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# MESSENGER

Vol. 34    No. 2    March 1, 1929

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*For March*

*1929*

*Being Volume 34*

*Number 2*

## THE MESSENGER

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### THE COMING

As Raleigh once  
His precious velvet spread  
Before his queen,  
The impetuous sky flings down his cloak  
Across the flooded fields  
That Spring may pass—  
His cloak with small clouds furred,  
Incomparably blue.

For Spring's outriders wait  
With swords unsheathed,—  
Glimmering golden blades held in salute,  
There on the brink  
Where marshalled willows stand.

Fanfares of lusty Winds, her trumpeters,  
Sound her approach;  
The peering trees on tiptoe sway;  
Each roadside bush  
Upreaching eager hands  
Feels, ere it falls,  
The thrill her scattered largess will bestow.

John Mills Gilbert

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### THE RUSSIAN MIND IN FICTION

What is it that constitutes the real greatness of a nation? If the measure were the number of its battleships, or its financial prosperity, Russia would indeed be an object of pity. But when we Americans swell with pride at hearing the chatter concerning our industrial prosperity, we would do well to reflect for a moment on the comparative value of America's and Russia's contributions to literature and music. In a way, Russian literature and American literature are twins. From the point where they became a matter of interest to the outside world, both literatures began in the early nineteenth century. But what a difference in the beginning! American literature sounds like a child learning to talk, and then aping its elders. Russian literature is the voice of an adult waking from a long sleep and commencing to talk. What he has to say has been worth the years of waiting.

The "big five" of Russian literature are Puskin, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoi. We shall limit ourselves to Dostoevsky—including for contrast the modernist, Michael Artsybashev. In the novels of these writers one can find the most prominent traits in the Russian character.

The gallery of Dostoevsky's characters which occur in *The Brothers Karamazov* show us Russia with its conflicts, rebelliousness, and abandon. Yet, to regard these characters as exclusively Russian would be as narrow as to paste a national label on Hamlet. They are truly international. What makes the world created by Dostoevsky so intensely interesting to the reader, is the unique quality of the men, women and children who people that nation. Despite the large number of characters who appear in this novel, there are no two who are alike in personality. They are, however, mutually at war with God, or with society, or with the State, or with reason, or with themselves—always at war! It is not a material conflict in which they are involved, but a subjective struggle; and self-destruction is the fate of nearly all Dostoevsky's characters who venture to emphasize their non-conforming individualities.

It is apparent in *The Brothers Karamazov* that

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Dostoevsky has used his story as a mere easel for his portraits. From a selfish, sensual father proceed three sons, men of marked individuality, bound together by fraternal affection. Mitia is in many respects like his father; Ivan is the sceptic, whose final conviction that he is morally responsible for the murder of his father, shows his inability to escape from the domination of moral ideas; Aloysha has all the family force of character, but in him its only outlet is love to God and love to man.

What strikes the reader most is that all of Dostoevsky's characters seem unhappy. One somehow feels that he deliberately makes them so, and the sense of impending catastrophe or tragedy prevails. He somehow succeeds in finding phrases which reveal the most intimate and obscure phases of the human soul. Dostoevsky has sought out the pathological persons, the transgressors, the enemies of society, as though they were the most interesting through the very fact of deviating from the trodden path. He himself was a victim of epilepsy and was apparently fascinated by the awful disease, as can be seen from his interest in the poor epileptic, Smerdyakov. It was his own disease, so he must have studied its symptoms carefully, and, one might say, almost eagerly.

Sin is the essence of Dostoevsky's characters, if by sin one means that which produces a sick conscience. Sin permeates Dostoevsky's world and its inhabitants—the Karamazovs, Smerdyakov, Katerina Ivanov, Grushenka and Liza, the idiot girl. Even the few "good" characters dwell on the brink of sin. Father Zoseima, the hermit-monk, tells his hearers of his former sinful existence and exhorts them to love sinners. In fact, he sends Aloysha out of the monastery, because he wants him to be an "earthly monk," to live in close contact with sin and crime.

There are two feelings which may be regarded as among the unfortunate products of religion, and they occur many times in *The Brothers Karamazov*. They are: (1) excess of spiritual pride, and (2) excess of self-humiliation. All the principal figures are made monsters through exaggerations of one or the other of these

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feelings. The Russian's humility enables him to see clearly what is going on and remain passive, where an American would instantly interfere and attempt to change the course of events.

