

GIBBS GEORGE

PARADISE GARDEN: THE
SATIRICAL NARRATIVE
OF A GREAT
EXPERIMENT

George Gibbs
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Narrative of a Great Experiment**

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Содержание

CHAPTER I	7
CHAPTER II	18
CHAPTER III	31
CHAPTER IV	48
CHAPTER V	63
CHAPTER VI	76
CHAPTER VII	89
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	100

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*I have considered well his loss of time
And how he cannot be a perfect man
Not being tried and tutored in the world.*

—TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.



"Love!" he sneered ... 'I thought you'd say that.'"

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT EXPERIMENT

It might be better if Jerry Benham wrote his own memoir, for no matter how veracious, this history must be more or less colored by the point of view of one irrevocably committed to an ideal, a point of view which Jerry at least would insist was warped by scholarship and stodgy by habit. But Jerry, of course, would not write it and couldn't if he would, for no man, unless lacking in sensibility, can write a true autobiography, and least of all could Jerry do it. To commit him to such a task would be much like asking an artist to paint himself into his own landscape. Jerry could have painted nothing but impressions of externals, leaving out perforce the portrait of himself which is the only thing that matters. So I, Roger Canby, bookworm, pedagogue and student of philosophy, now recite the history of the Great Experiment and what came of it.

It is said that Solomon and Job have best spoken of the misery of man, the former the most fortunate, the latter the most unfortunate of creatures. And yet it seems strange to me that John Benham, the millionaire, Jerry's father, cynic and misogynist, and Roger Canby, bookworm and pauper, should each have arrived, through different mental processes, at the same ideal and philosophy of life. We both disliked women, not only disliked but

feared and distrusted them, seeing in the changed social order a menace to the peace of the State and the home. The difference between us was merely one of condition; for while I kept my philosophy secret, being by nature reticent and unassertive, John Benham had both the means and the courage to put his idealism into practice.

Life seldom makes rapid adjustments to provide for its mistakes, and surely only the happiest kind of accident could have thrown me into the breach when old John Benham died, for I take little credit to myself in saying that there are few persons who could have fitted so admirably into a difficult situation.

Curiously enough this happy accident had come from the most unexpected source. I had tried and failed at many things since leaving the University. I had corrected proofs in a publishing office, I had prepared backward youths for their exams, and after attempting life in a broker's office downtown, for which I was as little fitted as I should have been for the conquest of the Polar regions, I found myself one fine morning down to my last few dollars, walking the streets with an imminent prospect of speedy starvation. The fact of death, as an alternative to the apparently actual, did not disconcert me. I shouldn't have minded dying in the least, were it not for the fact that I had hoped before that event to have expounded for modern consumption certain theories of mine upon the dialectics of Hegel. As my money dwindled I was reduced to quite necessary economies, and while not what may be called a heavy eater, I am willing to admit that there

were times when I felt distinctly empty. Curiously enough, my philosophy did little to relieve me of that physical condition, for as someone has said, "Philosophy is a good horse in the stable, but an arrant jade on a journey."

But it seems that the journeying of my jade was near its ending. For upon this morning, fortune threw me into the way of a fellow who had been in my class at the University, who was to be my *deus ex machina*. No two persons in the world could have been more dissimilar than "Jack" Ballard and I, and yet, perhaps for that reason, there had always been a kind of affinity between us. He was one of the wealthiest men in my class and was now, as he gleefully informed me, busily engaged clipping coupons in his father's office, "with office hours from two to three some Thursdays." Of course, that was his idea of a joke, for it seems quite obvious that a person who gave so little time to his business had better have kept no hours at all. He greeted me warmly and led me into his club, which happened to be near by, where over the lunch table he finally succeeded in eliciting the fact that I was down to my last dollar with prospects far from encouraging.

"Good old Pope!" he cried, clapping me on the back. "Pope" was my pseudonym at the University, conferred in a jocular moment by Ballard himself on account of a fancied resemblance to Urban the Eighth. "Just the man! Wonder why I didn't think of you before!" And while I wondered what he was coming at, "How would, you like to make a neat five thousand a year?"

I laughed him off, not sure that this wasn't a sample of the

Ballard humor.

"Anything," I said, trying to smile, "short of murder—"

"Oh, I am not joking!" he went on with an encouraging flash of seriousness. "Five thousand a year cool, and no expenses—livin' on the fat of the land, with nothin' to do but—"

He broke off suddenly and grasped me by the arm.

"Did you ever hear of old John Benham, the multi-millionaire?" he asked. I remarked that my acquaintance with millionaires, until that moment, had not been large.

"Oh, of course," he laughed, "if I had mentioned Xenophon, you'd have pricked up your ears like an old war horse. But John Benham, as a name to conjure with, means nothing to you. You must know then that John Benham was for years the man of mystery of Wall Street. Queer old bird! Friend of the governor's, or at least as much of a friend of the governor's as he ever was of anybody. Made a pot of money in railroads. Millions! Of course, if you've never heard of Benham you've never heard of the Wall."

I hadn't.

"Well, the Benham Wall in Greene County is one of the wonders of the age. It's nine feet high, built of solid masonry and encloses five thousand acres of land."

Figures meant nothing to me and I told him so.

"The strange thing about it is that there's no mystery at all. The old man had no secrets except in business and no past that anybody could care about. But he was a cold-blooded proposition. No man ever had his confidence, no woman ever

had his affection except his wife, and when she died all that was human in him was centered on his son, the sole heir to twenty millions. Lucky little beggar. What?"

"I'm not so sure," I put in slowly.

"Now this is where you come in," Ballard went on quickly. "It seems that inside his crusty shell old Benham was an idealist of sorts with queer ideas about the raising of children. His will is a wonder. He directs his executors (the governor's one of six, you know) to bring up his boy inside that stone wall at Horsham Manor, with no knowledge of the world except what can be gotten from an expurgated edition of the classics. He wants him brought to manhood as nearly as can be made, a perfect specimen of the human male animal without one thought of sex. It's a weird experiment, but I don't see why it shouldn't be interesting."

"Interesting!" I muttered, trying to conceal my amazement and delight.

"The executors must proceed at once. The boy is still under the care of a governess. On the twelfth of December he will be ten years of age. The woman is to go and a man takes her place. I think I can put you in. Will you take it?"

"I?" I said, a little bewildered. "What makes you think I'm qualified for such an undertaking?"

"Because you were the best scholar in the class, and because you're a blessed philosopher with leanings toward altruism. A poor helpless little millionaire with no one to lean on must certainly excite your pity. You're just the man for the job, I tell

you. And if you said you'd do it, you'd put it over."

"And if I couldn't put it over?" I laughed. "A growing youth isn't a fifteen-pound shot or a football, Ballard."

"You could if you wanted to. Five thousand a year isn't to be sneezed at."

"I assure you that I've never felt less like sneezing in my life, but—"

"Think, man," he urged, "all expenses paid, a fine house, horses, motors, the life of a country gentleman. In short, your own rooms, time to read yourself stodgy if you like, and a fine young cub to build in your own image."

"Mine?" I gasped.

He laughed.

"Good Lord, Pope! You always did hate 'em, you know."

"Hate? Who?"

"Women."

I felt myself frowning.

"Women! No, I do not love women and I have some reasons for believing that women do not love me. I have never had any money and my particular kind of pulchritude doesn't appeal to them. Hence their indifference. Hence mine. Like begets like, Jack."

He laughed.

"I have reasons for believing the antipathy is deeper than that."

I shrugged the matter off. It is one which I find little pleasure in discussing.

"You may draw whatever inference you please," I finished dryly.

He lighted a cigarette and inhaled it jubilantly.

"Don't you see," he said, "that it all goes to show that you're precisely the man the governor's looking for? What do you say?"

I hesitated, though every dictate of inclination urged. Here was an opportunity to put to the test a most important theory of the old Socratic doctrine, that true knowledge is to be elicited from within and is to be sought for in ideas and not in particulars of sense. What a chance! A growing youth in seclusion. Such a magnificent seclusion! Where I could try him in my own alembic! Still I hesitated. The imminence of such good fortune made me doubt my own efficiency.

"Suppose I was the wrong man," I quibbled for want of something better to say.

"The executors will have to take their chance on that," he said, rising with the air of a man who has rounded out a discussion. "Come! Let's settle the thing."

Ballard had always had a way with him, a way as foreign to my own as the day from night. From my own point of view I had always held Jack lightly, and yet I had never disliked him—nor did I now—for there was little doubt of his friendliness and sincerity. So I rose and followed him, my docility the philosophy of a full stomach plus the chance of testing the theory of probabilities; for to a man who for six years had reckoned life by four walls of a room and a shelf of books this was indeed an

adventure. I was already meshed in the loom of destiny. He led me to a large automobile of an atrocious red color which was standing at the curb, and in this we were presently hurled through the crowded middle city to the lower part of the town, which, it is unnecessary for me to say, I cordially detested, and brought up before a building, the entire lower floor of which was given over to the opulent offices of Ballard, Wrenn and Halloway.

Ballard the elder was tall like his son, but here the resemblance ceased, for while Ballard the younger was round of visage and jovial, the banker was thin of face and repressive. He had a long, accipitrine nose which imbedded itself in his bristling white mustache, and he spoke in crisp staccato notes as though each intonation and breath were carefully measured by their monetary value. He paid out to me in cash a half an hour, during which he questioned and I replied while Jack grinned in the background. And at the end of that period of time the banker rose and dismissed me with much the air of one who has perused a document and filed it in the predestined pigeonhole. I felt that I had been rubber-stamped, docketed and passed into oblivion. What he actually said was:

"Thanks, I'll write. Good afternoon."

The vision of the Great Experiment which had been flitting in rose-color before my eyes, was as dim as the outer corridor where I was suddenly aware of Jack Ballard's voice at my ear and his friendly clutch upon my elbow.

"You'll do," he laughed. "I was positive of it."

"I can't imagine how you reach that conclusion," I put in rather tartly, still reminiscent of the rubber stamp.

"Oh," he said, his eye twinkling, "simplest thing in the world. The governor's rather brief with those he doesn't like."

"Brief! I feel as though I'd just emerged from a glacial douche."

"Oh, he's nippy. But he never misses a trick, and he got your number all O.K."

As we reached the street I took his hand.

"Thanks, Ballard," I said warmly. "It's been fine of you, but I'm sorry that I can't share your hopes."

"Rot! The thing's as good as done. There's another executor or two to be consulted, but they'll be glad enough to take the governor's judgment. You'll hear from him tomorrow. In the meanwhile," and he thrust a paper into my hands, "read this. It's interesting. It's John Benham's brief for masculine purity with a few remarks (not taken from Hegel) upon the education and training of the child."

We had reached the corner of the street when he stopped and took out his watch.

"Unfortunately this is the Thursday that I work," he laughed, "and it's past two o'clock, so good-bye. I'll stop in for you tomorrow," and with a flourish of the hand he left me.

Still dubious as to the whole matter, which had left me rather bewildered, when I reached my shabby room I took out the envelope which Ballard had handed me and read the curious

paper that it contained.

As I began reading this remarkable document (neatly typed and evidently copied from the original in John Benham's own hand) I recognized some of the marks of the Platonic philosophy and read with immediate attention. Before I had gone very far it was quite clear to me that the pedagogue who took upon himself the rearing of the infant Benham, must himself be a creature of infinite wisdom and discretion. As far as these necessary qualifications were concerned, I saw no reason why I should refuse. The old man's obvious seriousness of purpose interested me.

"It is my desire that my boy, Jeremiah, be taught simple religious truths and then simple moral truths, learning thereby insensibly the lessons of good manners and good taste. In his reading of Homer and Hesiod the tricks and treacheries of the gods are to be banished, the terrors of the world below to be dispelled, and the misbehavior of the Homeric heroes are to be censured.

"If there is such a thing as original sin—and this I beg leave to doubt, having looked into the eyes of my boy and failed to find it there—then teaching can eradicate it, especially teaching under such conditions as those which I now impose. The person who will be chosen by my executors for the training of my boy will be first of all a man of the strictest probity. He will assume this task with a grave sense of his responsibility to me and to his Maker. If after a proper period of time he does not discover in his own

heart a sincere affection for my child, he will be honest enough to confess the truth, and be discharged of the obligation. For it is clear that without love, such an experiment is foredoomed to failure. To a man such as my mind has pictured, affection here will not be difficult, for nature has favored Jerry with gifts of mind and body."

Everywhere in John Benham's instructions there were signs of a deep and corroding cynicism which no amount of worldly success had been able to dispel. Everywhere could be discovered a hatred of modern social forms and a repugnance for the modern woman, against whom he warns the prospective tutor in language which is as unmistakable as the Benham Wall. It pleased me to find at least one wise man who agreed with me in this particular. Until the age of twenty-one, woman was to be taboo for Jerry Benham, not only her substance, but her essence. Like the mention of hell to ears polite, she was forbidden at Horsham Manor. No woman was to be permitted to come upon the estate in any capacity. The gardeners, grooms, gamekeepers, cooks, house servants—all were to be men at good wages chosen for their discretion in this excellent conspiracy. The penalty for infraction of this rule of silence was summary dismissal.

I read the pages through until the end, and then sat for a long while thinking, the wonderful possibilities of the plan taking a firmer hold upon me. The Perfect Man! And I, Roger Canby, should make him.

