

my mother being seventeen and my father nineteen. It is not clear to me even now how far my insignificant start in life under their charge was destined to affect my later career. But as I look back, it seems of a part with the whole course of petty circumstances that made me into an automaton.

Before I learnt to speak and began to think, I grew very much as other children do. From a comparatively formless lump of human clay, I developed into a sturdy, well-shaped chubby urchin. At four years of age I was considered worthy of having my photograph taken, and one of my first recollections is of that remarkable incident and the Scotch cap with silver buckle which I donned for the occasion. This brings me to the childish litany of "Why?" and "How?" so often heard during these early days. By this time I had already become dimly conscious that being alive was a great mystery. The "Why" and the "How" of it gave me indeed much thought. I had questions to put on the subject every day; but received very unsatisfactory answers from my parents. Other children, moreover, did not help me much; for they did not understand me.

The fact of my being born in the middle of winter may account for my loving that season beyond all others as a small boy. Winter was so different then from what it is now. The snow was not cleared away as soon as it fell but was allowed to accumulate till spring. It lay upon the sidewalks or was shovelled into the street until it was sometimes six or seven feet high. Huge mounds of it bordered every street, with passages cut in steps through the frozen barriers, here and there, to allow of the coming and going of the townfolk. When walking on one side of the street