Still another feature is Dostoevsky's fondness for interrupting the course of his narratives with dreams. Whether they were injected to deceive the reader, or merely to indulge the novelist's fancy, is hard to divine. Another favorite device is to have one of the characters take a walk, and on this walk undergo some experience that has apparently nothing to do with the course of the action. This device occurs more frequently in *Crime and Punishment*, an earlier novel, than in *The Brothers Karamazov*. That picture of the pretty, young girl, fifteen or sixteen years old, staggering about in the heat of the early afternoon, dazed by drink, while a fat libertine stalks after her like a bird of prey, stirs Raskolnikov to rage. This picture, and others, stick in the mind, though they do nothing to further the action.

The criminal psychology in *The Brothers Karamazov* and the scenes at the trial are more interesting than those in *Crime and Punishment*, because Dmitri is a more fascinating person than Raskolnikov, who wanted to be a Napoleon, but only succeeded in murdering two poor old women. Concerning Dmitri, however, by a clever trick the reader is completely deceived. The corpse of Dmitri's father lies on the floor, its silk nightgown covered with blood. The faithful old servant, smitten and bleeding, is faintly crying for help. Close at hand the epileptic is in the midst of a fearful convulsion, and the elder brother is running away from the scene. There are some dramatic moments! The defense is allowed the utmost freedom in the trial, a freedom equal to any American law court of today. However, it is in the prosecution that a contrast is most apparent. There is no "third degree" stuff. The questions are extremely fair and unprejudiced. We realize that the prosecutor is a skilled psychologist, who is trying to get at the exact process of the prisoner's mind. Indeed, the working of the Russian system of justice is an eye-opener to the common beliefs about Russian injustice of the middle nineteenth century.

Michal Artsybashev's *Sanine* was a sensational

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novel, not mainly in its incidents, although three men commit suicide and two girls are ruined, but in its ideas. The book appeared at a psychological moment in the year 1907.

The First Revolution had been a failure, and it now being impossible to fight the government or to obtain political liberty, people in Russia, of all classes, were ready for a revolt against moral law, the religion of self-denial, and all the conventions established by society, education, and the church. They revolted against the oppressive pessimism of Dostoevsky and the Christian non-resistance of Tolstoy. Yet this novel, *Sanine*, shows absolutely no sympathy with the Revolution, or with the spirit of political liberty. The *summum bonum* of *Sanine's* philosophy is the pursuit of individual happiness and the complete gratification of desires. It was not until ten years after the publication of *Sanine* that our F. Scott Fitzgerald, Warner Fabian, and Percy Marks began to write their novels about the emancipation of youth.

Briefly, the story centers around a man endowed with limitless power of will, while the women in the novel are characterized by weakness. They are under what *Sanine* regards as the "tyranny of social convention." *Sanine's* beautiful sister, Lydia, is ruined by a worthless officer. Her remorse, on finding that she is with child, is only natural, but she is ridiculed by her brother and thus deterred from contemplated suicide. He is not the least ashamed of her conduct, nor does he blame the officer, for he considers that their relations had been natural and not sinful. He is even carnally attracted to his sister. Later, *Sanine* encounters his seducer in the public square and beats him because he regards him as a blockhead. The latter commits suicide rather than face the contempt of his brother officers. Soon after this, *Sanine* seduces Karsavina at the very time when she is in love with Jurii, and reasons with coldness against her subsequent remorse.

The character of Jurii, apart from our hero, is the most interesting. He is the typical Russian, characterized by that indecision which has been the bane of so many Russians. All through the book he seeks in vain for some philosophy of life. He has abandoned faith



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in religion, and finally unable to escape from his own thinking, he commits suicide. At his grave, Sanine is asked to deliver an oration. The latter, who abhors all forms of hypocripsy delivers the following funeral oration: "The world has now one blockhead less." This pronouncement the reader can heartily endorse.