CHAPTER II

JERRY

With Ballard the elder, to whom and to those plutocratic associates, as had been predicted, my antecedents and acquirements had proven satisfactory, I journeyed on the twelfth of December to Greene County in the Ballard limousine. A rigorous watch was kept upon the walls of Horsham Manor, and in response to the ring of the chauffeur at the solid wooden gates at the lodge, a small window opened and a red visage appeared demanding credentials. Ballard put the inquisitor to some pains, testing his efficiency, but finally produced his card and revealed his identity, after which the gates flew open and we entered the forbidden ground.

It was an idyllic spot, as I soon discovered, of fine rolling country, well wooded and watered, the road of macadam, rising slowly from the entrance gates, turning here and there through a succession of natural parks, along the borders of a lake of considerable size, toward the higher hills at the further end of the estate, among which, my companion told me, were built the Manor house and stables. Except for the excellent road itself, no attempt had been made to use the art of the landscape gardener in the lower portion of the tract, which had been left as nature had made it, venerable woodland, with a well-tangled undergrowth,

where rabbits, squirrels and deer abounded, but as we neared the hills, which rose with considerable dignity against the pale, wintry sky, the signs of man's handiwork became apparent. A hedge here, a path there, bordered with privet or rhododendron; a comfortable looking farmhouse, commodious barns and well-fenced pastures, where we passed a few men who touched their caps and stared after us.

"It's lucky you care nothing for women, Canby," said Mr. Ballard crisply; "this monastic idea may not bother you."

"It doesn't in the least, Mr. Ballard," I said dryly. "I shall survive the ordeal with composure."

He glanced at me, smiled and then went on.

"Except for the presence of Miss Redwood, who goes today, the new regulation has been in force here for a month. The farmers and gamekeepers are all bachelors. We have an excellent steward, also a bachelor. You and he will understand each other. In all things that pertain to the boy he is under your orders. Questions of authority where you differ are to be referred to me."

"I understand. I am not difficult to get on with."

My employer had described to me thoroughly but quite impersonally all the conditions of his trust and mine, but had made no comments which by the widest stretch of imagination could be construed into opinions. He gave me the impression then as he did later that he was carrying out strictly the letter of his instructions from the dead. He had a face graven into austere lines, which habit had schooled into perfect obedience

to his will. He might have believed the experiment to which he was committed a colossal joke, and no sign of his opinion would be reflected in his facial expression, which was, save on unimportant matters, absolutely unchanging. Nor did he seem to care what my own thoughts might be in regard to the matter, though I had not refrained from expressing my interest in the project. My character, my reputation for conscientiousness, my qualifications for the position were all that seemed to concern him. I was merely a piece of machinery, the wheels of which he was to set in motion, which would perform its allotted task to his satisfaction.

The road soon reached an eminence from which Horsham Manor was visible, a fine Georgian house set handsomely enough in a cleft of the hills, before which were broad lawns that sloped to the south and terminated at the borders of a stream which meandered through a rocky bed to the lake below. Wealth such as this had never awed me. John Benham with all his stores of dollars had been obliged to come at last to a penurious philosopher to solve for his son the problem of life that had baffled the father. So intent was I upon the house which was to be my home that I caught but a glimpse of the fine valley of meadow and wood which ended in the faint purplish hills, beyond which somewhere was the Hudson River.

It was evident that our arrival had been telephoned from the lodge at the gate, for as the machine drew up at the main doorway of the house a servant in livery appeared and opened the door.

"Ah, Christopher," said my companion. "Is Mr. Radford about?"

"Yes, sir. He'll be up in a minute, sir."

"This is Mr. Canby, Christopher, Master Jeremiah's new tutor."

"Yes, sir, you'll find Miss Redwood and Master Jerry in the library."

We went up the steps while the aged butler (who had lived with John Benham) followed with the valises, and were ushered into the library, where my pupil and his governess awaited us.

I am a little reluctant to admit at this time that my earliest impression of the subject of these memoirs was disappointing. Perhaps the dead man's encomiums had raised my hopes. Perhaps the barriers which hedged in this most exclusive of youngsters had increased his importance in my thoughts. What I saw was a boy of ten, well grown for his years, who ambled forward rather sheepishly and gave me a moist and rather flabby hand to shake.

He was painfully embarrassed. If I had been an ogre and Jerry the youth allotted for his repast, he could not have shown more distress. He was distinctly nursery-bred and, of course, unused to visitors, but he managed a smile, and I saw that he was making the best of a bad job. After the preliminaries of introduction, amid which Mr. Radford, the steward of the estate, appeared, I managed to get the boy aside.

"I feel a good deal like the Minotaur, Jerry. Did you ever hear

of the Minotaur?"

He hadn't, and so I told him the story. "But I'm not going to eat *you*," I laughed.

I had broken the ice, for a smile, a genuine joyous smile, broke slowly and then flowed in generous ripples across his face.

"You're different, aren't you?" he said presently, his brown eyes now gravely appraising me.

"How different, Jerry?" I asked.

He hesitated a moment and then:

"I—I thought you'd come all in black with a lot of grammar books under your arms."

"I don't use 'em," I said. "I'm a boy, just like you, only I've got long trousers on. We're not going to bother about books for awhile."

He still inspected me as though he wasn't quite sure it wasn't all a mistake. And then again:

"Can you talk Latin?"

"Bless you, I'm afraid not."

"Oh!" he sighed, though whether in relief or disappointment I couldn't say.

"But you can do sums in your head and spell hippopotamus?"

"I might," I laughed. "But I wouldn't if I didn't have to."

"But *I'll* have to, won't I?"

"Oh, some day."

"I'm afraid *I* never can," he sighed again.

I began to understand now. His mind was feminine and at least

three years backward. There wasn't a mark of the boy of ten about him. But I liked his eyes. They were wide and inquiring. It wouldn't be difficult to gain his confidence.

"Are you sorry Miss Redwood is going?" I asked him.

"Yes. She plays games."

"I know some games, too—good ones."

He brightened, but said nothing for a moment, though I saw him stealing a glance at me. Whatever the object of his inspection, I seemed to have passed it creditably, for he said rather timidly:

"Would you like to see my bull pup?"

It was the first remark that sounded as though it came from the heart of a real boy. I had won the first line of entrenchments around Jerry's reserve. When a boy asks you to see his bull pup he confers upon you at once the highest mark of his approval.

I only repeat this ingenuous and unimportant conversation to show my first impression of what seemed to me then to be a rather commonplace and colorless boy. I did not realize then how strong could be the effect of such an environment. Miss Redwood, as I soon discovered, was a timid, wilting individual, who had brought him successfully through the baby diseases and had taught him the elementary things, because that was what she was paid for, corrected his table manners and tried to make him the kind of boy that she would have preferred to be herself had nature fortunately not decided the matter otherwise, and chameleon-like, Jerry reflected her tepor, her supineness

and femininity. She recounted his virtues with pride, while I questioned her, hoping against hope to hear of some prank, the breaking of window-panes, the burning of a haystack or the explosion of a giant cracker under the cook. But all to no purpose.

So far as I could discover, he had never so much as pulled the tail of a cat. As old John Benham had said, of original sin he had none.

But my conviction that the boy had good stuff in him was deepened on the morrow, when, banishing books, I took him for a breather over hill and dale, through wood and underbrush, three miles out and three miles in. I told him stories as we walked and showed him how the Indians trailed their game among the very hills over which we plodded. I told him that a fine strong body was the greatest thing in the world, a possession to work for and be proud of. His muscles were flabby, I knew, but I put him a brisk pace and brought him in just before lunch, red of cheek, bright of eye, and splashed with mud from head to foot. I had learned one of the things I had set out to discover. He would do his best at whatever task I set him.

I have not said that he was a handsome boy, for youth is amorphous and the promise of today is not always fulfilled by the morrow. Jerry's features were unformed at ten and, as has already been suggested, made no distinct impression upon my mind. Whatever his early photographs may show, at least they gave no sign of the remarkable beauty of feature and lineament which developed in his adolescence. Perhaps it was that I was

more interested in his mind and body and what I could make them than in his face, which, after all, was none of my concern.

That I was committed to my undertaking from the very beginning will soon be evident. Before three weeks had passed Jerry began to awake and to develop an ego and a personality. If I had thought him unmagnetic at first, he quickly showed me my mistake. His imagination responded to the slightest mental touch, too quickly even for the work I had in mind for him. He would have pleased me better if he had been a little slower to catch the impulse of a new impression. But I understood. He had been starved of the things which were a boy's natural right and heritage, and he ate and drank eagerly of the masculine fare I provided. He had shed a few tears at Miss Redwood's departure and I liked him for them, for they showed his loyalty, but he had no more games of the nursery nor the mawkish sentimentality that I found upon the nursery shelves. I had other plans for Jerry. John Benham should have his wish. I would make Jerry as nearly the Perfect Man as mortal man could make God's handiwork. Spiritually he should grow "from within," directed by me, but guided by his own inner light. Physically he should grow as every well-made boy should grow, sturdy in muscle and bone, straight of limb, deep of chest, sound of mind and strong of heart. I would make Jerry a Greek.

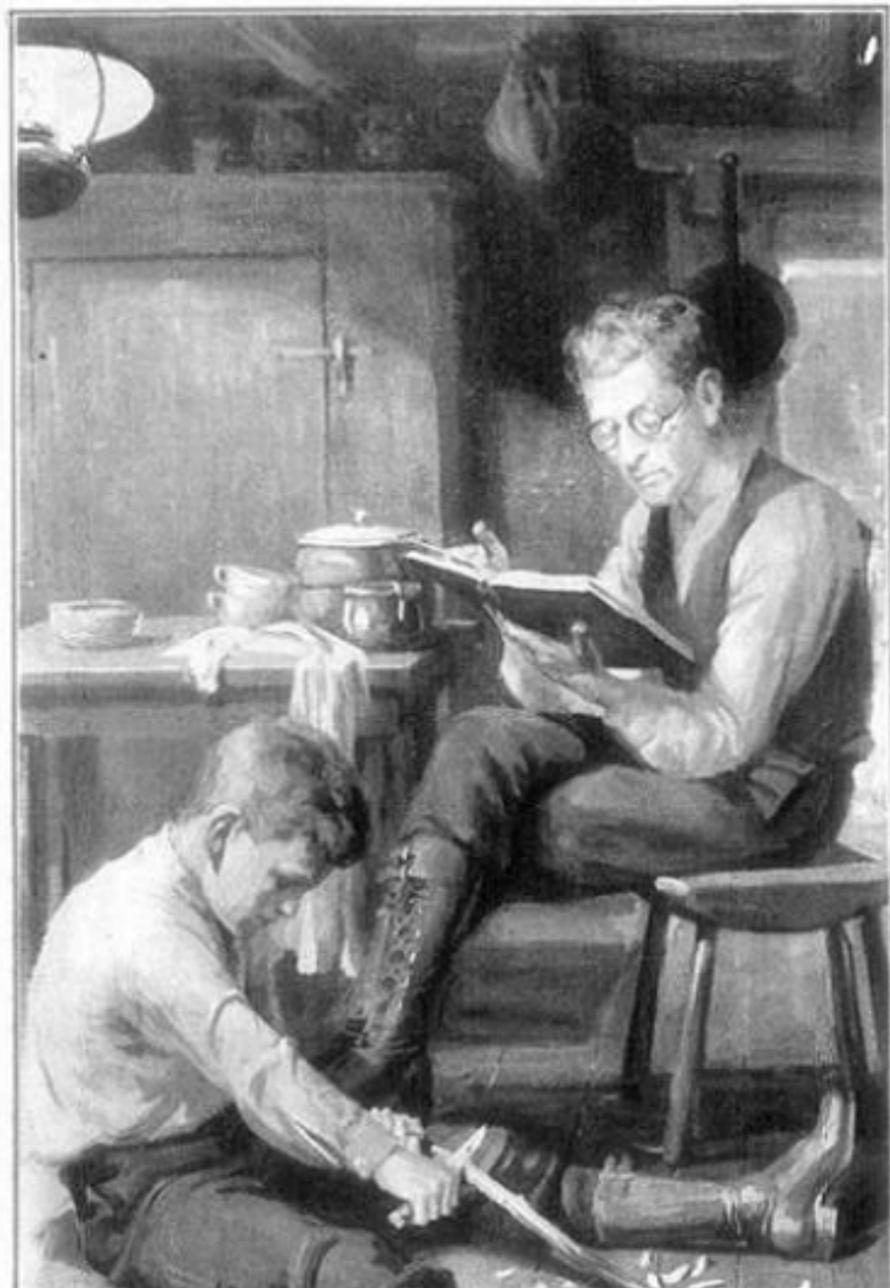
Perhaps these plans may seem strange coming from one who had almost grown old before he had been young. But I had made sure that Jerry should profit by my mistakes, growing slowly,

built like the Benham Wall, of material that should endure the sophistries of the world and remain unbroken.

