

CHAPTER II

BEFORE SCHOOL

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When I recall my early life I am surprised and grieved to remember some deplorable instincts which certainly were not inherited. Once when taken on a visit to Easneye, I was enjoying the phase of the catapult and had acquired considerable skill. I can hardly believe it now, but I certainly did repeatedly pick off thrushes' nests in the small fir trees at Easneye while the thrush was sitting. The noise she made in dashing off is a shameful memory.

It must have been about the time that I invited Smith, the well-known butler, to witness my skill with the catapult at Grosvenor Crescent. About half-way up the enormous staircase hung the portrait which the King of the Belgians had given to Father, when he attended a conference on Africa at Brussels, and I remember getting Smith to express scepticism when I said that I, from near the front door, could put a stone through his nose. I proceeded to do this, and what was much worse, I don't think I ever confessed. It showed prophetic instinct, because this man proved a blood-thirsty tyrant on the Congo, and later on the portrait was rightly removed from any place of honour. If Tom finds the portrait some day when he clears his stores, he will find a hole through the canvas where my stone hit the old villain.

If I am to continue my confessions, I ought to record the time when the Colne Cottage garden contained a small greenhouse in the S.E. corner of the little old garden. This was disused and

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full of snails. I am ashamed to say that I taught Marly the sport of attacking these snails, as they moved along, with schoolboy's percussion-cap pistols, which, when discharged at their distended horns, made them suddenly shrink into their shells. I don't think I corrupted Marley with another sport which occupied me when a little boy, when Mother was being tended by Ahmar at the looking-glass facing the great window of Mother's bedroom. Hidden by this from her and Ahmar, I enjoyed tearing up the flies at the foot of the window. I remember that Ahmar used to tell Mother of my sins, for instance of my having broken the glass of some picture with my bow and arrow, which I refused to admit. Mother was unwilling to believe her charges.

Father's horses were a great feature of our earlier time. When I was still small I remember his fury when he lost his favourite "Zanzibar". This horse was being ridden as his second horse by a groom, and was jumped on to a stake by Obelisk Wood. He bred one or two foals every year, and very good they were. The most lovely hackneys I ever saw were his chestnuts "Danube" and "Cyprus", names recording events in the year of birth or acquisition, as did also "Congo", "High Sheriff", "Zanzibar" and "Essex".

It was no doubt Father's clever plan to educate us by plans which we thought were our own invention, and he left us to make what we liked of such things as steam engines, the raft made of

brewery casks, and the inflatable boat, which could be worn as a waterproof coat. All these things led to efforts, and to reading up new subjects.

The chief influences on me, apart from parents, came from visits and from animals. Marly and I were engrossed in lizards, pigeons, rabbits, snakes and guinea-pigs. Of other animals, I think I was most fond of the dormouse which I found in the forest hibernating in a ball of leaves, and kept secretly at Harrow. Secondly, of a family of kestrels which I brought up, when kept from school one summer by ringworm, and tried to train for hawking.

We lived a very isolated life, seeing hardly any children except the Noels. Our governess was not social, and not young or athletic. It might have been better for our natural shyness if we had seen more people. Even at Cromer, where there were cousins, Miss Jay led us to dislike them. We must have had most of our social life from the company of our parents.

Father rode with us several times a week, and I seem to recollect constant walks to the home farm. Every Tuesday we rode to Waltham, and every Friday to Epping, as he was chairman of the Bench at both. I myself when I came to have children and we had a schoolroom at the Bury, never dared to interrupt lessons, but he did so constantly; and we owe him ever so much

for defying the governess in order to take us to shows and public events. I remember visits to the London Fire Brigade, the Buckingham Palace stables, the Bible Society House, and he was very fond of the show at the Westminster Aquarium.

I wonder what public occasion it was when I was handed along over the heads of ^a dense crowd. In Norfolk he took me to Autumn shoots, where I must have been toughened by walking and standing all day long, and returning in the evening soaking wet on an outside seat, when I remember him saying to somebody, "It doesn't matter their being wet if you can wrap them up warm".

A great thing he did for us was to make us fond of birds. I remember his carrying a nesting-box into the house with the tit sitting on the eggs to show the bird to Mother; and one of his frequent delights was to bring out one of the magnificent volumes of Gould's Birds, and turn over the lovely plates with us. Gould was regarded as something almost sacred because of its superb get-up. We did not turn the pages ourselves because we might crease them or soil them. Every picture was amply worth hanging on a sitting-room wall. He taught us to distinguish harmless snakes from adders, and one result was that we brought snakes into the house. Then they got loose. In the northern wing the servants who lived there in large numbers refused to stay in their rooms, and migrated to the swanky rooms on the gallery of the hall.