Sanine shows no sympathy with political liberty. Men who waste their time in discussion of political rights, or in the endeavor to obtain them, are ridiculed by him. How can there be good government unless there are good individuals worthy of being governed? Suppose the First Revolution had succeeded and the Czardom had been overmastered—could a new government have made society less oppressive to the life of the individual? —Artzybashev said, "No" because it was clear to him that political agitation had failed—must fail; for, although it has a vision of government, it has no vision of human life. The answer to Sanine's contempt is the policy of the present Soviet government. Dostoevsky's philosophy comes near to Artsybashev's, yet the former regards the gratification of physical desires a sin. Sin permeates Dostoevsky's world and he knows that the best among men are tormented by sin. So instead of preaching resistance, he lets them live in close contact with sin and crime, hoping that by sinning they may be purged and raised above the level of mediocrity. Still, the dilemma which recurs so often in his work "If God does not exist, then all things are lawful"—the dilemma which drove Ivan Karamazov mad, never gave up its secret to him. It is more than a dilemma to him; it's a riddle.

On the other hand, Sanine, the atheist, insists that it is not necessary to have any theory of life, or to be guided by any principle that God may or may not exist. Two of his friends are arguing about Christianity: "At least," says one, "you will not deny that its influence has been good." "But I do deny it," quietly remarks Sanine. "Christianity has played an abominable role in history and the name of Jesus Christ will for some time yet oppress humanity like a curse." There is in this doctrine something of Nietzsche. Accordingly, the really rational life should be controlled wholly by the desire of the moment. That is the way men and women

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should live,—without principles, without plans, and without regrets. Nothing that gives pleasure can ever be degrading. The love of drink and women is not sin; in fact, there is no such thing as sin. These passions are natural, argues Sanine, and what is natural cannot be wrong. One sees he doesn't care a hoot for public opinion, or for anything or anybody but himself. His selfish exclusiveness leaves him at perfect peace, consequently, he does not try to convert others to his views.

We glean from the novels of these men that the Russian is tremendously impulsive, but not at all practical. Most of the characters seem always sick of something, always thinking of something that cannot be understood, and are themselves so miserable, so miserable! The Russian is far more an extremist, far more influenced by theory, than the American. American undergraduates are the most conservative persons in the world; if any strange theory in morals or politics becomes noised abroad, the American student opposes to it the time-honored weapons of conservatives—burlesque. No American students lead a radical political mob as is common in Russia. One of the results of the publication of Sanine was the organization in various schools throughout Russia, among boys and girls, of societies to do what Sanine told them they ought to do. Likewise, Tolstoy put his opposite theories into practice and persuaded thousands of Russians to accept the Christian system to the letter. In America, every minister knows that it is perfectly safe to preach the sermon on the Mount every day in the year. There is no occasion for alarm. Nobody will do anything rash.

Finally, in reading the novels of Dostoevsky and Artsybashev, the general impression produced on one's mind is that of intense gloom—of intense suffering and intense despair. The Russian capacity for suffering is the real text of Dostoevsky's works and the immediate result of all this suffering is pity and sympathy for Humanity. When the refined student, Raskolnikov, stoops down to kiss the feet of the prostitute, Sonia, he says, "I do not bow down to you individually, but to suffering Humanity in your person." That phrase gives us an insight into the Russian national character.

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In any case, the Russia of Dostoievsky and Artsybashev is a Russia of the past—or perhaps only the crust of that great Russia of the past—now split and crumbled on the surface, but, underneath, the same.

John Alden Watkinson, '29.

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### I

Life held not love,  
but was a garden in which the weeds  
had overcome the flowers; in deeds  
of graciousness I'd failed; and knew not of  
the better things, until a rose  
sprang up, and added those  
life held not, love.

I speak of love,  
which you, I know, have never known  
as through your gay world you have flown  
on gilded, fragile wings; nor from above  
have you received the flame that glows  
within me, yet you are the rose  
I speak of, love.

### II

Love, laughter; stay  
the fool who says that life is drear,  
and nothing beautiful or dear,  
but all that is must pass away.  
For life is full of joyous things  
and we, of all the earth the kings.  
love, laughter. Stay!

### III

I loved you; once  
when you were queen, supreme, serene,  
you with biting comments keen,  
made me your jester, fool and dunce—  
and with a strange and subtle art,  
heaped leaden ashes in my heart—

I loved you once.

—Myles Alois Vollmer, '29.

