ugly, muddy water swirl with logs, drift, pieces of houses, and dead animals. People watch the river with fear waiting for it to devour them. The hungry current tears trees from their roots and drives the ferry boat to a safe anchorage in shallow water. Even at dusk the rescue boats are still toiling to save the homeless. The moon casts light, as the rescuers work feverishly on through the night. The river is fierce, ugly, and frightening during the days and nights of early spring.

**JUST FOR FUN**

**TOM STUMP**

The first book that I remember having read for myself was A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*. I read and re-read this book many times, as well as its twin, *House at Pooh Corner*. Whenever I grew tired of reading one of these books, I would skim through the pages and look at the winsome little pictures of Pooh, or Eeyore, the donkey, or Kanga, the kangaroo. Although as I grew up I soon considered myself above such juvenile literature, I was amazed not very long to find that I still enjoyed reading about the exploits of Pooh, the amiable and human-like bear.

It was not until I was in the fourth grade that I began to read much for myself. My tastes in books from this time until I reached the seventh grade ran almost exclusively to Indian stories and stories about the Civil War. Altsheler, Gregor, and Schultz were my favorite authors and indeed, I read almost nothing except the works of these three men during this period. When I was about ten or eleven, I began to look forward to joining the Boy Scouts. My interest in woodcraft increased tremendously, and it was during this time Ernest Thompson Seton became my favorite (and exclusive) author. I believe that I read at least once every volume he had written, while his *Two Little Savages* I read until I had almost worn the cover off the book.

*Ivanhoe*, by Sir Walter Scott, so enthralled me as a high school freshman that I was stimulated to read more of Scott's books. Since his vivid descriptions were so colorful and as much a part of the book as the plot itself, I found myself quite effortlessly reading all the descriptive material instead of skipping it as I previously had done. With this sudden realization of the pleasure that could be gleaned from descriptive material, I began to read some of Robert Louis Stevenson's travel stories and many of Mark Twain's stories of his experiences in Europe.

About this time I also became a strong admirer of Dumas, with his short, terse conversations and swift, decisive action — a style in direct contrast to the long and carefully descriptive style of Scott's *The Three Musketeers*, naturally, stands out in my mind as one of the most thoroughly entertaining and gripping books that I have ever read.

Today, Mark Twain is still one of my favorite authors. Sir Walter Scott I continue to read, occasionally, while I enjoy most short stories that are along a lighter vein. In spite of the fact that I often claim to prefer light selections such as Wodehouse's works, the only long books that I have ever read more than once are Alexander Dumas' *Three Musketeers* and his *Count of Monte Cristo*. I enjoy only those detective stories in which I cannot figure out who committed the crime, for it exasperates me no end to have my guess as to the villain concur with that of the
fictional detective. The type of mystery story that particularly fascinates me is the type that has to do with dope peddlers.

I pass the rainy days most rapidly, therefore, in reading a novel by Scott, a travel sketch by either Stevenson or Mark Twain, a story dealing with a sinister and unfathomable ring of dope peddlers, or—yes, in reading Winnie the Pooh.

THINGS I AM CURIOUS TO LEARN
MARYLOUISE MILES

Like every other child I started out with a burning curiosity. At five that unextinguishable fire was a horrible thing. Horrible, that is, to those coming within hearing distance. "Why" was the only word in my vocabulary, and every moment made me more masterful in its use. Why do ants build their houses like that? Why is grass green instead of some other color? Why are you dusting, Mama? Why do I have to wear my coat today? Why? Why? Why? Of course those sentences are exasperating; so was I.

By the time I was ten I had learned to find the answers for myself. I didn't quite understand how Daddy could make carrots, cabbages, and radishes grow out of the ground right where he wanted them. The major step in learning this was to have a small corner of the garden all to myself. Before the summer was over, I discovered that hard work had much to do with it. The next thing I decided was that rabbits couldn't possibly multiply as fast as the best books made out. That Easter I received two cute little black and white bunnies. Well, when number six bit me, we decided to get rid of them. My next smattering of education came when I decided to improve my vocabulary. Reading seemed the most logical and interesting method, so I promptly read everything in sight. It worked. For a while I led the class in verbalism, but eventually I wandered to greater fields. One of these fields happened to be art. My family before me had already broken the ground, but it had never occurred to me to try it. It seemed silly to start out with water color or something simple, so I jumped right into pastel work. It was many a year before I managed to turn out anything recognizable. I am not an athletic person, but I didn't intend to let sports escape my observation. Baseball and basketball both got their share of attention. However, the main difficulty arose in trying to see the balls without my glasses. I couldn't do it, so I put the glasses on. Net result: shattered specs.

By this time it was obvious that my interest lay not in one thing but many. Through high school I resolved to be consistent and take a wide variety of subjects. Unnecessarily to say, English started out the list. Not to be stopped by the warnings of upperclassmen I added a touch of Latin to the English. Later on, Spanish was also included. Although I detest Math, and only one year is required, I thought I might as well take geometry too. History had always intrigued me, so I took it and mingled social studies in for spice. According to family instructions, art couldn't be left out, and I had a fling at that. Music, you'll notice has been left out, but only because a guitar teacher I once had said that if I had no time to practice it was useless. Finally, I topped everything with a technical course in health.

Now, I've once more begun to take an interest in subjects outside of school. I have, at last, found one topic which I will probably have to follow through to the end. Is Darwin's theory right or wrong?