When Tor went to school he became my leader in the holidays, and for many years we seem to have amused ourselves without much

companionship from Father. It must have been his deliberate plan of education to let us invent our amusements, and he encouraged us with equipment for them. I don't remember his joining us in fishing or birdnesting, and yet he must have carefully provided us with the nesting ladder and the tackle, the canoe, the carpentering at the estate wood yard, and also with toys that I never dared to supply to my boys for fear of danger, namely, steam engines and toy cannons.

One of Father's inventions was, as he said, to teach ponies to lift their feet by galloping across Nazing Common where it was most thick with ant-hills. I suppose he did this to try to rid us of funk, as the ponies inevitably stumbled. Is it possible that he did not know that Tor and I fired cannons to our imminent danger? It seems likely - because Tor's amusement was to fill the cannon with gunpowder to the muzzle, and make it burst. On the other hand, Tor was so honest that I don't think he ever would have concealed his prank, and also, how did he get the gunpowder-flask except from Father?

It seems to me extraordinary that private school-boys of twelve should not be limited to shooting ferretted rabbits, but should also shoot with a party, as we did for a whole week on end at the Cromer January shoots, when we school-boys were collected at Colne House. Certainly the grown-ups who joined the parties without the motives attaching to Father's, showed some courage. I remember a woodcock flying low along the side of a covert and several boys blazing at it, followed by yells from Bertie Barclay in the

covert. He came out at the end of the beat protesting loudly and saying the battle of Waterloo was nothing to it. But the boys were merely convulsed with laughter.

Mother had become an invalid before the time I can remember, and I have no mental picture of her walking about even in the garden. Considering this, it was extraordinary that she was the main feature of our lives.

A memorable incident was the Bible reading from one o'clock until lunch. We schemed to keep her gossiping until the gong rang. This had the double advantage of being more enjoyable than the Bible, and of compelling her to keep us for Bible reading after lunch, taking the time out of the hours of our lessons.

Somehow one has not the impression of the parents bothering about us very much, but indeed this was part of their clever plan. It certainly sees^m that the young of later days, whom we in our turn seemed to treat with far more attention, and to whom we gave far more time, must be equally unaware of the constant efforts made for them.

An exception was Father's riding with us. When it came to hunting he seemed to be teaching us enterprise by the plan of leaving us to our fate. We must all have memories of him charging at fences, practising his well-known maxim, "Sit back and hit him"; leaving us to follow, without ever looking back

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to see how we fared. Jumping fences in cold blood was an unusual form of education for children. I remember such an occasion when riding to a meet at Nazing. We had got past Fern Hall, and he wanted to explore a new line north of the brook. He charged at a stiff hedge out of the road, and I in terror was compelled to follow. I very nearly came off and didn't find it at all an agreeable preliminary to the day's hunting.

As far as I can remember, technique was disregarded in those days. I don't think we were even taught how to keep close to the saddle, nor in shooting did we ever have shooting lessons. I went to a shooting school for the first time when I was about twenty-five, and found what a huge advantage it was.

At a later stage I must have been an awful nuisance to Father through my ungovernable longing to make improvements at Warlies. In early days the view from the library, which was the usual sitting-room, was marred, in my opinion, by iron railings just beyond the lawn, and groups of trees just outside them were also surrounded by rings of railings. Having seen somewhere the merit of a sunk fence, I would not rest until I had got Father to remove the railings to their present position, which is certainly better, but which necessitated his enclosing in the garden two or three acres which were not wanted.

I wonder whether he gave in in order to avoid trouble, or to educate me. An event which looked like the former occurred when a week-end party was leaving on a Monday morning, and among them

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Cecil Harris. As we drove away, the crash of a falling ~~plane~~ tree roused my indignation. It was the plane tree which stood behind the big ilex, and Father had long wished to remove it. I had dissuaded him, but he at last decided to be bullied no longer, and had ordered the tree to be cut on that Monday. Finding the men had arrived to cut it before we had left home, he took Cecil Harris into his confidence, and asked him to get me away before the tree fell. My bitterness was all the greater because Cecil felt no sympathy with me and was hugely amused.

The other theory, that he did things to educate me, was illustrated by his giving me the Bury when I was still only just of age. Ostensibly this unusual gift was made in order to qualify me for a Parliamentary vote.

THE BROOK

I think that great importance really attaches to the use we made of the Cobbin brook. Considering that most boys of our sort are introduced to trout fishing early in life, and know hardly anything about catching roach with dough, or perch with worms, it was a feat on my father's part to get his boys to find complete satisfaction in the fishing provided by a small brook - in fact, so small that it stopped running in summer.