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### THE LEGEND OF THE UNICORN

The laborers loitered along the roadside, some of them lounging about with their large straw hats pulled down to shade the whole of their faces, others sitting cross-legged on the grass finishing their mid-day meal. Now and again horses would pass by on the road; tall, strong horses, bearing knights in full armour, shining and bright and black. The knights sat bolt upright in the saddles and held their lances at rest with the points turned toward the skies. The visors of their helmets were raised, and when the knights passed the group of peasants working on the road, they did not deign to turn their heads or to exchange any greetings. Only on rare occasions did they stop to inquire in a haughty manner the way to some town or village further to the south of Italy than this Alpine district. There were also occasional merchants who proceeded along the road at a slower gait than that of the knights, and who were more inclined to ride in groups, not because there was any great danger of an attack from robbers in this peaceful country, but because of the traditions of the dangers which had formerly lurked along the roadside. Merchants had not yet forgotten the attacks of the robber barons who used to descend upon them, relieving them of the burden of their goods.

Along this road there also passed a man on foot who guided his heavily laden mule with his staff, using it to lean upon when he wearied of his slow and tiring progress. As this man approached the group of peasants, they easily discerned by his features and dress that he belonged to that race which was hated by kings and peasants alike, a despicable Jew who would not abide by the Canon law which forbade the taking of interest on money and who, therefore, must be immensely wealthy. The Jew seemed to cringe just a trifle as he drew nearer to the peasants: it seemed as though he expected to be jeered at and ridiculed and even cursed, and as though all his experience among Christians had not so hardened him to their enmity that he no longer felt the sting of their words. He almost fawned upon these lowly peasants and abased himself in the greeting which he extended to them and to which they replied only with grunts and frowns.



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The Jew was asking directions; he wanted to get to Genoa. The peasants answered his queries reluctantly and vaguely, telling him to keep going south. But one of the peasants at last took pity on him and told him of a path which led through the woods and up the side of the mountain, which, if he took it, would save him a considerable part of the journey. These woods were named the Grove of the Unicorn after the horse-like animal with the single golden horn which was reputed to inhabit the place. Knights in full armour could not essay this trip, for along the path there were many places where low-hanging trees would block the passage of a man sitting upright on a tall horse. But for a man on foot, with his little mule, the ardour of the climb up the side of the mountain would be well repaid by the saving in distance actually travelled.

The Jew smiled at his guide and thanked him. It was indeed a rare occasion when a Christian would forbear from hindering his passage, and it was miraculous when one actually helped him. He turned from the road on to the path which the peasant indicated, leading the mule by the bridle. When he had disappeared into the woods, the peasants took up their tools and resumed their work on the road. They had to have something done to show to the lord's bailiff when that exalted person came in the late afternoon to inspect their work.

Suddenly from the mountain there came a dull rumbling sound which seemed to grow louder and sharper as the moments passed, as if a great mass was approaching the place where the men worked. Shovels were dropped, and all, murmuring the name of the patron saint of the district, hastened to the spot where the path entered the woods and where the Jew had disappeared a short time before. After diminishing in volume as it had previously increased, the rumbling ceased.

A few of the more bold of the workmen were about to proceed along the path to see what phenomenon had caused this disturbance when the Jew burst forth from the woods. He was so excited that his words could not be understood by the peasants. In all probability the excitement had caused him to revert to the use of the tongue of his race. But he stood babbling to the peasants for some time before they began to understand

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what he was trying to tell them. He heard the unicorn, he said, the horse with the golden horn, and the unicorn had called to his mule. The mule had broken away from him to follow this love call. Now the Jew was unable to find the mule, and the mule had all his property.

The Jew begged the workmen to assist him in finding his mule, but they would have nothing to do with the matter. None could tell what would happen should they come across the enchanted beast in the woods. But they decided that this was a fit matter to take up with the village priest. One of them hastened to inform the priest of the strange happenings of the afternoon while the others remained with the Jew, their eyes intent on the path into the Grove of the Unicorn as though they expected at any moment to see some strange monster burst out upon them.

Presently the village priest came along the road following the peasant who had been sent to guide him. He had heard the story once from this peasant, but he insisted that the Jew retell it. When he found that the story of the Jew did agree with that told him by the peasant, he ordered the workmen to take up their shovels and follow him into the woods. The whole group followed upon the heels of the priest along the path. For a short distance, no signs of the disturbance could be discovered. But suddenly, the woods came to an end: a blanket of soft earth had buried all the trees. Where formerly there had been innumerable trees and a great deal of brush on the steep slope of the hill, there now appeared what resembled a newly ploughed field.

