Chapter 1

DOES ANCESTRY COUNT?

I TELL students at Babson Institute, Webber College and Utopia College there are three really important days in their lives—namely (1) the day when they select their ancestors; (2) the day when they select their wives or husbands; and (3) the day when they select their life vocations. Of all these days, the first—when they select their ancestors—is the most important, even though they have the least to do with it. It always makes me cross to hear people referred to as "illegitimate" children. Certainly it is not the fault of the children; *they* are legitimate enough. The criticism, if any is due, should be directed against their ancestors. The truth is that a real autobiography should be started many generations back, but publishers will not stand for it. They say that there is too much disagreement about the importance of heredity. There are several schools of heredity. Let me discuss two of these.

HOW THEORIES DIFFER

One group believes that heredity is the great determining factor in my life. This group consists of scientists who have carried on extensive laboratory investigations and experiments with cattle, hogs, monkeys, rabbits, and flies. They know that they can breed almost any characteristics by proper mating. Unfortunately, the same data that are available for animals are not available for humans. Certain famous families are used as illustrations in textbooks; but laboratory experiments on human heredity practically do not exist. The reasons are: First, that young people are unwilling to become scientific laboratories, and, second, that a generation of humans covers such a long period of time. Several generations of flies can be bred in a few weeks.

These scientists are convinced that the same laws apply to humans as to mammals. They believe that we are largely what our ancestors are, and that we are born with definite characteristics very difficult to change. When you ask them how it happens, they are more or less divided. Some believe, for instance, that I have descended primarily from some one ancestor. This ancestor may have been my father or my mother, or may have been some great-great-grandparent, living a hundred years ago. The theory is that some chromosomes or genes from the body of this latter ancestor may have kept alive and traveled,

so to speak, through the bodies of descendants until they reached my parents before becoming fertile.

Other scientists believe that each one of us is like the vertex of a triangle or pyramid, combining all the characteristics of all our ancestors. They believe that I am the spearpoint of hundreds, yea, thousands, of ancestors. There are also other theories. The fact that these scientists do not agree is one of the reasons why the second group questions the importance of heredity at all.

The second group believes that environment is the important thing in life. This group is made up more of preachers, welfare workers, and politicians than of real scientists. The psychologists, however, seem to favor the environment theory. These people believe that inheritance is of secondary importance, and that our lives depend largely upon how we were brought up. They emphasize that the examples and teachings of our parents and other relatives, together with our teachers, playmates, and neighbors, are the determining factors. They emphasize the importance of schools, neighborhoods, sanitary conditions, and especially playmates. Without doubt, environment is important. The weakness in their argument, however, is this. Even though environment is an important factor, yet it is itself largely the result of inheritance. It is almost impossible to conceive of being brought up by bad parents in a good environment. If the environment is good, it goes without saying that the ancestry is good, and usually vice versa. It almost seems as if those who advocate the importance of environment are themselves proving the case of the first group who believe that inheritance is all-important. In nine cases out of ten heredity determines environment.

SERIOUSNESS OF PREGNANCY

I belong to the first group and believe in the great importance of heredity. Its effect upon my own life is self-evident. It is manifest in connection with students with whom Mrs. Babson and I come in contact. We, of course, consider both heredity and environment, but even our study of environment is largely made as a check on heredity. We first consider heredity as a sieve, in order to take into our schools only those students who by inheritance are fitted for a business career. After students come to us, we study their inheritance, so that we may help them get into the special field of business for which they are best fitted. We, furthermore, impress upon them the importance of considering the ancestry of their future wives or husbands.

Not only does one's own health, success, and happiness depend largely on getting mated properly, but his or her greatest responsibility to mankind depends on this likewise. I mean by this that our greatest responsibility is not feeding, clothing, and sheltering ourselves; it is not the making of a name or reputation; it is rather the conceiving of children. When we bring a child into

the world we not only determine its fate, but also the fate of thousands of descendants. At the end of this book is the form which we use with students in making a simple and elementary study of this problem.

A TYPICAL ILLUSTRATION

A student at the Babson Institute was the only son of a wealthy oil operator in Oklahoma. The father had great ambitions for him to be a "captain of industry" like himself. It seemed impossible, however, to interest the boy in business; he seemed to love horses, cattle, plants, and other growing things. He often said that he wished his father had let him go to an agricultural college instead of sending him to a business college. He finally graduated, but his father was not at all satisfied with our results. Awhile after his graduation, I was speaking at the Chamber of Commerce of one of Oklahoma's leading cities. I inquired, while there, about this well-known oil operator who had made so many millions in the industry. Briefly, the story was this: The father came from a long line of small farmers, and he himself had an ordinary farm with a few head of cattle. One day he started to drill a well to secure water for the cattle. Instead of striking water, he struck oil! It was a paying well from the start, and, furthermore, it opened up an entirely new oil-field. His farm immediately became a mass of oil-wells, and he found himself a millionaire almost overnight. I saw immediately that this father was no captain of industry, in the real sense of the word, any more than a man is a captain of industry because he is a winner in the Irish Sweepstakes. The boy was right; the father was wrong.

A WONDERFUL WOMAN

As my own ancestry appears in various publications,[1] I shall not give it here. In studying this ancestry, it is evident that I came from three important strains on my father's side—namely, the Rogers, the Gorham, and the Low; also from three important strains on my mother's side—namely, the Putnam, the Stearns, and the Wise. However I got my name from the "Babson" family, and may have also inherited some important characteristics from them. I seldom heard my father or mother refer to the Babson ancestry. Only by careful effort have I been able to dig it out. Briefly, the Babson strain started with Isabel Babson, who came to this country in 1637, with a small boy. They both landed at Salem, Massachusetts. Nothing is known about the father; there may never have been a legal father, or he may have died before they sailed or during the trip.

There are no records of the "Babson" family in England—certainly not as the

[1] See *Babson Family*, published by Fred K. Babson, Riverside, Ills. Also *Babson Genealogy*, published, 1934, by the Babson Institute, Babson Park, Mass.

name is spelled today. When a boy, I was told that our family name was derived from the two words, "Babb" and "son." Studies made by me in England give evidence of this; apparently Isabel's name was also spelled Batson or Bapson at different times. Isabel Babson left Salem shortly after 1637, and went to Gloucester with her small boy. There she became a useful and beloved citizen. She had been a midwife in England and immediately became the nurse of the little new community on Cape Ann. As a token of her usefulness, the town fathers presented her, in 1648, with one of the most fertile tracts of land on Cape Ann. Industry, struggle, and independence were family characteristics. We were early taught about actions and reactions.

JAMES BABSON'S SHOP

On this tract of land her son built a little stone building, which still exists. It is located halfway between Gloucester and Rockport, on the inside state road. The son's name was James. The property now belongs to the City of Gloucester and is kept as a museum. So far as we know, James Babson never lived there; but used it as a cooperage shop. He raised on the farm the sustenance for himself and ten children, and made barrels for his spending-money. The wood was cut at a small mill less than a mile distant. It was hauled in an ox cart to the little stone house. The ox cart would back up in front of the building and the wood would be brought into the shop through low double doors, which still may be seen in the front of the building. There the staves and hoops were made. The hoops were kept soaked in a brook adjoining the stone house. The barrels were heated in a large fireplace, which still exists.