We got exciting sport out of sticklebacks and minnows. It was thrilling to get a gudgeon or a loach, a chub or a carp was big sport. We never caught a pike on a line, but they became an exciting feature when Tor had somehow secured a minute drag

net that it held sticklebacks. Dragging the brook with this net remained an exciting sport long after we had gone to Harrow, and it came to be combined with cooking the catch for a picnic lunch. We discovered that minnows wrapped in wet paper and roasted in the ashes of a wood fire made excellent eating; or at least, good enough when ^lfavoured by the romantic excitement which the brook offered.

The net was only about 8 or 10 feet long, and less than 3 feet deep. The pools had to be cleared of sticks and stones to begin with, because, if left in the pool, they entangled the net in these diminutive pools, and sometimes, when the brook had ceased to run for a time, the pike had eaten every other fish in the pool.

Perhaps the most memorable catch was when we took to setting night lines. In the pool above the dam where the water was deep, the eels had been fattening on a sheep which had fallen in and been drowned. Charlie, in the neighbourhood of the sheep, had an eel of 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., which was really remarkable for such a tiny stream.

Long after this, Charles de Bunsen and I, when tired of pike fishing in Cobbin Pond, tried our hand at spearing gudgeon with a penknife tied to the end of a stiff rod. It was a sport that might well have developed if we had thought of it sooner. But anyhow, we got out of this brook an amazing amount of education, and we learnt the attraction of small and simple things.

I learnt to swim in the Temple pond, but it was in the brook that I had already learnt to float, and I remember the exciting sensation when I was just able to keep clear of the bottom, and floating was barely possible.

VICTORIAN CUSTOMS

Life at Warlies represented the country house of the past, with a mistress brought up in the "lady bountiful" tradition. Every day at lunch a basket of peculiar shape was seen on the side-board. It contained two jars, in which my mother placed some of the savoury meats, and sweets which had formed the meal. As Mother could not walk the governess and we were employed to take these to some sick or needy cottagers, and this formed our outing almost every day when we were not riding with Father. As to the attitude of the village people themselves, there were many old women who still curtsied to Father when they passed him on the road, and even to us children. It was a notable relic of the past when, on Christmas Eve, all the cottage tenants assembled in front of the portico before ~~which~~ long trestle tables laden with huge blocks of beef. These functions were always attended by all of us. Father made a short speech. Then the agent began calling the names, and each man filed past, carrying off his chunk of beef in a cloth which he had brought.

There were four long portable benches kept in the passage just outside the hall, and brought in for prayers. At the back sat a goodly array of footmen, while on Sunday evenings grooms and laundry maids also assembled. Footmen in those days were supplied with a great variety of dress. When they did duty on the box of the carriage they wore top hats with curious composition rosettes stuck to the side, and at dinner parties in London it was common

for a footman to wear plush breeches and a specially elaborate tail coat, and to have his hair thickly powdered. Footmen were highly valued by Tor and me because they enabled us to get together a Warlies Cricket XI.

Tor

I cannot estimate what I owe to him because he was ready, not only to enjoy things with me, although four years older, but he put himself to the trouble of correcting me when I needed it. Not many boys would combine the two. I have a keen recollection of my discomfiture when we were at one of the winter parties going after sea birds on the Norfolk coast, and lunching, sitting on the sand. I, being about that time at a private school, was making myself a nuisance in some way which I forget, when I suddenly felt a bottle of very cold ginger beer being poured down the back of my neck, and realised Tor's drastic efficiency.

PRE-SCHOOL

When I recall the life at home before I went to school I am deeply surprised and grieved to note some deplorable instincts which certainly were not inherited. Once when taken on a visit to Easneye, I was enjoying the phase of the catapult and had acquired considerable skill. I can hardly believe it now, but I certainly did repeatedly pick off thrushes nests in the small fir trees at Easneye while the thrush was sitting. The noise she made in dashing off is still clear to me.

It must have been about the same time that I invited Smith, the well-known butler, to witness my skill with the catapult at Grosvenor Crescent. About half-way up the enormous stairs hung the portrait which the King of the Belgians had given to Father, and I remember getting Smith to express scepticism when I said I could put a stone through his nose. I proceeded to do this, and what was much worse, I don't think I ever confessed. It showed prophetic instinct because this man proved a blood-thirsty tyrant on the Congo, and later on the portrait was rightly removed from any place of honour. If Tom finds the portrait some day when he clears the store room, he will find a hole through the canvas where my stone hit the old villain.

If I am to continue my confessions, I ought to record that time when the Colne Cottage garden contained a small greenhouse in the S.E. corner of the little old garden. This was disused and full of snails. I am ashamed to say I taught Marley the sport of attacking these snails as they moved along, with school

boys' percussion cap pistols, which, when discharged at their distended horns, made them suddenly shriek into their shells.