The thoughts of the priest turned immediately upon the solution of the problem. Surely the Jew was responsible by some sort of trickery or witch-craft he had caused the forest to disappear along with his mule. The Jew was ordered to retell his story so that the priest might try to discern wherein lay the trick. He repeated the former story, saying that he had gone but a little way into the woods when he heard a rumbling noise to which the peasants could testify. Then the mule had broken from him and run further along the path up the mountain, finally swerving from the path and

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becoming lost in the thicket. The Jew had not actually seen the unicorn, but he was convinced that it was that monster who had seduced his mule. It was then that the Jew had returned to the peasants to seek their aid in recovering the animal.

Although the priest could not see anything wrong with this story, his religious training had taught him that these unbelieving Jews were capable of fiendish trickery which good Christians could not always hope to comprehend. He therefore instantly commanded the laborers to drive the Jew from the vicinity, and the peasants, given free rein to unleash their hatred of all Jews, cast stones at him until he was beyond their reach.

But the priest was not satisfied with his own explanation of the phenomenon. He repaired immediately to a nearby monastery famous for the erudition of its monks, and where he hoped to obtain a more satisfactory answer to the question which was vexing him. The monks listened intently to his story, but even they could find no explanation other than the one which the priest had formerly conceived.

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Many years later, in the middle of the eighteenth century, Il Principe Rodolfo D'Arrezzi, Barone di Monte Bianca, dilettante in the sciences as well as in the arts, was delving through the records of the monastery, when he came upon a reference to a Grove of the Unicorn in the vicinity, which was reputed to have been buried under a mass of earth. Machinery was imported, and search was made for the remains of the mythical animal with the golden horn.

Soon an unveiling took place in the private museum of the prince. It was a golden-horned unicorn, which had been discovered in the southern Alpine region. The price, with the acumen of a true eighteenth century scientist, had reconstructed it from a jaw-bone found in the excavated Grove of the Unicorn.

John Milton Nobis, '29.

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### AN OLD FRENCH CUSTOM

Le Duc de Brabant was eighty-three. Consequently it took him a somewhat longer period to "faire sa toilette" than a younger beau would have taken. He always arose at three in the afternoon, and had the curtains pulled. Then he ate an egg, carried by horse from his estate in Cambrai, and drank Chianti, from an old Italian chalice. The wicked delight of drinking wine on arising was thus given an added charm by drinking it from a sacred cup and Le Duc enjoyed this twice naughty breakfast to the fullest, taking an hour for it. At four, or, if he were feeling a little tired, at half-past four, M. le duc would be dressed. And, as monsieur was very particular about his rouge and lip-paint, that took quite a time. In Lent, monsieur was a brunette. When he went to mass, his hair was white. In the Easter season he was a blond, and at times he would appear in red hair, to give a Greek touch. Monsieur chose his perfume for the occasion. The perfume of a young bride for a wedding, musk for a funeral, something strong when he went into the shops, to protect himself from disagreeable odors, and, when he went to dine with a lady, or to spend the evening with one, he always used the perfume of black-violets. Tonight he wore the perfume of burnt roses, for a young rose was coming to visit him, to spend the evening with him. It was a bitter perfume. Monsieur had his fingernails stained red. No accident should happen to them.

Madame his visitor, was one of those women who can dress very carelessly, and look beautiful. Her gown seemed almost afraid to touch her white skin, and fell away from it in graceful folds. Her eyelids were painted black, and the eyelashes were long and sweeping. M. le duc was almost sure she had a delicate ankle. This evening, madame had not had her hair powdered. It was in its natural black, most beautiful. A thing so natural, in fact, looked a little out of place in the salon of M. le duc, but madame was all the more beautiful because of it.

What is this all about? It is an old French custom, devised to pass the time of night. And I will explain it. La Duchesse de Brabant was in love with le Compte

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de Gascon, and la Comtesse de Gascon was in love with le duc de Brabant. This was why la duchess de Brabant married le duc de Brabant, and why la comtesse de Gascon married le compte de Gascon. It is an old French custom. Edgar W. Wilcock, '30.

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### LINES INSPIRED BY THE NINTH OF JANUARY

Ceaseth the wind!  
Ceaseth the wind!  
Fairer the silence than pearls out of Ind.  
Fairer than this which I madly Beginn'd  
With rhyme so atrocious I feel that I've sinn'd  
Against the nine muses and all their sweet kind-  
Red of fauns and satyrs, goat shank'ed and shinn'd  
And I'd feign be a fish all betailed and befinn'd  
Who never had ears into which could be dinn'd  
The thought that fair poesy need be down-pinn'd  
To rhymes idiotic,—a thought at which Pind-  
Ar in all of his majesty scarce would have grinn'd.  
But——  
Ceaseth the wind!  
Ceaseth the wind!  
(This time pronounce the *i* long, as in *dined*)  
And I swear by the nut with the bitterest rind,  
Which Touchstone assures us was like Rosalinde,  
And I swear by the silly Narcissus who pined  
As he gazed at his image in water defined,  
That I could keep up the continual grind  
Of murmuring prophecies dark of this kind  
Till outraged Apollo hath stricken me blind.