When finished, the barrels were rolled out through the above-mentioned double doors into ox carts and taken down the Joppa Road to Little Good Harbor Beach. There they were filled with dried fish and shipped to England. James lived at the corner of Joppa Road and what is now Eastern Avenue. Although his home was a mile from the little stone shop, it nevertheless was the nearest house. His property at the corner of Joppa Road and Eastern Avenue descended down through the family, and it was here that John James Babson wrote the *History of Gloucester,* in 1855-60.[2] Both the old house in which James lived and the modern house—the home of John James Babson, the historian—have been destroyed by fire. The little stone shop, however, should continue to stand as a landmark for centuries to come.

MY DIRECT MALE LINE

Statistically, the connecting links between Isabel Babson and me are as follows:

[2] Published by Proctor Bros., Gloucester, Mass., in 1860.

	Born	*Died*
Isabel Babson	March 29, 1580	April 6, 1661
James Babson	November 29, 1633	December 21, 1683
John Babson	November 27, 1660	June 27, 1737
John Babson	December 14, 1691	June 1, 1720
William Babson	November 4, 1719	November 20, 1749
William Babson	September 5, 1749	December 30, 1831
Nathaniel Babson	June 17, 1784	February 1, 1836
Gustavus Babson	February 25, 1820	October 25, 1897
Nathaniel Babson[3]	January 2, 1850	February 12, 1927
Roger W. Babson	July 6, 1875	——

I have had two sisters: Edith Low, born March 15, 1880, and died August 26, 1893; and Alice Stearns, born March 20, 1884, married April 14, 1910, to Dr. William Stewart Whittemore, of Cambridge, Mass.

With the exception of Isabel Babson and the historian, John J. Babson, the Babsons were never leaders in their communities. They were, however, democratic and independent. Whenever I did anything unorthodox, my parents would say, "Surely Roger is a Babson." The family believed that our "good" qualities came from the Rogers, Gorham, or Low families on my father's side; and from the Putnam, Stearns, and Wise families on my mother's side. For instance, I am a direct descendant, through my father, of John Rogers, once president of Harvard College, and from his ancestor, John Rogers, the martyr, who was burned at the stake in England. Through the Gorhams I trace back directly to John Howland, who came over in the *Mayflower*. I am a direct descendant, through my mother, from that famous Revolutionary fighter, Israel Putnam, and that great preacher and Colonial statesman, the Reverend John Wise. It is my earnest prayer that I, my daughter, her children and descendants may be worthy of this ancestry.

ANCESTRAL STRAINS

As I study this ancestry, a few characteristics stand out forcefully. The Israel Putnam fighting strain has come down through all generations. I really think that next to enjoying a square meal we all enjoy a good fight. There is also a religious strain in the family. From the Reverend John Wise down, every generation has had members who were distinctly interested in churches and community welfare. We have not been a family to enter politics, but we all have expressed freely our opinions and have fought fearlessly for what we think is right. There is also an educational strain, which has come down from John Rogers. Although none of my other ancestors have been outstanding in the

[3] My mother was born October 19, 1850, and died October 31, 1929.

educational world, they have all been interested in education. Practically, I can see myself as a combination of these fighting, religious, and educational strains, all of which have dominated certain branches of my ancestry.

Mixed with the above strains has been a distinctly commercial strain which deserves much more space than this book will allow. I refer to those ancestors who were sea captains, engaged in trade between Boston and China, Africa, and the isles of the sea. They were the real men, and women, too, to whom I look up. In small vessels, without conveniences of any kind, they left home to sail around the Horn. Often these ships were locally built. The compass was about all they had for guidance. They had no charts, no weather reports, no lighthouses, and no radios. They had no steam or gasoline auxiliary—nor anything to help them but the winds of the ocean and the courage of their own souls. Studying my ancestry, I find that more of them followed the sea than followed any other occupation. Most of them started as cabin boys when they were twelve or fourteen years old, and retired as sea captains when they were in their fifties.

They were a great bunch, kindly at home, but hard-boiled on the sea and in foreign ports. They had the physical hardiness which enabled them to climb the highest mast of a tumbling ship in a raging storm in the dead of winter. Their food was of the roughest and simplest. Thence they were men of splendid physique and indomitable courage. They were compelled to be real leaders. If at any time they had shown cowardice, their crews would have thrown them overboard. But a successful sea captain then needed more than courage. He needed to be a successful merchant as well. When he arrived at a foreign port, it was necessary for him to sell his cargo at a profit, and to purchase at the lowest possible price a new cargo to bring back home. These ships were mostly loaded at Boston with lumber, dried fish, and manufactured goods, which were sold in China and other Eastern ports. There they loaded up with china, tea, and silk, which were brought back to Boston.

SEA CAPTAINS' CHARACTERISTICS

Any reader interested in following up the lives of these men can read the memoirs of Gorham P. Low, my great-uncle. A picture of one of his ships hangs in the library of my home at Wellesley, Massachusetts. It was a clipper which he used for taking passengers and freight from Boston to Liverpool from 1825 to 1835. His real experiences, however, occurred when making trips from Boston to Sumatra to buy pepper from the natives. Just visualize conditions in those days in the East Indies which he regularly visited. There was no government; there were no consuls, no police officers. My uncle and his friends would land there without even understanding the language. It was necessary to moor the ship some distance from land, as there were no wharves.

They went ashore in small boats amid these cannibals. Under these conditions he would do his trading for pepper, secure his cargo, and return with the ship. Not only was he obliged to show indomitable courage in both his landing and his negotiations, but it was necessary to show a fairness and kindness which would enable him safely to return a year later. In reading his memoirs, perhaps the one outstanding fact was this latter feature. He showed that, however wild and uncivilized a tribe might be, they always had instinctively a sense of right and wrong, of justice and mercy, of truth and kindness.

OLD-TIME MERCHANTS

Another outstanding example of this sea-captain-merchant strain was Daniel Rogers. He apparently was Gloucester's leading merchant at the time he lived, and was founder of what later became its great fishing industry. Although the sea captains were able men in their way, they all ran "one-man shows." Daniel Rogers, however, was more of the corporation type. Instead of being a sea captain, he hired sea captains and operated about the year 1760 a fleet of vessels from Gloucester. He was a daring promoter, but a man of excellent judgment. Naturally an aristocrat, he was nevertheless loved and honored by the plain people. Perhaps this was because of his sins as well as for his virtues. It is said that although he was a deacon in the church, he "went visiting" on weekdays. He signed his documents "D. R." His friends used to say that he was "D. R." in the morning, but "R. D." at night; that is, these two initials in the morning stood for "Daniel Rogers," but at night stood for something else! He was a typical sea captain on land, with all the energy, fearlessness, and judgment which go with successful sea captains.