I don't think I corrupted Marley with another sport which occupied me when a little boy when Mother was being tended by Ahmar at the looking glass facing the great window of Mother's bedroom.

Hidden by this from ~~Mother~~^{her} and Ahmar, I enjoyed tearing up the flies at the foot of the window. I remember that Ahmar used to tell Mother of my sins, especially my having broken the glass of some picture with my bow and arrow which I refused to admit, but Mother was unwilling to believe her charges.

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Of other animals I think I was most fond of the doormouse which I found in the forest hibernating in a ball of leaves and kept secretly at Harrow. Secondly of a family of kestrels, which I brought up when kept from school by ringworm one summer, and tried to train for hawking.

It was no doubt Father's clever plan to educate us by experiences which we thought were our own invention, and the same applies to steam engines; the raft made of brewery casks; and the inflatable boat which could be worn as a waterproof coat. All these things led to efforts, and to reading up new subjects.

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pre-school cont.

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Perhaps the most memorable catch was when we took to setting night lines in the pool above the dam where the water was deep and the eels had been fattening on a sheep which had fallen in and been drowned. Charlie, in the neighbourhood of the sheep, had an eel of $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., which was really remarkable for such a tiny stream.

Long after this, Charles de Bunsen and I, when tired of pike-fishing in Cobbin Pond, tried our hand at spearing gudgeon with a penknife tied to the end of a stiff rod. It was a sport that might well have developed if we had thought of it sooner. But anyhow, we got out of this brook an amazing amount of education, and we learnt the attraction of small and simple things.

I learnt to swim in the Temple pond, but it was in the brook that I had already learnt to float, and I remember the sensation when I was just able to keep clear of the bottom, and floating was just possible.

VICTORIAN CUSTOMS.

Life at ^{Worles}~~Worles~~ represented the country house of the past, with a mistress brought up in the "lady bountiful" tradition. Every day at lunch, a basket of peculiar shape was seen on the side-board. It contained two jars, in which my mother placed some of the savoury meats, and sweets which had formed the meal. As Mother could not walk, the governess and we were employed to take these to some sick or needy cottagers, and this formed our outing almost every day when we were not riding with Father. As to the attitude of the village people themselves, there were many old women who still curtsied when they passed Mother on the road, and even us children. At Christmas, it was a noble relic of the past, when all of

the cottage tenants assembled in front of the portico, before long trestled tables laden with huge blocks of beef. These functions were always attended by all of us, and my father made a short speech before the agent began calling the names, and each man filed past, carrying off his chunk of beef in a cloth which he had brought.

There were four long portable benches kept in the passage just outside the hall, and brought in for prayers. At the back sat a goodly array of footmen, and it seems strange in these days that these men should have been supplied with a great variety of dress. When they did duty on the top of the carriage they wore top hats with curious composition rosettes stuck to the side, and at dinner parties in London it was common for a footman to wear plush knickers and a special elaborate tail coat, and to have his hair thickly powdered.

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CHAPTER II. BEFORE SCHOOL

When I recall my early life I am surprised and grieved to remember some deplorable instincts which certainly were not inherited. Once when taken on a visit to Easneye, I was enjoying the phase of the catapult and had acquired considerable skill. I can hardly believe it now, but I certainly did repeatedly pick off thrushes' nests in the small fir trees at Easneye while the thrush was sitting. The noise she made in dashing off is a shameful memory to me.

It must have been about the same time that I invited Smith, the well-known butler, to witness my skill with the catapult at Grosvenor Crescent. About half-way up the enormous staircase hung the portrait which the King of the Belgians had given to Father, when he attended a conference on Africa at Brussels, and I remember getting Smith to express scepticism when I said that I, from near the front door, could put a stone through his nose. I proceeded to do this, and what was much worse, I don't think I ever confessed. It showed prophetic instinct, because this man proved a blood-thirsty tyrant on the Congo, and later on the portrait was rightly removed from any place of honour. If Tom finds the portrait some day when he clears his stores, he will find a hole through the canvas where my stone hit the old villain.

If I am to continue my confessions, I ought to record the time when the Colne Cottage garden contained a small greenhouse in the S.E. corner of the little old garden. This was disused and full of snails. I am ashamed to say that I taught Marley the sport of

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attacking these snails as they moved along, with schoolboys' percussion-cap pistols, which, when discharged at their distended horns, made them suddenly shrink into their shells. I don't think I corrupted Marley with another sport which occupied me when a little boy, when Mother was being tended by Ahmar at the looking glass facing the great window of Mother's bedroom. Hidden by this from her and Ahmar, I enjoyed tearing up the flies at the foot of the window. I remember that Ahmar used to tell Mother of my sins, for instance of my having broken the glass of some picture with my bow and arrow, which I refused to admit. Mother was unwilling to believe her charges.

