which was made available to them. The following chapter contains a review of some previous studies on children's interests in reading.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

The type of reading material considered suitable for children has changed considerably within the last one hundred years. Among the earliest literature regarded as appropriate reading for young people was the New England Primer, which was influenced by the Puritan point of view and therefore contained the alphabet, catechism, and religious instruction. At the close of the eighteenth century appeared Janeway's Tokens for Children, literature which contained stories with a moral. Later, in 1750 chap-books, published by John Newbery, came from England to America. These chap-books consisted of little story tracts written mainly for entertainment but included a moralizing element. A larger part of the literature written for children after this was in narrative form, and the moralizing tone of the earlier writers slowly disappeared.

One of the first extended studies of children's interests in reading was made by Russell and Bullock in Colorado in 1897. From the answers of 1,500 children in grade three to twelve inclusive these writers discovered that:

1. Adventure stories were popular with boys and girls and were liked best in grades 8 and 9.

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2. Biography and travel were liked by more boys and girls in grade 9 and were in high favor from then on.

3. Stories of a sentimental type held little interest for boys.

4. Detective stories were enjoyed most by boys in grade 6, and the interest decreased as they became older.

5. Love stories were well liked by girls, and the interest increased to the end of high school.

6. Biography was liked by girls who preferred in high school stories of great women to those of great men.

Another study made in the same year by C. H. Henderson included the responses of 3,000 children of 8 grammar schools in Chicago. He found that:

1. More girls than boys read fiction and poetry.

2. More boys than girls read history.

3. Both boys and girls showed preference for fiction over other kinds of books.

4. Poetry and books of science were the types least read by both boys and girls.

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1 H. C. Henderson, "Reading Interests", Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction of New York State, Volume II, 1897. pp 978-91
Kirkpatrick, who made a study the following year of the reading of 5,000 children in grade 4 to 9 had findings similar to those of Henderson.

An investigation in Indiana by Wissler which included the answers of 1,060 girls and 840 boys disclosed the following:

1. Fiction was the leading choice of boys and girls as early as grade 5.
2. The fiction chosen by girls depicted home life and everyday thought and emotion. Boys preferred adventure stories with exploits.
3. In the reading of history boys lead girls.
4. Love stories interested older girls.
5. Girls preferred the theme of affection and kindness, while boys preferred strength, courage, and honesty of purpose.

In her study Isabel Lawrence stated that children up to the age of 8 found a satisfaction in reading myths and fairy tales, a strong interest in rhythm, and an instinctive

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2 H. C. Henderson, op. cit.
3 Clark Wissler, "Interests of Children in the Reading Work of the Elementary Schools", Pedagogical Seminary, 5: 523-40, April, 1898.
interest in animals. This finding corresponded closely with that of Grant and White who inquired into the reading of 600 children found also that animal stories, fairy tales, and folklore were preferred over other types of material. Books such as the Jungle Book, and Black Beauty had strong appeal. At 8 or 9 there was a desire for history, Greek and Roman history, and the periods of chivalry and adventure with the interest on individuals. Stories like Robin Hood, Black Arrow, and Men of Iron were well liked. Boys and girls age 12 to 14, she further stated, had a strong preference for literature which expressed emotion.

Clara Vostrovsky's investigation in California of the tastes of 604 boys and 665 girls by the questionnaire method disclosed that girls preferred domestic stories and stories about children and that boys preferred adventure stories. She found also that the women writers were preferred by girls, while the men writers were preferred by boys. Another conclusion drawn from her study revealed that boys had no interest in girls' stories, but girls had an interest in stories about boys.

1 Emma B. Grant and Margaret L. White, "A Study of Children's Choices of Reading Materials", Teachers College Record, 26: 671-78, April, 1925.

2 Clara Vostrovsky, "Children's Tastes in Reading", Pedagogical Seminary, 6: 523-38, 1899.
Chase, ¹ who questioned over 700 adults about their reading at a certain age, stated that the greatest reading period ranges from age 12 to 15. This agrees with a finding by Russell and Bullock. ² According to Chase men in their reading showed the most interest in people, adventure, history, and biography. Women showed the most interest in people and in emotion and feelings.

In considering the questions answered by 2,469 boys and girls age 14 to 19, Abbott ³ found that interest was shown in content rather than style. Boys preferred reading books of adventure, and girls preferred sentiment. Another finding of Abbotts indicated a difference in reading taste with an increase in age. Mrs. Anderson ⁴ had a similar finding in her study of reading tastes in 1912. One half of the books liked by boys age 14 to 15, Abbott stated, were juvenile in nature, while the preferences of boys age 16 to 19 indicated an increased interest in books of realism. He found that girls also showed a maturing of tastes and that realism was of interest to girls at any age.


² Russell and Bullock, op. cit.


Atkinson's questionnaire-type investigation in Springfield in 1908 revealed the following preferences in connection with high school pupils:

1. The freshmen had a remarkable liking for biography, a wide interest in travel and adventure, and a liking for heroic characters in historic situations.

2. The sophomore class as a whole read more history, adventure, and travel than the two higher classes.

3. The juniors showed most general interest in historical novels. Their favorite authors were Scott, Dickens, Holmes, and Irving. A small amount of reading of historical and biographical books was done.

4. All the seniors had an interest in books portraying strong personalities. Their favorite authors were Scott, Dickens, Irving, and Stevenson.

Another study of the reading tastes of high school pupils was made by Roxanna Anderson two years later. She used the replies of 269 boys and 319 girls and found that:

1. Boys like adventure stories filled with action and outdoor life. Girls preferred sentiment and beauty and style in their reading.

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2 Roxanna Anderson, op. cit.
2. Preference for war stories and detective stories lessened as the boys and girls reached the senior year.

3. Boys preferred men as heroes; girls liked men for heroes but preferred women.

4. Girls showed much more interest in love stories than did boys.

Research by Crow in 1924 at the high school level disclosed additional information on reading preferred by these boys and girls. The book titles placed at the top of the scale contrasted with those at the bottom. Books liked most were those dealing with present day life and its activities, needs, and problems. Books containing the experiences of young people, with action and growth going on, were also placed at the top by the children. Simple and easy style, much action, and a direct appeal to the imagination and emotions of youth were other elements causing a book to be favored.

Olcott's study of children's reading showed a difference in taste between boys and girls. The former preferred stories of athletics, adventure, and experiences of gregarious life, such as gangs and pirates; they enjoyed history and biography and books on how to make and do things. Belser also stated

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that boys were interested in what-to-do and how-to-do books. Jordan drew a similar conclusion. Girls had preference for stories of play and of home and school life, and they enjoyed simple love stories.

The next extensive investigation of reading interest was undertaken by Jordan \(^1\) in 1921. The questionnaire method was used and the responses of 3,598 pupils of Arkansas, Kansas, and Washington, D. C. were considered. His work disclosed the following points:

1. Boys and girls read more fiction than any other kind. Girls read more fiction than boys. Boys preferred fiction of the adventure type which emphasizes action, fighting, and rivalry. Girls preferred fiction containing sentiment and emotion. This interest continued through the high school years.

2. Both boys and girls showed an increase of interest in fiction. From age 9 to 11 they were much interested in juvenile books; then the interest declined. Girls showed more interest than boys in juvenile fiction.

3. Boys lead in the reading of biography, travel, and history. Wissler \(^2\) and Henderson \(^3\) had a

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1 Arthur M. Jordan, *Children's Interests in Reading*. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 107. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1921. 143 pp
2 Wissler, *op. cit.*
3 Henderson, *op. cit.*
similar conclusion.

4. Girls had only a small interest in books on travel, science, and adventure. Boys had slightly more interest than girls in travel and science.

5. Girls of high school age liked novels of the day concerning manners and daily life.

6. Boys were slightly more interested in humor than were girls.

Agreement with the first conclusion above was shown by Jones and Owen 1 who gathered information from 17 schools and included the choices of 3,357 children age 7 to 15. The fiction books preferred were those with the spirit of activity and adventure. The study by Jordan 2 in 1926, employing two methods, a library investigation and a questionnaire, upheld the original findings and disclosed the following additional material in regard to reading preferences:

1. The interests of boys age 10 to 13 included books concerning war and scouting, school and sports, the Boy Scouts, and strenuous adventure.

2. The popular writers were those who appealed to instincts of mastery, fighting, love of sensory life for its own sake, original attention,

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approval, and scornful behavior.

3. Interest was displayed in biography and history when written in the form of an exciting story.

4. Girls were interested in fiction pertaining to home and school life, fairy tales, stories with an historical background, and love stories.

5. The authors popular with girls appealed to the following instincts: maternal, kindliness, attention to others, response to approval, and scornful behavior.

Sallibelle Royster ¹ had findings in 1933 similar to the first and fourth findings above.

Fannie Dunn's inquiry ² in 1921 was to discover the elements in primary reading material that were of interest to children in grades 1, 2, and 3. Selections taken from primary readers and arranged in pairs were read to the children. The characteristics that aroused interest were: surprise and plot for both boys and girls; animalness for boys; and childness, familiar experience, repetition, and conversation for girls. Liveliness, fancifulness, and verse form were of interest only when accompanied by the characteristics already


mentioned. Wilma Garnett ¹ three years later employed a procedure somewhat similar to Dunn's. The elements of interest for fourth grade boys in this later investigation were: action, adventure, animals, faithfulness, heroism, humor, and fighting. Elements arousing interest for girls took the following order: action and adventure, fairy tales, kindness, happy ending, daily life, and faithfulness. Arthur Gates ² also made a study similar to Dunn's and concluded with this statement:

"When all of these factors are considered, the agreement of the results of two studies involving so many subtle factors and such elaborate statistical analyses is really very close. In so far as any general investigations are concerned, the two investigations are in entire agreement."

Gates, Peardon, and Sartorius' inquiry ³ in 1931 of the reading of children in grade 1, 2, and 3 produced similar findings. The qualities most favored were: surprise, liveliness, animalness, humor, conversation, plot and narrativeness. This study differed from Dunn's in the following way: Humor and liveliness were rated higher, and plot was rated lower.


Starch's analysis of the contents of ten textbooks used in grade 1 through grade 8 revealed that the lower-grade readers were not similar to those of the upper grades. He concluded that the following four types of material composed three-fourths of the content of lower-grade textbooks: animals, boys and girls, folklore and poetry. Classics, history and patriotism, biography, and poetry made up four-fifths of the content of upper-grade books. Uhl, who made a questionnaire-type investigation into the reading of the elementary school, considered the answers of 2,253 teachers from 80 cities and found the following qualities made a selection favored: interesting action, characters, problems, information, and repetition. Interesting action was the best guarantee for success. This was also found by Angela Broening in her book survey over a two-year period. Florence Brumbaugh's inquiry covering grade 1 to 6 produced a similar finding. Also ranking high,

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according to Uhl, were adventure; easy content; easy diction; humor; and portrayal of the supernatural, of kindness, of faithfulness, and of loyalty. Dramatization and humor were important throughout the grades. He further stated that the most undesirable qualities were: an unreal, depressing, monotonous, or not well told stories.

Uhl came to similar conclusions in a later investigation of the reading by junior high school pupils of informational selections. In this later study he emphasized that the traditional informational selections in most cases possessed little interest and were written in a style suitable for adults, not for children. Later, in an experiment extending over widely distributed areas for a period of two years, Bruner asked children in grades 4, 5, and 6 to check selections which were most interesting and least interesting to them. His results also disclosed that descriptive types of informational selections rated much lower than informational material of the dramatic type. He concluded that the need for selections of

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the latter was great. Lydia Leistikow ¹ found that informational nature books were not so widely read as nature books written in story form.

A study by Genevieve Coy ² which appeared in 1923 revealed information on the reading interests of a group of gifted children whose intelligence quotients ranged from 100 to 156. She found that the special group of boys were much higher in instructive books and somewhat higher in books in series. The boys in the control group were slightly higher in adventure and in children's books. The girls in the special group showed greater liking for adventure and sentimental tales, while the control group listed more books in series and books about children. She concluded that the literary value of the books preferred by the group of gifted children and the group of below average children was almost the same. Thorndike ³ in a study of 12,000 children had a similar finding. Schmidt's ⁴

¹ Lydia M. Leistikow, "Inventory of What Children Voluntarily Select to Read", Elementary School Journal, 39:11-12 September, 1938.


study of the reading of a group of mentally retarded girls disclosed that the books most favored contained stories of girls going away to school, adventure stories, histories, stories of family life, and stories of other countries. Terman 1 in his report of a special group of children stated that gifted children read a wider range than the control children and read more science, history, biography, travel, folk tales, informational fiction, poetry, and drama. Huber 2 made a study of 430 children in schools of New York City. She included six types of literature; namely, familiar experience, unusual experience, humor, fancy, information, and heroism and service. Her findings indicated that (1) the reading interests of children of varying levels of intelligence were very much the same; (2) marked preferences in different kinds of reading material were shown by dull, average, and bright children; (3) dull children liked selections of humor less than the average and bright; (4) dull children liked selections of familiar experience more than did the children of higher levels of intelligence. Cleary 3 agreed with the first finding above.

1 Lewis M. Terman and Others, "Reading Interests", Genetic Studies of Genius, 1: 453-54, October, 1925.


Norvell in his study of boys' and girls' reading interests agrees with the findings of Coy, Huber, and Thorndike.\(^4\)

Lazar,\(^5\) contrary to the above studies, found a difference in the reading interests of children varying levels of intelligence. She stated that (1) the dull children preferred the simpler and less realistic types of reading materials, while the bright children selected better types; (2) a positive relationship existed between the types of books liked and the intelligence of the pupils; and (3) the quality of the material read was associated with the socio-economic status of the children. Alfred S. Lewerenz\(^6\) and Margaret Ladd\(^7\) stated

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2 Genevieve Coy, *op. cit.*

3 Miriam B. Huber, *op. cit.*

4 Robert L. Thorndike, *op. cit.*

5 May Lazar, *Reading Interests, Activities, and Opportunities of Bright, Average, and Dull Children*. Teachers College Contributions to Education, Number 707, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1937. 127 pp.


that the reading of books for enjoyment seemed to be done by
the children who were above average in intelligence. Albert
Harris \(^1\) disclosed that bright children did more reading and
had a wider range of interest than average children. Terman \(^2\)
also found that the reading of gifted children was of better
quality than that of unselected children. Findings in agree­
ment with this one were reported by Green, \(^3\) Witty and Lehman, \(^4\)
and Hollingsworth. \(^5\)

Three extensive examinations into the reading preferences
of children appeared in 1926. One by Mary Stroh \(^6\) dealt with
grades 7, 8, and 9 and used the responses from 97 school
systems. She stated that no significant difference in reading
selections was apparent in towns or cities of different sizes.
Ten books which teachers reported were most frequently read

\(^2\) Lewis M. Terman and others, *op. cit.*
\(^4\) Paul Witty and Harvey C. Lehman, "The Reading and Reading Interests of Gifted Children", *Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 45: 466-81, December, 1934.
voluntarily by the children included in order of popularity: Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Call of the Wild, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, Penrod, Anne of Green Gables, Treasure Island, White Fang, Hans Brinker, and The Secret Garden. Vera Fediaevsky ¹ had a similar report to make a year later. A survey ² of the leisure reading of 46,972 children in New York City at the secondary school level showed the following books were the favorites: Call of the Wild, Tom Sawyer, Alice Adams, David Copperfield, Seventeen, The Three Musketeers, The Count of Monte Cristo, Huckleberry Finn, The Good Earth, and Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. Belser's report ³ the same year disclosed this information:

1. The reading interests of boys and girls up to the age of 8 or 9 were similar. They liked juvenile fiction, fanciful and imaginative literature, and that's why stories.

2. Interests of boys age 10 to 13 included war and scouting, school and sports, boy scouts, and strenuous adventure.

¹ Vera Fediaevsky, "Methods of Studying Children's Interest in Reading", Elementary English Review, 4: 3-5; 14, January, 1927.


3. Most reading was done at 14 years of age. Almost 95 per cent of the boys preferred adventure and 75 per cent of the girls preferred love stories.

4. In non-fiction boys were interested in books on airplanes, submarines, kites, engines, puzzles, and magic.

5. In adult fiction boys preferred science and adventure; girls favored adult fiction and stories of home life.

6. Boys most frequently chose books containing the following elements: physical strength; self-control; independence; saving a person's life; gaining mastery in physical combat; being honest, and trustworthy; and winning admiration.

7. Boys had more decided preferences than did girls.

8. Boys almost never read girls' books.

The third study of importance was by Terman and Lima. They inquired into the reading interests of children up to the age of 16. The writers revealed that:

1. Children up to age 5 were interested in jingles,
nursery rhymes, simple fairy tales, and little animal stories.

2. Children 6 to 7 years old were interested in nature stories.

3. Children age 8 liked fairy tales, stories of real life, and animal and nature stories.


5. Children age 10 read books of travel. Stories of other lands were popular. Lives of famous men and women, myths, and legends were enjoyed.

6. Children age 11 had interest in series books which contained adventure and mystery. More interest was taken in animal and nature stories. Girls began to show interest in love stories.

7. Children age 12 had an interest in practically every field of literature, especially in biographies and historical narratives. Boys read books on inventions and mechanics. Adventure was still the most popular with boys. Girls were interested in stories of school or college life and nature stories. They liked biography and began to read adult fiction.

8. At age 13 no new interests developed, but present interest became more pronounced. Boys
showed much interest in mechanical and scientific books, and books pertaining to hobbies. Girls enjoyed poetry and had an interest in drama.

9. At age 14 non-fiction, if available, was read. They liked biography, history, and travel books. The interests of girls matured.

10. At age 15 a decided decrease of reading interests was found. Girls read more fiction than did boys and more romantic novels than anything else. Adult tastes were formed. Many read poetry. Boys often read technical books and books on hobbies. Specialization of interest occurred.

11. At age 16 there was no trend of group interest. The interests of boys and girls were matured. In agreement with these findings above at the different age groups were Gray and Monroe 1 three years later.

In studying the reading habits of a group of girls, Henriette Walter, 2 who had replies from elementary and high schools, leaders of girls' organizations, and librarians, found that fiction was the predominant kind of reading. A similar

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2 Henriette R. Walter, "Reading Interests and Habits of Girls", Girl Life in America, p. 117-37, April, 1927.
conclusion was made by Lancaster ¹ who stated that 98 per cent of the books read voluntarily in grade 4 to 8 were prose and mostly fiction. Campbell ² in a library investigation revealed that fiction, biography, and fairy tales were the types liked best. Elder and Carpenter's survey ³ of girls' reading showed that those of high school age read more fiction and preferred it to anything else. After obtaining responses of 5,500 boys and girls in grade 9, Anne Rinehart ⁴ concluded that interest in reading was mainly in fiction. Center and Persons, ⁵ studying a group of retarded readers, had a similar conclusion. The same results were reported by Thurber. ⁶


Eaton, 1 Jennings, 2 Johnson, 3 Grumette, 4 Seegers, 5 Betzner and Lyman, 6 Heller, 7 Blair, 8 and Rankin. 9

A study was made by Ruth Wells 10 in 1934 to determine the appeal of different types of humorous literature to pupils

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3 B. Lamar Johnson, "Children's Reading Interests as Related to Sex and Grade in School", School Review, 40: 257-72, April, 1932.