I worked Jerry hard that first winter and spring, and his physical condition showed that I had no need to fear for his health. And when the autumn came I decided to bring him face to face with nature when she is most difficult. I was a good woodsman, having been born and bred in the northern part of the state, and until I went to the University had spent a part of each year in the wilderness. We left Horsham Manor one October day, traveling light, and made for the woods. We were warmly clad, but packed no more than would be essential for existence. A rifle, a shotgun, an ax, and hunting knives were all that we carried besides tea, flour, a side of bacon, the ammunition and implements for cooking. By night we had built a rough shack and laid our plans for a permanent cabin of spruce logs, which we proposed to erect before the snow flew. Game was abundant, and before our bacon was gone our larder was replenished. I had told Radford of our plans and the gamekeepers were instructed to give us a wide berth. Jerry learned to shoot that year, not for fun, but for existence, for one evening when we came in with an empty game bag we both went to our blankets hungry. The cabin rose slowly, and the boy learned to do his share of work with the ax. He was naturally clever with his hands, and there was no end to his eagerness. He was living in a new world, where each new day brought some new problem to solve, some difficulty to be surmounted. He had already put aside childish things and had

entered early upon a man's heritage. There are persons who will say that I took great risks in thus exposing Jerry while only in his eleventh year, but I can answer by the results achieved. We lived in the woods from the fifteenth of October until a few days before Christmas. During that time we had built a cabin, ten feet by twelve, with a stone fireplace and a roof of clay; had laid a line of deadfalls, and rabbit snares; had made a pair of snowshoes and a number of vessels of birch bark, and except for the tea and flour had been self-supporting, items compensated for by the value of our labors.

In that time we had two snows, one a severe one, but our cabin roof was secure and we defied it. Jerry wanted to stay at the cabin all winter, a wish that I might easily have shared, for the life in the open and the companionship of the boy had put new marrow into my dry bones. I had smuggled into camp three books, "Walden," "Rolf in the Woods" and "Treasure Island," one for Jerry's philosophy, one for his practical existence and one for his imagination. In the evenings sometimes I read while Jerry whittled, and sometimes Jerry read while I worked at the snowshoes or the vessels of birch bark.



"In the evenings sometimes I read while Jerry whittled."

In those two months was formed the basis of Jerry's idea of life as seen through the philosophy of Roger Canby. We had many talks, and Jerry asked many questions, but I answered them all, rejoicing in his acuteness in following a line of thought to its conclusion, a procedure which, as I afterward discovered, was to cause me anxious moments. "Walden" made him thoughtful, but he caught its purpose and understood its meaning. "Rolf in the Woods" made his eyes bright with the purpose of achievement in woodcraft and a desire (which I suppressed) to stalk and kill a deer. But "Treasure Island" touched some deeper chord in his nature than either of the other books had done. He followed Jim and the Squire and John Silver in the *Hispaniola* with glowing eyes.

"But are there bad men like that now out in the world, Mr. Canby?" he broke in excitedly.

"There are bad men in the world, Jerry," I replied coolly.

"Like John Silver?"

"Not precisely. Silver's only a character. This didn't really happen, you know, Jerry. It's fiction."

"Fiction!"

"A story, like Grimm's tales."

"Oh!" His jaw dropped and he stared at me. "What a pity!"

I had wanted to stir in him a knowledge of evil and chose the picturesque as being the least unpleasant. But he couldn't believe

that old John Silver and the Squire and Benn Gunn hadn't been real people. The tale dwelt in his mind for days, but the final defeat of the mutineers seemed to satisfy him as to the intention of the narrative.

"If there are evil men in the world like those mutineers, Mr. Canby, it must be a pretty bad place to live in," was the final comment, and I made no effort to undeceive him.

CHAPTER III

JERRY GROWS

It is not my intention to dwell too long upon the first stages of my tutorship, which presented few difficulties not easily surmounted, but it is necessary in order to understand Jerry's character that I set down a few facts which show certain phases of his development. Of his physical courage, at thirteen, I need only relate an incident of one of our winter expeditions. We were hunting coons one night with the dogs, a collie and the bull pup, which now rejoiced in the name of Skookums, already mentioned. The dogs treed their game three miles from the Manor house, and when we came up were running around the tree, whimpering and barking in a high state of excitement. The night was dark and the branches of the tree were thick, so we could see nothing, but Jerry clambered up, armed with a stout stick, and disappeared into the gloom overhead.

"Do you see him?" I called.

"I see something, but it looks too big for a coon," he returned.

"What does it look like?"

"It looks more like a cat, with queer-looking ears."

"You'd better come down then, Jerry," I said quickly.

"It looks like a lynx," he called again, quite unperturbed.

It was quite possible that he was right, for in this part of the

Catskill country lynxes were still plentiful.

"Then come down at once," I shouted. "He may go for you."

"Oh, I'm not worried about that. I have my hunting knife," he said coolly.

"Come down, do you hear?" I commanded.

"Not until he does," he replied with a laugh.

I called again. Jerry didn't reply, for just then there was a sudden shaking of the dry leaves above me, the creaking of a bough and the snarl of a wild animal, and the sound of a blow.

"Jerry!" I cried. No reply, but the sound of the struggle overhead increased, dreadful sounds of snarling and of scratching, but no sound of Jerry. Fearful of imminent tragedy, I climbed quickly, amid the uproar of the dogs, and, knife in hand, had got my feet on the lower branches, when a heavy weight shot by me and fell to the ground. Thank God, not the boy!

"Jerry!" I cried again, clambering upward.

"A-all r-right, Mr. Canby," I heard. "You're safe, not hurt?"

"I'm all right, I think. Just—just scratched."

By this time I had reached him. He was braced in the crotch of a limb, leaning against the tree trunk still holding his hunting knife. His coat was wet and I guessed at rather than saw the pallor of his face. Below were the sounds of the dogs worrying at the animal.

"I—I guess they've finished him," said Jerry coolly sheathing his knife.

"It's lucky he didn't finish *you*," I muttered. "You're sure

you're not hurt?"

"Oh, no."

"Can you get down alone?"

"Yes, of course."

But I helped him down, nevertheless, and he reached the ground in safety, where I saw that his face at least had escaped damage. But the sleeve of his coat was torn to ribbons, and the blood was dripping from his finger ends.

"Come," I said, taking his arm, "we'll have to get you attended to." And then severely: "You disobeyed me, Jerry. Why didn't you come down?"

He hesitated a moment, smiling, and then: "I had no idea a lynx was so large."

"It's a miracle," I said in wonder at his escape. "How did you hang on?"

"I saw him spring and braced myself in time," he said simply, "and putting my elbow over my head, struck with my knife when he was on me—two, three, many times—until he let go. But I was glad, very glad when he fell."

I drove the dogs away, lifted the dead beast over my shoulder and led the way to the dog cart, which we had left in the road half a mile off, reaching the Manor house very bloody but happy. But the happiest of the lot of us, even including Skookums, the bull pup, was Jerry himself at the sight under the lamplight of the formidable size of his dead enemy. But I led Jerry at once upstairs, where I stripped him and took account of his injuries.

His left arm was bitten twice and his neck and shoulder badly torn, but he had not whimpered, nor did he now when I bathed and cauterized his wounds. Whatever pain he felt, he made no sign, and I knew that by inference my night-talks by the campfire had borne fruit. Old Christopher, the butler, to whom the Great Experiment was a mystery, hovered in the background with towels and lotions, timidly reproachful, until Jerry laughed at him and sent him to bed, muttering something about the queer goings on at Horsham Manor.

This incident is related to show that Jerry had more courage than most boys of his years. Part of it was inherent, of course, but most of it was born of the habit, learned early, to be sure of himself in any emergency. There was little doubt in my mind that there was some of the stuff in Jerry of which heroes are made. I thought so then, for I was proud of my handiwork. I did not know, alas! to what tests my philosophy and John Benham's were to be subjected. All of which goes to show that in running counter to human nature the wisest plans, the greatest sagacity, are as chaff before the winds of destiny. But to continue:

The following summer Jerry gave further proofs of his presence of mind in an accident of which I was the victim. For while trudging with Jerry along a rocky hillside I stepped straight into the death trap of a rattlesnake. He struck me below the knee, and we were a long way from help. But the boy was equal to the emergency. Quite coolly he killed the snake with a club. I fortunately kept my head and directed him, though he knew just

what to do. With his hunting knife he cut my trouser leg away and double gashed my leg where the fangs had entered, then sucked the wound and spat out the poison until the blood had ceased to flow. Then he quickly made a tourniquet of his handkerchief and fastened it just above the wound, and, making me comfortable, he ran the whole distance to the house, bringing a motor car and help in less than an hour. There isn't the slightest doubt that Jerry saved my life on this occasion just as the following winter I saved him from death at the horns of a mad buck deer.

You will not wonder therefore that the bond of affection and reliance was strong between us. I gave Jerry of the best that was in me, and in return I can truly say that not once did he disappoint me.

In addition to the woodlore that I taught him, I made him a good shot with rifle and revolver. I had men from the city from time to time, the best of their class, who taught him boxing and fencing. I had a gymnasium built with Mr. Ballard's consent, and a swimming pool, which kept him busy after the lesson hour. At the age of fifteen Jerry was six feet tall and weighed one hundred and sixty-five pounds, all bone and muscle. In the five years since I had been at Horsham Manor there had not been a day when he was ill, and except for an occasional accident such as the adventure with the lynx, not one when I had called in the services of a doctor. Physically at least I had so far succeeded, for in this respect Jerry was perfection.

As to his mind, perhaps my own ideals had made me

too exacting. According to my carefully thought out plans, scholarship was to be Jerry's buckler and defense against the old Adam. God forbid that I should have planned, as Jack Ballard would have had it, to build Jerry in my own image, for if scholarship had been my own refuge it had also done something to destroy my touch with human kind. It was the quality of sympathy in Jerry which I had lacked, the love for and confidence in every human being with whom he came into contact which endeared him to every person on the place. From Radford to Christopher, throughout the house, stables and garage, down to the humblest hedge-trimmer, all loved Jerry and Jerry loved them all. He had that kind of nature. He couldn't help loving those about him any more than he could help breathing, and yet it must not be supposed that the boy was lacking in discernment. Our failings, weaknesses and foibles were a constant source of amusement to him, but his humor was without malice and his jibes were friendly, and he ran the gamut of my own exposed nerve pulps with such joyous consideration that I came to like the operation. He loved me and I knew it.

But nothing could make him love his Latin grammar. He worried through arithmetic and algebra and blarneyed his French and German tutors into making them believe he knew more than he did, but the purely scientific aspects of learning did not interest him. It was only when he knew enough to read the great epics in the original that my patience had its reward. The Iliad, the Odyssey, the Aeneid held him in thrall, and by some

magic eliminated at a bound the purely mechanical difficulties which had fettered him. Hector, Achilles, Agamemnon, Ulysses—Jerry was each of these in turn, lacking only the opportunity to vanquish heroic foes or capture impregnable cities.

I had not censored the Homeric gods, as Jerry's father had commanded, and my temerity led to difficulties. It began with Calypso and Ulysses and did not even end when Dido was left alone upon the shores of Carthage.

"I don't understand it at all," he said one day with a wrinkled brow, "how a man of the caliber of Ulysses could stay so long the prisoner of Calypso, a woman, when he wanted to go home. It's a pretty shabby business for a hero and a demigod. A woman!" he sneered, "I'd like to see any woman keep me sitting in a cave if I wanted to go anywhere!"

His braggadocio was the full-colored boyish reflection of the Canby point of view. I had merely shrugged woman out of existence. Now Jerry castigated her.

"What could she do?" he went on scornfully. "She couldn't shoot or run or fight. All she did was to lie around or strut about with a veil around her head and a golden girdle (sensible costume!) and serve the hero with ambrosia and ruddy nectar. I've never eaten ambrosia, but I'm pretty sure it was some sweet, sticky stuff, like *her*." There is no measure for the contempt of his accents.

"She could swim," I ventured timidly.

"Swim! Even a fish can swim!"

I don't know why, but at this conversation, the first of Jerry's maturer years in which the topic had been woman, I felt a slight tremor go over me. Jerry was too good to look at. I fancied that there were many women who would have liked to see the flash of his eye at that moment and to meet his challenge with their wily arts. In the pride of his masculine strength and capacity he scorned them as I had taught him. I had done my work well. Had I done it too well?

"What are women anyway?" he stormed at me again. "For what good are they? To wash linen and have white arms like Nausicaa? Who cares whether her arms were white or not? They're always weeping because they're loved or raging because they're not. Love! Always love! I love you and Christopher and Radford and Skookums, but I'm not always whining about it. What's the use? Those things go without saying. They're simply what are in a fellow's heart, but he doesn't talk about them."

"Quite right. Jerry. Let's say no more about it."

"I'm glad there are no women around here, but now that I come to think of it, I don't see why there shouldn't be."

"Your father liked men servants best. He believed them to be more efficient."

"Oh, yes, of course," and then, suddenly: "When I go out beyond the wall I'll have to see them and talk to them, won't I?"

"Not if you don't want to."

"Well, I don't want to."

He paused a second and then went on. "But I *am* a little curious

about them. Of course, they're silly and useless and flabby, but it seems queer that there are such a lot of 'em. If they're no good, why don't they pass out of existence? That's the rule of life, you tell me, the survival of the fittest. If they're not fit they ought to have died out long ago."

"You can't keep them from being born, Jerry," I laughed.

"Well," he said scornfully, "it ought to be prevented."

I made a pretense of cutting the leaves of a book. He was going too far. I temporized.

