The Salemite

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THOUGHTS FOR Today

". . . Let me live in a house by
the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by—
The men who are good and the
men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's
seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban—
Let me live in a house by the
side of the road
And be a friend to man.—"
—*Sam Walter Foss.*

. . . "A fire—mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,

A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where the cave-
men dwell."—*Anonymous.*

PARAGRAPHICS

The *Salemite* seriously hesitated about going to print this week after the omission of Y. P. M. and Music Hour. One does have to fill up space, you know.

Here's to the Spirit of Spring, even though it is a cold crisp morning!

Let's go on a treasure-hunt for our Easter vacation! Maybe the Bunny-Rabbit will leave us a corsage of violets instead of Easter eggs.

It has been just a little too cool for the Spring Fever to affect our ardent spirits as yet. But warm days are coming—and laziness is a good sign.

Elections come but once a year, and yesterday was the momentous day for 1932 at Salem. The good-will of all was evident from sunrise to sunset.

SPRING FEVER

Guess I've got it—don't know why—its been too cold lately but I guess I've got it any how. Do wish Sara hadn't made me write about it though—yes, you've guessed—it's that old favorite — "Spring Fever." Wouldn't be so bad if this were to be a piece on Thanksgiving, 'cause then I could think of so much to be thankful for, thankful for the raisins in the toast the other morning and thankful that, if I have to come to school, I can come to Salem, and thankful that I'm not a dumb bell like some people I know.

It's sorta hard to say why one season should make a person feel any differently from another, but they do. No, that's not what I mean either, 'cause I can always tell myself from Dr. Rondthaler for instance, or from Miss Forman's Judy. What I mean is that some times of the year make you feel one way and another season gives you an entirely new mixture in your self-starter—anyway, that's what Spring does. But it's funny how it affects some people; when that languid ozone, (or what ever it is) starts to circulating about the first of March, some people just naturally have to play baseball, or ring-around the rosie, or roller skate. Anyway they seem to forget that they should study. That's the very time Miss Brown begins to give longer assignments and Miss Ferguson gives another test—they feel it their duty as girl scouts. And every one, even Mrs. Rondthaler, gets out his or her last summer's straw hat. They feel sorta guilty, too, about giving them to the cook or maid, imagining that they should be kept and retrimmed or painted for a Christmas present or for a week day bonnet. In spite of these guilty feelings new hats and suits fairly jump out about Easter time. Even in the dean's office and in the book store the people go about their work with almost as much pep as a snail with paralysis would have. They keep dreaming about green meadows and blue skies and summer vacations and fishing.

Now, of course I can't stop without saying something about the Seniors, whose thoughts always turn to love in the spring time. The two things seem to get mixed up in their minds. They get to wondering if they can find some one to pay their doctor's bills and buy their make-up and build their fires before the next cold spell comes. Spring seems to be exactly right for courting and moonlight walks, and the birds and flowers help a lot, I'm telling you.

Now after this lecture you should know some little some thing about spring fever. At least you should admit it's a good feeling—some times!

SPRING

Yellow daffodils on the hill, delicate green grass like felt for the feet, wind to stroke the hair,—Spring. Lovely Spring that makes sylphs of us, leaves us clothed in flowing softness—arms outflung to the sky, eyes closed—tiptoe in delight.

From the hill of solitary ecstasy blossoms flower, with shells of rosy petals and tender shades of green, like maidens of dreams in their charm, scattered by Spring with a lavish hand.

Spring is like a Willow, weeping only warm rain-tears, graceful as the sister goddesses, exquisite in her daintiness. Spring is like down, sensitive and gentle, like white clouds in the hand. Spring is like a brook, dreamily lapping soft music.

Spring is better than all these—Spring is the personification of youth. Youth glowing into life, awakening to beauty, laughing silver laughter, dancing with Pan. Youth with a red mouth, wide eyed and silken haired. Youth in love.

Trouble is a sieve through which we sift our acquaintances. Those who are too big to pass through are our friends.