Daniel Rogers had twenty-one children, four by his first wife and seventeen by his second wife. He died with his boots on, regretting only that he could not get into one more fight or make one more trade! He built a house for each of his daughters, and many of these houses exist today. He was a merchant prince. If living today, he would be at the head of one of America's greatest corporations, a man both loved and feared by all. However, I must not dwell more on these ancestors. I do, nevertheless, wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to every one of them, the good and the bad; to the aristocratic Gorhams and the democratic Babsons; to the religious Wises and the fighting Putnams. It takes all kinds to make a world!

GLOUCESTER IN 1875

I was born at 58 Middle Street, Gloucester, Massachusetts, on July 6, 1875. My father was Nathaniel Babson, the leading dry-goods merchant of the city; and my mother was Nellie Stearns, whose mother, Frances Wise Ward, in

turn kept a successful millinery store. Gloucester in those days was a city of about 14,000 inhabitants. Later, it increased gradually to 24,000; but after that the population fell off. Its natural resources consisted merely of rocks, blueberry bushes, and salt water. Its business consisted almost solely of the fish industry. This was made up sixty per cent of cod and haddock, thirty per cent of mackerel, and ten per cent of herring, with a certain amount of halibut and miscellaneous fish. The granite industry was, however, increasing. Conditions in my boyhood days were comparatively primitive. Our homes were all frame houses, with four rooms on the first floor and four rooms and an attic above. We were comfortable in summer, although there was no such thing as screens; ice was just beginning to be used. In the winter we had two rooms regularly heated —the living-room and the kitchen, but stoves or fireplaces were also in one or two other rooms which would be used in emergencies.

There was no need of air-conditioning! The air would rush through the cracks of the windows and doors, thoroughly ventilating the rooms, and then go up the chimney. Whatever automatic systems of ventilation my descendants may use, nothing can equal for health and efficiency a fireplace or the old-fashioned stove with the leaky doors and windows. I well remember hearing of the use of the first double windows and bathrooms discussed as being "unhealthful and shameful." That system where the air was taken in through the window cracks and then went up the chimney was a most perfect system. Later, steam heat, oil stoves, and gas stoves were used. It was during this latter period that the common cold, which has always been a plague and which is now more prevalent than ever, began to develop. These modern forms of heating are successful in the heating feature, but provide no system of ventilation, as did the fireplaces and old-fashioned stoves.

NO BATHROOMS—NO NOTHING!

Dr. George B. Stevens brought me into the world with the light of a kerosene lamp. Kerosene lighting was all that we had during my entire school life. There was, of course, no bathroom in the house. Morning and night during the winter months I would plow my way out through the snow, a distance of twenty-five feet, to the historic backhouse, which has been such an important factor in the history of this nation. And of course there was no such thing as city water. Our water came from a brick cistern in the cellar of the house, which was filled from rain falling on the roof. A cesspool in the back yard took the drainage from the kitchen sink.

Saturday night was bath night. Mother would take an ordinary round wooden washtub and place it on the kitchen floor. An iron kettle full of water was always on the kitchen stove. Mother probably never heard of the word "humidity," but she instinctively always kept this black kettle-humidifier at

work. This, by the way, has never been equaled as a humidifier by any modern invention. One by one, each of us children would be dumped in the washtub, rubbed off, and sent to bed. The same process was going on in every other home at the same time every Saturday night.

On Saturday nights we also had the proverbial baked beans. These lasted for five days and appeared in various forms throughout the week. We had hearty breakfasts, with a good hot dinner at noon, but very light suppers. The meals, in fact, were just as good as we get today. The food was simple, but there were plenty of good vegetables such as mashed potatoes, squash and turnips, with salt water fish twice a week. There were few fruits in those days. I remember my father driving his horse one night through the darkness fifteen miles to Salem to get an orange for his aunt, who did not have many more days to live. So far as I know, every family in the town had enough to eat. For fuel we went into the forest and cut the wood which we needed, dragging it home on a snow sled.

Food was the chief factor in the expense of living. Rents were low; little was spent for light and fuel. We wore our clothes until they were absolutely worn out. Still, we were warm, we were healthy, and we were happy. I could go back to all of it today except the cold bedrooms and tramping out through the snow to the backhouse! I should truly hate to go back to those cold, cold, cold bedrooms, dressing and undressing in them. However, perhaps I owe as much to those cold bedrooms and to that old backhouse as I do to my college education. Concerning these surroundings, I am sympathetic with my psychological friends who talk about environment!

There was no water system, no sewerage system, no any other kind of system! There were no telephones, no electric lights, no automobiles, no street cars, no radios. I had heard of a telephone long before I ever saw one. I remember when the first electric lights came to Gloucester; they were of the arc variety, operated by two long carbons, and were useful only for outdoor lighting and lighting in stores and public buildings. I must have been fifteen years old before the introduction of the incandescent lamp made home lighting possible.

FOR BETTER OR WORSE?

When the doctor was needed, I put on my coat and went to his office and called him. The only heating system was the "Armstrong" system, and the only way we had running water was "to run to the pump" and get it. I was in the twenties before my father had electric lights or a telephone in his house, and he died without owning an automobile. There were almost no public conveyances except an old stagecoach that went from Gloucester to Annisquam and Lanesville. Hacks were available for traveling people going to or from the train, but they were primarily used only for weddings and funerals. Of course we should hate to be without such conveniences at the present time, and yet I

wonder whether we might not be better off, physically, intellectually, and spiritually, without them. These modern conveniences have made life easier and perhaps swifter, but in the process we ourselves have become less independent and less courageous. As I am softer than was my father, so my children and grandchildren seem softer, more dependent, and less courageous than was I at their age.

Chapter II

TRAGEDIES OF CHILDHOOD

DIRECTLY opposite my home—at 58 Middle Street—was a beautiful old white house in which the Sanford family then lived. This was originally the house of the Reverend Mr. Murray, who was the preacher of the Universalist church of Gloucester, the oldest Universalist church in this country. The Reverend Mr. Murray was a great man and was one of the founders of the Universalist denomination. The house is preserved as a museum and is now known as the Sargent-Murray-Gilman-Hough House. In the yard of this Murray house was a stable in which my father kept two horses. The horses were used to deliver bundles from his dry-goods store. He usually drove what was known as a Goddard buggy, but he also had a democrat wagon to deliver carpets and other merchandise. It was a part of my boyhood duties to take care of the horses. This included feeding them three times a day, cleaning them in the morning after breakfast, and bedding them at night after school. I often think that the educational institutions to which America owes the most are not her schools and colleges, but rather her woodboxes and corn-fields. The chores which I and every other boy—who has since amounted to anything—were compelled to do were real character-building educational factors of our lives.

