

HARRY BATEMAN

1882-1946

Harry Bateman was born in Manchester, England, May 29, 1882. He was the third and youngest child of Samuel and Marnie Elizabeth (Bond) Bateman. His father, who was born in Congleton, Cheshire, was a druggist and commercial traveler. His mother was born in New York City in 1853 (her father, who came from Lancaster, having been a planter in the West Indies and America). He lived from 1884 to 1890 in Oldham, Lancashire, and his early education was received at home since, as he records, his mother did not wish him to acquire the Lancashire accent. He recounts two incidents of these early years in a manner which conveys some impression of the quiet, dry humor which was characteristic of him in later life. In order not to spoil this impression we use his own words: "One day a Mr. Pullinger, to whom my father had been apprenticed, was visiting us. As a result of some questions he had put to me he recommended me to study mathematics. I was quite impressed but my memory played me a trick when a lady asked me a few days later what I was going to study. My reply was that I was going to study acrobatics. She then asked me where I was going to perform and I was at a loss for an answer. Since I have learned recently that Dr. Thomas Young was an expert tight rope walker and harlequin my mistake does not seem so bad after all." The second story of his early days runs as follows: "Perhaps my love for the exact sciences dates from the day when I went with my sister to the home of one of her girl friends. The father of this girl was very stout and when I met him I gazed at him in astonishment and finally spoke thus: 'Mr. Booth, the next time I come to see you I am going to bring with me mother's inch tape and measure you. I think your waist line is about two yards.' 'No, Harry,' replied the good humoured Mr. Booth, 'it's nearly three.'" From 1891 to 1900 he attended Board School and Grammar School in Manchester. He held Manchester City Council and Langworthy Scholarships at the Grammar School where he specialized in mathematics and ended by winning a Derby Scholarship and sizarship at Trinity College, Cambridge. When he was at Board School, and not yet twelve years old, a teacher named Arthur Gronowsky offered a prize of one shilling to the boy who was first able to demonstrate the first twelve propositions in the first book of Euclid. A shilling seemed a lot in those days to young Bateman, and he set to work to win the prize. They had good teachers then in Manchester (and, doubtless, still have) and this small piece of bread