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THE YALE LITERARY
MAGAZINE**

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VOL. XLV.

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THE
YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE.

CONDUCTED
BY THE
Students of Yale College.



"Dum mentis gratia manet, animi laudisque VALENTES
CANTANTUM SCHOLAE, unanimique PAYSAGE."

DECEMBER, 1879.

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THE YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE.—Conducted by the Students of Yale College. This Magazine, established February, 1836, is the oldest college periodical in America; entering upon its Forty-Fifth Volume with the number for October, 1879. It is published by a board of Editors, annually chosen from each successive Senior Class, and is entirely made up of the writings of undergraduates. It thus may be fairly said to represent in its general articles the average literary culture of the college. In the Notabilia college topics are thoroughly discussed, and in the Memorabilia it is intended to make a complete record of the current events of college life; while in the Book Notices and Editors' Table, contemporary publications and exchanges receive careful attention.

Contributions to its pages are earnestly solicited from all the undergraduates, and may be sent through the Post Office. If rejected, they will be returned to their writers, whose names will not be known outside the Editorial Board. Items of news even of trifling importance, are also especially desired, and may be communicated personally to the Editors, or by mail. A Gold Medal of the value of Twenty-five Dollars, for the best written Essay, is offered for the competition of all undergraduate subscribers, at the beginning of each academic year.

The Magazine is issued monthly from October to June, inclusive; nine numbers form the annual volume, comprising at least 300 pages. The price is \$3.00 per volume, 35 cents per single number. All subscriptions must be paid in advance, directly to the Editors, who alone can give receipts therefor. Upon the day of publication the Magazine is promptly mailed to all subscribers. Single numbers are on sale at Gulliver's. Back numbers and volumes can be obtained from the Editors.

A limited number of advertisements will be inserted. The character large circulation of the Magazine render it a desirable medium for all who would like to secure the patronage of Yale students.

All communications, whether in regard to the editorial or the business management of the periodical, must be addressed to the EDITORS OF THE YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE, New Haven, Conn.

THE
YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE.

VOL. XLV. DECEMBER, 1879. No. 3.

EDITORS FOR THE CLASS OF '80.

JOHN A. AMUNDSON,

ALFRED B. NICHOLS,

WILLIAM M. HALL,

DOREMUS SCUDDER.

DIMITRI ROUDINE AND HIS BROTHERS.

THE nineteenth century—or rather that long civilization whose growth has so quickened therein—is charged with no less a crime than soul-murder, slow but unpitiful; with sapping the moral life of humankind not only by shattering old foundation-faiths with scientific doubts, but also by dissolving out the healthy vigor of man's will and passions with the ease and wise selfishness of modern living. The viking, we are told, is become a diplomatist; the martyr, a missionary. Few of us are ready to admit that the shadow of that doom is on our generation, that the world is selling its soul for knowledge; but we cannot fail to see about us some saddening figures of vacillating, shallow-hearted educated men—here and there even one on whom refinement has wrought its perfect work, till his memory is heavy with knowledge, his wit thrice-sharpened, his judgment mirror-clear, till strong will and deep emotion cannot be found in him. This, we are asked to believe, is the product of the nineteenth century, the incarnation of the reigning spirit of the age; and almost this is Dimitri Roudine.

Roudine is not the hero of a novel, nor is he, like most of Tourguéneff's men, an oddity peculiar to Russia; whatever he was meant to be, he is a man of no nation,

and the best type of that strange new class of brilliant faint-hearted men which has appeared so ominously in this century; better even than Philip Ostrander. Roudine's mind is stored with a shabbily encyclopedic knowledge; but that limitation is not essential to the character, for men of thorough learning are found among his spiritual namesakes. He takes delight in following the progress of the times, in scattering his new beliefs in gleaming epigrams among the people whom he meets, in standing by the front rank of battle and beckoning the laggards to come on; but he wields no sword himself. He is eloquent, because he must be: the natural expression of his tame emotions would move no one. To a stranger he is charming; but an untraceable distrust slowly dissolves the spell. He sees this himself: "At first they are impressed by me, but afterwards, . . ." His life is a succession of new friendships. He is interested in his new friends' avocations, makes acute suggestions, and accomplishes nothing. He knows by reading and observation what feeling is appropriate to every situation, and when occasion comes he stirs his meager soul to a pale transparent self-increasing glow; thinks to himself "This is a time for grief, and I am grieving," and so deceives himself into believing that he feels deeply. All men fall in love: he must be destined to do the same; so arguing, he dreams himself into an imaginary passion. His semblance of love withers before the first emergency, and he is scorned; he is mortified—for a little while; recovers himself, mildly reproaches Fate, and glides away to captivate, amuse, annoy and alienate new acquaintances elsewhere. So he drifts on always, flushing with weak emotions and flaccid resolutions, rosy with a dawn that never turns to day, with a hope so long deferred that utter heartsickness settles on his friends and at last on himself. The crisis comes; he does not descend through despairing lethargy into cold vegetation, but gathers all his powers into spasmodic straining efforts to do something, and half succeeds. He has caught a glimpse of his own weakness and felt a manly shame for his unmanliness; but he is weary, and he never can be strong. He wanders on until the end finds him in one of his moods of action, on the barricades of '48 in Paris.