FATHER'S BUSINESS

My father, Nathaniel Babson, was more than a storekeeper. He developed quite a wholesale business on Cape Ann. One of the pleasantest features of my boyhood life was to go with him in a horse and buggy to Annisquam, Lanesville, Pigeon Cove, Rockport, and West Gloucester to sell dry goods at wholesale to small storekeepers. My father always had excellent credit, and was very keen to collect his own bills. Hence, Boston drygoods jobbers preferred to sell small stores through him rather than direct. During the winter, he would try to take these trips on Saturday, so that I could go with him; although I mostly went with him in the summertime. Father was quite methodical. He would breakfast promptly at seven o'clock, and then go directly to the store, where he would spend the morning. He would be home again for dinner promptly at noon. Right after dinner he would start out with the horse and buggy on one of these selling trips. He would be home by six o'clock, ready for supper.

In the evening father usually went to the church, either for a service or for some committee meeting. Previous to his nervous breakdown, which came when I was about fifteen years of age, he was a terrific worker. He started with nothing, but accumulated enough to enable him to retire from business when he was about forty years of age. He was a careful merchant, a conscientious banker, and a very wise investor. Although we always lived well, he was never in active business during the last thirty-five years of his life. He gave his wife and children everything they needed and left an estate of about $300,000.

GRANDFATHER'S FARM

One feature of my boyhood life was the time spent at "The Farm." About a mile from my home on Middle Street was my grandfather's farm, located on Washington Street, on the road to Annisquam. It is that beautiful gable-roofed house with an attractive old-fashioned garden, directly adjoining the Ellery house, which is one of the oldest houses on Cape Ann. My grandfather's house was built in 1738. His father, Nathaniel, died when my grandfather was only sixteen years old. The latter then took over the farm. He started from scratch, brought up seven children, and left a fair estate. He raised a few vegetables, but was primarily a dairy farmer. He would have from twelve to eighteen cows; the milk he sold to Gloucester families.

There was a great old-fashioned barn on the farm which fascinated us children. In the winter my grandfather cut wood in the woods at West Gloucester and drew it home over the snow on an old-fashioned wood-sled. At certain times of the year he also cut marsh hay, which was used for the cows. He fed a certain amount of his English hay to his horses, but most of it he sold as a cash crop. About a mile distant, in a direction away from the city, were the pastures where for about six months of the year the cows spent the day grazing. These pastures were very fascinating to me, and I later purchased them and gave them to the city of Gloucester as a watershed for the Babson Reservoir. I greatly appreciate the kindness which was always shown me by my grandparents, and especially by my aunts, Miss Susan Babson, Mrs. Annie P. Alling, and Mrs. Lucy Jelly. I also played some at my cousin Elmer's farm near by. One of his sons, David, was at one time in my employ.

NEBRASKA COUSINS

My father had a brother named Gustavus Babson, Jr., who lived in Seward, Nebraska. He was always very kind to me, and sent me wonderful Christmas presents. He had six boys, Henry, Fred, Gustavus, Jr., Sanford, George, and Paul. The first three were about my age, and spent more or less time at the farm in Gloucester. Our summer work consisted of laboring in the hay-fields or in the garden, driving cows, helping on the milk route, and doing other

things which a boy could do. My grandfather used to say: "One boy is one boy; two boys are half a boy; and three boys are no boy at all." However, there were certain things which he felt we were pretty good at; for instance, leading the old horse for plowing or cultivating, raking the stray hay left behind by the loaders, and "pitching in" when a threatened thunderstorm would appear on the horizon.

My grandfather labored from four in the morning until eight at night; in fact, everybody worked in those days and we all seemed to enjoy it. Gustavus Junior's boys, mentioned above, turned out to be successful men. I think that each one of them will agree that the work which they were compelled to do as boys, both at home in Seward, Nebraska, and at our grandfather's farm in Gloucester, Massachusetts, was the most important part of their education. I also enjoyed meeting at the farm my other cousins, Robert, Elizabeth and Margaret Alling, and Donald Jelly. The Christmas dinners there were events never to be forgotten.

PLEASURES AND VACATIONS

I owe more to that farm than to any educational institution, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, from which I later had the honor of graduating. Furthermore, as I looked back, that farm work was not a hardship. It came as a matter of course with us boys; without that work we should not have known what to do with ourselves. It is true that the work would be boresome on the day when the circus came to town; but the circus came only once a year. There were no movies, no automobiles, no bridge games or other such diversions. I look back with real pleasure on that life at the farm. Our grandfather was a bear for work, and expected everyone else to swing in line and keep up with him. Our grandmother, however, was of an entirely opposite type. She was very sociable and genial. I well remember the glass jar of hard molasses drops which she kept on the shelf above the fireplace of her bedroom. From this jar she would take a piece of candy and slip it into our hands when grandpa was not looking.

Other than his business and the church, my father seemed to have no diversions. I cannot remember his ever playing games or taking exercise before his breakdown. He did, however, seem to look forward to his summer vacations. We had a cottage one year at Fernwood, West Gloucester. I wish I had space adequately to describe that summer cottage. It consisted of one small living-room on the first floor and a little room adjoining, in which there were three bunks, one for each of us three children. The kitchen consisted mostly of a back porch. In the attic above, which had no sides but merely two sloping roofs, slept my father and mother, lying on a mattress on the floor. Only lamps were available. The water I hauled in a wash-boiler in a little cart from a well about

a quarter of a mile distant. There were, of course, no toilet conveniences. Although my mother seemed to dread these summer vacations, my father got a great joy out of them. Apparently this was due to his inheritance of the "plain and ordinary" Babson strain!

After a few years, my mother induced father to give up this Bohemian vacation and take a month at North Conway, New Hampshire. The boarding-house in which we used to stay at North Conway has since burned down, but for many years father and I drove the old horse and buggy to North Conway, New Hampshire, while mother and my two sisters went up on the train. We used to climb Kearsarge Mountain and take the various trips which are generally taken by people who visit that beautiful part of New England. That annual visit was truly a great event in my life, and I look back on it with real joy. Even these vacations would be considered very commonplace by our children and grandchildren. I feel, however, that their plainness and simplicity were an important part of our education. I also spent some time each summer at Amherst, N. H., my mother's ancestral home. This led me to the adjoining town of New Boston where we are establishing an Emergency Plant to occupy in case "old" Boston should be bombed during World War III.

A GREAT TRAGEDY

The one great cloud on my boyhood life was the drowning of my sister, Edith Low Babson. A short distance from the farm, at the end of Ashland Place—a little street that ran from Washington Street westerly to the Annisquam River—was the local swimming-pool. On Ashland Place lived Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knights, two elderly persons who had never had any children of their own, but who were very, very good to me. Although uneducated in the ordinary sense of the word and in humble circumstances, they possessed great souls. They were important factors in developing the spiritual spark in my life. Many a Saturday, from the time I was seven until my high-school days, I spent in their humble but happy home. My sister Edith often went up with me. She was born on March 15, 1880.