Away with dull meter, away will dull rime;  
Let them both, in the shortest elapement of time,  
To scritch-owls and night-hags and mold-warps be  
thrown

(And the easiest rhyme that will fit here is *bone*).  
But up with free verse, and the lazy man's muse  
Whom Sandburg, and children in high school, abuse.  
If we're smart at effects, and not technical carpers,  
At least we can get our stuff printed in *Harper's*.

Elton Davies, '31

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### DREAMS

I have always been, and probably always will be, a dreamer. Exactly when I began dreaming I do not know, but it might have been about the time I learned to whistle, which, according to my family, was quite early enough. I do know, however, *where* I must have started on this career of dreaming, which is much more important to me just now.

I spent my first years in a Rhode Island village roughly between the boggy jungle known as King Philip's Swamp and the western shore of Narragansett Bay. Upon the hill overlooking the lowlands, beyond which, when the heavy ocean fog cleared off in the late morning, one could see in the west the faint blue strip of mountains far across on the edge of Connecticut. The little village has perched there ever since the handful of soldiers of King George made that hilltop their bivouac on the eve of their fight against the fierce Narragansetts securely intrenched within the recesses of the swamp, and called the place Little Rest. The battle turned out to be a glorious victory for the English, whereupon the few dwellings there took on shortly the more patriotic name of Kingston, which it carries to this day.

In the little village which grew up there, changes came but seldom. Like most small, but early-founded New-England towns, its old-looking houses, its huge elms, and the perpetual stillness in its streets seemed to have all been included as permanent items in the first settlement of the hilltop, when it was still called "Little Rest." About half way down a row of great elms, whose mottled shadows slanted down green banks; and across the worn street rose the pointed tips of three fir trees. Under those trees, facing the road, stood the white front of the old Tavern, slightly darkened by the deep shadows. One of the earliest recollections I have is that of standing across from the Tavern and gazing at its long porch with the moss-grown roof and the wide eaves, brushed every now and then by the wind in the low-swinging branches. Many times I would fancy in my youthful imagination what the place might be like inside, and wish that I could but peep through the tiny panes of the corner windows and see into the



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great square room within. This sombre corner room with its high ceiling and cavernous fireplace and the two tarnished andirons crouching upon the hearth held a peculiar interest for me in those days, for it was there that I was born.

I myself never knew the interior of my birthplace. I had in fact been inside the old Tavern but once that I could remember, and that visit revealed such a cheerless atmosphere within the dark hallway and the gaunt, mahogany-finished rooms that the gloom that hung so heavily about them seemed to creep outside and wait in the corners of the porch and under the sweeping branches of the firs. A feeling occasionally touched me like a chill breath that I myself had come into this beautiful world in the sighing shadows of these three firs; and whether they taught me or whether I came upon the discovery by chance, I learned to find increased beauty in the contrasts of their dark shadows and the chequered sunlight on the streets, and of the sighing of the wind in their tapering branches and the laughter of the children next door. Perhaps it was they who set me dreaming of all these things; perhaps it was Something Else, who knows?

Our house, down the western slope of the hill, on the very edge of the town, bordered also on the tangled swamp that stretched westward and the southward in rolling masses of green and black. In the still nights of summer the hylas chirped unceasingly from the pools among the roots of gnarled willows, and the dusky cow-frog grunted uneasily in the coarse grass. Things as strange happened there, I knew, as in the darkest jungles of Africa. One never got very far into the tangle, not much farther than he could see from the grass-grown road that cut along its eastern edge. The bullbriars reached out thin, snaky strands to catch in unsuspected places. The black water quivered in distant hollows, as though some animal had just slipped in, shaking the specks of far-away blue sky that filtered through the maze of grapevines overhead and were caught fast upon the glassy surface.