"Ah, they're all right, Jerry," I said with some magnificence, "if they do their duty. Some are much better than others. Now, Miss Redwood, for instance, your governess. She was kind, willing and affectionate."

"Oh, yes," he said, "she was all right, but she wasn't like a man."

I had him safe again. Physical strength and courage at this time were his fetish. But he was still thoughtful.

"Sometimes I think, Roger" (he called me Roger now, for after all I was more like an elder brother than a father to him), "sometimes I think that things are too easy for me; that I ought to be out doing my share in the work of the world."

"Oh, that will come in time. If you think things are too easy, I might manage to make them a little harder."

He laughed affectionately and clapped me on the shoulder.

"Oh, no, you don't, old Dry-as-dust. Not books. That isn't what I meant. I mean life, struggles against odds. I've just been

wondering what chance I'd have to get, along by myself, without a lot of people waiting on me."

"I've tried to show you, Jerry. You can go into the woods with a gun and an ax and exist in comfort."

"Yes, but the world isn't all woods; and axes and guns aren't the only weapons."

"But the principle is the same."

He flashed a bright glance at me.

"Flynn told me yesterday that I could make good in the prize ring if I'd let him take me in hand."

(The deuce he had! Flynn would lose his engagement as a boxing teacher if he didn't heed my warnings better.)

"The prize ring is not what you're being trained for, my young friend," I said with some asperity.

"What then?" he asked.

"First of all I hope I'm training you to be a gentleman. And that means—"

"Can't a boxer be a gentleman?" he broke in quickly.

"He might be, I suppose, but he usually isn't." He was forcing me into an attitude of priggishness which I regretted.

"Then why," he persisted, "are you having me taught to box?"

"Chiefly to make your muscles hard, to inure you to pain, to teach you self-reliance."

"But I oughtn't to learn to box then, if it's going to keep me from being a gentleman. What is a gentleman, Roger?"

I tried to think of a succinct generalization and failed, falling

back instinctively upon safe ground.

"Christ was a gentleman, Jerry," I said quietly.

"Yes," he assented soberly, "Christ. I would like to be like Christ, but I couldn't be meek, Roger, and I like to box and shoot —"

"He was a man, Jerry, the most courageous the world has ever known. He was even not afraid to die for an ideal. He was meek, but He was not afraid to drive the money changers from the temple."

"Yes, that was good. He was strong and gentle, too. He was wonderful."

I have merely suggested this part of the conversation to show the feeling of reverence and awe with which the boy regarded the Savior. The life of Christ had caught his imagination and its lessons had sunk deeply into his spirit, touching chords of gentleness that I had never otherwise been able to reach. His religion had begun with Miss Redwood and he had clung to it instinctively as he had clung to the vague memory of his mother. No word of mine and no teaching was to destroy so precious a heritage. He was not goody-goody about it. No boy who did and said and thought the things that Jerry did could be accused of prudery or sentimentalism. But in his quieter moods I knew that he thought deeply of sacred things.

But this conversation with Jerry had warned me that the time was approaching when the boy would want to think for himself. Already in our nature-talks some of his questions had

embarrassed me. He had seen birds hatched from their eggs and had marveled at it. The mammals and their young had mystified him and he had not been able to understand it. I had reverted to the process of development of the embryo of the seed into a perfect plant. I had waxed scientific, he had grown bewildered. We had reached our *impasse*. In the end we had compromised. Unable to comprehend, Jerry had ascribed the propagation of the species to a miracle of God. And since that was the precise truth I had been content to let the matter rest there.

But there was another problem that our conversation had suggested: the choice of a vocation. The proposition of the misguided Flynn had made me aware of the fact that I was already letting my charge drift toward the maws of the great unknown which began just beyond the Wall without a plan of life save that he should be a "gentleman." It occurred to me with alarming suddenness that the term "gentleman" was that frequently applied to persons who had no occupation or visible means of support. Nowhere in John Benham's instructions was there mention of any plan for a vocation. Obviously if the old man had intended Jerry for a business career he would have said so, and the omission of any exact instructions convinced me that such an idea was furthest from John Benham's thoughts. It remained for me to decide the matter in the best way that I could, for determined I was that Jerry, merely because of the possession of much worldly goods, should not be that bane of humanity and of nations, an idler.

At about this period Mr. Ballard the elder came down to Horsham Manor on one of his visits of inspection and inquiry. He brought up the subject of his own accord.

"What do you think, Canby, what have you planned about Jerry's future?"

I told him that my only ambition, so far, had been to make of Jerry a gentleman and a scholar.

"Yes, of course," he nodded. "That's what you are here for. But beyond that?"

"Nothing," I replied. "I am following my instructions from Mr. Benham. They go no further than that."

He frowned into the fire.

"That's all very well as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. Jerry is now eighteen. Do you realize that in three years he comes into possession of five million dollars, an income of over two hundred thousand a year; and that in seven years, at twenty-five, the executors must relinquish the entire estate?"

I had not thought of the imminence of this disaster.

"I was not aware, Mr. Ballard," I said. "At the present moment Jerry doesn't know a dollar from a nickel."

He opened his eyes wide and examined me as though he feared he had not heard correctly or as though it were blasphemy, heresy that I was uttering.

"You mean that he doesn't know the value and uses of money?"

"So far as I am aware," I replied coolly, "he has never seen a

piece of money in his life."

"All wrong, all wrong, Canby. This won't do at all. He had his arithmetic, percentage and so forth?"

"Yes. But money doesn't interest him. Can you see any reason why it should?"

Again the frown and level gaze.

"And what had you planned for him?" he asked. He did not intend to be satirical perhaps. He was merely worldly.

"I thought when the time came he might be permitted to choose a vocation for himself. In the meanwhile—"

"A vocation!" he snapped. "Isn't the controlling interest in a transcontinental line of railroad vocation enough? To say nothing of coal, copper and iron mines, a steel mill or two and a fleet of steamers?"

He overpowered me for the moment. I had not thought of Jerry as being all these things. To me he was merely Jerry. But I struggled upward through the miasma of oppressive millions and met the issue squarely.

"There is nothing in John Benham's advice which directs any vocational instruction," I said staunchly. "I was to bring the boy to the age of manhood without realization of sin."

"A dream, Canby. Utopian, impossible!"

"It has not proved so," I replied, nettled. "I am merely following instructions, Mr. Benham's instructions through you to me. The dream is very real to Jerry."

Mr. Ballard gazed into the fire and smiled.

"The executors are permitted some license in this matter. We are entirely satisfied with your work. We have no desire to modify in the slightest degree the purely moral character of your instruction or indeed to change his mode of life. Indeed, I think we all agree that you are carrying out with rare judgment the spirit if not the actual letter of John Benham's wishes. Jerry is a wonderful boy. But in our opinion the time has come when his mind should be slowly shaped to grasp the essentials of the great career that awaits him."

"I can be of no assistance to you, Mr. Ballard," I said dryly.

"We think the time has arrived," he went on, passing over my remark as though it hadn't been uttered, "for Jerry to have some instruction from one versed in the theory, if not the practice, of business. It is our purpose to engage a professor from a school of finance of one of the universities to work with Jerry for a part of each summer."

I did not dare to speak for fear of saying something I might regret. Thus far he was within his rights, I knew, but had he proposed to take Jerry into the cafes of Broadway that night, he couldn't have done my plans for the boy a greater hurt. He was proposing nothing less than an assault upon my barriers of idealism. He was going to take the sentient thing that was Jerry and make of him an adding machine. Would he? Could he? I found courage in a smile.

"Of course, if that is your desire," I managed at last, "I have nothing to say except that if you had asked my opinion I should

have advised against it."

"I'm sorry, Canby," he finished, "but the matter has already been taken out of your hands."

Youth fortunately is the age of the most lasting impressions. Dr. Carmichael, of the Hobart School of Finance of Manhattan University, came and went, but he made no appreciable ripple in the placid surface of Jerry's philosophy. He cast stone after stone into the lovely pool of Jerry's thoughts, which broke the colorful reflections into smaller images, but did not change them. And when he was gone the pool was as before he came. Jerry listened politely as he did to all his masters and learned like a parrot what was required of him, but made no secret of his missing interest and enthusiasm. I watched furtively, encouraging Jerry, as my duty was, to do his tasks as they were set before him. But I knew then what I had suspected before, that they would never make a bond-broker of Jerry. I had but to say a word, to give but a sign and bring about an overt rebellion. But I was too wise to do that. I merely watched the widening circles in the pool and saw them lost in the border of dreamland.

Jerry learned, of course, the difference between a mortgage and an insurance policy; he knew the meaning of economics, the theory of supply and demand, and gained a general knowledge which I couldn't have given him of the general laws of barter and trade. But he followed Carmichael listlessly. What did he care for bonds and receiverships when the happy woods were at his elbow, the wild-flowers beckoning, his bird neighbors

calling? Where I had appealed to Jerry through his imagination, Carmichael used only the formulæ of matter and fact. There was but one way in which he could have succeeded, and that was through the picture of the stupendous agencies of which Jerry was to be the master: the fast-flying steamers, the monster engines on their miles of rails, the glowing furnaces, the sweating figures in the heat and grime of smoke and steam, the energy, the inarticulate power, the majesty of labor which bridged oceans, felled mountains and made animate the sullen rock. All this I saw, as one day Jerry should see it. But I did not speak. The time was not yet. Jerry's understanding of these things would come, but not until I had prepared him for them.

CHAPTER IV

ENTER EVE

This memoir is not so much the history of a boy or of a man as of an experiment. Therefore I will not longer delay in bringing Jerry to the point where my philosophy and John Benham's was to be put to the test. I have tried to indicate in as few phrases as possible Jerry Benham's essential characteristics, the moral attributes that were his and the shapeliness and strength of his body. I have never set great value on mere physical beauty, which too often reacts unpleasantly upon the character of its owner. But looks meant nothing to Jerry and he was as unconscious of his striking beauty as the scarlet poppy that nods in the meadow.

At the age of twenty, to which point this narrative has arrived, Jerry Benham was six feet two inches in height and weighed, stripped, one hundred and eighty-two pounds. His hair was brown, his eyes gray and his features those of the Hermes of Praxiteles. His skin, naturally fair, was tanned by exposure to a ruddy brown, and his body, except for the few white scars upon his shoulder, relics of his encounter with the lynx, was without blemish. He was always in training, and his muscles were long and closely knit. I can hardly believe that there was a man on the Olympian fields of ancient Greece who could have been prettier to see than Jerry when he sparred with Flynn. He was as agile

as a cat, never off his balance or his guard, and slipped in and out, circling and striking with a speed that was surprising in one of his height and weight. "Foot-work," Flynn called it, and there were times, I think, when the hard-breathing Irishman was glad enough at the call of "time."

Flynn's own reply when I reproved him for the nonsense he had put into Jerry's head about the prize ring will show how Jerry stood in the eyes of one of the best athletes of his day. "He's a wonder, Misther Canby. Sure, ye can't blame me f'r wantin' to thry him against good 'uns. He ain't awake yet, sor, an' he's too good-nachured. Holy pow'rs! If the b'ye ever cud be injuced to get mad-like, he'd lick his weight in woild-cats—so he w'ud."

There were times, as you may imagine, when I felt much like Frankenstein in awe of the creature I had created. But Jerry fortunately couldn't be "injuced to get mad-like." If things didn't happen to please him, he frowned and set his jaws until his mood had passed and he could speak his mind in calmness. His temper, like his will, was under perfect control. And yet I knew that the orderly habit of his mind was the result of growth in a sheltered environment and that even I, carefully as I had trained him, had not gauged his depths or known the secret of the lees which had never been disturbed.

At the age of twenty, then, Jerry had the body of a man, the brain of a scholar and the heart of a child. Less than a year remained before the time appointed when he must go forth into the world. Both of us approached that day with regret. For my

part I should have been willing to stay on with Jerry at Horsham Manor indefinitely, and Jerry, whatever curiosity he may have felt as to his future, gave no sign of impatience. I knew that he felt that perhaps the years to come might make a difference in our relations by the way he referred to the good years we had passed together and the small tokens of his affection which meant much from one not greatly demonstrative by habit. As Jerry had grown toward manhood he did much serious reading in books of my selection (the Benham library having been long since expurgated), and I had been working steadily on my Dialectics. We did our out-of-door work as usual, but there were times when I was busy, and then Jerry would whistle to the dogs and go off for his afternoon breather alone. There had never been a pledge exacted of him to keep within the wall, but he knew his father's wish, and the thought of venturing out alone had never entered his mind. Perhaps you will say that it was the one thing Jerry would want to do, being the thing that was forbidden him, but you would not understand as I did the way Jerry's mind worked. If as a boy Jerry had been impeccable in the way of matters of duty, he was no less so now. He had been trained to do what was right and now did it instinctively, not because it was his duty, but because it was the only thing that occurred to him.

And so, upon a certain day in June while I was reading in my study, Jerry went out with a rod and fly-book bound for the silent pools of Sweetwater, where the big trout lurked. My book, I remember, was the "Dialogues of Hylas and Philonous

upon the Reality and Perfection of Human Understanding," and before Jerry had been long gone from the house I was completely absorbed in what Fraser in his preface calls "the gem of British metaphysical literature." But had I known what was to happen to Jerry on that sunny afternoon, or conceived of the dialogue in which he was to take a part, I should have regretted the intellectual attraction of Berkeley's fine volume which had been the cause of my refusal to accompany the boy.