9 Marie Rankin, Children's Interest in Library Books of Fiction, Teachers College Contributions to Education, Number 906, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944. 146 pp.

of the junior and senior high school. Four types were used: slapstick, absurdity, satire, and whimsy. She found that with all grades absurdity was the favorite, slapstick came second, satire was third, and whimsy was last. Her study showed that a difference existed between boys and girls in the appreciation of humorous literature. Girls appeared to like slapstick and absurdity less and satire and whimsy better than did boys. In conclusion she stated: 1

"It was, therefore, concluded that, in so far as this study is indicative, grade in school and social background are shown to have more relation to tastes in humorous literature than do mental ability or social adjustment."

Witty, Coomer, and McBean 2 twelve years later in a study of children's choices of books had a similar conclusion: namely, that humor was a favorite factor in children's choices of reading materials.

Four additional studies pertaining to reading interests of children at the secondary level were published in 1936. Byrns and Henman 3 found a small number of books was read by 1,980 freshmen entering at the University of Wisconsin. Boys read somewhat more books of travel, adventure, detective, and

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1 op. cit. p. 90


3 Ruth Byrns and V. A. C. Henman, "Reading Interests of High School Seniors", English Journal, 25:61-64, January 1936
mystery. Girls listed more novels of a high quality. Royster\(^1\) found that three-fourths of the high school freshmen questioned read the following authors: Altshalter, Grey, Curwood, and Terhune. Boys of the twelfth grade turned to more mature reading. Both boys and girls enjoyed mysteries. McCullough\(^2\) reported that boys read books about people their own age and sex. Next came books about adults or animals. The factors of interest to boys were: adventure, heroism, hardship, fighting, mystery, cleverness, humor, love, and daily life. Girls enjoyed in the order given: Hardship, heroism, love, mystery, adventure, daily life, fighting, and cleverness. Center and Persons\(^3\) found that fiction was the favorite leisure reading of New York City high school students. Travel, adventure, and poetry were not popular in any term.

In her inquiry the following year Lazar\(^4\) concluded that both boys and girls liked mystery stories, adventure, and history but had marked differences in the choice of other types. Girls preferred fairy tales and chose novels, poetry, and stories of school and home life more often than boys did. Other

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1 Sallibelle Royster, "Reading Tastes of Twelfth-Grade Pupils", *Education*, 56: 369-71, February, 1936.


4 May Lazar, op. cit.
investigations showing wide sex differences were those of
Jordan, 1 Johnson, 2 Chase, 3 Milam, 4 Malchow, 5 and Norvell. 6

A survey by Brink 7 in 1939 of the reading interests of
1,532 pupils in Chicago high schools disclosed that (1) adven-
ture lead with all classes; (2) interest in sports increased
during the high school period; (3) mystery, humor, and drama
seemed to lose appeal; (4) poetry, art, music, and religion
did not interest pupils very much; and (5) interest in reading
non-fiction increased. Comparable findings were made by
Rothney and McCaul, 8 Malchow, 9 and Eberhart, 10

1 Arthur M. 'Jordan, Children's Interests in Reading.
2 B. Lamar Johnson, op. cit.
3 Sara E. Chase, "Individual Differences in the Ex-
perience of Children," Journal of Educational Method, 8: 136-
46, December, 1928.
4 Carl H. Milam, Chairman, Children's Reading: A
Study of the Voluntary Reading of Boys and Girls in the United
States. Report of the Subcommittee on Reading, White House
Conference on Child Health and Protection. New York: The
5 Evangeline C. Malchow, "Reading Interests of Junior
6 George W. Norvell, op. cit.
7 William G. Brink, "Reading Interests of High School
Pupils", School Review, 47: 613-21, October, 1939.
8 John W. M. Rothney and Robert L. McCaul, Reading
Preferences of High School Boys", English Journal, 27: 650-
60, October, 1938.
9 Evangeline C. Malchow, op. cit.
10 Wilfred Eberhart, "Evaluating the Leisure Reading of
Witty and Coomer on the contrary, found that the list of books read by the children in their group contained good modern books and that these pupils read a more varied and mature collection of books than did the pupils mentioned in Brink's study.

In 1950 Moreland using high schools and a junior college found the following subjects to be of most interest to boys and girls: how the next war may come, how to get along with other people, how crimes are being detected, how other nations feel toward the United States, why people behave as they do, and what makes a personality.

Wilson from an inquiry of kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 children found that the reading preferences of children varied and only small grade-level differences were apparent. The favorite types of stories were: do-it books, animals, Snow White, fairies, comics, nature, poetry, Mother Goose, children's experiences, and adventure. McGehee had a similar conclusion. For boys and girls in grade 4 through grade 8


2 George B. Moreland, "What Young People Want to Read About", Library Quarterly, 10: 469-93, October, 1940.

3 Frank T. Wilson, "Reading Interests of Young Children" Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology, 58: 363-89 June, 1941.

in 455 schools he found no clear-cut trends in change of interest with change of grade status. A third study the same year by Ethel Cornell 1 on the voluntary reading of young people age 12 to 16 indicated a wide range of interests which included frequent reading of science, cooking, sewing, photography, and languages. More reading of adult fiction was done than any other kind. Her study showed little vocational reading was done. Zeller's study 2 which also appeared in 1941, was of the questionnaire type and included replies of 1,995 boys and 2,052 girls in grades 7, 8, and 9. She stated that action and humor exerted an influence on reading choices of boys and girls. Humor had a favorable effect on both boys and girls. Action attracted boys but sometimes tended to influence girls unfavorably.

Rankin's study 3 of reading interests found the following themes were most common in choices of books of fiction: stories of careers for girls, nursing, teaching, and newswriting, then sea adventure, and stories of school life. Books popular with boys pertained to stories of physical adventure; those popular with girls pertained to adventure which was sedentary in nature.


3 Marie Rankin, op. cit.
She found that in early adolescence the interests of boys and girls differed most. Also finding that sex was important in determining interests were: Lewerenz, 1 Milam, 2 Holmes, 3 Grumette, 4 Lazar, 5 Cleary, 6 LaBrant and Heller, 7 and Thorndike. 8

A more recent study of interests by Pressey 9 gave the following information: that at the age of 12 to 13 the most reading of books was done than ever before or after. Series books were eagerly read. Terman and Lima's finding 10 in

1 Alfred S. Lewerenz, "Children and the Public Library", Library Quarterly, 1: 152-74, 1931.
2 Carl H. Milam, op. cit.
4 Jesse Grumette, op. cit.
5 May Lazar, op. cit.
6 Florence Cleary, op. cit.
8 Robert L. Thorndike, A Comparative Study of Children's Interests. Teachers College Contributions to Education; New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941. 48 pp.
an earlier study concurred with this. Harris in 1947 made a similar statement.

Alice Sterner, in investigating the habits of high school pupils in reference to books, discovered that the three major interests were adventure, humor, and love. With this group adventure was the favorite type of reading. Mystery, girls' stories, and modern fiction followed along closely. Girls preferred modern fiction; boys sought adventure books. Humor and plays were the least popular with the whole group. Ruth Strang found from check lists that in the upper grade level historical novels, travel, and current events were of interest. Sterner summarized with this statement:

"It is the interest rather than the medium which attracts pupils to these leisure-time activities. Adventure and humor are almost universally popular with youth; and the love theme although it seems to be less favored, has considerable attraction for high school pupils."

Another recent study by Carson and Davies of the books read voluntarily by pupils in grades 8, 9, and 10 told of the

1 Albert J. Harris, op. cit.


4 Alice P. Sterner, op. cit. p. 27

types of general fiction read. Boys preferred in this order: dog stories, short stories, sports, sea, aviation, football, baseball, humor, pirates, hunting, and romance. Girls chose fiction in this order: romance, short stories, dog stories, humor, sports, sea, aviation, pirates, baseball, hunting, and football. William Scanlan ¹ in 1950 identified the one hundred most popular books of fiction during a seven months period. The five most frequent titles were: Betsy-Tacy, Magical Melons, Mr. Popper's Penguins, Adventures of Tom Sawyer, and Little House in the Big Woods. Out of the one hundred books mentioned 28 were animal stories and 43 of the books were written by nine authors.

Norvell's recent twelve-year study ² of reading interests showed the relative popularity of various literary selections. Data were secured on the basis of 50,000 children and 625 teachers in schools in New York state, and 1700 selections were used. The list of favorable factors for boys included: adventure, outdoor games, school life, mystery, obvious humor, animals, patriotism, and male rather than female characters. Factors making selections unfavorable were: love, other sentiments, home and family life, didacticism, religion, the reflective or philosophical, extended description, form or


² George W. Norvell, op. cit.
technique as a dominant factor, and female characters. For girls the favorable factors were: adventure, humor, animals, patriotism, love, other sentiments, home and family life, male and female characters. Considered unfavorable factors were: grim adventure, extended description, didacticism, and form or technique as a dominant factor. The favorable types of reading for boys were novels, plays, short stories, and biographies of men; girls preferred the same types with biographies of women added. They placed essays and poems higher than did boys.

This chapter presented a review of various studies relating to the reading interests and preferences of groups of children of different ages. Chapter III which follows describes the method, procedure, and scope of the present investigation.
CHAPTER III

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION
CHAPTER III

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

SCOPE OF STUDY:

As previously stated, this study was undertaken to determine the preferences of ninth grade boys and girls for six types of selections, narrative and informational. The narrative types included in this study were: adventure, such as *The Ransom of Red Chief*; and stories of family life, such as *A Start in Life*. The following types of informational selections were used: biography, such as *A Camping Trip*; science, such as *The Death Fighter*; and vocation, such as *Your Mind in the Making*.

The following comparisons were made:

1. Comparison of the interests of boys and girls.
2. Comparison of the interests in individual selections.
3. Comparison of the interests of children in the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence.
4. Comparison of the interest in types of selections.

PROCEDURE USED:

Ten narrative selections were chosen from literature books designed for use in the ninth grade. These selections were cut out and placed into separate folders. The distribution of narrative types is shown in the following chart.
As indicated in Chart I, three types of narrative selections were used. Five identical sets of these selections were distributed to teachers of the ninth grade. An instruction sheet was included which requested the teachers to allow the students to read the selections and to use the following code to express their individual preferences:

1. A plus sign (+) for indicating liking with enthusiasm.
2. A check mark (✓) for indicating liking without enthusiasm.
3. A circle (〇) for indicating dislike.

Chart II which follows shows the distribution of the types of informational selections used. The same procedure was followed in the selection, preparation, distribution, and presentation of the informational reading material as for the narrative material. The same method of expressing preferences for informational selections was used as for selections of the
narrative type:

1. A plus sign (+) for indicating liking with enthusiasm.
2. A check (✓) for indicating liking without enthusiasm.
3. A circle (○) for indicating dislike.

CHART II
DISTRIBUTION OF TYPES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biography</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following summary sheet, Chart III, was used for both the narrative and the informational selections. The information was filled in by the individual teachers. For each selection they recorded the number of children liking with enthusiasm, liking without enthusiasm, and disliking. Next the number of boys and the number of girls liking with enthusiasm, liking without enthusiasm, and disliking was indicated. Then the number of children in the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence again liking with enthusiasm, liking without enthusiasm, and disliking was placed in the appropriate
### Chart III

**Summary Sheet for Reports of Preferences of Material**

#### Titles of Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of children liking with enthusiasm</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartiles Upper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of children liking without enthusiasm</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartiles Upper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of children disliking</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartiles Upper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Number of Participants:** ____________  **Teacher's Name:** ____________

**I. Q. Range:** ____________  **School:** ____________

**City:** ____________
spaces. The same steps were required for the remaining selections. Whenever the intelligence quotient for any boy or girl was not available, the individual teacher used her own judgment and the pupil's rank in the class.

POPULATION:

The population consisted of 254 ninth grade boys and girls in several communities with varying socio-economic conditions outside the city of Boston. The intelligence quotient of the participants in the survey ranged from 70 to 123.

RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The information collected by the procedure just described is analyzed in the following chapter and an attempt is made to discover the following:

1. Which type of narrative selections appeal most to boys and girls in the ninth grade.
2. Which type of informational selections appeal most to boys and girls in the ninth grade.
3. If boys and girls in the ninth grade prefer the same selections.
4. If the same types of selections are preferred by children in the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA
Table I presented the preferences of the total population for narrative selections. The table can be read as follows: 75.2 per cent liked The Ransom of Red Chief with enthusiasm, 20.9 per cent liked the selection, and 3.9 per cent disliked it. The remainder of the table can be interpreted in the same manner. Graph A on the following page is based on the information contained in Table I.
GRAPH A

PERCENTAGES OF PREFERENCE WITH ENTHUSIASM OF TOTAL POPULATION OF 254 FOR NARRATIVE SELECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>75.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Trap</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad Influence</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moti-Guj---Mutineer</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Snob</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Start in Life</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wings Rampant</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE II

**COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' EXPRESSED OPINION OF NARRATIVE SELECTIONS BASED ON 254 CASES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Liking</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Treasure Trap</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bad Influence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Moti-Guj---Mutineer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Snob</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A Start in Life</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wings Rampant</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II is to be read as follows: both boys and girls liked *The Ransom of Red Chief*; both boys and girls disliked this selection. The rest of the table is to be read in the same manner. All the selections were both liked and disliked by boys and girls.


**TABLE III**

**COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' EXPRESSED PREFERENCES OF NARRATIVE SELECTIONS BASED ON 254 CASES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Treasure Trap</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bad Influence</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Moti-Guj--Mutineer</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Snob</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A Start in Life</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wings Rampant</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III presented a comparison of the percentages of boys and girls preferences for narrative selections. The Ransom of Red Chief was liked with enthusiasm by 74.8 per cent of the boys and 75.5 per cent of the girls; it was liked without enthusiasm by 21.7 per cent of the boys and 20.1 per cent of the girls; and it was disliked by 3.5 per cent of the boys and 4.4 per cent of the girls. The remaining figures are to be interpreted in the same manner. The figure which follows on the next page gives a graphic presentation of the data in Table III.
GRAPH B

COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF PREFERENCE WITH ENTHUSIASM OF BOYS AND GIRLS FOR NARRATIVE SELECTIONS BASED ON 254 CASES

- The Ransom of Red Chief
  - Boys: 74.8%
  - Girls: 75.5%

- Mountain Monarch
  - Boys: 55.7%
  - Girls: 77.0%

- Treasure Trap
  - Boys: 77.4%
  - Girls: 57.5%

- Bad Influence
  - Boys: 26.1%
  - Girls: 82.0%

- Death of Red Peril
  - Boys: 62.5%
  - Girls: 49.5%

- Moti-Guj--Mutineer
  - Boys: 51.4%
  - Girls: 41.0%

- Hanging a Picture
  - Boys: 34.8%
  - Girls: 48.2%

- The Snob
  - Boys: 17.4%
  - Girls: 49.6%

- A Start in Life
  - Boys: 15.6%
  - Girls: 51.1%

- Wings Rampant
  - Boys: 54.6%
  - Girls: 17.6%
### Table IV
ORDER OF PREFERENCES OF BOYS FOR NARRATIVE SELECTIONS BASED ON 115 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Treasure Trap</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>74.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wings Rampant</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Moti-Guj---Mutineer</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Bad Influence</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Snob</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A Start in Life</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV presented the order of preferences of boys for narrative selections. The table can be read as follows:

- **Treasure Trap** was liked with enthusiasm by 77.4 per cent of the boys, liked by 20.8 per cent, and disliked by 1.8 per cent.
- **The Ransom of Red Chief** followed second; it was liked very much by 74.8 per cent of the boys, liked by 21.7 per cent, and disliked by 3.5 per cent. The remainder of the table can be read in the same way.
Table V, which presented the order of preferences of girls for narrative selections, can be interpreted as follows: 82.0 per cent liked Bad Influence with enthusiasm, 14.4 per cent liked it, and 3.6 per cent disliked it. Mountain Monarch was the second most popular story for girls; it was well liked by 77.0 per cent, liked moderately by 19.4 per cent, and disliked by 3.6 per cent. The remaining numbers can be interpreted in a similar manner.
### TABLE VI

**ORDER OF PREFERENCE OF THE UPPER QUARTILE**
**IN INTELLIGENCE FOR NARRATIVE SELECTIONS**
**BASED ON 64 CASES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Selections</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Treasure Trap</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bad Influence</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Moti-Guj---Mutineer</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Snob</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A Start in Life</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wings Rampant</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table VI the order of preference of the pupils of the upper quartile in intelligence was indicated. Interpretation can be made as follows: The Ransom of Red Chief was liked enthusiastically by 70.3 per cent of the children of the upper quartile in intelligence, the same selection was liked without enthusiasm by 26.6 per cent, and it was disliked by 3.1 per cent. The remaining figures can be analyzed in a similar manner.
TABLE VII

ORDER OF PREFERENCE OF THE LOWER QUARTILE
IN INTELLIGENCE FOR NARRATIVE SELECTIONS
BASED ON 64 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Selections</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bad Influence</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Treasure Trap</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Moti-Guj---Mutineer</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Wings Rampant</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Snob</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A Start in Life</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VII showed the order of preference of children of the lower quartile in intelligence for narrative selections. The information can be interpreted in the same manner as the preceding table. Graph C follows and presents the data contained in Table VI and VII.
### Graph C

**Comparison of Preferences of the Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Narrative Selections Based on 128 Cases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Ransom of Red Chief</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Trap</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Monarch</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad Influence</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Red Peril</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moti-Guj---Mutineer</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanging A Picture</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Snob</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Start in Life</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wings Rampant</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE VIII

**COMPARISON OF PREFERENCES OF TOTAL POPULATION OF 254 CASES FOR THREE TYPES OF NARRATIVE SELECTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Liking without Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Adventure</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Humor</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Family Life</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VIII indicated the preferences for three narrative types. Adventure was liked with enthusiasm by 53.7 per cent, it was liked by 34.9 per cent, and it was disliked by 11.4 per cent. The remainder of the table can be interpreted in a similar way. Graph D which follows is based on Table VIII.
GRAPH D

Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of the Total Population for Three Narrative Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comparison of the preferences of boys and girls for three narrative types was made in Table IX, which can be read in this way: 59.7 per cent of the boys and 48.4 per cent of the girls liked adventure enthusiastically, 33.3 per cent of the boys and 36.5 per cent of the girls liked it, and 6.9 per cent of the boys and 15.1 per cent of the girls disliked it. The rest of the table can be analyzed in the same way. On the following page the information is presented in graphic form.