Such places did not breed exactly joyful fancies; but even the swamp, as the shadows of the fir trees before the Tavern, had a peculiar beauty, which I soon

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learned to capture and to love (perhaps the more because of its wildness), than the bright summer days in the fields and the warm sun shining on the water lilies in the mill-pond.

But there were many other kinds of fancies. On clear summer noons when fleets of white clouds went sailing overhead, I loved to lie flat on my back in the shadow of the north wall of the house and watch these endless argosies, traveling far away in an unfathomable azure sea toward lands of rich adventure beyond the blue rim of the horizon. The serene motion of the masses of white, piled high in turrets and shrouds, seemed always in harmony with the hush of the village and the mysterious peace of the swamp. Even the limitless tracks of these far-voyaging barques had something in common with little me, and the village of few streets on the hill.

In the evenings, just as the very last light of the sunset was deepening into the green and blue of the night sky, I would walk softly among the young balsams and hemlocks on the lawn and watch the tiny fire-flies come out one by one from their daytime retreats under leaves and bark and swing their golden lanterns to and fro among the fragrant trees. Sometimes so brilliant would be their swiftly moving lights and such their multitude that, flying higher and higher, they seemed to mingle with the twinkling heaps of stars, and to become lost in measureless space. Then from the depths of the swamp night would come floating the haunting notes of the whippoorwill, carrying with them the whole soul of the jungle fascinating and repelling, full of vague fancies of twilight lands and the will o' the wisp. It was the time when the spirit of the swamp came out a little way from its murky home and joined what was left of the retreating day in making the whole world more beautiful than even at noon in the sunlit fields or at midnight in the heart of the quags. And the keynote I found in it was again the beauty of pure harmony and proportion that exists ever in nature, but, as I found long afterward, so lacking in many of us.

It is now nearly ten years since I lived in the little town on the hill, and many, many other impressions have swarmed through my head since then, filling it

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with a host of pictures so extensive that I have but to step out of the back door of my memory to wander for hours through looking-glass lands as vivid as travels in real countries. But back of all these lies the harmony of the little New-England village, whose influence has been so strong that under its power everything discordant vanishes from my dreams. Pain only as pleasure is lasting; sorrow only as accentuating joy finds a record in memory. And in dreams one finds how slight is after all the difference between them. Then for one who lives in dreams, for such I call the palaces built high up on old memories, and peopled with old fancies, there is no death, for dreams are immortal, and no beyond, for it is all in the past. Even so I have found it, an escape from the evils of here and now, a magic window, through which to see the past treading hard on the heels of the future. And, lest someone think that I am alone in this, I ask him only to remember that

"We are such stuff as dreams are made of,  
And our little life is rounded by a sleep."

J. W. H., '31.

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### HARMONY

The rhythmic sweep of the sea,  
The rising and falling of the wind,  
The swelling hills and sloping vales,—  
All are waves of harmony.

The melodious undulations of music,  
The intermingling of rainbow colours,  
The surging pulse of poetry,—  
All are waves of harmony.

The comedy and tragedy of life,  
The heights and depths of man,  
The culmination of all things,—  
All—all are waves of harmony.

F. St. M. Caldiero, '31.

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### TWENTY-ONE AND WHITE

#### A Play In One Act

The play that follows is an attempt to be exactly life-like. The family about which the play is woven, exists. The episode presented here is one that happens continually in this particular family, and there is every reason to believe that similar occurrences are habitual in similar families. It is, therefore, a photograph of an actual group of people, or, as we may say, an attempt to snatch with bloody teeth a few edible fragments from the mouldy loaf of life.

"Joe" the daughter, is continually unconscious of the presence of her father and mother throughout the whole play. This is symbolic of an attitude which is prevalent among certain groups of girls—and boys, too, for that matter—who are born of more or less illiterate working people, and who find that their parents do not supply to their little problems acceptable answers. This may be ascribed to a feeling which exists, often among both children and parents, that each individual, having attained a certain age of discretion, is entitled to an almost unbounded freedom. The rather common phrase, 'twenty-one, and white,' gives expression to this feeling.

The play purposely fades away immediately before the fall of the curtain. It has the appearance of falling flat. The reason is that in actual life such scenes are marked by a sort of resignation; and resignation is nearly always characterized by a fading away of all opposition. The opposition, which constitutes the conflict, having failed—the play naturally ends.

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#### Scene One:

The living room of a working man's home.

#### Time:

Eight-thirty, any evening, or better yet, every evening.