I find that I must reconstruct the incident as well as I can from my recollection of the facts as related by Jerry in the course of several conversations, each of which I am forced to admit amplified somewhat the one which had preceded it.

It seems that instead of making for the stream at its nearest point to the eastward, Jerry had cast into the woods above the gorge and worked upstream into the mountains. His luck had been fair, and by the time he neared the point where the Sweetwater disappeared beneath the wall his creel was half full. He clambered over a large rock to a higher level and found himself looking at a stranger, sitting on a fallen tree, fastening a butterfly net. He did not discover that the stranger was a girl until she stood up and he saw that she wore skirts, short skirts, showing neat leather gaiters. She eyed him coolly and neither of them spoke for a long moment, the girl probably because she was waiting for him to speak first, Jerry because (as he described it) of sheer surprise at the trespass and of curiosity as to its accomplishment. Then the girl smiled at Jerry.

"Hello!" she said at last.

Jerry advanced a few steps, frowning.

"I suppose you know," he said quickly, "that you're trespassing."

She glanced up at him, rather brazenly I fancy, and grinned.

"Oh, really!" Her eyes appraised him and Jerry, I am sure, felt rather taken aback.

"Yes," he went on severely, "you're trespassing. We don't allow any females in here."

Her reply was a laugh which irritated Jerry exceedingly.

"Well, I'm here," she said; "what are you going to do about it?"

"Do about it?" Jerry advanced two or three paces and stood looking down at her. In our first conversation he told me that she seemed absurdly small, quite too insignificant to be so impudent. In our second conversation I elicited the fact that he thought her skin smooth; in our third that her lips were much redder than mine.

When he got near her he paused, for she hadn't moved away as he had expected her to and only looked up at him and laughed.

"Yes, *do* about it," she repeated.

"You—you know I could—could throw you over the wall with one hand," he stammered.

"Perhaps, but you wouldn't."

"Why not?"

"Because you're a gentleman."

"Oh, am I?"

"Yes. Or if you aren't you ought to be."

He frowned at that, a little puzzled.

"Where do you come from?" he asked.

"I can't see how that can possibly be any business of yours."

"H-m. How did you get in here?"

"I followed my nose. How did you?"

"I—I—I belong here."

"It's an asylum, isn't it?" she asked quite coolly.

"N—no." Jerry missed the irony. "Not at all. I live here. It's my place. You—you're the first woman that ever got in here, and I can't imagine how you did it. I—I don't want to be impolite, but I'm afraid you'll have to go at once."

The sound of her laughter was most disconcerting. Jerry had no lack of a sense of humor and yet there was nothing that he could see to laugh at.

"That's very amusing," she said. "A moment ago you were going to throw me over the wall and now you're afraid you're impolite."

Jerry found himself smiling in spite of himself.

"I—I don't suppose I really meant that," he muttered.

"What? Throwing me over the wall or being polite?"

He looked rather bewildered, I think, at the inanity of her conversation. Jerry wasn't much given to small talk.

"I'm sorry you don't think I'm polite. I—I'm not used to talking to women. They're too fussy about trifles. What does it matter—"

"I don't call throwing a female visitor over a wall a trifle," she broke in. "And it isn't quite hospitable. Now is it?"

Jerry rubbed his head and regarded her seriously.

"Now that you mention it, I don't suppose it is. But nobody asked you. You just came. Didn't you see the trespass signs?"

"Oh, yes, they're all about," she said carelessly, as she picked up her tin specimen-box and turned away. "I didn't mean to stay. I followed a butterfly. He came in the iron railings, where the stream goes through the wall. I crawled under where the iron is bent. If you're afraid of women you'd better have it fixed."

"Afraid!" It was one word that Jerry detested. "Afraid! That's funny. Do you think I'm afraid of *you*?"

"Yes," she replied, eyeing him critically. "I rather think you are."

"Well, I—I'm not. It would take more than a woman to make *me* afraid."

Something in the turn of the phrase and tone of voice made her turn and examine him with a new interest.

"You're a queer boy," she said.

"How—queer?" he muttered.

"You look and act as though you'd never seen a girl before."

If he had known women better he wouldn't have believed that she meant what she said. As it was, her wizardry astounded him.

"How can you tell that?"

She was now regarding him wide-eyed in amazement.

"It's true, then?" she gasped.

"Yes, it's true. You're the first girl that I remember having seen. But what difference does that make? Why should I be afraid of you? You couldn't hurt a flea. You can talk pretty well, but talk never killed anybody."

She seemed stricken suddenly dumb and regarded him with an air which to anyone but Jerry would have shown her as discomfited as he.

"Do you mean that you've lived all your life a prisoner inside this wall and never seen a woman?" she asked incredulously.

"That depends upon what you mean by prisoner," said Jerry. "If having everything you want, doing everything you want is being a prisoner, I suppose that's what I am."

"Extraordinary! And you've had no curiosity to go out—to see the world?"

"No. I'm going soon, but I don't care about it. There isn't anything out there half as good as what I've got."

"How do you know if you haven't been there?"

"Oh, I know. I've heard. I read a great deal."

Jerry told me (in our second conversation) that he wondered why he still stood there talking to her. He supposed it was because he thought he had been impolite enough. But she made no move to go.

"What have you heard?" she asked again. "I suppose you thought that a girl had horns and a tail."

Unconsciously his gaze wandered down over her slim figure. Then he burst into a sudden fit of laughter.

"You're funny," he said.

"Not half as funny as I would be if I had them."

"You might have a tail twisted under your dress for all I know.

What do girls wear skirts for?"

"To keep them warm. Why do you wear trousers?"

"Trousers aren't silly. Skirts are."

"That depends on who's in them."

He was forced to admit the logic of that. Skirts might be silly, but she wasn't. She interested him, this strange creature that talked back, not in the least like Miss Redwood. The jade! Jerry did not know their tricks as I did. She was reading him, I haven't a doubt, like an open book. It was a pity. I hadn't yet prepared Jerry for this encounter. The girl had moved two or three paces away when she paused again.

"What's your name?" she asked suddenly.

"Jerry."

"That's a nice name. I think it's like you."

"How—like me?"

"Oh, I don't know—boyish and rather jolly, in spite of being Jeremiah. It *is* Jeremiah, isn't it?"

He nodded.

"I was sure of it. It was Jeremiah who wanted to throw me over the wall, but it was Jerry who didn't. Which are you really? If you're Jerry I'm not afraid of you in the least. But if you're Jeremiah, I must go at once."

He smiled at her.

"Oh, that's all right. You needn't hurry. I wouldn't hurt you. You seem to be a very sprightly sort of a creature. You laugh as though you really meant it. What's your name? I've told you mine."

"Una."

"H-m. That means 'first'."

"But not the last. There are five others—all girls."

"Girls! What a pity!"

She must have glanced around at him quickly, with that bird-like pertness I discovered later. He was declaring war, himself defenseless, and was not even aware of it.

"You're not flattering. A pity! Why?"

"It's too bad if you had to be born why some of you couldn't have been boys. You'd have been a fine sort of a boy, I think."

"Would I really?" she said. "A better sort of a boy than I am a girl?"

He shrugged his shoulders, oblivious of the bait for flattery.

"How should I know what sort of a girl you are? You seem sensible enough and you're not easily frightened. You know, I—I rather like you."

"Really!"

He missed the smile and note of antagonism and went on quickly:

"You're fond of the woods, aren't you? Do you know the birds? They like this place. And butterflies—I'd like to show you my collection."

"Oh, you collect?"

"Of course—specimens of all kinds. Birds, eggs, nests, lepidoptera—I've got a museum down at the Manor. Next year you'll have to come and see it."

"Next year!"

"Yes. You see—" Jerry's pause must have been that of embarrassment. I think he realized that he had been going it rather rapidly. I didn't hear this part of the dialogue until our third conversation. "Well, you see, I'm not supposed to see any—any females until I'm twenty-one. Not that I've ever wanted to, you know, but it seems rather foolish that I can't ask you down, if you'd like to come."

Can you visualize a very modern young woman during this ingenuous revelation? Jerry said that close, cool inspection of her slate-blue eyes (he had, you see, also identified their color) rather disconcerted him.

"I'm sure I should be delighted to come," she said with a gravity which to anyone but Jerry would have made her an object of suspicion.

Jerry shook his head.

"But I—I'm afraid it wouldn't do. I've never given my word, but it's an understanding—"

"With whom?"

"With Roger. He's my tutor, you know."

"Oh, I see. And Roger objects to—er—females?"

"Oh, yes, and so do I. They're so useless—most of them. You

don't mind my saying so, do you?"

"Oh, not at all," she replied, though I'm sure her lips must have been twitching.

"Of course, you're different. You're really very like a boy. And I don't doubt you're very capable."

"How—capable?"

"You look as if you could do things—I mean useful things."

At this she sank on a rock and buried her face in her hands, quivering from head to foot. Jerry thought that she was crying.

"What's the—?"

She threw out her arms, leaned back against a tree, her long suppressed merriment bubbling forth unrestrained.

"Oh, you'll be the death of me," she laughed, the tears running down her cheeks. "I can't stand being bottled up another minute. I can't."

Jerry was offended.

"I don't see what there is to laugh at," he said with some dignity.

"You don't—that's just it, you don't, and that's what's so funny."

And she laughed again.

"What's funny?" he asked.

"You—!"

"I'm not half as funny as *you* are, but I don't laugh at you."

"Y—you w-would if you didn't p-pity me so much," she gasped between giggles.

"I don't pity you at all. And I think you're extremely foolish to laugh so much at nothing."

"Even when I'm laughing at y-you?"

She had taken out her handkerchief and now composed herself with difficulty while Jerry's ruffled dignity in silence preened at its feathers. She watched him furtively, I'm sure, between dabs with her handkerchief and at last stopped laughing, got up and offered him her hand.

"I've made you angry," she said. "I'm sorry."

He found that he had taken her hand and was looking at it. The words he used in describing it were these: "It was small, soft and warm, Roger, and seemed alive with vitality, but it was timid, too, like a young thrush just fallen from its nest." So far as I could discover, he didn't seem to know what to do with her hand, and before he decided anything she had withdrawn it abruptly and was turning away.

"I'm going now," she said calmly. "But I've enjoyed being here, awfully. It was very nice of you not to—to throw me over the wall."

"I wouldn't have, really," he protested.

"But you might have had me arrested, which would have been worse." She opened her tin box. "It's your butterfly, of course. You can have it, if you like."

"Oh, I wouldn't take it for anything. Besides, that's no good."

"No good?"

"No, common. I've got loads of 'em."

Her nose wrinkled and then she smiled.

"Oh, well, I'll keep it as a souvenir of our acquaintance. Good-bye, Jerry." She smiled.

"Good-bye, Una. I'm sorry—" he paused.

"For what?"

"If I was cross—"

"But you weren't. I shouldn't have laughed."

"I think I like you better when you laugh than when—when you're 'bottled up'."

"But I mustn't laugh at *you*. I didn't mean to. I just—couldn't help. You've forgiven me, haven't you?"

"Of course."

She had taken up her hat and now walked away upstream. Jerry followed.

"Will you really come next year?" he asked. "I—I should like to show you my specimens."

"Next year! Next year is a long way off. You know, I don't belong here. I'm only visiting."

"Oh!"

She clambered down into the bed of the stream toward the iron railing. Two of the bars, as he could now see, were bent inward at the bottom.

When she reached the railing she turned and flashed a smile up at him.

"You'd better tell Roger about the broken fence."

"Why?"

She thrust her net and tin box through the bars and then slipped quickly through the opening.

"Why?" he repeated.

She stood upright and laughed.

"I might come in again."

Jerry, I think, must have stood looking down at her wistfully. I cannot believe that the psychology of sex made any matter here. Youth merely responded wordlessly to youth. Had she been a boy it would have been the same. But the girl was clever.

"I think I will," she said gayly. "It looks very pretty from out here."

"I—I can't invite you," said Jerry. "I should like to, but I—I can't."

"I could come without being invited," she laughed.

"But you wouldn't, would you?"

"I might. I didn't hurt you, did I?"

"No," he laughed.

"Then I don't see what harm it would do. I'm coming."

No reply.

"I'm coming tomorrow."

No reply. This was really stoical of Jerry.

"And Jerry—" she called.

"Yes, Una—"

"I think you're—you're *sweet*."

There was a rustle among the leaves and she was gone.

Thus did the serpent enter our garden.

CHAPTER V

THE MINX RETURNS

That afternoon when Jerry returned to the Manor he gave me a superficial account of the adventure—so superficial and told with such carelessness that I was not really alarmed. The second conversation in the evening after dinner aroused my curiosity but not my suspicion. I was not in the habit of mistrusting Jerry. The intrusion of the stranger was an accident, not likely to occur again. It was only after our discussion had taken many turns and curiously enough had always come back to the pert intruder that I realized that Jerry's interest had really been aroused. Late at night over our evening reading the boy made the comments upon the visitor's appearance, her voice and the texture of her skin. He had been quite free in his opinions, favorable and unfavorable alike, and it was this very frankness which had disarmed me. The incident, as far as Jerry's story went, ended when the visitor crawled under the railing. I am not sure what motive was in his mind, but the events which followed lend strong color to the presumption that Jerry believed the girl when she said that she was coming back and that at the very time he was speaking to me he intended to meet her when she came.

