

## *Great Men Through Chance*

CHANCE rather than planning determines most careers. Charles Darwin shifted from medicine to the ministry and then a fortuitous invitation to go as scientific observer on the *Beagle* made him the eminent naturalist. Goethe prepared to be a jurist. Unsatisfied in the law, he successively tried art and public service, and then at 45 settled down to literature. This many-talented man wavered in racking indecision over his career plans, and his choices were finally made on impulse. Charles W. Elliot, possessed of a proven mathematics aptitude, sought to be a teacher of applied chemistry, for which he had a flair but no adequate preparation. He rose to success in college administration, for which a disfiguring facial scar and a personality complex, as described by Henry James, would have brought an adverse opinion from any personnel psychologist of my acquaintance. Is the world poorer through the lack of vocational guidance in the lives of Darwin, Goethe, and Eliot?—*Clement C. Williams, excerpted from School and Society.*