



a Penguin Book

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Scholarship at Stake

Jane Hope



Scholarship at Stake

The author writes: 'I was born into a Lancashire family of engineers and schoolteachers, and married into a Lancashire family of engineers and schoolteachers. I was educated at a girls' school of very high academic reputation but (alas) became School Games Captain. Obviously no candidate for the Honours Board, from school I went to training college as a matter of course, indeed almost without thinking. Once I found myself teaching in a state school I did have an occasional thought. "There *must* be an easier way of earning one's living" was my favourite, so when I was twenty-one I wrote my first book. Oddly enough, by the time it was published I was firmly on the scholastic hook. Schoolteaching, I discovered, is habit-forming. Since then I have written about ten other books, one of which was featured on the B.B.C. programme *Perspective*, and I was a regular contributor to *Teachers' World*. I now lead a life of static domesticity except for the occasions when my husband feels the urge to hitch our very long caravan behind our very long car and set out to tease the Minister of Transport.'

Jane Hope has two sons and lives in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She intends to resume her teaching career.

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The Scholarship Stakes



Dedication

For PAT AND DAVID
who know all about it.
Not forgetting
JOHN, CHRISTOPHER, MARGARET,
SUSAN AND STEPHEN, who will!

Foreword

Are you a parent – even a brand-new parent? Then this is just the bed-time book for you. This erudite work deals exhaustingly with the Eleven Plus Examination, the Scholarship Entrance, or call it what you will. No avenue to this goal has been left unexplored, no harrowing detail omitted. Here, in all its stark horror, is a complete guide to higher education. Read it tonight, and ponder its portent as you toss restlessly from side to side until Dawn gilds the Eastern horizon and sleep claims you just as the alarm clock rings. For the Eleven Plus appears to have come to stay. The pattern of *your* child's whole life will be decided by this one-day Examination. Not a comforting thought, is it?

Parents, you have my sympathy. But spare some yourself for your bewildered little white hope, not forgetting his harassed teachers. They, too, can't think why the Ministry chooses to build Secondary Moderns instead of Grammar Schools.

It's just one of those things!

JANE HOPE

Prologue

Lullaby (Modern Version)

Oh hush thee my baby,
Don't waste time in tears –
You've so much to learn
In eleven short years.

Although we're quite willing
They won't let us pay,
If you don't make the grade
On the Scholarship day.

We've chosen your schools
And your 'varsity too,
But now all depends
On your little I.Q.

Your father looks worried,
Your mother feels glum,
And their little white hope
Has a pain in his tum.

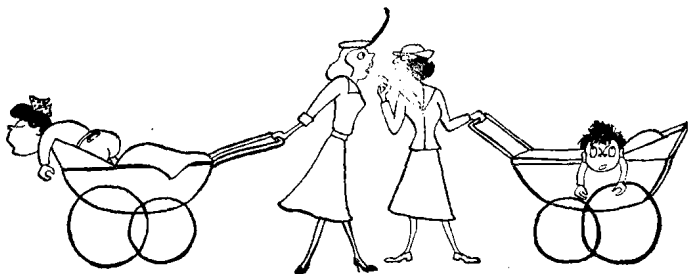
The pre-school potential scholarship snaffler

It is never too soon to start worrying. This is the first lesson a conscientious new parent must learn. In eleven years' time your child must sit for the Eleven Plus Examination. You haven't a moment to spare. Nothing that will enhance his chances must be left undone.



'But, my dears, why are his godparents all *schoolteachers*? No wonder the poor child's crying. *They'll* have nothing to leave him.'

How pleasant it is to find that other parents share your hopes and fears!



'I don't know *what* we'll do if Angeline fails her Scholarship.'

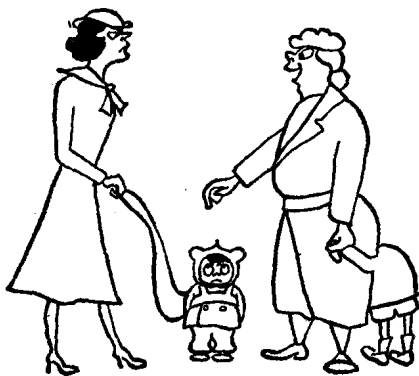
'I know just how you feel. Willie *seems* bright enough but sometimes I lie awake at night worrying.'

Time passes, and Willie becomes less apathetic.

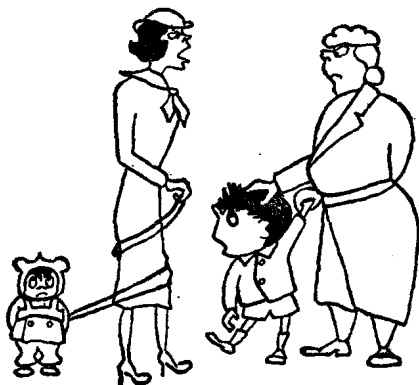


How reassuring are those first signs of initiative!

How bitterly you resent any criticism of your extraordinarily intelligent child!



'Do you think his head's the right shape?'



'Personally, I prefer quality to quantity.'

As he grows you cannot fail to notice how very favourably he compares with his small neighbours. How discouraged other parents must feel when they see your Willie! What fond plans you entertain for his future! There are no limits to what such a child might do. The Church? The Law? The Medical profession?

Angeline's Mama conceals her jealousy.

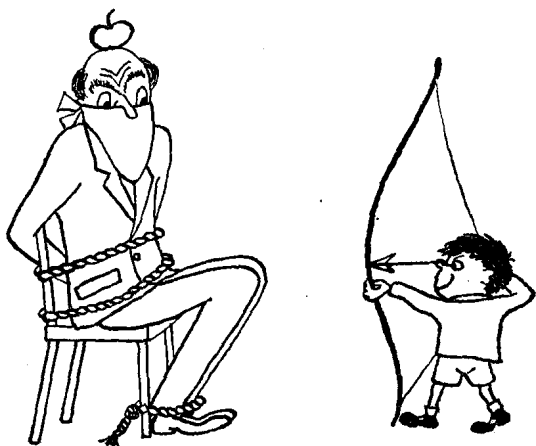


'What do you suppose they'll be when they grow up?' she muses.

Meanwhile you are feverishly studying child psychology. How annoyed you are when well-meaning relatives attempt to undermine your most cherished schemes!



'Please, Grandma, no baby-talk!'

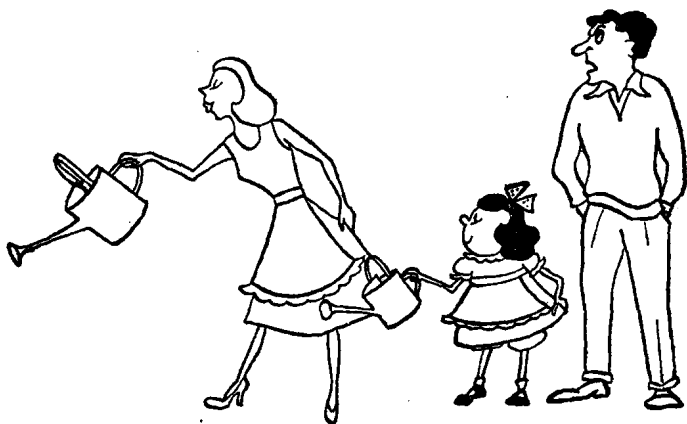


'Really, Grandpa! You should only buy him educational toys.'

When the child begins to show a marked personality the time is ripe to delve into books on heredity. Recriminations inevitably occur.



'He's getting just like his father. Bone idle!'



'She's getting just like her mother. Vain as a peacock!'