I had decided to treat the incident lightly, trusting to the well-ordered habits of Jerry's life and the number of his daily interests

to put the visitor out of his mind. I did not even warn him, as I should have done had I realized the imminence of danger or the necessity of keeping to the letter as well as the spirit of John Benham's definite instruction, for this I thought might lay undue stress upon the matter. And in the course of the morning, nothing further having been said, I was lulled into a sense of security.

In the afternoon Bishop Berkeley's book called me again and it was not until late that I realized that the boy had been gone from the house for four hours. His rod, creel and fly-book were missing from their accustomed places but even then I suspected nothing. It was not until the approach of the dinner hour when, Jerry not having returned, I began to think of yesterday's visitor.

After waiting dinner for awhile, I dined alone, expecting every minute to hear the sound of his step in the hall or his cheery greeting but there was no sign of him and I guessed the truth. The minx had come in again and Jerry was with her.

The events which followed were the first that cast the slightest shadow over our friendship, a shadow which was not to pass, for, from the day when Eve entered our garden, Jerry was changed. It wasn't that he loved me any the less or I him. It was merely that his attitude toward life and toward my point of view had shifted. He had begun to doubt my infallibility.

It was this indefinable difference in our relations which delayed Jerry's confession, and not until some days later did he tell me how it all happened. He didn't think she would really come back, he said, and I chose at the time not to doubt him,

but the fact was that he made his way directly upstream after leaving the house, and catching no fish, sat down on a rock near the iron grille. That the girl returned was not Jerry's fault, he said, because he didn't ask her to. But the fact that he was there awaiting her when she arrived shows that the wish was the father to the thought with Jerry. He had been sitting there alone fifteen or twenty minutes "listening for bird calls," as he explained it and had already identified twenty distinct notes when he heard the twenty-first.

It was human. "Hello, Jerry," it said.

It came from the iron railing, behind which the female Una was standing, grinning at him. He got up and walked toward her.

"Hello!" he returned.

"You didn't think I'd come, did you, Jerry?" she asked, though how she could have arrived at that conclusion with the boy sitting there waiting for her is more than I can imagine.

"No, I didn't," he replied, already learning to prevaricate with calm assurance. "Are you coming in?"

"I will if you ask me to."

"I can't do that," he laughed. "You know the rules. But I don't see what I could do to stop you."

"*Please* invite me, Jerry."

"No, I won't invite you. But I won't put you out if you come."

"*Please!*"

"Why do you insist?"

"Because—I think you ought to, you know. Just to make me

feel comfortable."

"You seemed very comfortable yesterday."

"I think you're horrid."

"Horrid! Because I won't break my promise?"

"But you've made no promise."

"It's understood. See here. I'll turn my back and walk away.

If you come in it's not my fault."

"You needn't bother. I'm not coming." She turned and made as though to go.

"Una," he called. "*Please*. Come in."

She reappeared miraculously, her vanity appeased by Jerry's downfall, bobbed through the bent irons, and rose smiling decorously as Eve must have smiled when she watched Adam first bite the apple.

"Thanks," she laughed, clambering up the rocks. "It's awfully nice of you. I knew you would. I couldn't have come else."

"It doesn't really make much difference, I suppose," said Jerry dubiously.

"What doesn't?"

"Whether I ask you or whether you just come."

"I wouldn't have come if you hadn't."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive. I was just passing this way and I saw you sitting here. I hadn't the slightest intention of coming in. Of course, when you *invited* me, that made things different."

He laughed and motioned to a rock upon which she sank.

"Tell me," he said, "how you happen to be up here in the mountains alone. You don't belong around here. You didn't know about the wall, or about me, did you?"

"Of course not; not yesterday. But I do now. I asked last night."

"Who did you ask?"

"The people I'm staying with."

"And what did they tell you?"

"They weren't very polite. It doesn't do to ignore one's neighbors. They said you were a freak."

"What's a freak?"

"Something strange, unnatural."

"And do you think I'm strange or unnatural?" he asked soberly.

She looked at him and laughed.

"Unnatural! If nature is unnatural."

"What else do they say?" Jerry asked after a thoughtful pause.

"That your precious Roger is a dealer in magic and spells; that you've already learned flying on a broomstick and practice it on nights when the moon is full; that you're hideously ugly; that you're wonderfully beautiful; that you live in a tree; that you sleep in a coffin; that you're digging for gold; that you've found the recipe for diamonds; that you've—"

"Now you're making fun of me," he laughed as she paused for lack of breath.

"I'm not. If there's anything that you are or aren't that I haven't heard, I can't imagine what it is. In other words, Jerry, you're the

mystery of the county. Aren't you glad?"

"Glad? Of course not. It's all such utter rot."

"Of course. But doesn't it make you *feel* mysterious?"

"Not a bit."

"Doesn't it ever occur to you how important a person you are?"

"How—important?"

"To begin with, of course, you're fabulously wealthy. You knew that, didn't you?"

"Oh, I suppose I've got some money, but I don't let it worry me."

"Do you know how much?"

"No, I haven't the slightest idea."

"Not that you've got millions—*millions!*"

"If my millions are as impalpable as my broomstick they won't hurt me much," he laughed. And then soberly: "Say, Una, you seem to know a lot more about me than I know about myself."

"I think I do," she returned. "For instance, of course, you couldn't guess that half the match-making mammas of the county are already setting their caps for you."

He looked bewildered at that, I'm sure.

"Do you know," he said, "that I haven't the slightest idea what you're talking about."

"Of course," she laughed. "I forgot. They want to marry you to their daughters."

"Marry! Me! You're joking."

I think he must have seemed really alarmed.

"I'm not. The fat, the small, the lean and the tall. They're all after you. The moment you poke your nose outside the gate next year, they're all going to pounce on you and try to carry you off."

"But I can't marry them all," he said aghast. "Besides I don't want to marry anybody. And I'm not going to."

She couldn't restrain herself now and burst into wild peals of merriment, while Jerry watched her, uncertain whether to be angry or amused. At last he decided to smile.

"You seem to have a lot of fun with me, Una, don't you?"

"I don't mean to. But the picture of you trying to escape the engulfing flood of mammas is too much. I've got to laugh, Jerry. I can't help it."

"Laugh, then. I don't think it's so funny, though."

"But it is. Because I'm sure you'd be too polite to refuse them—any of them."

"Polite! I won't be polite. Just because I'm nice to you isn't any sign. I—I'll send 'em all packing. You'll see."

"Oh, you're brave enough now, but wait—wait!" She bent over, clasping her knees, still shaking with merriment.

"Why, Jerry, you couldn't be impolite to a woman any more than you could *fly*. You'd do just whatever she said."

"I wouldn't. They're idiots, the lot of 'em. What's the use? What do girls want to get married for, anyway?"

She glanced up at him quickly. Then at the glimpse she had of Jerry's sober profile her wide gaze dulled and then sought the earth before her. It was true then what she believed of him. A

child—this gorgeous creature that shaved its face!

"I suppose it's because they—they haven't anything else to do," she stammered.

"There's plenty for every woman to do without marrying, or there ought to be. They can work like men, or clean their houses, or raise their children."

At this point the girl was seized with a sudden fit of coughing and her face was purple.

"What's the matter?"

"I—I just swallowed the wrong way," she gasped.

"Here, I'll pat you on the back. All right now?"

"Y-yes, better, thanks." But she held her fingers before her eyes and still struggled for breath. In a moment when she raised her head, there were traces of a smile, but she was quite composed.

"Then you—you don't believe in marriage as an institution?" she asked with some hesitation.

"No. I can't see the use of it. We're all animals like the wild folk, the beasts of the field, the birds. They get along all right."

"Birds mate, don't they?" she put in.

"Oh, yes, but they don't need a minister to mate 'em. They just hop about together a bit and then start their nest. It's simple as rolling off a log."

"That's what humans do, as you say; they just hop about a bit and then get married."

"But marriage doesn't make 'em any happier, does it? I'm sure

I wouldn't want to be tied down to one woman as long as I lived. Suppose I changed my mind or suppose she did."

"You wouldn't change your mind if you loved a woman."

"Love!" he sneered. "There you go. I thought you'd say that."

"You don't believe in love, then?" she asked.

"It seems to me that there's a lot of sentimental rubbish written about it. What's the use of talking so much about a thing that's as plain as the nose on your face? Love means loyalty, friendship, honor and everything that's fine, but when the classic poets begin writing reams of rot about it, it's time—it's time somebody was sensible."

"Poor Jerry," she laughed. "I'm so sorry for you."

"Why?"

"Because when you fall, you're going to fall so very hard."

"How—fall?"

"Fall in love. You will, some day. Everybody does. It's as sure as death or taxes."

"Everybody! *You* haven't, have you?"

"Oh, dear, no. Not yet. But I suppose I shall some day."

Jerry regarded her in silence for a moment.

"I didn't think you were a bit slushy."

"I'm *not* slushy," indignantly. "I *hate* slushy people. Where did you get that word?"

"Roger. He hates 'em too."

"Your Roger doesn't like women, does he?"

"No. He's very wise, Roger is. But sometimes I think he's

prejudiced. I'd like you to know Roger, I really would."

She gazed straight before her for a moment deliberating and then:

"I hope you don't mind if I say so, but I think your Roger must be a good deal of a fossil."

"A fossil. Now see here, Una—I can't have you talking about Roger like that."

"He is. I'm sure of it. All theorists are."

"He's not. He's the broadest fellow you ever knew."

"Nobody's broad who ignores the existence of woman," she returned hotly. "It's sinful—that sort of philosophy. It's against nature. We're here—millions of us, working as hard as men do, earning our own way in the world, active, live intelligences, writing books, nursing in hospitals, cleaning the plague-spots out of the cities, influencing in a thousand ways the uplift of that coarser brute man and besides all this practicing a thousand acts of self-abnegation in the home. Keeping man's house, cooking his food, bearing his ch—"

She stopped abruptly and bit her lip.

"Bearing his—what?" asked Jerry.

"Burdens," she blurted out. "Burdens—all sorts of burdens," she finished weakly.

"I suppose there *are* things that women can do," said Jerry after a moment. "Of course, I don't know much about it. But—"

"Well, it's time you did," she broke in again. "It may be beautiful here—inside these walls—an unbroken idyl of peace

and contentment, but it isn't life. It's just existence, that's all. If I were a man, I'd want to do a man's work in the world. I wouldn't want to miss an hour of it, childhood, boyhood or manhood. I'd want to meet my temptations and conquer them. It's selfish, the way you live, unreal, cowardly."

"See here, Una—"

"I mean it. You've got me started and I can't help it. If I say anything that hurts, you'll have to put me out. But I'm going to tell you what I think."

"You're rather bewildering. But I'm not a coward. I don't want you to say that. If you were a man, I'd give you a thrashing," he said quietly.

Their glances must have flashed fire. Jerry's face was red, I'm sure, and his fingers were twitching to get hold of something, but the girl didn't flinch. Jerry told me afterward that he found his anger softening strangely as he looked at her and in a moment they were both smiling. The girl spoke first.

"I've gone too far, Jerry. Forgive me."

"Of course," he said awkwardly. "I suppose you've got a right to your opinions. But it isn't very pleasant to be told that one's life is a failure."

"I didn't say that," she put in quickly. "You haven't failed, of course. You've missed something, but you've gained something too." Her words trailed slowly again and her gaze sought the deep woods. "Yes," she repeated softly and thoughtfully, "I'm very sure you've gained something."

"What have I gained?"

There was a long pause before she replied.

"Simplicity," she said carefully. "Life, after all, nowadays, is so very complex," she sighed.

But when he questioned as to what she meant, she waved him off. "No, I've said enough. I didn't intend to. Don't let's talk any more about what I think. Let's talk about what *you* think, what you read, what you do. People say you live in the woods most of the time—do you? Where? How?"

"In a cabin. We built it. Would you like to see it? It's not far. I'll make you a cup of tea."

As the reader will perceive, in these two conversations, lasting perhaps two hours, this slip of a girl, in mere idle curiosity, had touched with her silly chatter the vital, the vulnerable points of Jerry's philosophy of life. Fate had not been fair to me or with him. Less than a year; remained of Jerry's period of probation. In December the boy was to go out into the world. And through an unfortunate accident due to a broken iron, a chaos of half-baked ideas had come pouring through the breach. If I said that my labors of ten years had been useless or that the fruition of John Benham's ideals for his son were still in doubt I should be putting the matter too strongly, but I have no hesitancy in confessing that the appearance of the girl had at least put them in jeopardy. She had turned his mind into a direction which I had carefully avoided. He must think now and ask questions that I could not be ready to answer. By this time it must be well understood that I

have no love for women, but I will do this girl the credit of saying that in a general way she saw fit to respect Jerry's artlessness. I think that the sex instinct, so ready with its antagonisms, its insinuations, its alternate attacks and defenses, was atrophied as in the presence of a phenomenon. She was modern enough, God knows, but she had some delicacy at least and was impotent before the splendor of Jerry's innocence.