### TABLE IX

**COMPARISON OF PREFERENCES OF BOYS AND GIRLS FOR THREE NARRATIVE TYPES BASED ON 2514 CASES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Adventure</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Humor</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Family Life</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the following page the information is presented in graphic form.
GRAPH E

COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF THE PREFERENCES OF BOYS AND GIRLS FOR THREE NARRATIVE TYPES BASED ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative Type</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table X

Comparison of Preferences of Upper and Lower Quartiles in Intelligence for Three Narrative Types Based on 128 Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Adventure</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Humor</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Family Life</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table X presented a comparison of the preferences of children of the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence for three narrative types. The table can be read as follows:

- 52.0 per cent of those of the upper quartile and 48.8 per cent of the lower quartile expressed enthusiastic preference for adventure,
- 35.1 per cent of the upper quartile and 36.3 per cent of the lower quartile liked adventure,
- 12.9 per cent of the upper quartile and 14.9 per cent of the lower quartile disliked adventure. The same procedure can be used in interpreting the remaining figures. Graph F follows on the next page and is based on Table X.
GRAPH F

COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF PREFERENCE WITH ENTHUSIASM OF THE UPPER AND LOWER QUARTILES IN INTELLIGENCE FOR THREE TYPES OF NARRATIVE SELECTIONS BASED ON 128 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

52.0% 48.8%
56.3% 50.0%
45.8% 38.5%
**TABLE XI**
ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS FOR TOTAL POPULATION OF 254

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Camping Trip</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Death Fighter</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XI presented the order of preference for the informational selections. The table showed that 74.0 per cent of the children liked enthusiastically A Miserable, Merry Christmas, 23.2 per cent liked the selection, and 2.8 per cent disliked it. What Will Power Did for Me was the second choice of the total population; it was well liked by 56.3 per cent, moderately liked by 43.7 per cent, and disliked by 6.3 per cent. The remaining percentages are to be read in the same way. Graph G on the following page is based on the information included in this table.
PERCENTAGES OF PREFERENCE WITH ENTHUSIASM
OF TOTAL POPULATION OF 254 FOR
INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS

A Miserable, Merry Christmas 74.0%
What Will Power Did for Me 56.3%
A Camping Trip 50.0%
The Death Fighter 35.6%
A Holiday with Father 27.2%
Your Future in Natural Science 17.7%
Choosing Your Work 12.2%
Your Mind in the Making 10.2%
The Era of Plastics 8.2%
The Celestial Bean 7.1%
TABLE XII

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' EXPRESSED
OPINION OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED
ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Selections</th>
<th>Liking</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Camping Trip</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Death Fighter</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XII indicated the opinions of boys and girls liking and disliking the informational selections. Both boys and girls liked each story listed; both boys and girls disliked each story listed.
TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' EXPRESSED PREFERENCES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS
BASED ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Camping Trip</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Death Fighter</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XIII presented a comparison of the preferences of boys and girls for the informational selections. *A Miserable, Merry Christmas* was liked with enthusiasm by 66.0 per cent of the boys and 80.6 per cent of the girls, it was liked without enthusiasm by 30.6 per cent of the boys and 17.3 per cent of the girls, and it was disliked by 3.4 per cent of the boys and 2.1 per cent of the girls. The remainder of the table is to be interpreted in the same way. Graph H which follows is based on information included in this table.
### Graph II

**Comparison of the Percentages of Preference with Enthusiasm of Boys and Girls for Informational Selections Based on 254 Cases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Boys Percentage</th>
<th>Girls Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Camping Trip</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Death Fighter</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XIV
ORDER OF PREFERENCE OF BOYS FOR
INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON
115 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Selections</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A Camping Trip</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Death Fighter</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The order of preference of boys for informational selections is presented in this table. It can be interpreted as follows:

66.0 per cent of the boys enthusiastically liked A Miserable, Merry Christmas, 30.6 per cent liked it, and 3.4 per cent disliked it. A Camping Trip was the next most popular selection for the boys. It was well liked by 56.5 percent, liked moderately by 39.2 per cent, and disliked by 4.3 per cent. The rest of the figures can be interpreted in the same manner.
TABLE XV
ORDER OF PREFERENCE OF GIRLS FOR INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON 139 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>Disliking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with</td>
<td>without</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Camping Trip</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Death Fighter</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table is presented the order of preference of girls for informational selections. The first story was well liked by 80.6 per cent, liked without enthusiasm by 17.3 per cent, and disliked by 2.1 per cent. The second most popular story for girls was What Will Power Did for Me. It was liked very much by 61.0 per cent, liked moderately by 31.8 per cent, and disliked by 7.2 per cent. The rest of the table can be read in a similar way.
The order of preference of the upper quartile in intelligence for informational selections is presented here. Based on 64 cases, 78.1 per cent liked *A Miserable, Merry Christmas* very much, 20.3 per cent liked it, and 1.6 per cent disliked it. The story preferred second was *What Will Power Did for Me*, which was well liked by 57.8 per cent, moderately liked by 31.3 per cent, and disliked by 10.9 per cent. The rest of the figures can be read in similar manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>A Miserable, Merry Christmas</em></td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>What Will Power Did for Me</em></td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>A Camping Trip</em></td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>The Death Fighter</em></td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>A Holiday with Father</em></td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>Your Future in Natural Science</em></td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>The Era of Plastics</em></td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>Choosing Your Work</em></td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <em>Your Mind in the Making</em></td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE XVII

**ORDER OF PREFERENCE OF THE LOWER QUARTILE IN INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON 64 CASES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles of Selections</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Liking without Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Disliking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Camping Trip</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Death Fighter</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XVII presented the order of preference of the children of the lower quartile in intelligence. *A Miserable, Merry Christmas* was the first choice; it was liked with enthusiasm by 57.8 per cent, liked without enthusiasm by 32.8 per cent, and disliked by 9.4 per cent. The story placed second was *What Will Power Did for Me*. It was well liked by 51.6 per cent, liked by 39.0 per cent, and disliked by 9.4 per cent. The rest of the figures are to be interpreted in the same way. Graph I appears on the next page and is based on the percentages found in Tables XVI and XVII.
COMPARISON OF PREFERENCES OF THE UPPER AND LOWER QUARTILES IN INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON 128 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Miserable, Merry Christmas</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Will Power Did for Me</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Camping Trip</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Death Fighter</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Holiday with Father</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Future in Natural Science</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Era of Plastics</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Your Work</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Celestial Bean</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Mind in the Making</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XVIII

COMPARISON OF PREFERENCES OF TOTAL POPULATION OF 254 CASES FOR THREE TYPES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Liking without Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Disliking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Biography</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Science</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vocational</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preferences of the total population for three types of informational selections were indicated in Table XVIII. Biography was liked very much by 51.9 per cent, liked without enthusiasm by 38.4 per cent, and disliked by 9.7 per cent. The remainder of the table can be interpreted in a similar way. Graph J on the following page is based on Table XVIII.
GRAPH J

COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF PREFERENCE WITH ENTHUSIASM OF THE TOTAL POPULATION FOR THREE INFORMATIONAL TYPES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE XIX

COMPARISON OF PREFERENCES OF BOYS AND GIRLS FOR THREE TYPES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Biography</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Science</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vocational</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>54.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of the preferences of boys and girls for three types of informational selections was presented in Table XIX. Biography was enjoyed very much by 48.4 per cent of the boys and 53.8 per cent of the girls, enjoyed moderately by 40.2 per cent of the boys and 37.6 per cent of the girls, and disliked by 11.3 per cent of the boys and 8.6 per cent of the girls. The balance of the figures is to be interpreted in a similar way. The information contained in this table is presented graphically on the succeeding page.
GRAPH K

COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF THE PREFERENCES OF BOYS AND GIRLS FOR THREE INFORMATIONAL TYPES BASED ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XX

COMPARISON OF PREFERENCES OF UPPER AND LOWER QUARTILES IN INTELLIGENCE FOR THREE TYPES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON 128 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liking with Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Biography</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Science</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vocational</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XX presented a comparison of the preferences of children of the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence for three informational types. Biography was liked with enthusiasm by 53.1 per cent of those of the upper quartiles and 44.9 per cent of the lower quartile, liked without enthusiasm by 36.3 per cent of the upper quartile and 40.2 per cent of the lower quartile, and disliked by 10.6 per cent of the upper quartile and 14.9 per cent of the lower quartile. The rest of the table can be read in the same manner. Graph L which follows is based on Table XX.
GRAPH L

COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF PREFERENCE WITH ENTHUSIASM OF THE UPPER AND LOWER QUARTILES IN INTELLIGENCE FOR THREE TYPES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS BASED ON 128 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XXI
ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR ALL TYPES OF SELECTIONS FOR THE TOTAL POPULATION BASED ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Stories</th>
<th>Liking with Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Liking without Enthusiasm</th>
<th>Disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Humor</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adventure</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Biography</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Family Life</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Science</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Vocational</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The order of preference for all types of selections for the total population was shown in Table XXI. Humor was the most popular type. It was enthusiastically liked by 57.5 per cent, liked without enthusiasm by 33.3 per cent, and disliked by 9.2 per cent. Adventure was the second choice; 53.7 per cent liked it very much, 34.9 per cent liked it, and 11.4 per cent disliked it. The rest of the table can be interpreted in a similar way. The information from this table is presented on the following page in graphic form.
GRAPH M

ORDER OF ENTHUSIASTIC PREFERENCE FOR ALL TYPES OF SELECTIONS FOR THE TOTAL POPULATION BASED ON 254 CASES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Life</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary. The purpose of this study was to determine the reading preferences of a group of ninth grade boys and girls. A survey was conducted to discover, if possible, the following:

1. Which of the narrative selections included were preferred by ninth grade boys and girls.
2. If the preferences of boys and girls at grade nine level for narrative selections were the same.
3. If the children of the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence showed the same preferences for the same narrative selections.
4. Which of the narrative types included were preferred by ninth grade boys and girls.
5. If the preferences of boys and girls at grade nine level were the same.
6. Which of the informational selections included in this study were preferred by ninth grade boys and girls.
7. If the preferences of boys and girls at grade nine level for informational material were the same.
8. If the children of the upper and lower quartiles in intelligence showed the same preferences for the same informational material.
9. Which type of informational selections included was preferred by boys and girls at ninth grade level.

10. If the preferences of boys and girls at grade nine level for the types of informational selections were the same.

11. If boys and girls at ninth grade level prefer narrative selections or informational selections.

Included in this investigation were ten narrative type selections and ten informational type selections, all of which were presented in separate folders to 115 boys and 139 girls at ninth grade level. Three types of narrative selections were included: namely, adventure, humor, and stories of family life. Three types of informational selections were included: namely, biography, science, and vocational. All the boys and girls taking part were allowed to read the individual selections and to express their preferences for them on ballots.

Conclusions. The writer drew the following conclusions from this study of the expressed reading preferences of children at grade nine level:

1. The three most popular individual narrative selections were: A Miserable, Merry Christmas, What Will Power Did for Me, and A Camping Trip.

2. The type of reading material most preferred by these children was humor. The remaining types enjoyed enthusiastically took this order: adventure, biography,
family life, science, and vocational. The order of preferences of the six types which were liked without enthusiasm was: humor, adventure, biography, family life, science, and vocational. The order of preference taken by the six types which were disliked was: vocational, which was disliked most, then science, family life, adventure, biography, and humor.

The following narrative types were preferred enthusiastically by the boys in this study: adventure, humor, and family life. The types enjoyed by the girls took this order: Family life, humor, and adventure.

The narrative types preferred by the children of the upper quartile in intelligence were: humor first, then adventure and family life. The narrative types most popular with the children of the lower quartile in intelligence took the same order.

4. The order of preference of the total population for three informational types was: biography, science, and vocational. The informational types preferred by the boys in this study were: biography, science, and vocational. The informational types most enjoyed by the girls fell in the same order.
The types of informational material preferred by the children of the upper quartile in intelligence were: biography, science, and vocational. The same order of preferences was expressed by the children of the lower quartile in intelligence.

5. All the narrative and informational selections included in this study were liked by some of the boys and girls and disliked by some of the boys and girls.

6. The children in this study enjoyed the narrative types of material included over the informational types of material included.
CHAPTER VI

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND PROBLEMS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
CHAPTER VI

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND PROBLEMS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Limitations of the study. This investigation contained the following limitations:

1. The number of boys and girls included in this study was limited.
2. The intelligence quotients for some boys and girls were not obtainable.
3. The area in which the survey was conducted was limited.
4. The types and the number of selections used were limited.

Problems for further research. The writer felt that the following suggested problems would prove feasible for further research in reading:

1. A similar investigation covering a more extensive geographical area.
2. A similar investigation including a larger number of participants.
3. A similar investigation including a wider range and number of narrative and informational reading material.
4. A similar investigation in which the intelligence quotients of all the boys and girls were available.
5. A study comparing the reading preferences and interests of a large group of mentally bright children with a large group of mentally dull children.

6. A study comparing the preferences and interests in reading of gifted girls with gifted boys.

7. A study comparing the preferences and interests in reading of a group of low intelligence girls with a group of low intelligence boys.

8. A study investigating the influence of race on the preferences of boys and girls in reading.

9. A study determining the effect of radio, motion pictures, and television on the reading preferences and interests of boys and girls in various age groups.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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C. PUBLICATIONS OF LEARNED ORGANIZATIONS


TITLES OF NARRATIVE SELECTIONS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY

A Start in Life
Bad Influence
Death of Red Peril
Hanging a Picture
Moti-Guj---Mutineer
Mountain Monarch
The Ransom of Red Chief
The Snob
Treasure Trap
Wings Rampant
TITLES OF INFORMATIONAL SELECTIONS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY

A Camping Trip
A Holiday with Father
A Miserable, Merry Christmas
Choosing Your Work
The Celestial Bean
The Death Fighter
The Era of Plastics
What Will Power Did for Me
Your Future in Natural Science
Your Mind in the Making
THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF

D. HENRY

It looked like a good thing; but wait till I tell you. We were down south, in Alabama—Bill Driscoll and myself—when this kidnapping idea struck us. It was, as Bill afterwards expressed it, "during a moment of temporary mental apparition"; but we didn't find that out till later.

There was a town down there, as flat as a flannel cake, and called Summit, of course. It contained inhabitants of as undeleterious and self-satisfied a class of peasantry as ever clustered around a Maypole.

Bill and me had a joint capital of about six hundred dollars, and we needed just two thousand dollars more to pull off a town lot scheme in western Illinois. We talked it over on the front steps of the hotel. Philoprogenitiveness, says we, is strong in semirural communities; therefore, and for other reasons, a kidnapping project ought to do better there than in the radius of newspapers that send reporters out in plain clothes to stir up talk about such things. We knew that Summit couldn't get after us with anything stronger than constables and, maybe, some lackadaisical bloodhounds and a diatribe or two in the Weekly Farmers' Budget. So it looked good.

We selected for our victim the only child of a prominent citizen named Ebenezer Dorset. The father was respectable and tight, a mortgage fancier and a stern, upright collection-plate passer and forecloser. The kid was a boy of ten, with bas-relief freckles, and hair the color of the cover of the magazine you buy at the newsstand when you want to catch a train. Bill and me figured that Ebenezer would melt down for a ransom of two thousand dollars to a cent. But wait till I tell you.

About two miles from Summit was a little mountain covered with a dense cedar brake. On the rear elevation of this mountain was a cave. There we stored provisions.

One evening after sundown, we drove in a buggy past old Dorset's house. The kid was in the street, throwing rocks at a kitten on the opposite fence.

1 UNDELETERIOUS—Harmless.
2 PHILOPROGENITIVENESS—Instinctive love of parents for their children.
3 DIATRIBE (di'ā-trīb)—Bitter criticism.
4 BAS-RELIEF (bā-re-lef')—A kind of sculpture in which the figures stand out very slightly from the background.
5 CEDAR BRAKE—A woods of cedar, filled with dense underbrush.
“Hey, little boy!” said Bill, “would you like to have a bag of candy and a nice ride?”

The boy catches Bill neatly in the eye with a piece of brick.

That boy put up a fight like a welterweight cinnamon bear; but, at last, we got him down in the bottom of the buggy and drove away. We took him up to the cave, and I hitched the horse in the cedar brake. After dark I drove the buggy to the little village, three miles away, where we had hired it, and walked back to the mountain.

Bill was pasting court plaster over the scratches and bruises on his features. There was a fire burning behind the big rock at the entrance of the cave, and the boy was watching a pot of boiling coffee, with two buzzard tail feathers stuck in his red hair. He points a stick at me when I come up, and says:

“Ha! cursed paleface, do you dare to enter the camp of Red Chief, the terror of the plains?”

“He’s all right now,” says Bill, rolling up his trousers and examining some bruises on his shins. “We’re playing Indian. We’re making Buffalo Bill’s show look like magic lantern views of Palestine in the town hall. I’m old Hank, the Trapper, Red Chief’s captive, and I’m to be scalped at daybreak. By Geronimo! that kid can kick hard.”

Yes, sir, that boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping out in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive himself. He immediately christened me Snake-eye, the Spy, and announced that, when his braves returned from the warpath, I was to be broiled at the stake at the rising of the sun.

Then we had supper; and he filled his mouth full of bacon and bread and gravy, and began to talk. He made a during-dinner speech something like this:

“I like this fine. I never camped out before; but I had a pet ’possum once, and I was nine last birthday. I hate to go to school. Rats ate up sixteen of Jimmy Talbot’s aunt’s speckled hen’s eggs. Are there any real Indians in these woods? I want some more gravy. Does the trees moving make the wind blow? We had five puppies. What makes your nose so red, Hank? My father has lots of money. Are the stars hot? I whipped Ed Walker twice, Saturday. I don’t like girls. You daren’t catch toads unless with a string. Do oxen make any noise? Why are oranges round? Have you got beds to sleep on in this cave? Amos Murray has got six toes. A parrot can talk, but a monkey or a fish can’t. How many does it take to make twelve?”
Every few minutes he would remember that he was a pesky redskin, and pick up his stick rifle and tiptoe to the mouth of the cave to rubber for the scouts of the hated paleface. Now and then he would let out a war whoop that made Old Hank, the Trapper, shiver. That boy had Bill terrorized from the start.

"Red Chief," says I to the kid, "would you like to go home?"

"Aw, what for?" says he. "I don't have any fun at home. I hate to go to school. I like to camp out. You won't take me back home again, Snake-eye, will you?"

"Not right away," says I. "We'll stay here in the cave awhile."

"All right!" says he. "That'll be fine. I never had such fun in all my life."

We went to bed about eleven o'clock. We spread down some wide blankets and quilts and put Red Chief between us. We weren't afraid he'd run away. He kept us awake for three hours, jumping up and reaching for his rifle and screeching: "Hist! pard!" in mine and Bill's ears, as the fancied crackle of a twig or the rustle of a leaf revealed to his young imagination the stealthy approach of the outlaw band. At last, I fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamed that I had been kidnapped and chained to a tree by a ferocious pirate with red hair.

Just at daybreak, I was awakened by a series of awful screams from Bill. They weren't yells, or howls, or shouts, or whoops, or yawps, such as you'd except from a manly set of vocal organs—they were simply indecent, terrifying, humiliating screams, such as women emit when they see ghosts or caterpillars. It's an awful thing to hear a strong, desperate, fat man scream incontinently in a cave at daybreak.

I jumped up to see what the matter was. Red Chief was sitting on Bill's chest, with one hand twined in Bill's hair. In the other he had the sharp case knife we used for slicing bacon; and he was industriously and realistically trying to take Bill's scalp, according to the sentence that had been pronounced upon him the evening before.

