

evil; every gay, every bright word or picture, like a pleasant air of music, is a piece of pleasure set afloat; the reader catches it, and, if he be healthy, goes on his way rejoicing; and it is the business of art so to send him, as often as possible.

Whether you agree with this view or not, it is patently the working creed of the editors of the popular American magazines; they insist above all else that their short story writers produce entertainment, tales in which the home team nearly always wins—so that Joe may be sent upon his way rejoicing.

Greenwich Village and Park Row picture a grim and horrible sphere, threatening any day to come to a disastrous end. Grub Street replies with

rosy pictures of real good people doing real good things in a real good world. To Joe, the philosophic consumer, these apparent contradictions are only opposite sides of the same truth.

Probably Thoreau came nearer to the real facts than either of these rival camps when he bluntly observed: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." But what editor north of Fourteenth Street would care to buy a short story with that for its message? Joe wouldn't want to read stuff like that. And Joe, after all, is the real boss.

AMBASSADORS OF GRIEF

By Carl Sandburg

THERE was a little fliv of a woman loved one man and lost out. And she took up with another and it was a blank again. And she cried to God the whole layout was a fake and a frame-up. And when she took up with Number Three she found the fires burnt out, the love power, gone. And she wrote a letter to God and dropped it in a mail box. The letter said:

O God, ain't there some way you can fix it up so the little flivs of women, ready to throw themselves in front of railroad trains for men they love, can have a chance? I guessed the wrong keys, I battered on the wrong panels, I picked the wrong roads. O God, ain't there no way to guess again and start all over back where I had the keys in my hands, back where the roads all came together and I had my pick?

And the letter went to Washington, D. C., dumped into a dump where all letters go addressed to God—and no house number.

THE MINNOW

By Dana Burnet

F. BUCHANAN BOGGS was the editor of "Mosely's Magazine". His offices on the forty-fifth floor of a Broadway skyscraper were consciously palatial and gave glimpses at every turn of the most expensive view in the world. He had more stenographers than Solomon had wives. Authors revolved about him as dependent planets revolve about their sun, and where his glance fell was light and fame.

"Mosely's Magazine" was one of the journalistic phenomena of the age. Its literary standing was very high. It made a million dollars a year.

F. Buchanan Boggs had made "Mosely's".

His success was not undeserved. He had reflected profoundly upon the subject of the proletarian taste. He had felt the pulse of America. He had come to the conclusion that what the public wanted was:

1. Love.
2. Business.

Whereupon he had reduced literature to a simple but comprehensive formula. "Give me stories of Love and Business," he had said to his authors, and his authors had written the stories upon their typewriters as fast as ever they could work their forefingers. The result was a triumph for art and Mr. Boggs. The net paid circulation of "Mosely's" reached the astounding figure of five millions a month.

During the course of the Great War, Mr. Boggs, besides ordering his

artists to paint the girl on the cover each issue in a different kind of Allied uniform, also enlarged his literary formula to include war stories. But when the armistice was signed and the Germans defeated—chiefly by the advice of "Mosely's", if the truth were known—he had gone back to Love and Business with a confidence amply justified by the results. The circulation of "Mosely's" increased another half million or so.

Even Mr. Boggs began to be impressed. He came into his own presence, so to speak, with a new respect. He was forced finally to the conclusion—as are most great men at one time or another—that he was an instrument of Providence, an instrument for the advancement of humanity, and no small, piping instrument at that. He never had been interested particularly in religions, because religions seemed to fall on a Sunday, and Sunday was his day for playing golf. But now he began to look about for a creed to fit his case. One of his authors heard about it and sent him a book on Reincarnation.

Mr. Boggs read three or four chapters of this book—which was all he ever read of any book—and was convinced absolutely of its truth. He became an adamant and positive convert to the theory of Reincarnation. Rather, Mr. Boggs used this theory as a basis for a religion of his own, a religion that he invented quite out of his own head, one rainy Sunday when the links were impossible. . . .