What they said on the way to the cabin must have been unimportant. I suppose Jerry told her about his routine at the Manor and something of what I had taught him of woodcraft, but I think that she was very reticent in speaking of herself. No doubt her unceremonious visit to our domain and the unusual intimacy of their conversation had made it seem necessary to her to preserve her incognito, or perhaps it was coquetry, which no woman, however placed, is quite without. As far as I have been able to learn, they were as two children, the girl's mind as well as her actions, in spite of her sophistication, reflecting the artlessness of her companion. The damage that she had done, as I was afterwards to discover, was mainly by the force of suggestion. She assumed the absurd premises of modernity, drew her own preposterous conclusions and Jerry drank them in, absorbed them as he did all information, like a sponge.

CHAPTER VI

THE CABIN

Having decided upon a course of action, I lost no time in setting forth, following the Sweetwater to the wall and then, not finding Jerry, making as though by instinct for the cabin. Perhaps I may be pardoned for approaching the place with cautious footsteps. I was justified, I think, by the anxiety of the moment and the fear of a damage that might be irreparable. I am sure that the somber shade of old John Benham guided me upon my way and made light my footsteps as I crept through the bushes and peered through the window of the cabin.

There upon the floor, before the hearth, in which some fagots were burning, sat Jerry and the minx, as thick as thieves, oblivious of the fall of night, wrapped in their own conversation and in themselves. I am willing to admit that the girl was pretty, though from the glimpses I had of it, her profile gave no suggestion of the classical ideals of beauty, for her nose made a short line far from regular and her hair, though carelessly dressed, was worn, in some absurd modern fashion with which I was unfamiliar. And yet in a general way I may say that there seemed to be no doubt as to her comeliness. She was quite small and crouched as she was upon the floor before the fire she even seemed childish—quite too unimportant a creature to have made

such a hullabaloo in this small world of ours.

Nevertheless I felt justified in keeping silence and even in listening to their conversation.

"You didn't mean it," I heard Jerry ask, "about all those girls' mothers, did you?"

She laughed.

"Of course I did. You're a catch, you know."

"You mean, they want to catch *me*? Nonsense. I don't believe you."

"It's true. You're too rich to escape."

"If that's the way marriage is made I don't think much of it."

"It isn't always like that." She smiled. "People aren't all as rich as you are."

"It's queer," he said after a pause. "I've never thought of myself as being different from other people. If money makes one man more desirable than another then money sets false standards of judgment. The people here I like for what they are, not for what they have. That's all wrong somehow, Una. It makes me think crooked."

"I suppose I'm talking too much. You don't have to believe what I say," she said slowly.

"But I want to know and I want you to talk. You've stirred something deep in me. You somehow make me think I've been looking at everything sideways without being able to walk around it. Roger knows what he's about, of course, and I suppose he has reasons of his own, but I'm a not a child any longer. And if

he does not care to tell me the whole truth, I've got to find out things for myself from somebody else." And then, turning upon her suddenly: "You aren't lying to me, are you?"

"Do you think I would?" she asked.

"No, I don't. But I thought you might say queer things, just as a joke."

She shook her head. "No," she said calmly. "I laughed a little at first, because I didn't understand, but I'm quite serious now."

"You said Roger was a fossil. I know what a fossil is. That wasn't kind."

"But it's true," she repeated warmly. "He might keep things from you, but he has no right to misrepresent women."

"*Are women as fine as men?*" he asked.

She looked around at him.

"Why shouldn't they be? I think they're finer. Your Roger wouldn't agree with me. I've told you the kind of things they do—that men can't and won't do. You may believe me or not as you choose. Some day you'll find out."

"But I want to find out now. I want to find out everything."

She smiled into the fire.

"That's a great deal, isn't it?" she said.

He went on soberly:

"You see, I don't want you to think I'm an idiot and I don't want you to think Roger is narrow-minded. If you only knew him—"

"I'm sure he has a long nose, sandy hair, grayish? watery eyes and spectacles."

"There. I knew you hadn't a notion of him. He's nothing like that."

"Well, what *is* he like?"

"Why, I've never thought. But he isn't like that. He has a beautiful mind. I think that is what matters more than anything. What do looks count for? I would rather think fine thoughts than be the handsomest person in the world."

He might have been the handsomest person in the world but he wouldn't have been aware of it. Through the window I saw the girl search his bent head quickly and then peer into the fire smiling. But Jerry did not know what she was thinking about and went on slowly:

"You've said some things that make me believe I ought to know more about women and their work. I didn't know that they ever did the sort of things you tell me of. It's strange I don't know, but I've always been pretty busy in here and I've never really thought much about them. What did you mean by 'the plague-spots of the cities'?" he asked. "Surely there can be no such a disease as the plague in a modern city when science has made such progress."

She smiled.

"Moral plague-spots, Jerry, civic sores." She paused.

"I don't understand."

"You will in time. The world isn't all as beautiful as you think it is. There are men and women with diseased minds, diseased bodies that no medicine can cure. There are hospitals and homes

for them, but there never seems to be enough money or skill or civic righteousness to make such people well."

"How do you know all this?" he asked in wonder.

"I've always been interested in social problems. I can't abide being idle."

"Social problems! And do you mean that you go among these diseased people and try to make them well?"

She nodded.

"I begin to understand," he said slowly, "why you said you thought I wasn't doing my work in the world. It's true. I've been sheltered from evil. Things have been made easy for me. And you"—he burst forth admiringly—"I think you're very wonderful. Perhaps some day I can help. You'll let me help, won't you?"

"Oh, would you, Jerry?" she cried.

"I don't see any reason why I shouldn't. I shall be twenty-one in December. I can do what I please. The executors want to make me a business man—to go to board meetings and help run some companies my money is in. But I don't want to. Finance makes my head tired. I've been working at it some. Seems like awful rubbish to me. They want me to make a lot more money. I suppose I've got enough to get along on. I don't want any more than I've got. I'd much rather do something useful."

She laughed.

"Useful! I'm afraid your executors have different ideals of utility."

Jerry sighed.

"Of course, I've got to go through with the thing for awhile. But I—I'd rather give you my money to cure the plague spots."

"Not all of it, Jerry," she cried, "but would you, some of it? Just a very little?"

"Of course—as much as you like. You can do a lot more with it than I can."

In my hiding place, I didn't know whether to be alarmed or amused. She had done well. Jerry was already giving her his twenty millions. She was a capital missionary. It seemed about time I made my entrance, so I coughed, then walked through the door and faced them.

"I beg pardon for intruding," I said dryly, "but the fact is that it's almost if not quite bedtime."

They got to their feet in some haste, Jerry red as a turkey-cock, the girl, I think, a little pale.

"Is it—*is* it Roger?" stammered Jerry. "I hadn't the slightest notion—" And from his appearance I could readily believe him. "Is it dinner—bedtime? Why, of course, it *must* be." He shuffled his feet awkwardly and looked from me to the girl. "This is—Una, Roger. We've been talking."

"So I should suppose," I remarked, aware of the cool and rather contemptuous glances that the young lady was sending in my direction. "It's too bad that I interrupted. I hope that Miss—er—"

"Smith," sniffed the girl.

"Quite so. I hope that Miss Smith will forgive me. We are a little unused to visitors and of course—"

"I'm going at once," she said, moving a step or two, but seeing that I stood in the door, hesitated.

"I don't want you to go yet, please," said Jerry, recovering his coolness amazingly. "I want you and Roger to know each other. I've been telling her all about us, Roger. She's awfully interested. She just happened in, you know. It's all been very agreeable."

"I don't doubt it in the least," I remarked. "Of course, you have settled all the affairs of the nations between you."

"Oh, not quite that," laughed Jerry uneasily. "But we did have a talk, didn't we, Una?"

"I'm sure I—I hadn't the slightest idea how late it was," said the girl stiffly, fingering at her hair.

"Time passes so quickly when one is amused or interested," I said.

"I was thinking, Roger, how nice it would be if Una would come to dinner at the Manor."

"Oh, no, thanks—not now. I must be going."

"Couldn't you? I'll show you my specimens. Then we could send you on in the machine afterwards."

"No—no, thanks."

"Doubtless the friends of Miss—er—Miss Smith will be worried about her."

She shot a malevolent glance at me.

"Not at all. I'm accustomed to doing exactly as I please."

"But I couldn't think of letting you go through the forest alone. It's fully half a mile beyond the wall to the highroad."

"Thanks, but I won't bother you at all. If you'll let me pass—"

But Jerry had caught her by the arm.

"Roger's right," he said quickly. "I didn't think. Of course you can't go alone. I—"

"If you'll leave it to me, Jerry, I'll see that the lady reaches the highroad in safety. I would suggest that you go at once to the house. I will join you later."

"But—"

"Will you do as I ask?"

Our glances met in a level gaze. There was a moment of rebellion in Jerry's, but it flickered out.

"I think I know best, Jerry," I said quietly.

"Yes, but I don't want her to think—"

"Please don't worry about me," said the girl. "I'm accustomed to looking out for myself." She brushed by me quickly and before I could restrain her, was merged into the shadows of the trees. But Jerry was after her in a hurry while I followed.

"Please go with Roger," I heard Jerry say when I came up.

"I don't need a *keeper*!" she flared at him.

"Una!"

"Go, Jerry," I said again.

He paused but the girl went on, so I followed quickly, and wisely, it seemed, for she wandered blindly and would have been lost in a moment.

"If you'll follow me," I ventured, "you will find the way out much more quickly. Otherwise you will probably scratch your face."

I'm sure by the sound of her feet in the dry leaves and her hurried breathing behind me that she would have liked to scratch *my* face. But she didn't. I think she realized for the first time that without my guidance she would probably spend the rest of the night in the woods.

"I'm sorry to have been obliged to be so unceremonious," I said at last over my shoulder. No reply. But I wasn't in the least daunted. I had made up my mind that she shouldn't venture in again.

"It's rather lucky you weren't seen by any of the gamekeepers. You might have spent the night in the lockup."

Still no reply.

"You see, the trespass rules here are very strictly enforced. It's too bad you didn't know about them. They've been in force for ten years. This is the first time, I think, that a woman has been inside the wall."

"I—I'm a stranger," she gasped. "I'm only visiting here."

"Of course, that explains it. I couldn't imagine your having ventured in otherwise."

We had come to an opening where the trail was wider and I slowed my pace so that in a moment she walked beside me. She forged ahead at once, but I kept my place.

"Since you're interested in sociological questions, Miss—er—

Smith, perhaps—"

"You listened?" she asked scornfully.

"I did," grimly. "I listened for at least ten minutes."

"I'm sure you're quite welcome," she gasped.

"Since you're interested in sociological questions," I repeated, "perhaps you may be interested in educational ones."

"I'm not."

"That's not consistent, for sociological problems can hardly be solved without the aid of—"

"Oh!" Her pent-up temper exploded. "I didn't come in here to—to listen to a dissertation on—" Rage choked her and she couldn't go on.

"I should be very much interested to learn what you *did* come in for."

"You're a beast!" she flashed at me.

"Come now, you don't mean that. As a matter of fact, I'm merely a mild-mannered person of studious instincts hired to carry out a most valuable experiment in comparative psychology."

"I have no interest in your experiments."

"Or the object of them?" I put in quickly. She found that difficult to answer.

"You must admit that my inquiry is natural," I went on suavely. "Since Jerry has just promised to give you his entire fortune, it seems to me only fair that his executors—"

"Will you be silent?" she cried, stopping suddenly. "It seems

that I'm at your mercy. You will at least have the decency to let me go in peace."

She broke away, running aimlessly. I followed rapidly, my conscience hurting, but my purpose relentless.

"This way," I said coolly. "You've left the trail."

"I don't care," she gasped. "Leave me."

"I can't do that. You see, I promised Jerry. But I will lead the way if you like. The stream is not far."

I set out again and I heard her trudging behind me. If she had stuck me in the back with a hatpin, I shouldn't have been surprised. But she was more tractable now.

"How are you getting on?" I asked as I neared the Sweetwater. But she wouldn't reply. Her sentiments toward me, I am sure, were too deep for words.

"Where did you come in?" I asked again.

"The iron railing—at the stream," she mumbled.

"Oh! It must be repaired at once."

"You needn't bother," she said scornfully, "so far as I am concerned."

"That's very kind of you. Ah, here we are."

We went carefully over the rocks and in a short while the dim bulk of the wall rose before us. I descended, preceding her, found the opening and went through it.

"You're not going any further with me," she commanded in a suppressed tone. "I forbid it."

I rose on the other side of the grille and dusted my knees.

"I should be sorry to disobey your commands," I said firmly, "but the dangers of the woods at night—"

"Oh! How I abominate you!"

"Really? I am sorry."

But she followed me through the aperture and I led the way down a path, which seemed fairly well worn, alongside the wall.

"Of course, your real name isn't Smith," I began again in a moment. And then after waiting in vain for a reply: "Are you staying with the Laidlaws? The Carews? The Van Wycks then? You won't tell me? Oh, very well, I'll inquire."

My threat brought her to her senses.

"You wouldn't do that!" she said in an agonized tone, catching me by the arm.

"I'm quite capable of it," I replied, stopping beside her.

"I—I beg of you not to do that."

"*Am* I a beast?" I smiled.

"No, no—not a beast. I'm sorry."

"Why do you wish to remain unknown?"

"I—I had no business coming. No one knows. It was mere—mere feminine curiosity." She turned away, "Does *that* satisfy you?" she cried.