Father's horses were a great feature of our earlier time. When I was still small I remember his fury when he lost his favourite "Zanzibar". This horse was being ridden as his second horse by a groom, and was jumped on to a stake by Obelisk Wood. He bred one or two foals every year, and very good they were. The most lovely hackneys I ever saw were his chestnuts "Danube" and "Cyprus", names recording events in the year of birth, or acquisition, as did also "Congo", "High Sheriff", "Zanzibar" and "Essex".

It was no doubt Father's clever plan to educate us by plans which we thought were our own inventions, and he left us to make what we liked of such things as steam engines, the raft made of brewery casks, and the inflatable boat, which could be worn as a waterproof coat. All these things led to efforts, and to reading up new subjects.

The chief influences on me, apart from parents, came from visits and animals. Marly and I were engrossed in lizards, pigeons, rabbits, snails and guinea pigs. Of other animals, I think I was most fond of the dormouse which I found in the forest hibernating in a ball of leaves, and kept secretly at Harrow. Secondly of a family of kestrels which I brought up, when kept from school by ringworm one summer, and tried to train for hawking.

We lived a very isolated life, seeing hardly any children except the Noels. Our governess was not social, and not young or athletic. It might have been better for our natural shyness if we had seen more people. Even at Cromer, where there were cousins, Miss Jay led us to dislike them. We must have had most of our social life from the company of our parents.

Father rode with us several times a week, and I seem to recollect constant walks to the home farm. Every Tuesday we rode to Waltham, and every Friday to Epping, as he was chairman of the Bench at both. ^{I myself,} When I came to have children and we had a schoolroom at the Bury, never dared to interrupt lessons, but he did so constantly, and we owe him ever so much for defying the governess in order to take us to shows and public events. I remember visits to the London Fire Brigade, the Buckingham Palace stables, the Bible Society House, and he was very fond of the show at the Westminster Aquarium.

I wonder what public occasion it was when I was handed along over the heads of a dense crowd. In Norfolk he took me to Autumn shoots, where I must have been toughened by walking and

standing all day long, and returning in the evening soaking wet on an outside seat, when I remember him saying to somebody, "It doesn't matter their being wet if you wrap them up warm".

A great thing he did for us ^{was} to make us fond of birds. I remember his carrying a nesting-box into the house with the tit sitting on the eggs to show the bird to Mother; and one of his frequent delights was to bring out one of the magnificent volumes of Gould's Birds, and turn over the lovely plates with us. Gould was regarded as something almost sacred because of its superb get-up. We did not turn the pages ourselves, because we might crease or soil them. Every picture was amply worth hanging on a sitting-room wall. He taught us to distinguish harmless snakes from adders, and one result was the we brought snakes into the house. Then they got loose. In the northern wing the servants, who lived there in large numbers, then refused to stay in their rooms, and migrated to the swanky rooms on the gallery of the hall.

When Tor went to school he became my leader in the holidays, and for many years we seem to have amused ourselves without much companionship from Father. It must have been his deliberate plan of education to let us invent our amusements, and he encouraged us with equipment for them. I don't remember his joining us in fishing or ~~birds~~^{birds} nesting, and yet he must have carefully provided us
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tackle, the canoe, the carpentering at the estate wood yard, and also with toys that I never dared to supply to my boys for fear of danger, namely, steam engines and toy cannons.

One of Father's inventions was, as he said to teach ponies to lift their feet gy galloping across Nazing Common where it was most thick with ant hills. I suppose he did this to try and rid us of funk, as the ponies inevitably stumbled.

Is it possible that he did not know that Tor and I fired cannons to our imminent danger ? It seems likely - because Tor's amusement was to fill the cannon with gunpowder to the muzzle, and make it burst. On the other hand Tor was so honest that I don't think he ever would have concealed his prank, and also, how did he get the gunpowder flask except from Father ?

It seems to be extraordinary that private school boys of twelve should not be limited to shooting ferreted rabbits, but should also shoot with a party, as we did for a whole week on end at the Cromer January shoots, when we school boys were collected at Colne House. Certainly the grown-ups who joined the parties without the motive attaching to Father's showed some courage. I remember a woodcock flying low along the side of a covert and several boys blazing at it, followed by yells from Bertie Barclay in the covert. He came out at the end of the beat, protesting loudly and saying the battle of Waterloo was nothing to it. But the boys were merely convulsed with laughter.

Mother had become an invalid before the time I can remember, and I have no mental picture of her walking about even in the garden. Considering this, it was extraordinary that she was the main feature of our lives.