Edith was up there on the fatal day of August 26, 1893. It was a very hot day, and she rode from our house (we then were living at 8 Angle Street) up to Mrs. Knights's house, where she left her bicycle and changed into her bathing-suit. She was a swimmer, but was in the water that day with one who could not swim; in fact, only the two of them were in the swimming-hole at that time. Just what happened no one knows. The girl who was with her came running up and cried out to Mrs. Knights, "Edith is drowning." Mrs. Knights called a man named Billy Younger, who ran down and dove into the water and recovered her. Meanwhile, some one frantically got a horse and drove to Gloucester to get the doctor.

My father and mother were also notified and came up, galloping their horse. I have since been told by the neighbors that this was the only time my father was ever known to gallop his horse in the shafts. Dr. Albert Garland—the physician who was called—worked diligently over my sister, but failed to revive her. There was then no such thing as a pulmotor, and no telephone was within a mile. If the use of the telephone had not been so restricted and if the pulmotor had then existed, perhaps my sister would be alive today. If her girl friend had been trained in a Scout camp, my sister would have been recovered in time. The girl would have known how to restore respiration, and by this means perhaps have saved her. Certainly I believe in boys' and girls' summer camps. They are one modern development of our educational system which is exceedingly worth while.

THE MYSTERIOUS TRUNK

I was in Chicago working at the World's Fair with my Nebraska cousins when this accident happened. Although I came home as soon as I knew about it, I did not reach Gloucester until after the funeral. Edith's death cast a shadow over my family which never wholly passed. To begin with, my mother's mother, Francies Ward, lived with us. She was fond of Edith and, in fact, of all us children, but she was a woman of the old type and would speak pretty sharply to us at times. It happened, unfortunately, that her last words to Edith were: "Get out of my sight and never come in this room again." She had probably said this to us children a hundred times before, but, unfortunately, she said it once too often. It completely broke her up and she was never herself afterward, although she was a remarkable woman. I carry for my middle name the name of her second husband, William Ward, who was the only father whom my mother remembered. That was in 1893.

In 1929, thirty-six years thereafter, when my mother died, a little black trunk was found among her possessions. We had always supposed that the trunk was full of old letters, perhaps love letters which my father had written her before they were married. But the trunk was never opened until after she died. It contained, when opened, an old broken doll and a few other simple playthings of my sister Edith's! I now have the trunk and its contents among my possessions. For thirty-six years she had kept this trunk and would secretly open it periodically, to keep kindled in her soul that love which makes the world go round.

About fifty years thereafter on about the same day of the year, August 29, 1947, my grandson Michael Webber was likewise drowned saving the life of another at Sunapee Lake, N. H. He was 17 years of age and possessed a wonderful character. This also was a great personal loss to me; but it taught me to revalue life as nothing else could do.

Normal sex relations, playing with little children, and a good meal after a hard day's work were probably meant to be nature's pleasures. These fundamental joys existed fifty, yea, five thousand, years ago as much as they exist today, if not more so. It was not necessary for my mother to go to the theater to have her emotions aroused; nor to read sex books to get a kick out of life; nor to take up diet fads in order to enjoy a good meal. I suppose we shall never return to those days, and yet I sometimes think that we may. There may be emotional cycles as well as business cycles.

LIFE'S GREATEST FORCE

The great World's Fair held in Chicago in 1893 appealed greatly to me. I began to coax my father a year or more in advance for the privilege of attending it. My father was very conservative. He had traveled little and did not know much of what was going on outside of Cape Ann. He therefore discouraged my pioneering ambitions. Finally, I teased him so much that he agreed to let me go, *provided I would get a job out there.* He was a wise man, knowing that it is Satan who "finds work for idle hands." He further limited my total expense money for the trip to twenty-five dollars, which (and I say this kindly) was a very large sum to him. It was as much as one thousand dollars would earn in six months! I remember arguing with him and trying to get him to increase the amount to thirty-five dollars, assuring him that I needed twenty-five dollars as a minimum to pay my railroad fares; also to pay my first week's board while I was getting a job. He would not budge above the twenty-five dollars. As it was, I could not afford to take the regular railroad route to Chicago, but was obliged to travel by way of Poughkeepsie Bridge and the Erie Railroad. The twenty-five dollars also made it impossible for me to buy a berth or to go into a dining-car. Hence, I traveled in day coaches and sat up all night, changing cars four times. My mother put up food enough to last me for the entire trip.

Economies were a part of my education, but as I look back on those days I am astounded that my parents were willing to trust me to travel alone under such conditions. Here is the point of the story. I was to leave Gloucester for Chicago on a 10.00 A.M. train. I remember being driven to the Gloucester depot in the old buggy with my father and my sister Edith. Father remained in the buggy, caring for the horse, but Edith climbed out with me and went to the train platform. In her hand she held a little red iron bank about three inches square which opened in two halves and was held together by a screw. She apparently had taken the screw out before getting into the buggy and held the bank together with her hands during our ride to the railroad station. Just as I was getting on the train, she asked me to take off my hat and hold it "upside down." Then she opened the bank and let all her savings, which consisted of

two or three dollars, drop into my hat. She said: "You take that, Roger; I love you." That was the last time I ever saw her.

I shall never forget that morning. It is things like this, rather than schools and colleges, which really influence our lives. Although I am supposed to be a statistician, yet I have learned that the world is ruled not by figures, but by feelings. The greatest things are the simplest things, while the most powerful things are the tenderest things. The greatest force is love; and the greatest asset is friendship.

Chapter III

SCHOOLING IN THE EIGHTIES

I RECENTLY learned that a famous Boston physician had been giving some form of iron to the children of one of my friends. In commenting on it to the physician, I said: "How is it that I got on without iron and all these other things which you give children nowadays?" He replied: "I don't know to what 'other things' you refer, but you probably got your iron from the old tin dipper at the town pump! Didn't you and the other children all drink out of a rusty tomato can when at school?" I admitted that this was true.

LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSES

The wonder is, considering present hygienic theories, how any of us ever lived to grow up! We never heard of germs, bacteria, or any such things until our school days were over. Like all children, I had mumps, measles, chicken-pox, and whooping-cough. One of my sisters also had scarlet fever, while I, when at Massachusetts Tech., had a light dose of typhoid fever. It does seem, however, that there was less sickness among school children in those days than there is now. Some say it was because the weak ones then died early and only the stronger ones survived for school age. Granting that this was so, it might possibly be better in the end for the race to let nature make its own selections in this old-fashioned manner.

The schoolhouses of my boyhood resembled the schoolhouses of today as a freight car resembles a Pullman palace car. They were frame buildings, rudely furnished, without any toilet conveniences. They had a boys' yard and a girls' yard, with the proverbial outhouses, but the boys rarely bothered to use the outhouse. Whatever may be the condition of the sex life in high schools and colleges today, I am certain that conditions in the elementary school are far better today than ever before. The word "modesty" did not exist in the school vocabulary of fifty years ago. Not only did we boys behave in a nasty way, but the fences of the school yard and the walls of the outbuildings were marked with disgraceful pictures and shameful words. Surely, if there was anything in school environment in those days, it is a wonder that we have any decency at the present time. Yet both we boys and girls of that day seem to have survived these conditions and are now worrying about our grandchildren. I guess that

it is our home training that really determines our lives. With a wholesome home I was surely blessed.