I got the knife away from the kid and made him lie down again. But, from that moment, Bill's spirit was broken. He lay down on his side of the bed, but he never closed an eye again in sleep as long as that boy was with us. I dozed off for a while, but along toward sunup I remembered that Red Chief had said I was to be burned at the stake at the rising of the sun. I wasn't nervous or afraid; but I sat up and lit my pipe and leaned against a rock.

\* INCONTINENTLY—Without restraint.
“What you getting up so soon for, Sam?” asked Bill.

“Me?” says I. “Oh, I got a kind of a pain in my shoulder. I thought sitting up would rest it.”

“You’re a liar!” says Bill. “You’re afraid. You was to be burned at sunrise, and you was afraid he’d do it. And he would, too, if he could find a match. Ain’t it awful, Sam? Do you think anybody will pay out money to get a little imp like that back home?”

“Sure,” said I. “A rowdy kid like that is just the kind that parents dote on. Now, you and the Chief get up and cook breakfast, while I go up on the top of this mountain and reconnoiter.”

I went up on the peak of the little mountain and ran my eye over the contiguous vicinity. Over toward Summit I expected to see the sturdy yeomanry of the village armed with scythes and pitchforks beating the countryside for the dastardly kidnappers. But what I saw was a peaceful landscape dotted with one man plowing with a dun mule. Nobody was dragging the creek, no couriers dashed hither and yon, bringing tidings of no news to the distracted parents. There was a sylvan attitude of somnolent sleepiness pervading that section of the external outward surface of Alabama that lay exposed to my view. “Perhaps,” says I to myself, “it has not yet been discovered that the wolves have borne away the tender lambkin from the fold. Heaven help the wolves!” says I, and went down the mountain to breakfast.

When I got to the cave I found Bill backed up against the side of it, breathing hard, and the boy threatening to smash him with a rock half as big as a cocoanut. “He put a red-hot boiled potato down my back,” explained Bill, “and then mashed it with his foot; and I boxed his ears. Have you got a gun about you, Sam?”

I took the rock away from the boy and kind of patched up the argument. “I’ll fix you,” says the kid to Bill. “No man ever yet struck the Red Chief but what he got paid for it. You better beware!”

After breakfast the kid takes a piece of leather with strings wrapped around it out of his pocket and goes outside the cave unwinding it.

“What’s he up to now?” says Bill, anxiously. “You don’t think he’ll run away, do you, Sam?”

“No fear of it,” says I. “He don’t seem to be much of a home body. But we’ve got to fix up some plan about the ransom. There don’t seem to be much excitement around Summit on account of his disappearance; but maybe they haven’t realized yet that he’s gone. His folks may think he’s spending the night with Aunt Jane or one of the neigh-
bors. Anyhow, he'll be missed today. Tonight we must get a message to his father demanding the two thousand dollars for his return."

Just then we heard a kind of war whoop, such as David might have emitted when he knocked out the champion Goliath. It was a sling that Red Chief had pulled out of his pocket, and he was whirling it around his head.

I dodged, and heard a heavy thud and a kind of a sigh from Bill, like one a horse gives out when you take his saddle off. A niggerhead rock the size of an egg had caught Bill just behind his left ear. He loosened himself all over and fell in the fire across the frying pan of hot water for washing the dishes. I dragged him out and poured cold water on his head for half an hour.

By and by, Bill sits up and feels behind his ear and says: "Sam, do you know who my favorite Biblical character is?"

"Take it easy," says I. "You'll come to your senses presently."

"King Herod," says he. "You won't go away and leave me here alone, will you, Sam?"

I went out and caught that boy and shook him until his freckles rattled.

"If you don't behave," says I, "I'll take you straight home. Now, are you going to be good, or not?"

"I was only funning," says he sullenly. "I didn't mean to hurt Old Hank. But what did he hit me for? I'll behave, Snake-eye, if you won't send me home, and if you'll let me play the Black Scout today."

"I don't know the game," says I. "That's for you and Mr. Bill to decide. He's your playmate for the day. I'm going away for a while, on business. Now, you come in and make friends with him and say you are sorry for hurting him, or home you go, at once."

I made him and Bill shake hands, and then I took Bill aside and told him I was going to Poplar Cove, a little village three miles from the cave, and find out what I could about how the kidnaping had been regarded in Summit. Also, I thought it best to send a peremptory letter to old man Dorset that day, demanding the ransom and dictating how it should be paid.

"You know, Sam," says Bill, "I've stood by you without batting an eye in earthquake, fire, and flood—in poker games, dynamite outrages, police raids, train robberies, and cyclones. I never lost my nerve yet till we kidnapped that two-legged skyrocket of a kid. He's got me going. You won't leave me long with him, will you, Sam?"
“I'll be back sometime this afternoon,” says I. “You must keep the boy amused and quiet till I return. And now we'll write the letter to old Dorset.”

Bill and I got paper and pencil and worked on the letter while Red Chief, with a blanket wrapped around him, strutted up and down, guarding the mouth of the cave. Bill begged me tearfully to make the ransom fifteen hundred dollars instead of two thousand. “I ain't attempting,” says he, “to decry the celebrated moral aspect of parental affection, but we're dealing with humans, and it ain't human for anybody to give up two thousand dollars for that forty-pound chunk of freckled wildcat. I'm willing to take a chance at fifteen hundred dollars. You can charge the difference up to me.”

So, to relieve Bill, I acceded, and we collaborated a letter that ran this way:

EBENEZER DORSET, ESQ.:

We have your boy concealed in a place far from Summit. It is useless for you or the most skillful detectives to attempt to find him. Absolutely the only terms on which you can have him restored to you are these: We demand fifteen hundred dollars in large bills for his return; the money to be left at midnight tonight at the same spot and in the same box as your reply—as hereinafter described. If you agree to these terms, send your answer in writing by a solitary messenger tonight at half-past eight o'clock. After crossing Owl Creek, on the road to Poplar Cove, there are three large trees about a hundred yards apart, close to the fence of the wheat field on the right-hand side. At the bottom of the fence post, opposite the third tree, will be found a small pasteboard box.

The messenger will place the answer in this box and return immediately to Summit.

If you attempt any treachery or fail to comply with our demand as stated, you will never see your boy again.

If you pay the money as demanded, he will be returned to you safe and well within three hours. These terms are final, and if you do not accede to them, no further communication will be attempted.

TWO DESPERATE MEN.

I addressed this letter to Dorset, and put it in my pocket. As I was about to start, the kid comes up to me and says:

“Aw, Snake-eye, you said I could play the Black Scout while you was gone.”

“Play it, of course,” says I. “Mr. Bill will play with you. What kind of a game is it?”
"I'm the Black Scout," says Red Chief, "and I have to ride to the stockade to warn the settlers that the Indians are coming. I'm tired of playing Indian myself. I want to be the Black Scout."

"All right," says I. "It sounds harmless to me. I guess Mr. Bill will help you foil the pesky savages."

"What am I to do?" asks Bill, looking at the kid suspiciously.

"You are the hoss," says Black Scout. "Get down on your hands and knees. How can I ride to the stockade without a hoss?"

"You'd better keep him interested," said I, "till we get the scheme going. Loosen up."

Bill gets down on his all fours, and a look comes in his eye like a rabbit when you catch it in a trap.

"How far is it to the stockade, kid?" he asks in a husky manner of voice.

"Ninety miles," says the Black Scout. "And you have to hump yourself to get there on time. Whoa, now!"

The Black Scout jumps on Bill's back and digs his heels in his side.

"For heaven's sake," says Bill, "hurry back, Sam, as soon as you can. I wish we hadn't made the ransom more than a thousand. Say, you quit kicking me, or I'll get up and warm you good."

I walked over to Poplar Cove and sat around the post office and store, talking with the chawbacons that come in to trade. One whiskerando says that he hears Summit is all upset on account of Elder Ebenezer Dorset's boy having been lost or stolen. That was all I wanted to know. I bought some smoking tobacco, referred casually to the price of black-eyed peas, posted my letter surreptitiously and came away. The postmaster said the mail carrier would come by in an hour to take the mail on to Summit.

When I got back to the cave Bill and the boy were not to be found. I explored the vicinity of the cave, and risked a yodel or two, but there was no response.

So I lighted my pipe and sat down on a mossy bank to await developments.

In about half an hour I heard the bushes rustle, and Bill wabbled out into the little glade in front of the cave. Behind him was the kid, stepping softly like a scout, with a broad grin on his face. Bill stopped, took off his hat and wiped his face with a red handkerchief. The kid stopped about eight feet behind him.

"Sam," says Bill, "I suppose you'll think I'm a renegade, but I
couldn't help it. I'm a grown person with masculine proclivities and habits of self-defense, but there is a time when all systems of egotism and predominance fail. The boy is gone. I have sent him home. All is off. There was martyrs in old times," goes on Bill, "that suffered death rather than give up the particular graft they enjoyed. None of 'em ever was subjugated to such supernatural tortures as I have been. I tried to be faithful to our articles of depredation; but there came a limit."

"What's the trouble, Bill?" I asks him.

"I was rode," says Bill, "the ninety miles to the stockade, not barring an inch. Then when the settlers was rescued, I was given oats. Sand ain't a palatable substitute. And then, for an hour I had to try to explain why there was nothin' in holes, how a road can run both ways, and what makes the grass green. I tell you, Sam, a human can only stand so much. I takes him by the neck of his clothes and drags him down the mountain. On the way he kicks my legs black-an'-blue from the knees down; and I've got two or three bites on my thumb and hand cauterized.

"But he's gone,"—continues Bill—"gone home. I showed him the road to Summit and kicked him about eight feet nearer there at one kick. I'm sorry we lose the ransom; but it was either that or Bill Driscoll to the madhouse."

"Bill," says I, "there isn't any heart disease in your family, is there?"

"No," says Bill, "nothing chronic except malaria and accidents. Why?"

"Then you might turn around," says I, "and have a look behind you."

Bill turns and sees the boy, and loses his complexion and sits down plump on the ground and begins to pluck aimlessly at grass and little sticks. For an hour I was afraid for his mind. And then I told him that my scheme was to put the whole job through immediately and that we would get the ransom and be off with it by midnight if old Dorset fell in with our proposition. So Bill braced up enough to give the kid a weak sort of smile and a promise to play the Russian in a Japanese war with him as soon as he felt a little better.

I had a scheme for collecting that ransom without danger of being caught by counterplots that ought to commend itself to professional kidnappers. The tree under which the answer was to be left—and the
money later on—was close to the road fence with big, bare fields on all sides. If a gang of constables should be watching for anyone to come for the note they could see him a long way off crossing the fields, or in the road. But no, siree! At half-past eight I was up in that tree as well hidden as a tree toad, waiting for the messenger to arrive.

Exactly on time, a half-grown boy rides up the road on a bicycle, locates the pasteboard box at the foot of the fence post, slips a folded piece of paper into it and pedals away again back toward Summit.

I waited an hour and then concluded the thing was square. I slid down the tree, got the note, slipped along the fence till I struck the woods, and was back at the cave in another half an hour. I opened the note, got near the lantern, and read it to Bill. It was written with a pen in a crabbed hand, and the sum and substance of it was this:

**Two Desperate Men.**

**Gentlemen:** I received your letter today by post, in regard to the ransom you ask for the return of my son. I think you are a little high in your demands, and I hereby make you a counterproposition, which I am inclined to believe you will accept. You bring Johnny home and pay me two hundred and fifty dollars in cash, and I agree to take him off your hands. You had better come at night, for the neighbors believe he is lost, and I couldn’t be responsible for what they would do to anybody they saw bringing him back.

Very respectfully,

**Ebenezer Dorset.**

“Great pirates of Penzance!” says I, “of all the impudent—” But I glanced at Bill, and hesitated. He had the most appealing look in his eyes I ever saw on the face of a dumb or a talking brute.

“Sam,” says he, “what’s two hundred and fifty dollars, after all? We’ve got the money. One more night of this kind will send me to a bed in Bedlam. Besides being a thorough gentleman, I think Mr. Dorset is a spendthrift for making us such a liberal offer. You ain’t going to let the chance go, are you?”

“Tell you the truth, Bill,” says I, “this little he ewe lamb has somewhat got on my nerves, too. We’ll take him home, pay the ransom, and make our getaway.”

We took him home that night. We got him to go by telling him that his father had bought a silver-mounted rifle and a pair of mocassins for him, and we were going to hunt bears the next day.
It was just twelve o'clock when we knocked at Ebenezer's front door. Just at the moment when I should have been abstracting the fifteen hundred dollars from the box under the tree, according to the original proposition, Bill was counting out two hundred and fifty dollars into Dorset's hand.

When the kid found out we were going to leave him at home he started up a howl like a calliope and fastened himself as tight as a leech to Bill's leg. His father peeled him away gradually, like a porous plaster.

"How long can you hold him?" asks Bill.

"I'm not as strong as I used to be," says old Dorset, "but I think I can promise you ten minutes."

"Enough," says Bill. "In ten minutes I shall cross the Central, Southern, and Middle Western States, and be legging it trippingly for the Canadian border."

And, as dark as it was, and as fat as Bill was, and as good a runner as I am, he was a good mile and a half out of Summit before I could catch up with him.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

O. Henry was the author of more than 250 stories of recognized quality. From the time of his death in 1910 until recent years, his stories were the most widely read in the English language.

O. Henry is known as the master of the surprise ending among short story writers, but his beginnings are masterpieces, too. He believed that the best way to tell a story is to include all the description and detail in the early development so that when the climax is reached the story is ended, since there is then little or nothing to say.

Many of O. Henry's stories are humorous. Usually, the humor is present not because the characters themselves are comic, but because the situations in which they find themselves are so unusual, unexpected, or outlandish that they become a humorous mold for the comedy. Some of the humor comes from the way O. Henry twisted words and phrases into unusual and sometimes incorrect patterns of usage. The result of this twisting may be a surprise meaning or a strange and unexpected situation: for example—"The large building was presided under by a janitor," and "After the rain he walked out to view the mudscape."

"The Ransom of Red Chief" contains all of these characteristic features: surprise, humor, and interesting word usages. Recognition of them will make your reading of O. Henry's stories more enjoyable.
on top—worked until the last moment. When the logs began to cave under them so rapidly that even the expert rivermen found difficulty in “staying on top,” the foreman set the example of hunting safety.

“She ‘pulls,’ boys,” he yelled.

Then in a manner wonderful to behold, through the smother of foam and spray, through the crash and yell of timbers protesting the flood’s hurrying, through the leap of destruction, the drivers zigzagged calmly and surely to the shore.

All but Jimmy Powers. He poised tense and eager on the crumbling face of the jam. Almost immediately he saw what he wanted, and without pause sprang boldly and confidently ten feet straight downward, to alight with accuracy on a single log floating free in the current. And then in the very glory and chaos of the jam itself he was swept downstream.

After a moment the constant acceleration in speed checked, then commenced perceptibly to slacken. At once the rest of the crew began to ride downstream. Each struck the calks of his river boots strongly into a log, and on such unstable vehicles floated miles with the current. From time to time, as Bryan Moloney indicated, one of them went ashore. There, usually at a bend of the stream where the likelihood of jamming was great, they took their stands. When necessary, they ran out over the face of the river to separate a congestion likely to cause trouble. The rest of the time they smoked their pipes.

At noon they ate from little canvas bags which had been filled that morning by the cookee. At sunset they rode other logs down the river to where their camp had been made for them. There they ate hugely, hung their ice-wet garments over a tall framework constructed around a monster fire, and turned in on hemlock branches.

All night long the logs slipped down the moonlit current, silently, swiftly, yet without haste. The porcupines invaded the sleeping camp. From the whole length of the river rang the hollow boom, boom, boom, of timbers striking one against the other.

The drive was on.

*cookee—The cook’s helper.

**KEYS TO APPRECIATION**

1. Many of us will never have an opportunity to see a crew of rivermen in action, but Mr. White tells their story so dramatically that we feel we have seen or experienced the “drive” ourselves. Looking back over the selection, read
aloud specific passages that re-create the action of the men and the picture of the crashing logs. Point out words that make the action vivid.

2. Rivermen are necessarily well-trained men. Their work calls for physical co-ordination, mental alertness, and good judgment. Point out examples of these qualities in the men in the story.

3. The good riverman knows when to exercise caution as well as when to exhibit skill and daring. Explain how these men demonstrate courage without foolhardiness. How do the crews show their understanding of working together with a fine co-operative spirit?

4. Do you think this glimpse into the lives of men far removed from us is interesting or worth while? Discuss, giving the reasons for your answer.

USING WORDS

Discuss the meaning of each italicized word in the expressions below.

1. "an arrested railroad train seems for a moment to retrogress"
2. an integral part
3. a prearranged course
4. inextricably imbedded
5. an irresistible force

Now use each word correctly in a sentence, or use all in a paragraph about a subject of your own choosing.

TREASURE TRAP

The action of this story takes place just off the southeastern coast of the United States on an island formerly frequented by pirates and early Spaniards who manned the old treasure ships. In those days the thought of hidden treasure lured men into strange adventures—and still does.

John Pindar stood beside the wheel, idly holding his schooner on her course as she leisurely ran off before a light northeaster. He pulled the palm-plait hat he wore down over his forehead and through half-closed eyes looked ahead at the sun glint dancing on the water. Timmy Albury, sitting on the rail beside him spoke dolefully, “So we lost not only the money for the hauling but were out a lot more for the damages on our last trip.”

A worried note was in his voice when John Pindar answered, “That bit of a blow that we met up with in the Northeast Providence Channel hit me harder than it did the Tiburon. When the main-hatch tar-
paulin split and let the water leak on our cargo, the flour and sugar got soaked. Malone claims they were almost all spoiled. He says the canned goods with the labels water-stained are hard to sell. The tins are rust-spotted, the—"

Timmy interrupted him, "But he didn't say the flour will be as good as ever except for a thin crust next to the sacks. The water wouldn't soak in for more than a quarter of an inch. The tinned goods—" He paused, shook his head. "Why, half the stuff on his shelves is rust-streaked. I've never known him to knock a penny off the selling price on that account."

John Pindar glanced up at the peak of the main gaff and down at the water alongside before answering. "That's business, Timmy, and he's a good businessman. In all my dealings with him, I've seldom got the best of the bargain. In fact, most of the time I've been lucky to break even, and many of the deals have gone in his favor. Yet I'll say this for him: Once he makes a bargain, he sticks by it. But he's generally pretty certain he stands to profit before he gives his word."

He gazed ahead off to the eastward at the white limestone cliffs of an island with a fringe of bushy-topped coconut palms that ran along its crest like a mane, at the flock of man-of-war birds sailing above there, from which the 'cay' had got its name.

He turned back to his companion and resumed his conversation. "Malone made me a proposition. He offered to sell the load to me for twenty-five per cent less than what he paid for it and take the loss himself. Or I could stand the twenty-five-per-cent damage. That took the haul bill and more besides. Sell or buy; on the face of it, that looked as though it was a fair deal."