He was misunderstood, of course: they who at first admired cursed him when they found how irresolute and lukewarm he really was; they took vengeance for their own misjudgment by calling him hypocrite for his professions of wisdom and affection. But he was not a hypocrite. Not knowing what deep feeling was, he mistook his ripples of emotion for tropical storm-waves—or rather, he thought that other men exaggerated their experiences in describing them, that others felt no more deeply than he; and he nursed his emotion by imagining it a prodigious rush of feeling. The ghost of Love which he once conjured up, he looked on as flesh and blood until it curled away in cold smoke before a blast of danger. His resolves, too, he believed in: had he not been eloquent over them in public? had he not adorned them in his own mind with rich results? Surely there was no flaw in them. But in a week they were gone, and other plans reigned in their stead. He was not hardly selfish, not consciously selfish at all; it made him comfortable to be generous once or twice a day; he praised men whom he disliked, and strove to be judicial. In fact, he did no harm to other men except by disappointing their hopes of him. His quick imagination and keen judgment were employed with an honest fervor to spread truth as he saw it. He really wondered why he never attained eminence or prosperity.

This is not the story of Dimitri Roudine merely; he has scores of counterparts in actual life; their nature and history are his nature and history, without the dramatic death. And besides them there are hundreds of brilliant men who partake more or less of his weakness. Noteworthy among these are they who, like Roudine, are unpersevering and unemotional, but who unlike him, know their own deficiency and strive with it or submit in sorrow. They know that other men have that to which they can never attain—strong will and strong affections; experience has taught them how weak the will is, and they see and despise the shallowness of all their feelings. Many a man thus afflicted earnestly desires to live a fuller life. Music and verbal harmony, sunset colors, storm-

winds, and silent meditation raise in him broad, vague emotions and purposes, and he seems to himself risen into new high sensibility; but these feelings fade and cool without result in action. Great deeds of men, magnificent unities of science, bold imaginations of the future, stir his heart to real but transient enthusiasm. He tries to key himself to an artificial pitch of perseverance, but breaks down before long; and so he lives his days out in alternation between hope and hopelessness, endowed with threefold greater intellectual gifts than his moral strength can use.

How shall we look on such men? Are they the typical product of civilization? Is ultimate man to be a thing of tints instead of colors?

It is not quite true that these weak-hearted men of brains are creations of this century. We know not how many of them are lying in forgotten graves; we should expect to find small trace of such faint figures in the histories and novels, the poems and dramas of old time, and we may not make haste to acquit the past of them because the past has not confessed them. Yet there is slight doubt that now is their time of most abundance, and that their abundance is in some sort the result of civilization. But that fact does not enthrone them as the chief and typical result. In days of old, will and passion had better opportunities than mind; and mind not backed by those strong allies was helpless. Here and now, sound education is no longer the reward of great toil and courage; it may be reached by the weakling also. Our Dimitri Roudines are not the men who would have been heroes but for civilization; they are the men who would have been nothing but for civilization. We have our heroes still—the Homeric virtues are not fading from the earth; and for certain of the weakly ignorant we have substituted the weakly wise. The Roudines are better than the cockneys, the cynics, and the ciphers whom they replace. They do some good; we mourn only because they cannot do more. Is Yggdrasil then dying because above the fair fruit ripe to-day, among the blossoms of a fairer future, there hang some fading flowers, unvital, odorless?

SILURIAN RHYME.

O ask me not, my brother, to join you in the praise
 Of this nineteenth century shrieking fiend—the spirit of the age.
 Let locomotives thunder, and scream their fierce delight
 While whooping o'er the continent, at morn, at noon, at night ;
 Let telegraphs go gossiping with tongues that ever rattle,
 Like aged crones as o'er the seas they bear a nation's tattle ;
 And let the vast steam presses print ten thousand sheets a day,
 Of politics, of scandal, and defaulters run away ;
 Wax eloquent o'er all these themes, declaim, orate and glow,
 But I will think on ancient things, four million years ago.
 Then Nature sang in sweetest strains a soft Silurian rhyme,
 And the Trilobite and Mollusk had a devil of a time ;
 For they combed their golden tresses 'neath the overwhelming fern
 And they played at roley boley near the arching gymnosperm.
 And all that funny business : the Ganoid and the Shark
 Strolled gayly down the boulevard just at high water mark.
 Then life it was worth living, not cold and dark and drear.
 For the Worm was in his glory and the Centipede was here.
 Though I never heard that Germans were common in that age,
 Yet surprise parties were frequent, they indeed were all the rage ;
 For the earth bulged up in flexures once a thousand years—about—
 And animate creation gave one universal shout,
 As the Dodo, who'd been sitting on what seemed a level spot,
 Found himself just then perched grandly on the misty mountain top.
 There was nothing small or little in the spirit of that age,
 For the Mastodon went tramping 'round in fine heroic rage ;
 No base born Megatherium e'er dared to cross his path,
 But kept a proper distance and escaped his sovereign wrath.
 When off to his true lady love, beneath the weeping willow,
 He'd go with knightly grace to court the gentle Armadillo,
 O, how I love to ponder on the beauties of that time,
 And what a carboniferous charm invests the shale and lime.
 With what a pride those lady-killing glaciers must have flushed ;
 Since everything they ever met immediately they crushed.
 I would not be particular about the time or place,
 In Paleozoic or Archean age I could have run my race.
 My charmed fancy o'er the whole hath fond affection flung—
 Content I'd lived in period of Catskill or Chemung.
 But O, the joy that generally existence then o'erspread
 Disgusts me with this present age, so lifeless, cold, and dead.
 Yet as I see the sable clouds which round the future loom,
 Methinks a silver lining shines amidst the gathering gloom ;
 Be strong, my soul, this glorious hope my fainting courage wakes,
 The "Mesozoic" I yet may see, that is, the "Age of Snakes." ELU.