THROWN OUT OF PRIVATE SCHOOL

Owing to these bad school conditions, my mother insisted that I start out in a private school owned by Miss Mary Stacy and her associate, Miss Ellwell. This school was located in the large Stacy house on Middle Street, near the corner of Washington Street. Unfortunately, I was an unruly youngster and did not get along well. Miss Stacy did not follow the practice of the public schools and whip her students. She sent them upstairs in a cold room to go to bed as a punishment for misbehavior. This punishment I resented, and once spent my time while there in bed in cutting holes in the sheet for my eyes, nose, and mouth. When she came up to get me, I saluted her by sticking my tongue out through one of the slits which I had cut in her good bedding. When I came home that night for supper, I found my mother in tears. She just said: "Roger, I wish you would be a good boy. It's too bad that no one can do anything with you." I never knew exactly what happened, but Miss Stacy apparently refused to take me back.

I finished my primary work with a wonderful old lady named Miss Martha Ann Morey in the Old Town Hall school. I entered the sixth grammar grade under Miss Frances Davis at the Washington Street school nearly opposite the end of Mansfield Street. This building was later used as headquarters for the Grand Army of the Republic. Miss Davis was a dark-haired woman who did the best she could with us, but she was very free with her whippings. The first statistics that I ever compiled were in connection with a record of the lickings which the various boys, and some girls, received during that year. I did not have the highest number, but nearly reached it. My score was forty-seven lickings. Usually these were administered with a broad black ruler, but occasionally she used a bamboo. The ruler was not so bad, but the bamboo certainly put the fear of God into us. I am told that this form of punishment has now become extinct in city schools. I am not so sure but that it should be revived. Miss Davis had the room downstairs. Miss Wheeler had the room upstairs for her fifth grammar grade. I should have been transferred upstairs at the end of the year, but apparently they wanted to get me out of the building as soon as possible. Hence I entered the fifth grade in the Collins School on Prospect Street.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

The principal of the Collins School at that time was Mr. Freeman Putney—an able, fair, but stern administrator. He apparently had heard that I was a hard ticket and was "laying for me," as the boys said. I found, after a few

rumpuses, that my happy days were over, and I therefore settled down to business. Little did I then realize that he and I would marry own sisters. For the fifth grade I had Miss Dennis; she later married Charlie Brown, who for some time was postmaster of Gloucester. For the fourth grade I had Miss Belle Parsons, a good-natured, roly-poly girl, of whom I have lost track. For the third grade I had Miss Belle Proctor, who was an able and efficient teacher and a great favorite with the children. For the second grade I had Mrs. Saunders, a rather elderly fat woman with a temper. For some peculiar reason she and I got along first rate, but the rest of the children certainly hated her. Finally, in the first grade, I had Miss Camilla J. Knight. She later was to become my sister-in-law, although up to that time I had never met the girl who was to become my wife. Miss Knight was an excellent teacher, well informed, patient, and just. She was a natural-born and conscientious educator. I was however in this Collins School six years. During these six years, Mr. Freeman Putney, the principal, was promoted to Superintendent of Schools for the entire city, and Mr. James Appleby became the school principal.

In those days the school bell rang at twenty minutes of nine, and school began promptly at nine every morning except Saturdays and Sundays. School continued until twelve o'clock, when we all went home for our dinners. The school bell rang again at twenty minutes of two, and school began promptly at two o'clock and contined to four. This gave us about two hours to play before supper. We all retired early in those days, children and parents, as we had only kerosene-lamps. Here again I sometimes wonder whether the brilliant illumination of the electric lamp has been a good or a bad thing. Most of us need more sleep than we get. Only during sleep are we building our systems. In most cases we get the proper amount of air only after going to bed. There were, of course, no buses in those days. We all walked back and forth to school, and this included children living a mile or more away. In case of terrific rains or snowstorms, the "no-school" fire bell would ring. This was the most cheerful sound that we heard during the year. Little I then thought that I later would become the largest stockholder of the company which installed this fire-alarm system.

HAS TEACHING IMPROVED?

It is an old saying that "fools' names and fools' faces always appear in public places." There is some instinct that makes people want to cut their names or initials on public property, especially places of public interest. This instinct was apparent during my early school days. We then thought it our duty to cut our initials on our desks! My initials were cut on every desk until I reached high-school age, when the trick was absolutely forbidden. With the help of a faithful janitor whom we called "Pa Herrick," the high-school teachers tabooed this nonsense. Not a desk in that high school had a scratch upon it! This dif-

ference proves the wisdom of my father's advice: "Consent gladly—or refuse finally; never temporize." When people *know* that you mean business, they usually cheerfully obey. It is the business man, employer, or teacher who has no definite goal who fails. Once when in the fourth grade, after getting my initials cut on the desk, I was cutting them on the wooden border of my slate. I was holding the slate in my lap behind the desk so my teacher would not see me. Suddenly my knife slipped and cut into my right leg halfway between the knee and thigh. That scar still remains and will always serve as an identification of Roger W. Babson.

I especially hated English grammar. I understand it is taught differently today from what it was in those days, when we spent our time analyzing sentences. I never then understood what it was all about, and I do not as yet. To what extent the efficiency of teaching has increased since those days I do not know. Schoolhouses are better; there are many more subjects and frills. However, schools must use the same multiplication table today as then. Personally, I think that the success of teaching is nine-tenths in the teacher and one-tenth in the buildings and textbooks. I go further and say that next to parents and preachers, the elementary-school teachers are the most valuable persons of every community. As a voter and taxpayer, I never begrudge money that is spent on school-teachers. They are a worthy and hard-working group. The best possible teachers should be employed, and we all should gladly pay them a fair salary.

I would much rather have my grandchildren have teachers with a few diplomas and big hearts than teachers with many diplomas and little hearts. The present fad that a school principal must have a Ph.D. in order to get a position is all rot. I would much rather know he loves his work and his pupils. Ph.D.s do not necessarily make good teachers. A thousand years from now no building or curriculum will ever take the place of a conscientious and praying school-teacher. I do feel that the health of a teacher is an important factor. In many instances the teacher is cross and impatient because not in good physical condition. I should give teachers regular physical examinations and insist that they keep in good condition physically and nervously. I should forget the Ph.D.s and turn them over to the M.D.s.

PARENTS OR TEACHERS

Fathers and mothers did not worry much about school in those days. Fathers were busy procuring food, clothing, and shelter. Mothers were busy preparing food, cleaning the house, and making clothes for us kids. There were no canned goods or breakfast foods! The oatmeal had to be cooked overnight instead of only a few minutes. Wood and coal had to be brought up for the stoves; water had to be carried from the sink to the bedrooms; while all slops had to be

emptied in the yard. The floors were swept with old-fashioned whisk brooms, as this was long before the day of the vacuum cleaner. Mother made all the clothes for my sisters and most of my clothes until I reached high-school age. Hence parents did not have very much time to bother with schooling. Parent-teachers associations did not exist. When I got into any trouble at school, it was my mother, however, who got me out of it. She, like most mothers, was the "worrier" of the family.