John Pindar laughed scornfully. "Oh, he was safe in that! He well knew I didn't have the money to take him up. Had he realized the new suit of sails the schooner now wears has not yet been paid for or that the last bill at the shipyard is long since overdue, he might have turned the screws down tighter. It's a hard game, this trying to make an honest living with a small sailing vessel. And now we're on another trip for him. If this one does not pay off—"

"But," Timmy hopefully reminded, "there's always the chance a bit of luck will come our way. Remember the time when we ran across those drums of gasoline some steamer lost from her deckload

1 CAY (kā or kē)—The usual spelling of key (a low island or reef) in the West Indies.
during heavy weather?” He chuckled. “The sea’s surface was peppered with them. Two hundred, wasn’t it, we saved?” he asked.

John Pindar nodded. “Two hundred. We cleared a couple of thousand dollars then. But that has been several years gone now. Since then, we’ve netted sharks in the passes and fished on the reef, gathered conch shells and sponges, hauled coconuts from Andros and salt from Inagua, a load of cattle from Turk’s Island and provisions for Conch Cay. A lot of work and little gain.”

He moved the wheel down a couple of spokes and the schooner swung to avoid a brown spot in the clear water that denoted a clump of weed-grown rocks below. He settled her back on her course, the bowsprit heading straight for the island, before he continued again, “Yes, we’ve sweated in flat calms in midsummer, been dismasted by a hurricane in the fall, fought a nor’easter across the Gulf Stream and beat back and forth for slow, hot days over the banks in light weather. And for what?” he exclaimed bitterly, and gave his own answer, “For a meager wage.”

Timmy answered, “Oh, we’ll make it all right, John. Something is bound to turn up. It’s always darkest just before dawn.”

A quietness fell on the two men as the Tiburon slowly forged along the pea-green water toward where the rocky shores of the approaching island were outlined against the velvet blue of a cloudless sky. The low gurgle of water swirling around the rudder post and sliding along the bilge, the small creak of a line in a block, the half-heard rustling of the wind alone broke the stillness punctuated by the faint boom of the surf on the reef a mile away.

After a long silence, John Pindar’s voice arose, “We’re not beaten till we’re down and out. Let’s see how that goes? A man is never down and out. When he wears the soles from his shoes, he’s on his feet again.”

Both laughed and glanced down at their bare feet. But there was little merriment in their glum faces. The cay gradually drew nearer. The wind was lightening. The schooner barely had steerage on now.

John Pindar remarked, “Well, the breeze has about petered out. We’ll come to anchor. It probably will be after sundown before we get wind enough to work out through the pass.” He pointed toward the beach, now hardly a quarter of a mile off. “We’ll go ashore and pick up a few crawfish for dinner.”

When the Tiburon was within a few hundred yards of the island,
he rolled the wheel. Her head swung and she faced the wind. Timmy's feet pattered along the deck in a broken rhythm as he went forward, limping slightly from an old injury. The anchor fell from the cathead with a splash. Jib and staysail, fore and main fluttered down stay and mast. A few minutes later they got into the dinghy trailing astern and sculled it ashore.

With his two-tined spear in his hand, John Pindar waded through the water along the rocky shore. Every now and then he jabbed the gig down, the long pole vibrated and, flipping violently, a big spiny lobster was lifted out from a hole in the rocks below. He turned to where Timmy held an open sack in his hands.

"There's enough now," he said. "You'd better go out to the Tiburon and get them boiled for dinner. I'll give you a call when I want to leave here. I think I'll look around on the cliff and see if any of the egg birds have laid yet."

He made his way back along the thin strip of beach that separated the rocky wall of Man-of-War Cay from the low-tide mark. He stopped, watched the bent figure, the sack over his back, walking in a long and short step. Timmy shoved the dinghy afloat, settled the oar in the notch in its transom, and with an easy lunge and swing sculled it out toward where the Tiburon lay.

They'd been through a lot together and Timmy had stuck by him faithfully through fair weather and foul. He felt a sense of incompetency when he thought of how little the other had made since the day the schooner had been launched. He was getting old; the injury he'd got during a hurricane on board bothered him at times now. If the Tiburon could just make a few paying voyages, Timmy could fix up the little place he owned and get his home in shape for the day that was not far off when he'd no longer be able to go to sea.

The wind had died and a flat calm lay on the water. The schooner's anchor chain hung limp and pendent from her hawsepipe. The water on which she floated was so transparent that it seemed as though she were suspended in the air. The sky behind her was a light robin's-egg blue on which her outline was etched clear and sharp in the brilliant sunshine. For a brief second a misgiving ran through John Pindar. Had he wasted his time? Would he have been better off in some other business? Malone, with his store on Conch Cay, was well off. He'd made it all buying and selling, bartering and trading. He slept in a comfortable bed at night and never had to take the risks of the sea.
And when age overtook him, he’d not have to worry about poverty. John Pindar turned and climbed up the sloping face of the cliff till he stood thirty feet above the water. He drew a deep breath. The scene before him was one to make any man pause and look. The soft pastel shades of brown and orange shaded into velvety green and merged into azure as the waters deepened. Out to the eastward, the slow deep-sea surges rose, seemed to pause, then with a low boom broke into creaming lather on the coral reef. Beyond the breakers, the ocean stretched out till it met, in the far distance, a faint line where sky and water appeared welded to each other.

As he stood there, he realized he never could be happy cooped up by four walls, peddling things across the counter. This was his life out where the wind rattled the dried fronds of the coco palms, out where the waves broke on the coral heads, where he could feel the hand-polished grip of a wheel or the rough rasp of a mainsheet in his hands.

He took a few steps, bent over and picked up a conch shell lying in a cleft in the rocks. Its end was smooth, its lip chipped and broken. He recognized it as one of the tools left behind by men who no longer lived here. He’d often found shells like this on the beaches along these islands. The Lucayans, the original inhabitants, had used them for hand tools. With the conch for a scraper and fire for a helper, they built their dugout canoes in which they traveled from place to place across these purple waters.

He wondered if life had been easy for them. Food was plentiful; their crude tools and meager equipment were all they needed to cope with a mild climate. Then there came the time when the high-pooped galleons of Spain had anchored off these isolated cays. The tough and merciless fighting men of Castile had come ashore avid for treasure, and the Lucayans had been exterminated. John Pindar dropped the shell and walked along the ledge. A cloud of sea birds mewed and cried above him. He scanned the little shelflike projections along the rocks. The birds had gathered, but as yet had not begun to lay. From boulder to boulder, he made his way down again toward the beach.

As he reached it, he noticed a hole in the face of the cliff, a strong stream of water running out from it. He’d never seen this cave before, although he had been on Man-of-War often, gigging crawfish. Then the reason he had not come on this until now became apparent. Last night was full moon and the tide was very low. At normal water level this opening was submerged.
He glanced inside. The cavern extended back into the darkness so far that he could not see its end. Suddenly an idea was born in his mind. He'd heard the old tales of wealth concealed on this cay, tales that no doubt had grown in the telling. For this string of islands along the Abaco coast had known many men: rum-runner and buccaneer, pirate and freebooter; British and French and Spaniard had one after the other fought and robbed, murdered and pillaged, drunk and caroused, and even at times, when hard pressed, had hidden their loot.

John Pindar felt in his pockets. He pulled out the bottle in which he kept his matches dry. A couple of wind-blown palm fronds lay in a crack in the rocks. He twisted a bundle of the leaves together and struck a match to them. In the wavering light from his torch, he ducked his head and looked inside. The cave opened up into a spacious room with a pool for a floor. Overhead was a rocky roof well studded with stalactites from which the water dripped.

He stepped in and walked along the narrow corridor. The water deepened; it covered his hips, then came up to his armpits. Holding his torch high, he followed the passageway. It bent around a turn; the bright glare from the opening behind him disappeared. The enclosed gorge pinched in on either side. The roof sloped down till, just at the edge of his illumination, the slab of rock angled down to the water.

He started to turn back, hesitated. His torch had burned down to a stub. It appeared as though this cleft stopped. Then he felt a gentle current against his body. The water was running through from farther back. This passage was not closed. The burning palm leaves guttered out. He tossed the glowing end away, caught his breath and dived under. His hands scraped the wall on either side. He reached up after half a dozen strokes and could not feel the ceiling above him. His head emerged. He lowered his feet, but the water was too deep for him to reach bottom. He swam for another dozen strokes and then tried again. It was shallow here, and he waded ahead till he was out of the water and his bare feet trod on a pebble beach. He shook himself and took the knife he carried from its sheath in his belt. Holding it by its blade, he swished it back and forth to dry it. With his teeth, he pulled the cork out of the bottle and shook out a match. Then he struck it on the rough, sharkskin-covered handle of his knife. In its feeble glare, he looked straight ahead... into a grinning skull not a foot in front of his face.

John Pindar started. Wedged into a cleft was the skeleton of a man
gray-green with age. Quickly he surveyed it—a squat man who must have been broad across the shoulders, heavily muscled; without a doubt, one of the aboriginals who had lived on these scattered islands when the first white men arrived. Just a hand’s reach away, lying face down, was another skeleton, a rusty sword between its ribs.

Before the match burned down, he knew this was no savage. The remains of a buckle, even the few moldy shreds of cloth that draped the bones, showed that more than likely some soldier of Spain had breathed his last here. They had left many relics of their stay on these cays—bits of rusty iron, cannon balls, hilts of broken swords—reminders that once this country of rocky islands and pea-green water had been a part of the far-flung Spanish colonial empire. These two had been dead and hidden in this tomb for at least a couple of centuries.

By the light of another match, he saw lying in front of those age-stained bones a big conch shell. The knob on its end had been cut off, the hole stopped with a plug—a hard, dense tropical wood that had withstood the slow disintegration of time. As he reached out and picked it up, a faint rattle issued from it. His match died and the darkness enveloped him. He twisted the plug out and turned the shell up. Into his cupped hand below he felt a stream of round hard pellets fall. Without the aid of his eyes, he knew these were no pebbles. They were smooth and velvety, sleek to his touch. With difficulty he lit another match, and its light showed them gleaming dully, a handful of pearls that glistened green and purple, bronze and amber.

He rolled them around in his palm. Evidently they had not been damaged by the passing of time, enclosed as they were in their crude case. His heart beat fast. He held a treasure in his hand. A smile of complete satisfaction swept over his face. His thoughts turned to the storekeeper. The last time, Malone had put it over on him. These pearls would readily sell in Miami and no doubt bring a fine price. He’d have the money then he now lacked. Ah, that was it. How easy it would be to go into the store at Conch Cay, pull a long face, talk about heavy weather and the difficulties of keeping the cargo dry.

Malone would immediately jump to the conclusion that the same thing had happened again. And he’d make the same proposition. Buy or sell, he’d either take the cargo, as is, at his own figure or dispose of it at the same price. He wouldn’t even bother to examine it. He would be sure that John Pindar could not buy, and he would set the sum low.

John Pindar turned. There was nothing more to keep him here.
He dropped the pearls into his dungarees pocket and buttoned it, waded into the water, dived, headed to where he was certain the passage lay. His groping fingers met only the smooth, wet rocks. He caught his breath and tried it again, with the same result. He'd lost his sense of direction. There was nothing here by which a man could tell east or west, north or south. He dived again and again, but without coming upon that narrow cleft. The cold, clammy air of the cavern seemed to be enveloping him in a shroud. There was no sound but his own breathing. Each heartbeat thumped loud in his ears. He must get out. Time after time, he plunged down, only to come up against the hard stone.

Frantically he clawed his way around the edge of the pool, feeling, probing for that hole through which he had entered. The place was a couple of hundred feet across and the chances of blindly discovering the small break were slim. He was used to working under water on the reef, but out there a man rose to the fresh air and bright sunshine, caught his breath clean and sweet in the warm drift of the trade wind. Here the air above was as black as the water below, a fetid atmosphere that held the chill of death.

He waded out into the pool and struck a match. It sputtered, almost died out, then flared up. He'd have to be careful now. His matches were beginning to get damp from handling, and there were but two left. He held his hand up and gazed intently at the surface below him. It was dead flat except where a little ripple swept across it when he moved. Two matches, two little slivers of wood tipped with phosphorus, and when they were gone, he'd have nothing to break the darkness around him.

A blind and unreasoning panic overtook him. To be sealed up here in the everlasting night, to be cut off from the sunshine was terrifying. The blackness pressed closer and closer on him. The silence was absolute. Not the faintest whisper of sound from the outside penetrated here. He was cut off from the world of men. These dripping rocks were a dungeon, a cell with a door sealed tight, hidden under water.

Scarcely stopping between dives, he plunged down and came up. His fingers scraped against the soft slime, his hands blindly pressed against the limestone. The pool sloped down steeply from the beach to a seemingly bottomless hole. Time had ceased to exist. There was no way now to mark the passing of the hours. He swam under water,
round and round, driven by a desperate urge. The opening he came through had vanished completely. Not even a small fissure, not the slightest place where a break occurred met his search.

His shoulder muscles were tired, his breath came in gasps. Finally he calmed down and reasoned with himself. He’d never escape unless he kept his head. He felt the pebbles of the beach under his feet and realized with a shock that the tide was rising. He’d come in at low water. The flow had been out then. Now it had reversed. He stood for a long time thinking while the water crept up past his knees. All around him the walls came straight down, except in that one place where the ledge jutted out. He climbed up on it, sat crouched over, his hands clasped around his knees, sat close to where a couple of other men had been up against the same hopeless situation. They had failed.

In his mind he re-enacted what probably had happened. That native, hotly pursued by the man with the sword, had found his way in here with his treasure. The other had followed. How long had they lasted with nothing but salt water to drink? The squat, heavy-shouldered fellow crouched back in the niche had died of fear. The dark to him was peopled with malignant spirits that surrounded him and in his imagination clutched and menaced with invisible hands.

The man with the sharp steel blade—how long had he waited before he’d fallen on his upright weapon and ended the agony of his body weakened by hunger, his mind crazed by thirst? Those two had come in here, one driven by fear, the other by greed. Neither had gone out. Now he decided he would not linger here day after slow day, beating futilely against those rocks. He had his sheath knife, and he’d use it on himself.

That, though, could wait. It was the final expedient when all else failed. Perhaps he might be able to detect the current coming in as he had felt it going out in the other cavern. Anything was better than sitting waiting. He tried floating on his back, lying still, but he seemed to stay in the same place. That was no help. He hauled himself back on to the ledge again, alone in the darkness with his thoughts, the sound of his own breathing and the dripping of water from his dungarees keeping him company.

The hours passed. He’d been in here since almost noon. He reached over to the water a couple of feet below him. If the tide had not already turned to ebb, it soon would swirl around the end of the island,
eddy among the rocks off the point and then, like a fast-running river, race out through the pass, out through the break in the reef and lose its force in the dark blue of the sea.

His mind ranged back over the years. He recalled working with his father out on the reef. He'd learned to dive then, stripping the copper and brass from a wrecked steamer that lay in six fathoms just on the outside of the coral wall. The Tiburon—his schooner that he'd left anchored out there in the bright sunshine—he remembered the work he'd put in, building her, getting the timbers out from the woods, hewing keel and frame, driving driftbolts, ripping planking, sewing sails, splicing rigging. He'd put a lot of himself into that vessel.

He thought of the cargoes he'd hauled for Malone. A sickening sense of finality came over him. Was that his last trip? All his ideas of revenge were gone. They were so futile now. He was up against something that dwarfed all those plans into insignificance. He slid into the water. As his feet struck the bottom, he knew the tide was more than halfway out. The current should be swift outside, and running out of this pool fast.

Gradually it came over him. That stream of water flowing out the entrance could be his guide. He had only to find it. He carefully set his small match bottle down, propped against the moldering bones on the shelf. He took the cork out, methodically shaved it into small pieces with his knife, catching them in his hands. He waded out till the water was shoulder high. Then he let the little crumbs of cork fall from his outstretched fingers. Slowly he backed away, moving gently, inch by inch, so as not to create any disturbance.

He reached the edge of the gravel beach, leaned against the wall and waited. The long minutes passed. Several times he started away, but forced himself to remain where he was. It seemed like eternity as the tide crept down on his legs till the water he stood in was but ankle deep.

Finally he moved and felt cautiously behind him among the bones till his fingers touched the bottle. With his knife blade in his teeth and the glass held high, he eased out into the pond. It was hard to resist the temptation to hurry his progress.

At last he was almost shoulder deep. In spite of his efforts to control himself, his hands were shaking as he took a match from its container. He rasped it across the knife handle a half dozen times before it sputtered. Holding his breath, he watched the feeble flame in its tip glow,
brighten, and then die. He had one match left, one more chance. He hesitated before he struck it with trembling fingers. The wood caught and a little blob of light wavered, flickered, and burst into flame.

He gazed down. The cork he had dropped was not in sight. Perhaps he had waited too long. Perhaps it had drifted with the flow and been sucked under and out of his sight. He turned around, the tiny torch high over his head. Then he saw the bits of cork floating on the black water. They had scattered and spread into a crescent-shaped line. He barely caught a glimpse of that break in the smooth ebony beneath when his match went out.

The darkness closed down again. Yet in that brief instant before the light had been extinguished, he had got the hint he needed. Straight in front of him, the bulge of the curve showed the direction of the current. He began swimming, dived.

His hands were outstretched before him when one shoulder struck the rocks. He'd found the opening. A few swift drives of arms and legs, and he raised himself up.

Ahead, a dim glow blossomed like a flower painted on a velvet background. He turned the corner in the passage. The mouth of the cave came in sight, and framed in its jagged circle, the outlines of the schooner were etched like a silhouette in the path of the moonlight. He stepped out on the beach and drew in a long breath of clean fresh air.

Above the booming of the offshore reef, he heard Timmy hoarsely calling in a tone of despair, “John! Oh, John!”

He threw back his head, and loud and clear his own voice rose in answer.

KEYS TO APPRECIATION

1. The men who make their living in the waters off the Florida keys, like the fishermen of Gloucester, take their chances with storms, damaged cargoes, and other forms of ill luck. In spite of the “hard work and little gain,” many men deliberately choose this kind of life. What personal satisfaction did John Pindar get from sailing his schooner and accepting the risks of the sea? Would this kind of life appeal to you?

2. For most of us life seems to run along in a routine fashion, yet every day something strange and exciting happens to many people. Explain briefly how the turn of events in a few hours probably changed the life of John Pindar.

3. In times of sudden danger many people become panic-stricken and lose
the ability to think clearly. Show how John Pindar saved himself by forcing his mind to analyze the situation and find a solution to his problem. Do you know of any incident in real life in which someone saved himself or someone else by refusing to yield to panic?

4. Like the character in this story all of us have known times when the usual calm of an ordinary day has been shattered by an unexpected turn of affairs—an accident, a fire, a sudden opportunity. Relate briefly an exciting incident in your own life or in the life of someone you know.

THE FISHERMEN  
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

HURRAH! the seaward breezes
Sweep down the bay amain;
Heave up, my lads, the anchor!
Run up the sail again!

5 Leave to the lubber landsmen
The rail car and the steed;
The stars of heaven shall guide us,
The breath of heaven shall speed.