A memorable incident was the Bible reading from one o'clock to lunch. We schemed to keep her gossiping until the gong rang. This had the double advantage of being more enjoyable than the Bible, and of compelling her to keep us for Bible reading after lunch, taking the time out of the hours of our lessons.

Somehow one has not the impression of the parents bothering about us very much, but indeed this was part of their clever plan. It certainly seems that the young of later days, whom we in our turn seemed to treat with far more attention, and to whom we gave far more time, must be equally unaware of the constant efforts made for them.

An exception was Father's riding with us. When it came to hunting he seemed to be teaching us enterprise by the plan of leaving us to our fate. We must all have memories of him charging at fences, practising his well known maxim, "Sit back and hit him"; leaving us to follow, without every looking back to see how we fared. Jumping fences in cold blood was an unusual form of education for children. I remember, such an occasion when riding to a meet at Nazing. We had got past Fern Hall, and he wanted to explore a new line north of the brook. He charged at a stiff hedge out of the

road, and I in terror was compelled to follow. I very nearly came off and didn't find at all an agreeable preliminary to the day's hunting.

As far as I can remember, technique was disregarded in those days. I don't think we were even taught how to keep close to the saddle, nor in shooting did we ever have shooting lessons. I went to a shooting school for the first time when I was twenty-five, and found what a huge advantage it was.

At a later stage I must have been an awful nuisance to Father through my ungovernable longing to make improvements at Warlies. In early days the view from the library, which was the usual sitting-room, was marred in my opinion by iron railings just beyond the lawn, and groups of trees just outside them were also surrounded by rings of railings. Having seen somewhere the merit of a sunk fence, I would not rest until I had got Father to remove the railings to their present position which is certainly better, but which necessitated his enclosing in the garden two or three acres which were not wanted.

I wonder whether he gave in in order to avoid trouble or to educate me. An event which looked like the former occurred when a weekend party was leaving on a Monday morning, and among them Cecil Harris. As we drove away, the crash of a falling tree roused my indignation. It was the plane tree which stood behind the big ilex, and Father had long wished to remove it. I had dissuaded him, but he at last decided to be bullied no longer,

and had ordered the tree to be cut on that Monday. Finding the men had arrived to cut it before we had left home, he took Cecil Harris into his confidence, and asked him to get me away before the tree fell. My bitterness was all the greater because Cecil felt no sympathy with me and was hugely amused.

The other theory, that he did things to educate me, was illustrated by his giving me the Bury when I was still only just of age. Ostensibly this unusual gift was made in order to qualify me for a Parliamentary vote.

THE BROOK

I think that great importance really attached to the use we made of the Cobbin brook. Considering that most boys of our sort are introduced to trout fishing early in life, and know hardly anything about catching roach with dough, or perch with worms it was a feat on my father's part to get his boys to find complete satisfaction in the fishing provided by a small brook - in fact, so small that it stopped running in summer.

We got exciting sport out of sticklebacks and minnows. It was thrilling to get a gudgeon or a loach; a chub or a carp was big sport. We never caught a pike on a line, but they became an exciting feature when Tor had somehow secured a minute drag net with a mesh so fine that it held sticklebacks. Dragging the brook with this net remained an exciting sport long after we had to Harrow, and it came to be combined with cooking the catch for a picnic lunch. We discovered that minnows wrapped in

wet paper and roasted in the ashes of a wood fire made excellent eating; or at least, good enough when flavoured by the romantic excitement which the brook offered.

The net was only about 8 or 10 feet long, and less than 3 feet deep. The pools had to be cleared of sticks and stones to begin with, because, if left in the pool, they entangled the net and the fish got under it. We often got small pike in these diminutive pools, and sometimes, when the brook had ceased to run for a time, the pike had eaten every other fish in the pool.

Perhaps the most memorable catch was when we took to setting night lines. In the pool above the dam where the water was deep the eels had been fattening on a sheep which had fallen in and been drowned. Charlie, in the neighbourhood of the sheep, had an eel of 2½ lb., which was really remarkable for such a tiny trap.

Long after this, Charles denBunsen and I, when tired of pike fishing in Cobbin Pond, tried our hand at spearing gudgeon with a penknife tied to the end of a stiff rod. It was a sport which might well have developed if we had thought of it sooner. But anyhow, we got out of this brook an amazing amount of education, and we learnt the attraction of small and simple things.

I learnt to swim in the Temple pond, but it was in the brook that I had already learnt to float, and I remember the exciting sensation when I was just able to keep clear of the bottom, and floating was barely possible.