The meanest kind of slander is a knowing smile and a shrug of the shoulders.

—*William L. Brownell.*

POETRY

SPRING SONG

"I have been trying," Godfrey mutters,
Scowling down as he plucks the strings,
"To find a word that spring time utters
And tell of a song the blue bird sings,
And all the comings of new green things.

"I have been cursed for a note of wonder
Fit to tell you about gray walls
Early in April when clouds asunder
Drift, and the sun of morning falls
Over the church and the brave bell calls.

"And I am quite sure I shall lose my reason,
Having no worthy word to say
Of Alison walking in this sweet season,
So demurely and yet so gay,
And so surprised when she looks my way."

—*William Bryfogle.*

A FARMER SPEAKS

"Work indoors? I've never even
Thought of it; for what should I
Do cooped up in an office,
A dingy ceiling for my sky.

"See the wild geese now returning,
Their dark wings outlined against the west;
See that clump of slender birches
Around whose feet the fern frouds press.
Young calves that hug their mothers,
Flappy chickens breaking through the shell:
I can watch these if I want to
While I'm working; I can smell
Hay repassing in the fields, or move
Freely about my acres as I choose.
Why should I ever want to leave?—
"Scent of earth has filtered through me
Till I've become a fragrant part
Of seasons, fields and forest."

—*Louise Dorcy.*

XLV

I know my mind and I have made my choice;
Not from your temper does my doom depend;
Love me or love me not, you have no voice
In this, that is my portion to the end.
Your presence and your favors, the full part
That you could give, you now can take away;
What lies between your beauty and my heart
Not even you can trouble or betray.
Mistake me not—unto my inmost core
I do desire your kiss upon my mouth;
They have not craved a cup of water more
That bleach upon the deserts of the south;
Here might you bless me; what you cannot do
Is bow me down, that have been loved by you.

—*From "Fatal Interview," by Edna St. Vincent Millay.*

XVII

Sweet love, sweet thorn, when lightly to my heart
I took your thrust, whereby I since am slain.
And lie disheveled in the grass apart,
A sodden thing bedrenched by tears and rain.
While rainy evening drips to misty night,
And misty night to cloudy morning clears,
And clouds disperse across the gathering light,
And birds grow noisy, and the sun appears—
Had I bethought me then, sweet love, sweet thorn,
How sharp an anguish even at the best—
When all's requited and the future sworn—
The happy hour can leave within the breast,
I had not so come running at the call
Of one who loves me little, if at all.

—*From "Fatal Interview," by Edna St. Vincent Millay.*

Week-End Travels

"In the Realms of Gold"

This week-end Mr. Walpole directs our trip by taking us on a journey to England where we can peek into windows, creep down wooded lanes and surround ourselves with an English environment that gets into our bones and sticks there. *Judith Paris* gets its title from the red-headed daughter of Rogue Herries and his gypsy wife. Judith spends her life loving and hating, fighting and protecting her father's descendants. The story takes place in the eighteenth century in the extreme northwestern section of England. Although Mr. Walpole admits that *Judith Paris* is a sequel to *Rogue Herries*, he says that the former may be read as a quite independent novel as he sees it, "as a piece of gaily tinted tapestry worked in English colours." When you have read *Rogue Herries*, you will want to read *Judith Paris*, and after you have read these, there is no doubt about your joining the crowd which is anxiously awaiting Mr. Walpole's next book about the Herries family.

Next, Mr. Strindberg would take us to Sweden by letting us read his collection of interesting dramas with the title, *Easter* and *Other Plays*. This book contains "Easter," "The Dance of Death," "The Ghost Sonata," and "A Dream Play." The first of these is a story of personal resurrection and change in the soul. The Heyst family undergoes misfortunes of all kinds. The play is not didactic, although it is the voice of the author. *"Easter"* is a drama of haunting beauty. "The Dance of Death" is the longest play in the book. It is a realistic philosophic work, which is dominated throughout by tragedy. Critics believe that in the double tragedy, "The Dance of Death," Strindberg has produced the most unforgettable—if not the most hopeless and depressing—of all his tragedies of married misery. "The Ghost Sonata," the shortest play in the collection, is fascinating as well as original. The personages here play out their strange fates before us as in a disordered dream. The last play, "A Dream Play," is ranged by many Strindberg critics with his greatest works and is regarded as a starting point for a new *genre* of symbolic drama. Since the author is trying to imitate the disordered, yet apparently logical form of a dream, anything may happen: everything is possible and probable. You will not be sorry if you read this play.