My youngest sister, Alice Stearns Babson, and I did not see much of each other, excepting at meal times, until after my oldest sister, Edith Low, was drowned. Alice Stearns was so much younger than I that we went with entirely different children; and, in fact, we were never in the same school buildings at the same time. After the death of Edith Low, however, we became good pals. I should perhaps have already said that my mother had four children—one who died shortly after birth; Edith Low, who was drowned; Alice Stearns, who married Dr. W. Stewart Whittemore and who has three children, Frederick, Richard and Eleanor; and I, who married Grace Margaret Knight. Grace and I have had but one child. This one child we named Edith Low, after my sister who was drowned.

FATHERS VS. MOTHERS

Statistics show that the happiest marriages are between people having similar tastes and opposite dispositions. The most unhappy marriages are between people having opposite tastes and similar dispositions. My mother enjoyed travel and company much more than my father did, but otherwise they were well mated. My father was of a judicial and calm nature, while my mother was emotional. My father supplied the *thinking* for the family, while my mother supplied the *energy*. Both were much interested in church work. My father, however, would stay at home figuring how he could balance the church budget, while my mother would be actively running around in connection with missionary work or a church supper. I can visualize my father sitting in his leather chair by the window of the living-room, and my mother running downstairs to go out the front door to attend some church gathering. My father would call to my mother: "Nellie, be content to *follow* God tonight; *don't try to run ahead of Him.*"

Another common incident illustrates their difference. Some one would be at the house endeavoring to interest my father in some popular cause, and my mother would join in the drive on my father. Finally, she would give up in disgust and say: "You cannot interest my husband in that program; in fact, there are only two things that interest him at all. These are the Ten Commandments and the multiplication table." Thereupon my father would whimsically turn and say: "This may be true; but my wife, Nellie, is not even interested

in the Ten Commandments nor in the multiplication table. The only thing that interests her is helping people."

HAS YOUTH CHANGED?

Gloucester, like every other city, was divided into three classes—the poor, the rich, and the middle class. I belonged to the middle class. My mother received invitations from the "Nob Hill" families once in a while, and then seemed to enjoy the society of Gloucester's "codfish aristocracy," as it was called. These people, however, never bothered my father. He knew that they went to Boston to buy their dry goods, instead of buying them from him, and this was all he wanted to know about them! Social events were not his affair. Furthermore, my parents were wise enough not to encourage me to play with the rich children of the city. These were the children of the owners of the big fishing firms in Gloucester. These children had ponies, parties, and dances. At any rate, as I look back on those days, it appears that the children of the rich were then just the same as the children of the rich today, irresponsible and spoiled. Liquor was then used in the homes of the rich families, and the whole set-up was the same then as now.

Those who think that children have changed fail to realize that instead they themselves have changed their strata. When they were young, they belonged to the middle class; that is, to the class which had continually to scratch for a living and to think carefully before spending a penny. Now they have shifted to the wealthy class and are likely to compare the children whom they once knew and who then belonged to the middle class with the children whom they know today and who now belong to the wealthy class. Instead of the young people changing, these parents have changed from one stratum to another stratum—that is, these parents are today associating with a different stratum of young people. This is important to remember. This fact is impressed upon me whenever I attend young people's summer conferences, which are today so enthusiastically attended by children of the middle class. As a rule, the children of the wealthy tend not to be much good. It is upon the children of the middle class that this country depends. It was with these middle-class children that I was supposed to associate. The children of the wealthy families frankly spurned me.

In view, perhaps, of my democratic Babson strain, I felt most at home with the children of the poor. My proud mother used to say this was because I could boss these poor children, but my father always refrained from any comment. Directly behind our house was what was known as Gould Court, backing off from Washington Street nearly opposite Washington Square. In it were a lot of cheap tenement houses inhabited by families of fishermen. All these families were "foreigners" and mostly Irish. Owing to their proximity to my

home (only a high board fence separated us) and to other reasons, which my good mother never understood, these "Gould Courters" became my playmates. History even records that shameful fact that I organized the Gould Courters into a gang. This gang periodically would go to Nob Hill and lick the rich boys. This became so easy that we then tackled the Washington Square crowd, which was headquarters for the children of the intelligentsia. I can now name in my mind the owners of every house in Washington Square, and could list them herein, with the characteristics of each family. In Washington Square lived the Phillips family, the Story family, the Allen family, the Morris family, the Foster family, the Downs family, and others. They represented really the best people (not the wealthiest) of Gloucester. Here it was that I was supposed to play after school.

Somehow or other the Gould Courters appealed to me more than the Washington Square or Nob Hill boys. Finally there developed an open enmity between the different groups. Much to the grief of my mother, I went with the Gould Courters as their leader. Whether I did right or wrong only the good Lord knows, but this one thing I do know: When I now return to Gloucester each summer for a few days, these Gould Courters are the ones who greet me on the streets. They are working on fish wharves and in garages; yea, some of them are working for the city on the highways. Most of them are still poor and not very husky, but they always have a good hand for me. Those wealthy boys and and girls who spurned me have generally disappeared. Many of them are dead and buried, while most of the rest of them are down and out. The backbone of Gloucester is today made up of the children of that middle class to which I belonged, who have continued to remain in the city, supplemented by an industrious and thrifty foreign element.

MY NERVOUS BREAKDOWN

I was always a nervous child, and finally broke down completely during the first term of my last year in the grammar school. After Christmas vacation of that year, I did not return to school. Hence I was obliged to take the year over. As I look back on those days, I do not know what was the matter with me. The records of the family physician, Dr. George B. Stevens, might tell the story and might not. At any rate, this was a blessing in disguise, because it gave me an acquaintance with my father which I had never had before. He also broke down physically about the same time. Thereupon he took me to West Gloucester every afternoon to cut wood. Here I had opportunity to become acquainted also with an old hermit who lived in a little hut at Bonds Hill. Every Gloucester boy of my age was well acquainted with the hermit who made polo sticks and snowshoes. I spent most of my time during that year with my father. Then I learned from him those fundamental principles of life which

have stood me well during my busy career. Whenever consulted today on educational matters, I advise that more attention be given to the building of health and character, and less to the teaching of higher mathematics and foreign languages.