Now, brothers, for the icebergs
Of frozen Labrador,
Floating spectral in the moonshine,
Along the low, black shore!
Where like snow the gannet's feathers
On Brador's rocks are shed,
And the noisy murr are flying,
Like black scuds, overhead;

There we'll drop our lines, and gather
Old Ocean's treasures in,
Where'er the mottled mackerel
Turns up a steel-dark fin.
The sea's our field of harvest,
Its scaly tribes our grain,

13. GANNET—A bird related to the pelican.
15. MURR—Murre, a North Atlantic sea bird.
1. Lack of understanding is responsible for much of the trouble among human beings. Show how Luster Sexton's first reactions to the situation in the story are the result of lack of understanding. Recall some of your own experiences in which you formed hasty impressions about new teachers or classmates. Did this first impression always stand up after you got to know them better? Are we all often guilty of hasty judgments of the character and actions of others? Discuss.

2. Change of times and ways sometimes creates a gulf of misunderstanding between members of two generations. What were the changes in school equipment and teaching methods that contributed to Luster's misunderstanding? In what ways did Professor Herbert reflect a tolerant point of view of the situation?

3. A strong sense of right and wrong exists in most people. How is this sense reflected in the characters of Luster, Dave, and Professor Herbert?

4. Some people feel that what they think is right must always be maintained by "strong arm" methods. Explain how this belief seems to be shown by Luster's words and actions. Do you think this story illustrates the principle that it is better to settle an argument by means of co-operative understanding and compromise than by force? Discuss.

USING WORDS

1. Jesse Stuart's characters seem like the typical hill people they are because of the way they talk. Their speech is filled with dialect. The speech of any area having local peculiarities of words or pronunciations is known as dialect. Pa uses dialect as he says allus, fer, shore, keer, jist, larnin', sicha, and etter you.

Though dialect is not usually a part of the good English we use, we are sometimes careless in our own pronunciations of short words. Emphasize orally the correct pronunciation of each of the words listed in the preceding paragraph.

2. The italicized words in the following sentences are necessary for your understanding of this particular story, although they are not used so frequently in your everyday speech. See if you can guess the meanings of these words as they are used here.

   a. Dave threw down his books in the chipyard.
   b. When I was a little shaver in school, they didn't go galavanting over the hills and ransacking the country for lizards and snakes.
   c. He rushed out to help his Pa finish foddering the cattle.
   d. "Don't go down to school and show off and plague your own boy in front of all the scholars," Mother pleaded.
   e. Pa replied, "I'll show it's not right to keep one boy in and let the rest go scot-free."
The Switzers were scurrying around to get Daisy ready by the time that Elmer Kruse should get through in town. They had known all week that Elmer might be in for her any day. But they hadn’t done a thing until he appeared. “Oh, it was so rainy today; the roads so muddy, they hadn’t thought he’d get in until maybe next week.” It would have been the same any other day.

Mrs. Switzer was trying now at the last moment to get all of Daisy’s things into the battered telescope¹ that lay open on the bed. She had meant to get Daisy all mended and “fixed up” before she went out to the country. But somehow . . . oh, there was always so much to see to when she came home. Gone all day, washing and cleaning for other people; it didn’t leave her much time for her own house.

“Daisy, you get yourself ready now.”

“I am ready. Mama, I want to put on my other ribbon.”

“Oh, that’s way down in the telescope somewhere. You needn’t be so anxious to fix yourself up. This ain’t like going visiting.”

Daisy stood at the little mirror preening herself—such a homely child, “all Switzer,” skinny, with pale sharp eyes set close together and thin, stringy, reddish hair. But she had never really learned yet how homely she was. She was the oldest, and she got the pick of what clothes were given to the Switzers. Goldie and Dwight envied her. She was important in her own small world. She was proud of her blue coat that had belonged to Alice Brooker, the town lawyer’s daughter. It hung unevenly about her bony little knees, and the buttons came down too far. Her mother had tried to make it over.

Mrs. Switzer looked at her, troubled, but not knowing how she could tell her all the things she ought to be told. Daisy had never been away before except to go to her Uncle Fred’s at Lehigh. She seemed to think that this would be the same. She had so many things to learn. Well, she would find them out soon enough—only too soon. Working for other people—she would learn what that meant. Elmer and Edna Kruse were nice young people. They would mean well enough by Daisy. It was a good chance for her to start in. But it wasn’t the same.

Daisy was so proud. She thought it was quite a thing to be “start-

¹ TELESCOPE—Telescope bag, a kind of adjustable traveling bag.
ing to earn.” She thought she could buy herself so much with that dollar and a half a week. The other children stood back watching her, round-eyed and impressed. They wished that they were going away, like Daisy.

They heard a car come splashing through the mud in low.

“Well, I guess you’ll have to go now. He won’t want to wait. I’ll try and send you out what you ain’t got with you.” She turned to Daisy. Her face was working. There was nothing else to do, as everyone said. Daisy would have to help, and she might as well learn now. Only, she hated to see Daisy go off, to have her starting in. She knew what it meant. “Well—you try and work real good this summer, so they’ll want you to stay. I hope they’ll bring you in sometimes.”

Daisy’s homely little face grew pale with awe, suddenly, at the sight of her mother crying, at something that she dimly sensed in the pressure of her mother’s thin, strong arms. Her vanity in her new importance was somehow shamed and dampened.

Elmer’s big new Buick, mud-splashed but imposing, stood tilted on the uneven road. Mud was thick on the wheels. It was a bad day for driving, with the roads a yellow mass, water lying in all the wheel ruts. This little road that led past these few houses on the outskirts of town, and up over the hill, had a cold, rainy loneliness. Elmer sat in the front seat of the car, and in the back was a big box of groceries.

“Got room to sit in there?” he asked genially. “I didn’t get out, it’s so muddy here.”

“No, don’t get out,” Mrs. Switzer said hastily. “She can put this right on the floor there in the back.”

He saw the signs of tears on Mrs. Switzer’s face, and they made him anxious to get away. She embraced Daisy hastily again. Daisy climbed over the grocery box and scrunched herself into the seat.

“I guess you’ll bring her in with you some time when you’re com­ing,” Mrs. Switzer hinted.

“Sure. We’ll bring her.”

He started the engine. It roared, half died down as the wheels of the car spun in the thick, wet mud.

In that moment, Daisy had a startled view of home—the same house standing on a rough rise of land, weathered to a dim color that showed dark streaks from the rain; the narrow sloping front porch whose edge had a soaked, gnawed look; the chickens, grayish-black, pecking at the
wet ground; their playthings, stones, a wagon, some old pail covers littered about; a soaked, discolored piece of underwear hanging on the line in the back yard. The yard was tuussocky and overhung the road with shaggy long grass where the yellow bank was caved in under it. Goldie and Dwight were gazing at her solemnly. She saw her mother's face—a thin, weak, loving face, drawn with neglected weeping, with its reddened eyes and poor teeth . . . in the old coat and heavy shoes and cleaning cap, her work-worn hand with its big knuckles clutching at her coat. She saw the playthings they had used yesterday, and the old swing that hung from one of the trees, the ropes sodden, the seat in crooked . . .

The car went off, slipping on the wet clay. She waved frantically, suddenly understanding that she was leaving them. They waved at her. Mrs. Switzer stood there a little while. Then came the harsh rasp of the old black iron pump that stood out under the box elder tree. She was pumping water to leave for the children before she went off to work.

Daisy held on as the car skidded going down the short clay hill. Elmer didn't bother with chains. He was too used to the roads. But her eyes brightened with scared excitement. When they were down, and Elmer slowed up going along the tracks in the deep, wet grass that led to the main road, she looked back holding on her hat with her small scrawny hand.

Just down this little hill—and home was gone. The big car, the feel of her telescope on the floor under her feet, the fact that she was going out to the country, changed the looks of everything. She knew it all now.

She sat up straight and important, her thin, homely little face strained with excitement, her sharp eyes taking in everything. The watery mud holes in the road, the little thickets of plum trees, low and wet, in dark interlacings. She held on fiercely, but made no sound when the car skidded.

She felt the grandeur of having a ride. One wet Sunday, Mr. Brooker had driven them all home from church, she and Goldie and Dwight packed tightly into the back seat of the car, shut in by the side curtains, against which the rain lashed, catching the muddy scent of the roads. Sometimes they could plan to go to town just when Mr. Pattey was going to work. Then they would run out and shout
eagerly, "Mr. Pattey! Are you going through town?" Sometimes he didn’t hear them. Sometimes he said, with curt good nature, "Well, pile in"; and they all hopped into the truck back. "He says we can go along with him."

She looked at the black wet fields through which little leaves of bright green corn grew in rows, at showery bushes of sumach along the roadside. A gasoline engine pumping water made a loud desolate sound. There were somber-looking cattle in the wet grass, and lonely, thick-foliaged trees growing here and there in the pastures. She felt her telescope on the floor of the car, the box of groceries beside her. She eyed these with a sharp curiosity. There was a fresh pineapple—something the Switzers didn’t often get at home. She wondered if Edna would have it for dinner. Maybe she could hint a little to Edna.

She wished she were in the front seat with Elmer. She didn’t see why he hadn’t put her there. She would have liked to know who all the people were who lived on these farms; how old Elmer’s babies were; and if he and Edna always went to the movies when they went into town on Saturday nights. Elmer must have lots of money to buy a car like this. He had a new house on his farm, too, and Mrs. Metzinger had said that it had plumbing. Maybe they would take her to the movies, too. She might hint about that.

She looked at Elmer’s back, the old felt hat crammed down carelessly on his head, the back of his neck with the golden hair on the sunburned skin above the blue of his shirt collar. Strong and easy and slouched a little over the steering wheel that he handled so masterly. Elmer and Edna were just young folks; but Mrs. Metzinger said that they had more to start with than most young farmers did, and that they were hustlers. Daisy felt that the pride of this belonged to her, too, now.

"Here we are!"

"Oh, is this where you folks live?" Daisy cried eagerly.

The house stood back from the road, beyond a space of bare yard with a little scattering of grass just starting—small, modern, painted a bright new white and yellow. The barn was new, too, a big splendid barn of frescoed brick, with a silo of the same. There were no trees. A raw, desolate wind blew across the back yard as they drove up beside the back door.

Edna had come out on the step, Elmer grinned at her as he took
out the box of groceries, and she slightly raised her eyebrows. She said kindly enough:

"Well, you brought Daisy. Hello, Daisy, are you going to stay with us this summer?"

"I guess so," Daisy said importantly. But she suddenly felt a little shy and forlorn as she got out of the car and stood on the bare ground in the chilly wind.

"Yes, I brought her along," Elmer said.

"Are the roads very bad?"

"Kind of. Bad. Why?"

"Well, I'd like to get over to mama's some time today."

"Oh, I guess they aren't too bad for that."

Daisy pricked up her sharp little ears. Another ride. That cheered her.

"Look in the door," Edna said in a low fond voice, motioning with her head.

Two little round, blond heads were pressed tightly against the screen door. There was a clamor of "Daddy, daddy!" Elmer grinned with a bashful pride as he stood with the box of groceries, raising his eyebrows with mock surprise and demanding, "Who's this? What you shoutin' 'daddy' for? You don't think daddy's got anything for you, do you?"

He and Edna were going into the kitchen together, until Edna remembered and called back hastily:

"Oh, come in, Daisy!"

Daisy stood, a little left out and solitary, there in the kitchen, as Billy, the older of the babies, climbed frantically over Elmer, demanding candy, and the little one toddled smilingly about. Her eyes took in all of it. She was impressed by the shining blue-and-white linoleum, the range with its nickel and enamel, the bright new woodwork. Edna was laughing and scolding at Elmer and the baby. Billy had made his father produce the candy. Daisy's sharp little eyes looked hungrily at the lemon drops until Edna remembered her.

"Give Daisy a piece of your candy," she said.

He would not go up to Daisy. She had to come forward and take one of the lemon drops herself. She saw where Edna put the sack, in a dish high in the cupboard. She hoped they would get some more before long.

"My telescope's out there in the car," she reminded them.
"Oh! Elmer, you go and get it and take it up for her," Edna said.

"What?"

"Her valise—or whatever it is—out in the car."

"Oh, sure," Elmer said with a cheerful grin.

"It's kind of an old telescope," Daisy said conversationally. "I guess it's been used a lot. My papa used to have it. The strap broke when mama was fastening it this morning. We ain't got any suitcase I had to take this because it was all there was in the house, and mama didn't want to get me a new one."

Edna raised her eyebrows politly. She leaned over and pretended to spat the baby as he came toddling up to her, then rubbed her cheek against his round head with its funny fuzz of hair.

"Um-hm," Edna replied absently. "You can go up with Elmer and take off your things, Daisy," she said. "You can stop and unpack your valise now, I guess, if you'd like to. Then you can come down and help me," she reminded.

Daisy, subdued, followed Elmer up the bright new stairs. Elmer had put her telescope in one of the bedrooms.

She heard him go clattering down the stairs, and then a kind of murmuring and laughing in the kitchen. The back door slammed. She hurried to the window in time to see Elmer go striding off toward the barn.

She put her coat and hat on the bed. She would rather be down in the kitchen with Edna than unpack her telescope now.

She guessed she would go down where the rest of them were.

Elmer came into the house for dinner. He brought in a cold, muddy, outdoor breath with him. The range was going, but the bright little kitchen seemed chilly, with the white oilcloth on the table, the baby's varnished high chair and his little fat mottled hands.

Edna made a significant little face at Elmer. Daisy did not see. She was standing back from the stove, where Edna was at work, looking at the baby.

"He can talk pretty good, can't he? Dwight couldn't say anything but 'ma-ma' when he was that little."

Edna's back was turned. She said meaningly:

"Now, Elmer's come in for dinner, Daisy, we'll have to hurry. You must help me get on the dinner. You can cut bread and get things on
the table. You must help, you know. That’s what you are supposed to do.”

Daisy looked startled, a little scared and resentful. “Well, I don’t know where you keep your bread.”

“Don’t you remember where I told you to put it this morning? Right over in the cabinet, in that big box. You must watch, Daisy, and learn where things are.”

Elmer, a little embarrassed at the look that Edna gave him, whistled as he began to wash his hands at the sink.

As Edna passed him, she shook her head and her lips just formed, “Been like that all morning!”

He grinned comprehendingly. Then both their faces became expressionless.

Daisy had not exactly heard, but she looked from one to the other, silent and dimly wondering. The queer ache that had kept starting all through the morning, under her interest in Edna’s things and doings, came over her again. She sensed something different in the atmosphere than she had ever known before—some queer difference between the position of herself and of the two babies, a faint notion of what mama had meant when she had said that this would not be visiting.

“I guess I’m going to have the toothache again,” she said faintly.

No one seemed to hear her.

Edna whisked off the potatoes, drained the water. . . . “You might bring me a dish, Daisy.” Daisy searched a long time while Edna turned impatiently and pointed. Edna put the rest of the things on the table herself. Her young, fresh, capable mouth was tightly closed, and she was making certain resolutions.

They sat down. Daisy and the other children had always felt it a great treat to eat away from home instead of at their own scanty, hastily set table. They had hung around Mrs. Metzinger’s house at noon, hoping to be asked to stay, and not offended when told that “it was time for them to run off now.” Her pinched little face had a hungry look as she stared at the potatoes and fried ham and pie. But none of them seemed to be taking more, and so she said nothing. She remembered what her mother had said, with now a faint comprehension. “You must remember you’re out working for other folks, and it won’t be like it is at home.”

After dinner, Edna said, “Now you can wash the dishes, Daisy.”
She went into the next room with the children. Daisy, as she went hesitantly about the kitchen alone, could hear Edna’s low contented humming as she sat there rocking, the baby in her lap. The bright kitchen was empty and lonely now. Through the window, Daisy could see the great barn looming up against the rainy sky. She hoped that they would drive to Edna’s mother’s soon.

She finished as soon as she could and went into the dining room where Edna was sewing on the baby’s rompers. Edna went on sewing. Daisy sat down disconsolately. The queer low ache went all through her. She said in a small dismal voice:

“I guess I got the toothache again.”

Edna bit off a thread.

“I had it awful hard awhile ago. Mama come pretty near taking me to the dentist.”

“That’s too bad,” Edna murmured politely. But she offered no other condolence. She gave a little secret smile at the baby asleep on a blanket and a pillow in one corner of the shiny leather davenport.

Daisy’s homely mouth drooped at the corners. Her toothache did not seem to matter to anyone. Edna did not seem to want to see that anything was wrong with her. She had expected Edna to be concerned, to mention remedies. But it wasn’t toothache, that strange lonesome ache all over her. Maybe she was going to be terribly sick. Mama wouldn’t come home for supper to be told about it.

Edna glanced quickly at her. The child was so mortally unattractive, unappealing even in her forlornness. Edna frowned a little, but said kindly.

“Now you might take Billy into the kitchen out of my way, Daisy, and amuse him.”

Daisy felt a thrill of comfort as Billy put his little fat hand in hers and trotted into the kitchen beside her. He had the fattest hands, she thought. Edna brought the blocks and put the box down on the floor beside Daisy.

“Now, see if you can amuse him so that I can get my sewing done.”

“Shall you and me play blocks, Billy?” Daisy murmured.

He nodded. Then he got hold of the box with one hand, tipped out all the blocks on the floor with a bang and a rattle, and looked at her with a pleased proud smile.

“Oh, no, Billy. You mustn’t spill out the blocks. Look, you’re
too little to play with them. No, now—now wait! Let Daisy show you. Daisy’ll build you something real nice—shall she?’

He gave a solemn nod of consent.

Daisy set out the blocks on the bright linoleum. She had never had such blocks as these to handle before. Dwight’s were only a few old, unmatched, broken ones. Her spirit of leadership came back and she firmly put away that fat hand of Billy’s whenever he meddled with her building. She could make something really wonderful with these blocks.

“No, Billy, you mustn’t. See, when Daisy’s got it all done, then you can see what the lovely building is.”

She put the blocks together with great interest. She knew what she was going to make—it was going to be a new house; no, a new church. Just as she got the walls up, in came that little hand again, and then with a delightful grunt Billy swept the blocks pell-mell about the floor. At the clatter, he sat back, pursing his mouth to give an ecstatic “Ooh!”

“Oh, Billy—you mustn’t, the building wasn’t done! Look, you’ve spoiled it. Now you’ve got to sit ’way off here while I try to build it over again.”

Billy’s look of triumph turned to surprise and then to vociferous protest as Daisy picked him up and firmly transplanted him to another corner of the room. He set up a tremendous howl. He had never been set aside like that before. Edna came hurrying out. Daisy looked at Edna for justification, but instinctively on the defensive.

“Billy knocked over the blocks. He spoiled the building.”

“Wah! Wah!” Billy gave loud heartbroken sobs. The tears ran down his fat cheeks and he held out his arms piteously toward his mother.

“I didn’t hurt him,” Daisy said, scared.

“Never mind, lover,” Edna was crooning. “Of course, he can play with his blocks. They’re Billy’s blocks, Daisy,” she said. “He doesn’t like to sit and see you put up buildings. He wants to play, too. See, you’ve made him cry now.”

“Do’ wanna stay here,” Billy wailed.