After seeing Sweden as August Strindberg would have us see it, Sherwood Anderson, American, would have us sit down and think. In *A New Testament* we see Mr. Anderson as he sees himself. There are a groping for thoughts, turmoils, and introspective discoveries that are full of rhythmical unities. Read *A New Testament* and try to decide what *you* think!

Judith Paris ..... Hugh Walpole
Easter and Other Plays ..... August Strindberg
A New Testament ..... Sherwood Anderson

THESE CORSAGES

Of all the menaces to the world—Hitlerism, property tax, kidnappers, liquor—all these included, without a doubt the corsage is the worst.

I do not mean the dainty bunch of violets or the sophisticated sheaf of gardenias, but I do mean the commonplace Easter corsage. Can you recall or imagine any thing more irritating to the aesthetic souls of us Americans than a mass of pink rose buds tied together in a superb mass, resting—call it resting if you like—on a showy background of straggling ostrich feathers?

Of course, it isn't so bad when you consider the sentiment connected with it, that is, if you will let the corsage remain in the ice box. But the sad fact is that people wear such and worst of all, they take great pride in doing so.

Dean Vardell would be mobbed if he should insert "Turkey In the Straw" in a recital of Bach, while "P. V. W." would probably be drawn and quartered if she should exalt the merits of *The Lily White Journal* in a lecture on the works of Goethe—but nothing ever happens to the person who wears a sophisticated Schiorapelli model and tacks a knot of flowers on the waist. Cannot a gown be a work of art? Any how—such are the troubles of mankind. May my prayer be thus,—

"Lord—deliver me from corsages—but—*not yet.*"

SPRING SONG OF 1932

Old Chaucer scratched his head and frowned. Then he began slowly to write:

"What that Aprille with his showers sote
The drogthe of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in suich licour,
Of which vertu engendered is the flour;" etc.—

Looking up from his work Chaucer's face lit up with a satisfied grin.

And, spring held both his sides and laughed,

"Why, that's the same old story, son. Couldn't you think of some thing new?"

But several hundred more years of spring rhymes brought tears instead of laughter to Spring's eyes. He hears about light 'Zephirus' gentle kisses until he grew disgusted. Why did every body have to sing about the trees "decking themselves anew in green"? Why did the little birdies cause such a commotion? Why did every body shout to them "Sing, then Ye birds, Oh Sing"? In fact Spring was hailed so much, sung, written, welcomed so much that he began to wonder why every body was suddenly inspired to write about his coming, and why those who could not write danced around singing "Tra-la, Tra-la."

As Spring shook hands with Winter in 1932 he asked him, "Why is it they make my life miserable with their wretched songs, and let you alone?"

Old Winter laughed until his white beard shook. He called over his shoulder to Spring, "Oh, you're too easy with them. I freeze them till they keep their mouths shut."

Again, when he met Summer he cried frantically, "Why do they smother me with their songs?" "Oh," smiled Summer, "You trip along so gently. I'm so fierce that I don't give them a chance to do any thing but melt."

"Well," sighed Spring, "I guess this will be one time that I don't hear 'When It's Springtime In the Rockies' and 'Ho, Hum Spring Is Here Now.' I'll change zephirus' caresses to raging winds. Maybe I'll mix in a little snow. I'll hang the houses with icicles. And I'll stand behind this tree with a great big snow ball to pelt the first one who dares to start up an ode to Spring!"

It is very much easier to live down to our characters than up to our reputations.

—*William L. Brownell.*