"I think it does," I said more gently. "And you'll not return?"

"No—no, never."

"Good. I ask no questions. You stay out. It's a bargain."

She led the way now silently, and I hurried after her, a little sorry for my own part in the matter, but still jealous for our

violated sanctuary. She had force, this girl, and not a little courage. Modern she was, if you like, but very spirited and human. When we reached the highroad I paused.

"If you wish, I will go on with you."

"Our paths separate here."

I offered her my hand.

"Forgive me," I said gently. "I am only doing my duty."

But she turned quickly and in a moment was running down the road where the night soon swallowed her.

Women are queer animals. She might at least have given me her hand.

CHAPTER VII

JACK BALLARD TAKES CHARGE

On my way back to the Manor house I thought deeply of a way to make the best of the situation. That Jerry was a philosopher seemed for the moment to be a matter of little importance, for the portion of his conversation in the cabin which I had overheard was an indictment both of my teaching and my integrity. His eyes, thanks to the gabble of this mischievous visitor, were now open. He would want to know everything and I found myself placed in the position of being obliged to choose between a frankness which would be hazardous and a deception which would be intolerable. The time had suddenly come for generous revelations. I had labored all these years to bring Jerry to manhood, armed with righteousness and a sound philosophy, equipment enough according to my reading of his character and the meaning of life, to make him impervious to all sophistry and all sin. The conversation that I had overheard did nothing to weaken my faith in the Great Experiment which in my heart I felt already to be an unqualified success, but it notified me of the fact which had almost escaped me, that Jerry was no longer a boy but a man in years as well as body and intelligence and that his desire for worldly knowledge was not to be thwarted.

And yet the prospect seemed far from pleasing to me. It was

the beginning of the end of our Utopia. Upon the threshold of the world Jerry was eager for that which I had scorned. Our paths would separate. The old relation would be no more.

I went home slowly and I think some sign of my weariness and perplexity must have been marked upon my features as I entered the hall where Jerry with sober countenance awaited me. There was nothing for it but to talk the thing out. I did not upbraid him nor he me. We understood each other too well for that.

Then followed the flood of eager questions from a mind topsy-turvy. I answered him slowly, deliberately, and gave him in some detail his father's thesis on education, explaining how and why I happened to be in sympathy with it and pointing out by the results attained the wisdom of our plans.

"Results!" he cried. "What results? In what respect is my education better than another man's? I know my Latin, and my Greek, my French, my German. I'm a good history scholar, and what you've taught me of philosophy,—the inside of books—all of it. But life, Roger,—you've starved me—starved me! If I were a babe in arms I couldn't know less—"

"You'll know life in time, Jerry, see it through a finer prism."

"I want to see it as it is, in the raw, not beautiful when it is not beautiful. I want the truth—all the truth, Roger, the rough and the ugly where it *is* rough and ugly. You say you've made me a man, taught me to think fine thoughts, given me a good mind and a strong body, but all the while you were sheltering me, saving me—from what? What good are my mind and body if they aren't

strong enough to be put to the test of life and survive it?"

He was much agitated.

"I have no fear to put you to any test—today, tomorrow," I said quietly.

"Then put me to it—out there." With a wave of his arm he cried: "I must see for myself, think for myself."

"You shall, Jerry, soon. Will you be patient a little while longer?"

He controlled himself with an effort and bent forward in his chair, bringing his head down into his hands.

"It's hard. I feel like a coward, a coward—not taking my share —"

"Ah," I said suddenly, "*she* called you that?"

"Yes. If she had been a man I should have thrashed her. But in a moment I knew that she had spoken the truth."

"But Jerry, a coward is one who is afraid. How could you be afraid of something you didn't know about?"

"But I know now. She told me very little, Roger, but I've guessed the rest."

He went on in this vein for awhile and at last grew calmer. And the result of it all was a promise on my part to answer more frankly all his questions, to subscribe to two newspapers and some magazines, and to begin on the morrow a course of reading which would prepare the way for his contact with the world. He seemed satisfied and at last went to bed with his old cheery "Good night, Dry-as-dust."

After all, I had gotten out of it well enough. Only a few months remained for him within the wall and with the exception of the newspapers, my plans for him were really little changed. I may as well confess at once that my delay in broadening his point of view was selfish. I had made such a beautiful thing that I was as proud of it as any painter of his masterpiece. Until the present moment I had been true to my own ideals. What was to follow must be a concession to convention.

But I entered frankly enough into the new scheme of things and set Jerry a course in modern fiction in books carefully chosen and before the summer was gone and the autumn far advanced Jerry had read at least a shelf-full of volumes. He went through them avidly and asked few questions. Love between the sexes he now accepted as a matter of course, but he hadn't the slightest conception of what it meant and told me so. He had passed the morbid age between boyhood and manhood, his head in the air, his gaze upon the stars, and what he read now did not trouble him.

And as the months flew by without the expected revelation, I breathed more freely. His heart was so clean that the suggestion of forbidden things made no impression upon it. He already accepted suffering, sin, disease, as part of the lot of a too complex society, but he made few comments upon his reading and these were perfunctory. He was so free from guile that I actually believe he could have been given access to any library without fear of contamination.

In November Jack Ballard arrived for a visit of a few days and

announced that his father had bought a house in New York which was to be ready for occupancy after Jerry's birthday. As Jack is to occupy a prominent place in these pages, I may as well announce at once that at this time he had reached the age of thirty-five, had kept most of his hair, was slightly inclined to corpulency, and wore gay cravats which matched his handkerchiefs, shirts and socks, the "sartorial symphony," as he described it. He still kept office hours from two to three on Thursdays and refused all efforts on the part of his father to make him take life other than as a colossal joke. He had not married, though I do not doubt that there were many who would have nabbed him quickly enough.

In his previous visits to Horsham Manor Jack had, at no little cost, repressed his speech into accord with my teachings, and Jerry was very fond of him. They fished, swam and sparred by day, and in the evenings Jack told stories of hunting in foreign countries to which Jerry listened wide-eyed.

But now, it seemed, his visit had a purport. There was just a suggestion of swagger in Jack's manner at the dinner table where, to Jerry's surprise, he wore a jacket and a fluted shirt.

At the boy's comment, Jack inhaled deeply of his cigarette (another operation which Jerry always regarded with a certain awe) and stated the object of his visit, which was nothing less than that of sartorially equipping Jerry for the fray.

"To be well-dressed, my boy," he said gayly, "is to show the finishing touch of a perfect culture. Without well-fitting garments no man is complete. I am going to clothe you, Jerry,

from the skin out. That's my privilege. I shall be the framemaker for Roger's *magnum opus*. And not over my dead body shall you wear after December twelfth a tartan-cravat." (Jerry fingered at the gay bit of ribbon at his neck.) "If you will remember, our friend Ruskin said that the man who wears a tartan-cravat will most surely be damned."

As you will observe. Jack Ballard exactly defined sophistication, root and branch. But his sophistries were always colorful and ornamental and of course Jerry laughed.

"I'll take your word for it, Uncle Jack," he said. "But you know I rather like color."

"Of course, in a rainbow, my boy. But in a cravat—no! The cravat is the chevron of gentility. You shall see. Symphonies in browns and gray-greens! I'll make you a heart-breaker."

"Why do you put such rubbish in his head, Ballard?" I said testily.

"Because he's got quite enough essential matter there already," he laughed. "For ten years you've been packing him with facts. I have a feeling that if one only shook Jerry a little, he would disgorge them all—dates of battles, maxims, memorabilia of all sorts, a heterogeneous mess. He's full to the brim, I tell you, and ready to explode. Suppose he did! How would you like to be hit in the midriff by an apothegm of Cicero, or be hamstrung by the subjunctive pluperfect of an irregular French verb?"

Jerry was laughing immoderately, though I admit such blackface pleasantry appealed little to my sense of humor. But

I found myself smiling. "Surely you don't expect to avert this catastrophe by providing Jerry with a new cravat?" I urged.

"That is precisely what I *do* expect," he said. "You've had your fling at him, Pope. I'm going to have mine. Tomorrow a tailor will arrive, also a haberdasher and a bootmaker. Jerry will be measured from top to toe. The mountain is coming to Mahomet."

"Let's be sure no mouse is born," I said dryly.

"Six feet two of country mouse," he roared. "Oh, Pope, don't you worry. We'll show you a thing or two, won't we, Jerry?"

The tailor, the haberdasher and the bootmaker came, saw and measured, while Jack sat in the background, with a sheaf of plates of men's clothing in his lap, and gave directions. Jerry must have felt a great deal like a fool during the operation for I'm sure he looked one. But Ballard had his way and not until night did he leave us to peace and our own devices.

The time for the boy's emergence approached, alas, too quickly. A change had come over the spirit of Jerry's dreams. I saw that he was eager to go. It seemed that he already stood on tiptoe peering forth, eager, straining at his leash. And since he was no longer content at Horsham Manor, I reasoned, with regret, that the sooner he went the better. I had done all I could for him. His destiny was now in the lap of the gods.

Everything had been carefully arranged. The Ballards, elder and younger, were to take him to the new house in town where Christopher would look after him. At first Jerry would not listen to the arrangement. I had for so long been his guide and

philosopher I must continue his friend. He wanted me with him in New York. But to this I demurred. Much as I disliked the thought of separation, I had made up my mind that he must go alone, cut adrift from all moral support. I had wished to go away, for having saved practically all my salary for ten years I was now independent, but at Jerry's insistent pleading we compromised. For the present I would stay on at the Manor and finish my book.

Jerry's birthday dinner was an impressive affair. With the two Ballards came the five solemn co-executors of John Benham's will—Mr. Stewardson, Mr. da Costa, Mr. Wrenn, Mr. Walsenberg and Mr. Duhring. And these, with Jerry, Radford, Flynn, the boxer, and myself made up the company. Jerry had insisted on having Flynn and no amount of urging could dissuade him. Flynn was his friend, he said, more his friend than Mr. Wrenn, Mr. Duhring or indeed any of the others whom he barely knew by sight. And so Flynn came.

The elders were solemn and significant, Jerry, at the head of the table, wearing for the first time his new finery (under the hypnotism, as he confessed in a whisper, of the vast expanse of white shirt-front), trying to look as though he were enjoying himself. Radford and I were mere onlookers. Flynn was acutely miserable. Had it not been for Jack Ballard I fear the conversation would have degenerated into a discussion of the merits and possibilities of Jerry's many "companies." But every time that that danger threatened the irrepressible Jack demolished it with an anecdote. He wasn't going to have Jerry's bud nipped so early,

as his own had been, by the frost of finance. By the time we had reached the roast, and the champagne, the plutocrats seemed to realize that the occasion was a birthday party and not a board meeting.

Over the port there were speeches, toasts by the plutocrats, one by one, to the newly risen Railroad King, while Jerry grasped the arms of his chair, a ballet dancer's smile on his lips, trying to look happy. But when Jack got up he laughed genuinely.

"Gentlemen, I've known our host of this evening almost since he was born. I have watched with solicitude the rearing of this infant. I am his fairy godfather. I got Canby. Thanks to my wisdom, Jerry has now safely emerged from the baby diseases, and confronts the world in a boiled shirt. He has kindly consented, I think, against the advice of his tutor, to permit me to put the finishing touches on his education.

"Jerry has already been proposed at three excellent clubs, to two of which he has been elected today. I have warned him against the insidious cocktail and the deadly cigarette" (here Jack puffed at one vigorously) "and have advised him that ladies were designed by their Maker for purely ornamental purposes. I am not sure that he has taken my word for it and will probably propose to verify my statement according to his reading of aesthetics. I wish him all success in the purely scientific side of his investigations.

"As to his career, gentlemen, I warn you that he will choose it for himself. If you don't believe me, I will ask you carefully to examine the breadth and squareness of his chin. In proposing

Jerry Benham's health, a superfluous proceeding at the best, I don't think I can pay him a higher tribute than in saying that in addition to being both a scholar and a gentleman, he is also the best heavyweight boxer I have ever seen, in the ring or out of it, and that anyone who expects to make him do anything he does not want to do, will be a subject for commiseration—or the coroner. Gentlemen, Jerry Benham!"

Having discharged this bombshell into the ranks of the plutocrats, Jack sat down. Of course, everybody laughed, and while they were laughing Flynn awkwardly got up, perspiring profusely, first shooting his cuffs and then fingering at his neckband. "Misther Ballard's right, gents. He's right. I don't know much about books, but if Masther Jerry's as good at edjication as he is wid his fists, then all I've got to say is that he's *some* perffessor. I've been workin' wid him on an' off these four year an' all I'd loike to say to you, gents, is just this: Don't crowd him, *don't crowd him*, gents, because he's got an uppercut like a ton o' coal."

Flynn sat down amid applause and Jerry rose, flushing happily. I think what Flynn had said pleased him more than all that had preceded it.

"My friends," he said quietly, "I am glad to see you here and hope that I may prove worthy of your good opinions. I'm grateful to you and Mr. Ballard, Mr. Stewardson, Mr. da Costa, Mr. Walsenberg, Mr. Wrenn and Mr. Duhring for all that you've done for me in here, but I want you all to know that it's to Roger Canby

that I owe my greatest debt, to Roger Canby, my tutor, brother, mother, father,—friend."

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