“Well, come in with mother then.” She picked him up, wiping his tears.

“I didn’t hurt him,” Daisy protested.

“Well, never mind now. You can pick up the blocks and then
sweep up the floor, Daisy. You didn't do that when you finished the dishes. Never mind," she was saying to Billy. "Pretty soon daddy'll come in and we'll have a nice ride."

Daisy soberly picked up the blocks and got the broom. What had she done to Billy? He had tried to spoil her building. She always made Dwight keep back until she had finished. Of course, it was Daisy, the oldest, who should lead and manage. There had been no one to hear her side. Everything was different. She winked back tears as she swept, poorly and carelessly.

Then she brightened up as Elmer came tramping up on the back porch and then through the kitchen.

"Edna!"

"She's in there," Daisy offered.

"Want to go now? What! Is the baby asleep?" he asked blankly.

Edna gave him a warning look and the door was closed.

Daisy listened hard. She swept very softly. She could catch only a little of what they said—"Kind of hate to go off . . . I know, but if we once start . . . not a thing all day . . . what we got her for . . ." She had no real comprehension of it. She hurried and put away the broom. She wanted to be sure and be ready to go.

Elmer tramped out, straight past her. She saw from the window that he was backing the car out from the shed. She could hear Edna and Billy upstairs, could hear the baby cry a little as he was wakened. Maybe she ought to go out and get on her wraps, too.

Edna called out, "Come in and get this boy, daddy." She did not look at Daisy, but said hurriedly. "We're going for a little ride, Daisy. Have you finished the sweeping? Well, then, you can pick up those pieces in the dining room. We won't be gone so very long. When it's a quarter past five, you start the fire, like I showed you this noon, and slice the potatoes that were left and the meat. And set the table."

The horn was honked again.

"Yes! Well, we'll be back, Daisy. Come, lover, daddy's in a hurry."

Daisy stood looking after them. Billy clamored to sit beside his daddy. Edna took the baby from Elmer and put him beside her on the back seat. There was room—half of the big back seat. There wasn't anything really, to be done at home. That was the worst of it. They just didn't want to take her. They all belonged together. They
didn't want to take anyone else along. She was an outsider. They all—even the baby—had a freshened look of expectancy.

The engine roared—they had started; slipping on the mud of the drive, then forging straight ahead, around the turn, out of sight.

She went forlornly into the dining room. The light from the windows was dim now in the rainy, late afternoon. The pink pieces from the baby's rompers were scattered over the gay rug. She got down on her hands and knees, slowly picking them up, sniffing a little. She heard the clock in the kitchen ticking loudly.

That dreadful ache submerged her. No one would ask about it, no one would try to comfort her. Before, there had always been mama coming home, anxious, scolding sometimes, but worried over them. Mama and Goldie and Dwight cared about her—but she was away out in the country, and they were at home. She didn't want to stay here, where she didn't belong. But mama had told her that she must begin helping this summer.

Her ugly little mouth contorted into a grimace of weeping. But silent weeping, without any tears; because she already had the cold knowledge that no one would notice or comfort it.

KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING

Most literature can be classified as either realistic or romantic, depending upon the degree to which the author has allowed his imagination to dress up the materials of life. The realistic writer tries to present bits of life pretty much as they really are. His characters are the kind of people one meets in everyday life; his situations are incidents that are likely to happen to real people anywhere. He writes of life as it is—sometimes pleasant, sometimes drab and hard—but always real. Like some experiences in real life, realistic fiction does not always have a happy ending. In some short stories there is no ending at all in the sense of climax and solution of difficulties. Frequently the story ends with the statement of the problem, and the reader must search his own experience for the solution. Realistic writers believe that intelligent readers wish to see, even in stories, people like themselves meeting problems like their own. And since most problems in real life are a long time in solving, the problem in the story cannot always be worked out completely.

The romanticist, on the other hand, writes of life as we should like it to be. His imagination carries him beyond the real world to an ideal world where life may be happier, more exciting, full of adventure and interest. His characters may suffer setbacks, his incidents may resemble events in real life, but in gen-
A net to snare the moonlight,
A sod spread to the sun,
A place of toil by daytime,
Of dreams when toil is done.

KEYS TO APPRECIATION

Vachel Lindsay has mentioned the needs that seem most important to the life of men: a chance to enjoy the beauties of the night and the day, a place to work, and a home in which to dream.

1. In our greed and selfishness we sometimes forget that the basic needs of man are not available to all people at all times. Do you think the poet believes we have a responsibility to see that all men have these necessities of life? Do you think such things as moonlight and poppies are needed by everyone? Why or why not?

2. Name some other things which are just as necessary to a full life as those mentioned in the poem. Why are these other things a necessity?

3. What is the net we use to capture the moonlight? Explain.

I saw him sitting in his door
Trembling as old men do;
His house was old, his barn was old,
And yet his eyes seemed new.

His eyes had seen three times my years
And kept a twinkle still
Though they had looked at birth and death
And three graves on a hill.

"I will sit down with you," I said,
"And you will make me wise;
Tell me how you have kept the joy
Still burning in your eyes."
Then like an old-time orator
   Impressively he rose;
“I make the most of all that comes
   And the least of all that goes” —
The jingling rhythm of his words
   Echoed as old songs do—
Yet this had kept his eyes alight
   Till he was ninety-two.

KEYS TO APPRECIATION

When our dreams and ideals have been sufficiently simmered by the heat of
time and experience, they help to form a philosophy of living that reflects the
best of the individual. The old man in the poem has experienced life with all its
happiness and trouble; yet he can compress his philosophy into two brief lines.
1. Do you think the old man’s philosophy would be a good one for each of
   us? Restate it in your own words.
2. Do you think we should, as “The Philosopher” seems to suggest, look
   forward and not backward? What kinds of things in our own lives, and the
   lives of others, do we need to remember? What things might we just as well
   forget?

WHAT WILL POWER DID FOR
ME   ANONYMOUS

I do not remember my father and mother. My earliest recollection
is that I was one of a number of children in the care of an old woman
who, I learned later on, was half-witted. We were dirty, ragged, and
poorly fed. As I grew older I learned that I was a pauper in the
county poorhouse, and that my parents were dead. This is all I ever
knew about them.

We were huddled together—children and mumbling old men and
women, many of them crippled, blind, and weakbrained. To the few
who were passably intelligent was given the care of the others. Those
who were able to do a little work, including the children, were com-
pelled to cultivate the farm for the benefit of the overseer. I think I
could not have been more than four years old when I was put to work picking up chips in the woodyard. As I grew older I was set to other tasks, and many a beating I got when my work did not satisfy the overseer. This life went on until I was about thirteen.

One evening, just as I had finished milking, a cow kicked over the bucket, and half of the milk was lost. I told the overseer, and he gave me the worst beating I had ever received and sent me to bed without supper. That night, when all the others were sleeping, I left the house and made my way to the railroad. A freight train was standing there, and I crept into an empty boxcar and went to sleep.

I was awakened in the morning by a trainman shouting, “Out of that, you little bum!” The train had stopped to put off supplies for a gang of men who were doing the grading for a new railroad that was to cross the one I was on. The gang were working near by. Child-curious, I walked over to look around.

As I got up close one of the men yelled, “Where’s that waterboy? We can’t dig without drinking!”

“I’ll get you water; where do I get it?” I said, stepping forward. He told me, and I soon had the gang drinking like camels. When I was dispensing the second bucket a big, rough-looking man came up, and after looking me over, asked, “Who are you?”

“I am the waterboy,” I said, not knowing what else to say.

“Who put you on the job?”

“No one, sir, I put myself on.”

“Where is that waterboy who was here yesterday?”

“Left last night,” put in one of the men.

At noon when they knocked off for dinner I was about used up. I had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours and was getting faint. As I sat on the bank while the men were eating, one of them, called Tom, said to me, “It’s lunchtime, kid.” I did not answer.

“Where is your lunch, kid?”

“Left it behind,” I said.

“Left it where?”

He looked at me sharply. “Come here, kid,” he said kindly. “What’s this you are giving us?”

So I told them all about myself, showed them my body, which was covered with black-and-blue marks, and added, “Those bruises are why I ran away.”

“Good boy,” said one of the men, “you will do.” These were the
first kind words I remember as ever having been spoken to me; they helped me a lot. The men shared their dinner with me. It was the best meal I had ever eaten.

When the gang quit work for the day, Tom said, “Come with me, kid!” He took me to the wooden shack where the gang slept and had their breakfast and supper. A German boarded them by the week. After supper Tom took me to the cook. “Mike,” he said (and I thought this was an odd name for a German), “here is a kid who is down and out. He is our new waterboy. Don’t you think that he could help you enough morning and night to pay for his grub?”

“How vos you down and outs, son?” asked the cook.

I told my story over again and showed him my bruised body.

“Dot oferseeer vos a devil—a devil!” he said. “Now you vill get up at four o’clock and help me mit the breakfast and at night help me vash de dishes and clean tings up, and vot you eats you vill enough haf paid for.”

I was given a bunk, a straw tick, and a blanket, and before turning in Mike gave me a hot-water bath and rubbed me all over with arnica. When I got into my bunk I dare say there was never a happier boy in the world.

When I was in the poorhouse I was called George Black; whether it was my right name I never knew. One evening I was sitting, thinking over my past, when this good German, the best friend I ever had, put his hand on my head. “Son,” he said, “it vos not goot to look at dot blackness. Put him behind you, and look at dot brightness in front of you; it vos better always so!”

This struck me as good advice, and the first thing I did was to drop George Black for the cheerier name I bear today.

Regular hours and plenty of wholesome food soon made a big change in me. I had always been strong for my age, and in a short time I was able to carry two buckets of water at a time.

When in the poorhouse I had been taught my letters by a man who had lost both legs, and for whom I often did little favors. When I ran away I could read a little and write my name.

I had often wondered why it was that some men were better off than others. I had not been a waterboy long before my association with men broadened my observation, and these childish thoughts came back with renewed force. Why is it, I wondered, that Mr. Mullen is a boss, instead of working in the gang? My solution was: He knows more
than they do, and when the contractor gives orders to the boss it is because he knows still more; and so I found it to be all the way up the line. "I will some day be a boss!" I assured myself.

We were paid twice a month. The evening of the day that I received my first pay I went to a little town two miles away and bought a pair of shoes, the first new pair I had ever had. I told the storekeeper that I wanted some books for a beginner. He questioned me, and selected an elementary arithmetic, a spelling book, a geography, and a copybook.

When I asked if I ought not to have a reader, he said, "No! Let your reader be the newspaper! Here, I will give you something better to start with!" and he gave me a dozen illustrated books. He also gave me a small dictionary and showed me how to use it. From that time every spare moment at my command was given over to mastering the contents of these, my first, books.

In a town some fifty miles away, Mike, our cook, kept a workingmen's boarding house, which his wife looked after during the summer while he was running the shack for the railroad gang. When cold weather and snow tied up work on the road until the following spring he went home, and carried me with him. His wife took me right to her heart. They called me "son." At the shack I had been just "kid." Had I indeed been the son of this dear German couple I do not think they could have shown me more kindness and affection. They insisted that I spend not less than four hours a day with my lessons and they heard me recite.

I soon mastered my elementary books and got more advanced ones. Grammar and history were added to the list, and I spent much time improving my penmanship. One day I said I wished I could speak German, and straightway they commenced to teach me. By spring I had a good understanding of that language, and a fair ability to express myself in it.

After the snow was off the ground we went back to the railroad. The new gang was much larger than the old one, and my German friend had to have a steady helper. I gave up the job of waterboy to become his assistant. He paid me five dollars a week.

I found more or less time each day to study, and at night I went on with my German, reading and talking with Mike. About the middle of October I happened to see in a newspaper that in November the night schools in the city about two hundred miles away would reopen
for the winter. At once, I made up my mind that I would enter those schools. How I would live during the winter did not trouble me. I knew that I would make out somehow; my wants consisted only of plenty of plain food and a dry place in which to sleep.

When I told my plan to the boss he heartily approved of it, and gave me a good letter of recommendation. The gang made up a small purse for me, which with my wages, the most of which I had saved, gave me a feeling of real independence.

I reached the city about six o’clock in the morning and was quite dumbfounded when I saw the crowds of people going in all directions to their work. I had not supposed there were so many people in the world. I do not know how long I had been standing on the corner watching the people, when a policeman came up and asked me if I was looking for anyone. I told him that I had never been in a city before and everything was very strange to me, and asked him where I could get breakfast.

“Have you any money?” he asked. I told him that I had seventy-eight dollars.

This statement and my shabby clothes seemed to make him a little suspicious, so I told him all about myself and let him read my letter of recommendation.

“That’s a good letter,” he said. “Come with me, and I will take you to a reasonable restaurant.”

I got a very good meal for twenty-five cents, which I thought was a terrible price to pay for just something to eat. It was the first meal I had ever bought.

Before leaving me, the policeman asked me what I intended to do, and I replied, “Look for a job at once.”

“What kind of a job do you want?”

“Anything,” I said, “will do for a starter.”

He pointed to my shabby clothes, and remarked that my appearance would be against me. He offered to go with me to a secondhand store where I could get a good suit. The suit, with shirt, shoes, and hat, cost nine dollars.

After telling me how to find a lodginghouse where I could get a good clean bed for twenty cents a night, the officer shook hands with me and wished me good luck. Let me say in passing that until his death, many years later, we remained very close friends. It was one of the
greatest pleasures of my life that I was able to have him placed in a much better position.

I do not know how many times I was refused employment that day. The nearest I came to landing a job was as a messenger for the telegraph company, but my ignorance of the streets was against me. Toward evening I wandered over to the station. Trains were more familiar to me than anything else in this big city. The station was at the foot of a steep hill on the top of which ran horsecars. Soon a train came in. A gang of rough-looking, shabby boys, whom I had noticed loafing around, made a rush for the passengers’ bags.

It struck me that right here was a chance for me to earn enough to pay for my night’s lodging. I went up to a lady who had a large carpetbag, and, lifting my hat, asked to carry her bag. Among other things taught me by my German friends is that politeness costs nothing and is often very valuable. When I had placed her bag on the car at the top of the hill she gave me a quarter. Ten cents was as much as I had hoped for. I returned to the station, and soon after another train came in. Two men who were together handed me their luggage to carry, and one of them gave me twenty-five cents to pay for both. I had now more than enough to pay for my bed and supper.

The next morning I went back to the station, and by evening had made ninety cents. The following day the hoodlums tried to drive me away from the station, but the station policeman threatened to arrest them if they interfered with me again. He was much interested in my story and in my determination to get an education. Through his influence the station agent let me sit in the waiting room, where it was warm, a privilege not granted to any of the other boys.

About two weeks before the night schools were to open, the officer I had met the morning I arrived in the city advised me to go and see the superintendent of education. The superintendent gave me some good advice and a note to the principal of one of the schools. I called on him a day or two later.

About two weeks after school opened, my hair needed cutting. I went across the street from the station to a barbershop. The barber was a German, who was greatly pleased when I spoke to him in that language. I told him about myself; some three or four weeks later he sent word he would like to see me. I went over.

“Would you like to earn some money between trains? Are you too
proud to polish shoes?" he asked. I smiled at the idea that I was proud. Inside of an hour, I went to work polishing and I seldom made less than seventy-five cents a day.

Aside from buying a little new clothing my expenses mainly were for food, lodging, and laundry. I had found a place where very good table board was twenty cents a meal. A young man whom I met at the barber’s went halves with me in renting a small furnished room at two dollars a week.

My earnings now were considerably more than my expenses. Soon I found that I had nearly one hundred dollars. I spoke to the barber about this one day, and he advised me to put the money in a savings bank. One remark that he made greatly impressed me—that it would be working for me day and night.

One day while walking through the better part of the city I saw a man trying to put a box of ashes out of a cellar window. He was having trouble, and I pulled it out for him. He came out to thank me. He told me that he attended to the heaters in fourteen houses during the winter at one dollar a week for each heater.

"I wish that I had a job like yours," I said.

"Well," he replied, "there were two places offered to me a few days ago which I had to turn down. Meet me at the engine house in an hour and I'll go with you and vouch for you." I got these jobs. By the end of the week, with his help, I had nine places, the work requiring about four hours a day.

Having now an assured income for the winter, I gave up luggage carrying and shoe polishing. On the advice of the barber I went to a workingmen's boarding house, securing there a small room to myself with board and washing at four dollars and a half a week. My new employment gave me several hours a day for study, and on the advice of my night-school teacher I began to learn stenography. I took six lessons, and then I saw that I did not need him any more; all I needed was practice. In a year I had no trouble in taking down ordinary conversation; at the end of the second year I could rapidly and correctly report lectures and political speeches.

The night schools closed at the end of March, but I kept up my studies under the guidance of my teacher, who kindly allowed me to come to her twice a week to recite. Here was another instance of kindness which I was later able to repay. Many years afterward, when, on account of advanced age and ill-health, she could no longer
teach, I was able to give her an annuity, without which she would have been dependent on relatives who were not able to care for her.

I was born with a mathematical turn of mind. In arithmetic, my favorite study, I soon outstripped the rest of the class. My teacher advised me to take up algebra. This opened a new world for me—one that I fear I pursued at times to the neglect of my other studies.

When the night school opened again, I was placed under a man teacher. When the term was about half over he advised me to take up the study of geometry, and I learned quickly under his guidance. A few days after the schools had closed he sent for me.

"How old are you?" he asked.

I said that I thought I must be about seventeen years old.

"I have heard you say several times," he went on, "that you want a college education. There is a small college in a town about one hundred and fifty miles from here. The president is an old friend of mine. The requirements for entrance are not severe, and your acquaintance with mathematics and history exceeds the requirements in those branches. You will have six months in which to get ready for your examination in two or three other requirements. I will help you. How much money have you?"

"About $100 in the savings bank," I replied.

"That is more than enough for your first year," he said.

I broke in to tell him I did not intend to touch a dollar of it except for actual necessities. "I have more than earned my way here for the past two years," I explained, "and I shall be much mistaken if I can't find something to do in college, at least partly to pay my way."

The college was then in session and would remain so until the middle of June. I concluded that I had better not wait until the fall term opened before looking over the ground. I was most kindly received by the president, who advised me about my preparations for entrance. I stayed in the town a week and got acquainted with most of the professors and many of the students. Some two hundred of them boarded in common, paying a flat rate per week to a man who was under contract. He told me that when the fall term opened if I would wait on the table he would give me my board. I jumped at the offer.

About a week before the fall term opened, I left for the college. The day after my arrival the president sent for me and told me that if I would sweep out the halls once a day, the chapel, and classrooms, and attend to the fires in the classrooms during the winter, those services
would be considered full payment for my tuition. This meant that my college expenses would be very little. I passed my entrance examination with a percentage of 92; there were only two students who exceeded this mark.

Up to this time I had never decided what I would like to be after I was graduated. One day I read in a magazine an article on great civil-engineering feats and the men who had accomplished them. That article decided me to become a civil engineer. When I told the president of my determination, he approved heartily and gave me two or three elementary books on engineering. I studied these at leisure moments.