VICTORIAN CUSTOMS

Life at Warlies represented the country house of the past, with a mistress brought up in the "lady bountiful" tradition. Every day at lunch, a basket of peculiar shape was seen on the side-board. It contained two jars, in which my mother placed some of the savoury meats and sweets which had formed the meal. As Mother could not walk, the governess and we were employed to take these to some sick or needy cottagers, and this formed our outing almost every day when we were not riding with Father. As to the attitude of the village people themselves, there were many old women who still curtsied to Father when they passed him on the road, and even to us children. It was a notable relic of the past, when, on Christmas Eve, all the cottage tenants assembled in front of the portico, before long trestle tables laden with huge blocks of beef. These functions were always attended by all of us. Father made a short speech, then the agent began calling the names, and each man filed past, carrying off his chunk of beef in a cloth which he had brought.

There were four long portable benches kept in the passage just outside the hall, and brought in for prayers. At the back sat a goodly array of footmen, while on Sunday evenings grooms and laundrymaids also assembled. Footmen in those days were supplied with a great variety of dress. When they did duty on the box of the carriage they wore top hats with curious composition rosettes

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stuck to the side, and at dinner parties in London it was common for a footman to wear plush breeches and a specially elaborate tail coat, and to have his hair thickly powdered. Footmen were highly valued by Tor and me because they enabled us to get together a Warlies cricket XI.

TOR

I cannot estimate what I owe to him because he was ready, not only to enjoy things with me, although four years older, but he put himself to the trouble of correcting me when I needed it. Not many boys would combine the two. I have a keen recollection of my discomfiture when we were at one of the winter parties going after sea birds on the Norfolk coast, and lunching, sitting on the sand. I, being about that time at a private school, was making myself a nuisance in some way which I forget, when I suddenly felt a bottle of very cold ginger beer being poured down the back of my neck, and realised Tor's drastic efficiency.

CHAPTER II. BEFORE SCHOOL

When I recall the life at home before I went to school I am ~~deeply~~ surprised and grieved to note some deplorable instincts which certainly were not inherited. Once when taken on a visit to Basneye, I was enjoying the phase of the catapult and had acquired considerable skill. I can hardly believe it now, but I certainly did repeatedly pick off thrushes' nests in the small fir trees at Basneye while the thrush was sitting. The noise she made in dashing off is ~~still clear~~ ^{a shameful memory} to me.

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schoolboys' percussion cap pistols, which, when discharged at their distended horns, made them suddenly shrink into their shells. I don't think I corrupted Marley with another sport which occupied me when a little boy, when Mother was being tended by Ahmar at the looking glass facing the great window of Mother's bedroom. Hidden by this from her and Ahmar, I enjoyed tearing up the flies at the foot of the window. I remember that Ahmar used to tell Mother of my sins, especially my ^{for instance of my} having broken the glass of some picture with my bow and arrow, which I refused to admit, but Mother was unwilling to believe her charges.

Father's horses were a great feature of our earlier time. When I was still small I remember his fury when he lost his favourite "Zanzibar" ^{This horse} which was being ridden as his second horse by a groom, and was jumped on to a stake by Obelisk Wood. He bred one or two foals every year, and very good they were. The most lovely hackneys I ever saw were his chestnuts "Danube" and "Cyprus", names recording history as was his ^{events in the year of birth of} custom. ^{acquaintance, as did also 'Conzo', High Sheriff, Zanzibar and Essex.}

Of other animals, I think I was most fond of the dormouse which I found in the forest hibernating in a ball of leaves, and kept secretly at Harrow. Secondly of a family of kestrels which I brought up, when kept from school by ringworm one summer, and tried to train for hawking.

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The chief influences on me apart from parents came from visits and from animals
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tackle, the canoe, ⁺ the carpentering at the estate wood yard, and also with toys that I never dared to supply to my boys for fear of danger, namely, steam engines and toy cannons.

~~(X)~~ ^{Insert page 23 & 24.} Mother had become an invalid before the time I can remember, and I have no mental picture of her walking about even in the garden. Considering this, it was extraordinary that she was the main feature of our lives.

A memorable incident was the ^{custom} Bible reading from one o'clock until lunch. We ^{daily} ~~schemed~~ to keep her gossiping until the gong rang. This had the double advantage of being more enjoyable than the Bible, and of compelling her to keep us for Bible reading after lunch, taking the time out of the hours of our lessons.

Somehow one has not the impression of the parents bothering about us very much, but indeed this was part of their clever plan. It certainly seemed ^A that the young of later days, whom we in our turn seemed to treat with far more attention, and to whom we gave far more time, must be equally unaware of the constant efforts made for them.