HIGH SCHOOL MORALS

I entered the Gloucester High School in September, 1890. With this date began a new chapter of my life. I was in good condition after the year of physical and mental tutoring received from my father. The high-school work appealed to me more than did the grammar-school work, especially certain courses such as physics and chemistry. One reason I liked high school was because I loved the principal, Mr. Albert W. Bacheler. I became acquainted with him through a very beautiful daughter of his who died during my last year in the grammar school. Although I have never before mentioned the matter, I have often thought that the death of his only child, Gertrude, who sat next to me in school and of whom I was fond, may have been one cause of my nervous breakdown. Of one thing I am sure; namely, that children have troubles and worries about which parents know nothing. Most young people are older than their parents think they are. They hide things from their parents for fear of ridicule or punishment. This secretive life is a serious mental strain, and often is the cause of nervousness, absent-mindedness, and poor school work.

Possibly Mr. Bacheler was kind to me because I, having been to his house so much playing with his daughter Gertrude, reminded him of her. At any rate, we got on splendidly together, and I enjoyed my four years of high school. In 1885, before I entered high school, Mr. Bacheler, who had been an adjutant in the Civil war, formed the Gloucester High School Cadets. This military training interested me greatly. The first year I was a private, the second year a corporal, the third year a sergeant, and the fourth year I was captain of my company. Not only was I captain, but my company won the first prize of the regiment, which was made up of similar companies from other schools in Salem, Lynn, Haverhill, and Lowell.

Those were great days, and they bring thrills to me as I now think of them. On May 30, 1935, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the formation of the High School Cadets was held at Gloucester and I gave the anniversary address. By 1890 I was becoming fond of the girls and always had one or two on hand for emergencies. We had buggy rides and picnics in the summer; skating and candy pulls in the winter. I had never learned to dance or play cards, but we had mighty good times just the same. Neither I nor any of my friends smoked or touched liquor.

Although the young people today spend five times the money, I doubt whether they get as much real fun and pleasure as we did. We all had our girls, but there was no immorality whatsoever in the Gloucester High School

in my day. The school battalion was divided into two companies. I was captain of one; John Marshall, of Rockport, Massachusetts, was captain of the other. John was a natural aristocrat—a fine-looking young man with marked musical and literary talents. He always eclipsed me both in studies and in social life. After graduation, he studied music abroad and became the head of the music department of Boston University. For the first three years I always had to take a back seat when John was around. I have never liked taking back seats! I was willing to stay home; but when I went for a drive I wanted to sit in the driver's seat and handle the lines, with a snappy girl by my side. The major of my class was a fine fellow, John J. Burke, who became mayor of the city. He died in 1934.

THREE GREAT EVENTS

There were three great events of my last high-school year. The first was a sham battle, such as took place annually on Dogtown Commons, in the latter part of the junior year, or the first of the senior year. John Marshall, the aristocrat and captain of Company A, led his forces; and I, a commoner and captain of Company B, led my forces. It was a great day and a great battle. It resulted in my company capturing John Marshall and entirely "wiping out" his soldiers. From that day I could have any girl in the school I wanted! Girls then came to men as a reward for courage, the same as has been the case throughout the centuries.

The second great event was the officers' party. I will refer to this more in detail in a later chapter. It was held annually and was the most brilliant affair in the high-school year. For the older people in the city the high-school "reunion," which came each June with graduation, was the great social event, but I never functioned at that. Undergraduates were not invited, and after I graduated in 1894 my interests were in Boston rather than in Gloucester.

A third great event concerned my diploma. When I entered high school, my father permitted me to take any course that I desired, *but insisted that I must study bookkeeping.* Frankly, I think most of the other subjects appeared quite unimportant to him. There were three courses—a strictly *business course* of typewriting, shorthand, and bookkeeping, which lasted two years; a four-year *college preparatory course,* which carried Latin and Greek; and a four-year *scientific course,* which the most of us took and which prepared for schools such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. My father went further and insisted that I should study bookkeeping the first year. He was not going to run any chances that I might get thrown out and made to go to work. It happened that a bookkeeping hour came at the same time as the botany hour in the regular course, although for that one hour of botany I had three hours of bookkeeping. Hence my work was really much stiffer than the work of those

who took the regular scientific course. I finished bookkeeping with a good mark. In fact, I passed all my subjects, never getting high marks, but always getting by.

All apparently went well at graduation in June, 1894. With the rest of the boys and girls I received a "diploma"—that is, a roll of white paper tied with two white satin ribbons. On returning home after the exercises, I opened it to show my mother, and behold, it was blank! I am afraid I have been angry many, many times in my life. I have been quick at the trigger, although always sorry afterward. I surely was angry then, and immediately left to see Mr. Bacheler. He explained the situation, stating that it was because I had not taken the *regular* scientific course, but had substituted bookkeeping for botany. He further stated that he himself had appealed to the school committee to give me a regular diploma, but they had refused. He took full responsibility for giving me the blank piece of paper, thinking he was doing me a good turn by such an act. He probably hoped that I would throw the roll in the bureau drawer and never bother to open it! My mother, like me, was much irritated, but father seemed to think it was a good joke, although he was the one really responsible for my troubles. He, however, never thought much of diplomas, believing that elbow grease, shoe leather, and common sense are about all that counts.

I determined to get a diploma, and started on the warpath, with a little egging from my mother. I visited each one of the school committee every week and made myself such a nuisance that they finally voted me a diploma. This I now have, although it has "Special Course" written in red ink on the lower left-hand corner. This diploma did not arrive for several months after my graduation. Looking back on it, I think my father, nevertheless, got real joy from seeing me get that diploma. It taught me several lessons—first, to check up on everything that is handed to me; second, to insist on justice; and third, when right, never to give up. This was the first time I had definitely functioned with older people, as I had been taught before that arguing with older people was disrespectful. In this instance, however, both my father and my mother let down the bars and said, "Go to it." I took the cue and brought home the bacon.

OUR BEAUTIFUL HALL CLOCK

My primary-school days meant nothing to me; my grammar-school days were hectic chores; but my high-school days enabled me to find myself. During these high-school days I developed physically, mentally, and spiritually. And I shall always remember Albert W. Bacheler. Furthermore, I am proud to say that he also remembered me. He had a beautiful old mahogany tall hall clock in his home, made in 1802. Before his death he instructed his wife to give it to me when she should pass on. Mrs. Bacheler died in 1934, and the clock was

delivered at my house a few weeks after her funeral. It now stands in my home as a memorial to this wonderful man and his patience with me and many other Gloucester boys. High school also taught me that I did not have a cultural mind and was not fitted to work with or teach the languages. Although I have always enjoyed chorus singing, I never was able to read music, and, to quote Mr. Bacheler, "Roger could not tell 'Old Hundred' from 'Yankee Doodle.'"

Those years of high school showed clearly that my forte was in connection with the sciences or business. I was especially interested in statistical work of all kinds, but perhaps was even more interested in the business side of such jobs. It was during high-school days that I joined the church, and hence, when ready for college, was grounded spiritually as well as physically and mentally. When graduating from high school, I was anxious to do something worth while and was happy at the thought of doing it. It now seems to me that education would be much more efficient if schools systematically tried to help young people find themselves and to learn for what work they are best fitted. Schools should be clinics, gymnasiums, and even hospitals, rather than libraries, forums, and country clubs.