Shortly before the summer vacation I learned of a survey that was being made for a new railroad about seventy miles away. I wrote to the engineer in charge, and the president enclosed a letter of recommendation. An answer came in a few days to report at the close of the term. This I did, my first job being that of chain bearer.

Two weeks later, in the course of a conversation, the engineer learned something of my mathematical attainments; whereupon he took me into his office as an assistant to figure up results of surveys. Once in his office he gave me many opportunities to learn surveying and a great deal of valuable information on different phases of the business. By the time the fall term opened I had acquired much useful knowledge.

Before the close of my second year in college I had made up my mind that I had received all the help it had to give me, and at the end of the college year I went back to the engineer for whom I had worked the summer before. I stayed with him until late in the fall, when the snow in the mountains forced us to stop work until the following spring. My employer took me into his office during the winter and gave me great help in mastering many of the details of his profession.

In the spring operations were resumed on the road, which we completed by fall. Before this, however, he had advised me to take a three-year course in a celebrated school of technology. I applied for admission, and after an examination was enrolled. It was now that my skill in stenography gave me the way of almost entirely paying my way. With a letter of introduction from the engineer to the editor of a large daily newspaper, I was, after he had tested my stenography, promised assignments, when extra help was needed to report lectures, sermons, and political speeches. The work that I turned in for my
first assignment was so satisfactory that I was employed at least four evenings a week and sometimes every evening.

My three summer vacations were spent in the employ of my friend the engineer, who during this time was engaged on a harbor improvement. Shortly after my graduation he sent for me and told me he was about to make the survey for a railroad in Chile. He offered to take me with him, and I accepted at once.

While at the school I had become chummy with a young Spanish student, and at the end of my three-year course I could speak Spanish almost as well as English. This facility helped me in Chile. We remained three years, and then went to Brazil, where we stayed two years more.

It has been my good fortune to be concerned in a directive capacity with many big engineering jobs at home and abroad. Among other contracts, my engineer friend and I spent two years in Russia in the employ of the government. I have always been interested in politics, and, although I have never run for office, I have held several positions by appointment. Among them are president of a city board of education, commissioner of charities and corrections, commissioner of water and gas, private secretary to a governor, and my present position of supervisor of municipal improvements.

I mention these matters, not in a spirit of boasting but merely to show once more that a lowly beginning need not prove a handicap, that hardships may be made the bond servant of determination. I have been assured that my simple story may give new hope to many discouraged ones. I hope so. That is why I have written it.

KEYS TO ENJOYMENT

1. Stories of successful men who rose from humble beginnings are not new in American life. Few persons, however, start life with as many handicaps as "George Black" had. Name some of these disadvantages. What advantages, if any, did he have?

2. Early in life the author noted that men who reach the top of their professions generally do so because they develop their capacities and skills. How did this observation help him to direct his own life? Did his attitude toward schoolwork differ from that of the average American boy? Do you think many people with good minds and excellent opportunities are satisfied with mediocre lives? Why?

3. Will power has been defined as an expression of determination, resolute-
ness, or purpose. It has also been said that there is no such thing as will power—only strong desire. Do you think that it was resolute strength of mind or the great desire to make something of himself that helped the author achieve success? If one's desire for something is strong enough to place it above all other interests, is he likely to attain it? Give some examples.

4. Besides determination and persistence the author possessed other traits of character which were definite assets. What instances illustrate his initiative and self-reliance? his eagerness to learn and his willingness to work? How did friendliness and good manners help him? Can these qualities be helpful to anyone?

5. The author's ability to make decisions for himself did not keep him from following the advice of others. Why do you think so many young people today disregard advice and often have to learn by the hard lessons of experience?

6. The writer of this selection deliberately chose to withhold his name. It is not known even to the publishers, nor are any other details of his life. Why do you suppose he wished to remain anonymous?

USING WORDS

1. Instead of the author's name for this selection you find the word anonymous. What does this word tell you about the writer?

2. Heredity and environment are two words you will probably use in discussing the story. Check your understanding of the difference in meaning of these two words. Give examples from the story of the writer's early environment. Can you suggest some of the characteristics the writer may have inherited?

3. Some day you may wish to purchase an annuity. Annuity is derived from the Latin base annum meaning year. Annual is derived from the same base. What does the word annuity mean in our present-day language?

THE UNFAMILIAR

Who he was and what he was and where he came from no one knew. How he came to be in Crosby Corners was a mystery, and at harvest time Connecticut farmers are too busy to peer into mysteries. He could not speak much English beyond "Yes," "No," and "Hungry," but he could gesture—with his hands, his elbows, his eyes, his feet. He appeared to be trying by pantomime to convey the idea that he had been forcibly seized in his native land, which was remote; had been pressed into service aboard a ship; had been very ill at sea; had
Clothed in plastics from head to foot, the American of tomorrow will live in a plastics house, drive a plastics automobile, and fly in a plastics airplane.

Too far in the future to interest us? Not at all, say farsighted scientists. The average person has become a plastics showcase largely without knowing it, because plastics have been made to imitate bone, horn, ivory, semiprecious stones, wood, metal, and a score of common materials. And the uses to which plastics articles are being put number thousands and range from airplane parts to false teeth.

From morning to night we use articles made of plastics — combs, buttons, shoelace tips and eyes, toothbrushes and hairbrushes, fountain pens, pencils, eyeglass frames, keys of computing machines and typewriters, slide rules, golf tees, playing cards, radio dials, control knobs and receiver cases, containers for face creams and lotions, thermometers, ash trays, lamp shades and reflectors, handles of coffee sets, tableware, carving sets, and scores of other articles.

Since plastics appear to be more closely associated with our daily affairs than any other class of industrial materials except food and clothing, you may well ask, "What are plastics?" One chemist answers: "Plastics are materials that, while being processed, can be pushed into almost any desired shape and then retain that shape." Rubber,
glass, and pottery might be regarded as the earliest plastics, since they are formed easily into any desired shape during their processing, and retain that shape after cooling. But owing to the tremendous growth of newer materials, the word now applies almost exclusively to the synthetic\(^1\) products of chemistry which can be cast, molded, or pressed into an almost unlimited variety of forms.

Recently a young woman stepped upon a stage in an eastern city. She wore a plastic hat made from cotton cellulose.\(^2\) Coal, water, and air plastics contributed her necklace, bracelet, ring, belt buckle, handbag frame, shoe ornaments, buttons, and walking stick. No less than fifteen purposes were served by plastics in her costume. With that start, clothing women as well as men and children entirely in plastics is too near realization to be regarded as an idle dream.

That the house, automobile, and airplane of the future may be constructed for the most part of plastics, combined in some cases with other materials, appears a possibility. Already several plastics have been employed experimentally for these purposes; one in the production of airplane fuselages and wings with surfaces as smooth as glass; another in tests as a material for lightweight auto bodies and parts which would be more resistant to wear than metals. Others may be produced that will serve as substitutes for wood, stone, and brick in buildings. Even now plastics are being used widely as walls, ceilings, floors, and decorative trim in buildings. The automobile industry probably is the largest buyer of plastics today, for plastics have become increasingly important in creating beauty appeal in automobiles, as well as in replacing materials formerly used.

\(^1\) synthetic (s\(\text{in-th} \text{-}\text{thet}^\prime \text{īk} \)): artificial

\(^2\) cellulose (s\(\text{ēl} \text{-}\text{ūl}^\prime \text{-lōs} \)): substance that forms the walls of plant cells
A transparent plastic, such as Lucite, is used for some accessories in place of glass because it is practically unbreakable and at the same time crystal clear. Clock dial ring, speedometer light conductor and pointer, and reflector buttons are also made of Lucite, in some cars, since it does not cause a glare from the instruments when lighted at night. Other interior uses of plastics include ornamental knobs for window controls, throttle, light switch, gear shift, heater switch, defroster switch, windshield wiper, cigar lighter, and ash tray.

A recently developed plastic is sandwiched between two layers of plate glass to produce the safety glass used in modern automobiles. The plastic, when struck, will give instead of remaining rigid, introducing a new degree of safety for windshield and side windows.

Acryloid, Crystalite, and Plexiglas are employed by the airplane industry in sheet form for landing-light covers, cockpit inclosures, windshields and windows and gun turrets, because of their light weight, weather resistance, and clarity—an important factor from the standpoint of visibility. Recently these products have entered into the making of lenses, highway reflectors, signs, and displays. The material is used for spectacle lenses, camera lenses, magnifying glasses, and protective goggles. It has been found useful for making dentures that may be colored to resemble the color of the mouth tissues. In the sign industry, designers obtain novel effects by heating and shaping sheets or bars and then lighting from one edge. Surfaces of letters in a sign stand out in glowing relief when sandblasted.

Next to the plastics made from coal, air, and water, perhaps those appealing most to the imagination are the

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1 accessories (ək-sēs’ə-rēz): attachments which add to convenience
2 Acryloid (ək’ri-loid) 3 Crystalite (krif’s-tāl-īt) 4 Plexiglas (plēk’st-glās)
caseins, which are made from milk and processed in a large range of colors, as well as with many mottled effects. They can be sawed, ground, cut, turned, and carved without difficulty, and a fine lasting polish can be applied. Research is under way for using proteins from sources other than milk, such as soybeans and corn. Buttons, buckles, beads, game counters, novelties, and trimming accessories are made from these plastics.

Fine costume jewelry is manufactured by machining resins\(^1\) into intricate forms and polishing; chessmen are carved from rods of the material, and articles such as lamp bases, tableware handles, book ends, clock cases, desk sets, brush backs, fixtures for interior lighting, and advertising signs are produced. Two of the plastics in this family are Catalin and Prystal, the former cast from pure liquid resins and the latter a water-clear material that has the sparkle of a perfect gem and is furnished in a large selection of delicately transparent shades. Catalin is being used to replace costly semiprecious stones, including coral, rose quartz, amber, jade, onyx, and ivory.

Bakelite is almost a household word, so widely has it been used. It has great strength and hardness; it resists heat, water, acids, and mild alkalies;\(^2\) its electrical properties are good; and it will shrink around metal insets after molding and hold them tightly. Automotive\(^3\) parts, electrical insulation, camera cases, telephone equipment, housings, and a large number of other applications are possible in this field of Bakelite and similar plastics.

Urea resins are other plastics, and are used to manufacture baking enamels and surface coatings; to treat tex-

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\(1\) resins (rez'inz): artificial products which resemble natural gum of trees

\(2\) alkalies (al'kd-liz): special group of chemical substances

\(3\) automotive (o'to-mo'tiv): self-propelling
tiles to render them crushproof, water repellent, and more serviceable. With plastics thus invading one field after another, we seem to be emerging into what might be called "The Plastics Age."

Exchanging Ideas

1. What is the meaning of the word plastic? What are the leading qualities of plastics which help to account for their usefulness? What advantage comes from the fact that they may be molded or made into different shapes?

2. What are some of the leading articles made of plastics at present? Which of these articles are used around the home? Which are used for clothing? Which are used in transportation? How are plastics used in the construction of buildings?

3. You may wish to find out how plastics are made—especially what materials are used. Gather information from the library and report interesting facts to the class.
Prayers of Steel

by Carl Sandburg

Lay me on an anvil, O God.
Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.
Let me pry loose old walls.
Let me lift and loosen old foundations.
Lay me on an anvil, O God.
Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.
Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.
Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.
Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars.

Exchanging Ideas

1. According to this poem, what did the piece of steel wish to become? Into what guiding principle for living can the thought of the poem be interpreted?

2. Read the poem aloud and notice how the rhythm and sound of the words suggest the power and force of steel.

Interesting Sidelights

The author of this poem, Carl Sandburg, was born in Galesburg, Illinois, in 1878, and is one of America’s greatest living poets. In early life he did a variety of work in both country and city, and thus came to have great respect for labor. When he began to write he based many of his poems upon the work of everyday life, using such subjects as tractors, slaughterhouses, steel mills, and railroads. In recent years he has become a noted writer of prose and has traveled widely lecturing to the public. Among his best-known poems are “A Fence,” “New Farm Tractor,” “Chicago,” and “Good Morning, America.”
Possibilities for a career . . .

Your Future in Natural Science

by Donald Culross Peattie

A boy who keeps snakes in his bedroom is not likely to be popular with his family. Uncles and aunts who give a boy birthday money and find that it has been spent on serpents are not always pleased with the investment. When the police call at the door with a complaint from the health department about the keeping of "highly venomous animals" in the neighborhood, then a boy's hobby may clash with parental authority.

That is what happened when young Raymond Ditmars of New York City started his career. As curator of the American Museum of Natural History, he became famous for his *Snakes of the World* and *The Reptile Book*. He had, so far as I know, more firsthand experiences with mambas, cobras, bushmasters, coral snakes, fer-de-lances, and diamond-backed rattlers than any other American.
And he reached his enviable popularity and official position without benefit of a costly college education. He made his hobby pay, not only in money, but in happiness, in the satisfaction of doing what he wanted to do. Of course he wasn’t turned aside by his father’s forcing him to surrender his two garter snakes and one water snake. He went to his room and shed a few hot tears, and then, like every practical person, decided to turn his talents and energies for the time being into a channel that the family wouldn’t mind. At first this was difficult. He collected frogs, and found he had to feed them flies. So he went to a livery stable—this was near the close of the horse-and-buggy era—and trapped flies. They got out, and as one body the flies rushed downstairs and met Raymond’s father coming in the door. So the frogs had to go.

But Raymond had grown interested in flies. The interest broadened to include moths and beetles. One species of moth puzzled him. Though he collected it over and over, no two specimens were alike. The boy took them around to the Natural History Museum for identification, and the curator of entomology\(^1\) peered at first scornfully, then with amazement, at the collection. That kind of moth was rare. Further, the boy’s curiosity about the variations showed he had a nose for things in the natural sciences. The specimens were neatly, even exquisitely, mounted. “I’m looking for a young man to mount a large series of moths and butterflies,” said the curator. “There will be a chance of working up in the Museum.”

This made an impression at home. For the next five years Ditmars served his apprenticeship. In the field, collecting, he carried the equipment, trotted the errands, did the chores—and listened. He made a living, for a

\(^1\) *entomology* (ënt-o-möll’ö-jë): study of insects
time, as a reporter on the *New York Times*. Then he was made an assistant curator. To enlarge his income, he began popularizing his science. I must add that he chose a good wife. She let him have manuscripts and pickled specimens all over the dining-living room.

One could go on multiplying similar instances. When a boy, the Baron von Humboldt created his own museum; he came swiftly to the notice of the Prussian government, and when he was still rather a young man he was already the most renowned scientist of his times. Auguste Forel, the greatest living authority on ants, "the mankind of insects," made at the age of ten a discovery about some common garden ants that had escaped the observations of all the famous students of the times. John James Audubon, America’s greatest artist of birds, began drawing the creatures he loved while a child. Linnaeus, the "father of botany," was already an excellent young naturalist in his teens. Another boy, who grew up in a village in the Alps so overshadowed by the towering mountains that it got no sunshine for one-third of the year, made himself the foremost authority in France, in his time, on the beautiful Alpine wild flowers. A nineteen-year-old Georgia garage mechanic who had astronomy for an amateur hobby made one of the most sensational discoveries of a new star in our age, a few hours earlier than any of the great observatories mounting sixty-inch lenses that forever sweep the skies.

The sciences offer young people the finest of all hobbies, in my opinion. They certainly have the greatest futures. To become a renowned singer you have to be born with a wonderful voice, and then work like a slave during a long, expensive training. A poet, a composer, a painter, a sculptor, has to be both born and made.

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1 Auguste Forel (ˈɔːɡyst fɔrˈɛl)  
2 Linnaeus (ˈlɪnəəs): Swedish botanist
Not so in science. Geniuses are rare, and we will all admit that Baron von Humboldt and John James Audubon belong in the genius class. But most scientists, even very good ones, are not geniuses. They were all young once, and all began at the beginning.

It would be misleading to say that much money can be made out of science. Science discourages people who are out for just money, and rightly does it do so. The pure and honest cause of truth seeking, for that is what science is and means, would be ruined if fortune hunters saw inducements in it. But the young man or young woman (for there are many women employed nowadays in museums, universities, on expeditions of exploration, in government and state service, and by great foundations like the Carnegie and Rockefeller) who loves his work first, will find, if he shows the ability, a living that will seem satisfying. A man who is satisfied with a thousand dollars is better off than a man who can't be happy because he has only a million! Actually, during the Depression, few good scientists were out of work. The people who suffered most were the unskilled and the overpaid. A scientist is neither.

Some of the careers leading from nature hobbies that need young men and women are forestry, National Park Service, nature guide or counselor for summer camps, wild-life management, landscape gardening, game-farm management, plant-disease experts, genetics, or scientific breeding of superior plant and animal stocks, range-land management, biology and nature teaching, collecting
and laboratory work for the big biological supply houses that prepare demonstration material for schools and colleges, horticulture, cereal experts, crop estimating, agricultural economics, geology and oil and mineral research, seed experts, insect control, and state and government fisheries. The men and women who get good jobs (and they are usually lifetime jobs) along these lines begin to get into them early in life. Most of the employees in the Department of Agriculture come from farms, or range lands, or grew up as woodsmen. The city-bred youngster has a good outlook, too, however. His superior educational advantages fit him for the "pure," or theoretical, sides of science—and before a new project can be put into practice rightly, it has to be founded on the right theory. And theory is evolved by research.

The place for the young person to begin is right at home. Wherever you live is just as interesting as any other place on earth. It's a mistake to think you have to be sent to Greenland or Guatemala to find rare curiosities. A terrifically ambitious young scientist was appointed entomologist to the state of Missouri. He was the first man on the spot when a plague of Rocky Mountain locusts swept over the farms of the prairie states. His report was so complete and splendid that in a short time he was called to Washington as the head of the Bureau of Entomology.

A young man who lived on the New Mexican desert where few plants grew soon knew so much about those plants and what economic uses they had, what part they
played in the life of the Indians and the range, and flowering and fruiting dates of them all, that he, too, was called to Washington. In London or Paris they may not consider it a high appointment to be a plant pathologist in Illinois, but the man who was called to that post some years ago won a world-wide reputation with his researches. He stamped out one dangerous crop disease after another with promptness.

So, if nature is your hobby, you will not need to be told that within ten miles of your home there is a vast world about which you never know enough. If it isn't yet your hobby, but you wish it were and don't know where to begin, turn to your librarian, your biology teacher, your county agent, local game warden, local forestry department; visit the nearest college and its museum and talk to the science teachers. They will tell you of individuals, groups of people right in your neighborhood, who will let you learn from them, tell you what to study, join you to group projects going on. They will steer you to the right books, and steer you off beginners' mistakes. Science is democratic; it shares everything and gives preferment to merit and to merit only.

Even if your hobby doesn't lead to a career, even if later you turn to other interests, a nature hobby is much the most fun and much the most worth while. A collection of match folders is as worthless and meaningless as the cigar-wrapper collections that were made when I was a boy. In fact, the larger it is, the sillier it will someday look. Young Ditmars' collection of variations in one kind of moth had meaning, and that meaning could instantly be read off by an eminent scientist. And, as we saw, the old curator read the young collector in the same penetrating glance, and picked his successor!