#### Stage:

Parlor. Center front is a library table of the mail-order type with a runner and a lamp upon it. On the left side of the table is a rocking chair and beside



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it on the table is the Holy Bible, a copy of Good House-keeping, and a sewing basket. On the right of the table is a Morris chair and on the table is a tin of tobacco, two pipes, a newspaper and Popular Mechanics. Door on left, opening on the street. Doorway on right, opening on the rest of the house. In the center back is a couch on which lies a girl's henna coat. On the floor to the left of the couch is a girl's henna hat. On the wall above the couch is a gilt framed picture of the Mayflower and a motto: "God Bless Our Happy Home." Beside the door on the left is a full length mirror.

A woman is in the rocking chair. She is forty, fat, gray-haired and wears a yellowish-white house dress and a pair of faded pink-felt slippers. A coatless man is in the Morris chair opposite. His shoeless feet reveal a pair of dirty white socks. Two children, about the ages of nine and eleven, are running around the table playing.

Mother: The kids ought to go to bed. Eh?

Father, (arranging the newspaper which he holds up in front of him): Yeh.

Silence.

Mother: Pa!

Father (continuing to read the paper): Huh?

Mother (sighs—brushes her hair back on her brow—picks up her sewing basket and turns to the children): Betty! Martha! It's time for bed. Go along now.

(Exeunt Betty and Martha sulkily)

(Almost as soon as they have left the room the patter of hard heels is heard on the stairs. The door on the right is pushed open violently. A girl enters and moves quickly toward the couch. She is a little over five feet tall and wears a pink chemise. Her black bobbed hair is closely curled. Her bare leg may be seen above her rolled stockings. The mother watches her.)

The Girl (picking up the henna coat and feeling through both pockets several times finally extracts a purse. She throws the coat back on the couch.) Damn.

(The girl leaves hurriedly through the same door by which she entered, slamming it after her. Her father, startled by the noise, turns and glances, once, at the door.)

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Silence.

Mother: Well, what do you think of that?

(The father takes a pipe from the table, fills it, extracts a match from his vest pocket and strikes it on the bottom of the chair. Continues with his paper.)

(Again the hard heels are heard on the stairs and the girl enters. This time she wears a dress that is almost red. She walks over to the couch, picks up the coat and puts it on. Then she surveys herself in the mirror. She turns and her eyes search the couch as though looking for something.)

The Girl (turning to walk out of the room): Damn.

(She is heard going up stairs.)

Mother: Guess Joe's going out again, tonight, Pa.

Father: Yes, again.

Mother: It's getting so she goes out every night lately.

Lord knows what she does.

Father (turning slowly and staring at Ma): Don't be a fool.

Mother (indignantly): What do you mean?

(Hard heels are heard pattering again on the stairs.)

Father: Shh-h.

(The girl stamps in and goes over to the couch. She looks all about it. Again she is searching carefully. Finally she looks on the floor beside the couch and picks up the henna hat.)

The Girl (walking towards the mirror): Damn.

(She puts the hat on, carefully surveying herself all the time. Very affectedly the girl, now ready to meet the world, walks to the front door and goes out slamming it after her. The mother and father, both startled by the noise of the door, turn to look at it.)

Father (regaining his composure): That's our Joe.

Mother (wearily): Yes.

Father: You'd never think it, would you?

Mother (a little sadly): Yes, our Joe.

Silence.

(Both the mother and the father gaze steadily at the floor. After a few moments the father, coming out of his lethargy, folds up his paper and puts it on the table. He knocks the ashes out of his pipe, fills it with fresh tobacco and lights it. His feet, one after the other, feel about for their shoes. He slips into them and gets up.

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He starts for the door, and after two steps he turns.)  
 Father (looking pathetically at Ma): Come on, Ma.  
 Mother (absently): Where?  
 Father (turning to the door): Bed.  
 (Father goes out by the side door. The mother still trying to comprehend what he meant continues to sit for a moment. Slowly she puts her sewing on the table and get ups. She leans over toward the light and puts it out.)

Curtain

Lola.

### DAFFODILS

These write the Song of the Sun  
 In notes of gold,  
 Which the wind learns one by one  
 As they unfold.

On many a garden's page  
 Its staves appear,—  
 The golden music of youth  
 For the young year,

And hearts, like gardens, await  
 The daffodils,  
 Till the old, old pledge of joy  
 The spring fulfills.  
 John Mills Gilbert.

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