An exception was Father's riding with us. When it came to hunting he seemed to be teaching us enterprise by a ~~practice~~ ^{the plan} of leaving us to our fate. We must all have memories of him charging at fences, practising his well known maxim, "Sit back and hit him"; leaving us to follow, without ever looking back to see how we fared. Jumping fences in cold blood was an

unusual form of education for small children. I remember, ^{such an occasion} when riding to a meet at Nazing, ^{we had} when we had got past Fern Hall, and he wanted to explore a new line north of the brook, ~~he~~ charged at a stiff hedge out of the road, and I in terror was compelled to follow, on the cob called "Skimey". I very nearly came off and didn't find ^{it} ^{at all} an agreeable preliminary to the day's hunting.

As far as I can remember, technique was disregarded in those days. I don't think we were ^{even} taught how to keep close to the saddle, nor in shooting did we ever have shooting lessons. I went to a shooting school for the first time when I was about twenty-five, and found what a huge advantage it was.

^{at a later stage} later on I must have been an awful nuisance to Father through my ungovernable longings ^{in the garden & the park} to make improvements. In early days the view from the library, which was the usual sitting-room, was ^{in my opinion} marred by iron railings just beyond the lawn, and groups of trees just outside them were also surrounded by rings of railings. Having seen somewhere the merit of a sunk fence, I would not rest until I had got Father to remove the railings to their present position, which is certainly better, but ^{which} necessitated his enclosing in the garden two or three acres which were not wanted.

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I wonder whether he gave in to avoid trouble or to educate me. An event which looked like the former occurred long afterwards *a weekend* when some party was leaving on a Monday morning, and among them Cecil Harris. As we drove away, the crash of a falling *plane* tree roused my *independent* distress. It was the tree which stood behind the big ilex, and Father had long wished to remove it. I had dissuaded him, but he at last decided to be bullied no longer, and had ordered the tree to be cut on that Monday. Finding the men had arrived to cut it before we had left home, he took Cecil Harris into his confidence, and asked him to get me away before the tree fell. *My bitterness was all the greater* This I learned from Cecil Harris, *because Cecil felt no sympathy with us and was hugely amused.* owing to the plan to elude me having failed.

The other theory, that he did things to educate me, was illustrated by his giving me the Bury when I was still only just of age. *Obviously the unusual gift was made in order to qualify me for a Parliamentary vote.*

THE BROOK.

I think that great importance really attaches to the use we made of the Cobbin brook. Considering that most boys of our sort are introduced to trout fishing early in life, and know hardly anything about catching roach with dough, or perch with worms, it was a feat on ~~my~~ father's part to get his boys to find complete satisfaction in the fishing provided by a small brook - in fact, so small that it stopped running in summer.

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Perhaps the most memorable catch was when we took to setting night lines. In the pool above the dam, where the water was deep, and the eels had been fattening on a sheep which had fallen in and been drowned, ~~★~~ Charlie, in the neighbourhood of the sheep, had an eel of 2½ lbs., which was really remarkable for such a tiny stream.

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I learnt to swim in the Temple pond, but it was in the brook that I had already learnt to float, and I remember the sensation when I was just able to keep clear of the bottom, and floating was ^{barely} just possible.

VICTORIAN CUSTOMS.

Life at ^{Warrles} ~~Wareless~~ represented the country house of the past, with a mistress brought up in the "lady bountiful" tradition. Every day at lunch, a basket of peculiar shape was seen on the side-board. It contained two jars, in which my mother placed some of the savoury meats, and sweets which had formed the meal. As Mother could not walk, the governess and we were employed to take these to some sick or needy cottagers, and this formed our outing almost every day, when we were not riding with Father. As to the attitude of the village people themselves, there were many old women who still curtsied ^{to Father} when they passed ^{him} Mother on the road, and even us children. ^{to} At Christmas, it was a ^{no table} noble relic of the past, when ^{on Remembrance} all of

the cottage tenants assembled in front of the portico, before long trestled tables laden with huge blocks of beef. These functions were always attended by all of us, and ~~my~~ ^{Then} father made a short speech, before the agent began calling the names, and each man filed past, carrying off his chunk of beef in a cloth which he had brought.

There were four long portable benches kept in the passage just outside the hall, and brought in for prayers.

At the back sat a goodly array of footmen, and it seems ^{while on Sunday} ~~weird~~ ^{wendings} ~~groves~~ ^{grooms} ~~laundry~~ ^{maid} ~~also~~ ^{attended.} strange in these days that ~~these men should have been~~ ^{were} supplied with a great variety of dress. when they did duty on the ^{box} top of the carriage they wore top hats with curious composition rosettes stuck to the side, and at dinner parties in London it was common for a footman to wear plush ^{breeches} knickerbockers and a special, elaborate tail coat, and to have his hair thickly powdered.

Footmen were highly valued by Tom & me because they enabled us to get together a Warton cricket XI