CHAPTER II

THIS SIDE OF PARADISE
Fitzgerald's career as a novelist started with *This Side of Paradise*, which was written at a critical point of his life. Soon after its publication, the novel proved to be a great success and, in fact, its success over-reached the expectations of Fitzgerald himself. And this also positively helped him in winning the hand of Zelda Sayre, the girl he was passionately in love with. As Arthur Mizener observers, "With the publication of *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald had become a hero to his generation, to the young people who found in the book a glorious expression and justification of the life they believed in and longed for. He became, as Glenway Wescott put it, 'a kind of king of our American youth" ¹. Thus with the publication of *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald had achieved his dream of writing a famous book, marrying Zelda, and making a success in New York.

It is commonly accepted by all the critics of Fitzgerald that his life was inextricably bound up with his work. He always wrote about himself or about people and things with which he was related by his own personal
experience. He made a habit of keeping a meticulous record of his experiences and feelings which he extensively used and explored in his writings. This is evident from the beginning of Fitzgerald's literary career, and he was endowed with a fine talent to turn his material, which largely consisted of his experiences and feelings, into fiction. This observation holds good with regard to most of Fitzgerald's literary works. It must also be said that Fitzgerald's time and place exerted great influence over him throughout his life. As such, Fitzgerald's work was closely connected not only with his own life but also with the upper middle-class life in America during the early twenties. It is for this reason that with the publication of 'This Side of Paradise', Fitzgerald was acclaimed as the "Laureate of the Jazz age". But a close examination of 'This Side of Paradise' and the other novels of Fitzgerald makes it amply clear that he had gone far beyond this popular title and that "he was the exceptional yet, representative figure for a far beyond deeper quality of the time and a far larger group of people than these." Fitzgerald's own description of 'This Side of Paradise' as "a somewhat edited history of me and my imagination" shows the close connection between Fitzgerald's life and the novel. The novel also contains the prominent themes of his total work, namely youth, beauty, love, wealth, success, and failure that were to develop and acquire sophistication in the later novels.

Some critics feel that the novel is highly imitative and that Fitzgerald was very much influenced by many contemporary writers. The novel, they say, was an American attempt to re-write Compton Mackenzie's Sinister Street. That Fitzgerald was influenced by many contemporary writers is a fact Fitzgerald openly acknowledged. Though in the novel we find influence of
popular novelists of the time like Tarkington, Chesterton, H.G. Wells, Rupert Brooke and others, 'This Side of Paradise' does offer us an insight into Fitzgerald as a writer.

Critics have differently looked at the theme of 'This Side of Paradise'. But it is commonly admitted that the novel presents Fitzgerald's favourite story and theme. Alfred Kazin observers, "Mr. Fitzgerald had recorded with a good deal of felicity and a disarming frankness the adventures and developments of a curious and fortunate American youth". He goes on to say that This Side of Paradise is "an amusing and sometimes disconcertingly realistic investigation of a sensitive mind, growing up in our own present day civilization." 4 Thus This Side of Paradise not only reflects faithfully Fitzgerald's life and experience as a young man but realistically investigates and attempts to assess the value of the experience.

In the first chapter of This Side of Paradise we are introduced to the background of Amory Blaine, the protagonist, before he enters Princeton. Fitzgerald mainly made use of his past in providing a background for his hero. He also added new details to and elaborated on this material. He had already made use of the incidents and experiences in Basil Duke Lee Stories. It is for this reason that Amory resembles Basil in many ways in spite of the difference between the fictional backgrounds of the families of Amory and Basil. Basil's father is dead before the stories are told and Amory's father is left in the background as a shadowy figure. But it is clearly said that Amory's father is "an ineffectual, inarticulate man with a taste for Byron and a habit of drowsing over the Encyclopaedia Britannica" (331). It is significant that the novel begins with
reference to Amory's mother: "Amory Blaine inherited from his mother every trait except the stray inexpressible few, that made him worthwhile" (331). This clearly shows the influence of Beatrice on Amory Blaine while his father hovers in the background and remains an unassertive figure. Beatrice provides a kind of romantic background for Amory's life. The O'Haraes were exceptionally wealthy and Beatrice was given a brilliant education and had an opportunity for absorbing international culture. It can be seen that Fitzgerald provides Amory Blaine with a kind of romantic background which Fitzgerald perhaps wished for but certainly did not have in his life. As such, Amory's background presents a mixture of Fitzgerald's desires with the actualities of his family's past.

Beatrice marries Stephen Blaine not because she considers him the best choice but almost entirely because she is a little bit weary, a little bit sad. So she soon feels disappointed with Stephen Blaine and as a consequence all her attention turns to Amory, her only child. During these domestic years Amory is given a highly specialized education by his mother. Beatrice wants her son to grow up to be sophisticated and charming, but she makes a lot of fuss about Amory's health and works herself into nervous states. But Amory, even at this tender age, is able to see through all this and, in fact, he has no illusions about his mother. Fitzgerald portrays the character of Beatrice with a fine sense of irony. The references to the religious outlook of Beatrice and her romance with Monsignor Darcy are delightfully ironical: "She had once been a catholic, but discovering that priests were infinitely more attentive when she was in process of losing or regaining faith in Mother Church, she maintained enchantingly wavering attitude ...next to doctors, priests were her favourite
sport" (331). Naturally, Amory never receives any religious outlook from his mother. But strangely enough Beatrice strongly feels that Amory should meet Monsignor Darcy. In fact, Amory's meeting with Dracy proves to be one of the very significant events in his life.

At thirteen Amory is more than ever "on to his mother" (331). Though he has been tutored occasionally, he has not attended any school so far. But, after an operation for appendicitis, Amory leaves for Minneapolis to spend the following two years with his aunt and uncle. It is here that Amory starts attending school and certain traits of this teenage boy's character begin to reveal themselves.

At school Amory tries hard to conceal from other boys his own sense of superiority. Nevertheless, he shows himself off one day in French class and this proves to be quite a success. But in history class his efforts to show himself off bring about disastrous results. Amory discovers that athletics is the touchstone of power and popularity at school. This attitude of Amory continues even at Princeton. His chief disadvantage lies in athletics and so he begins to make persistent efforts to excel in winter sports.

The incident of Miss Myra St. Claire reveals very interesting traits in the character of Amory. He accepts Myra's invitation to a bobbing party, but goes half-an-hour late which, he calculates, would draw a special attention to him. But his plan fails because all the party, except Myra, has already left for Minnehaha Club. Amory makes up a story to explain his delay. He begs a thousand pardons and asks Myra if she could ever forgive him. This begins to produce the desired effect on Myra: "She regarded him gravely, his intent green
eyes, his mouth, that to her thirteen-year-old, arrow-collar taste was the quintessence of romance. Yes, Myra could forgive him easily” (336). With this success, Amory goes on to create an impression that he is quite reckless. In the carriage, as they are going to Minnehaha Club, Amory feels certain that he has won Myra. At the club they go up stairs and Myra leads the way into the little den of Amory’s dreams. Here they sit in front of a cozy fire and begin talking about bobbing parties. At this point, when Amory kisses Myra, something unexpected happens: “Sudden revulsion seized Amroy, disgust, loathing for the whole incident. He desired frantically to be away, never to see Myra again, never to kiss anyone” (338). So, when Myra asks Amory to kiss her again, he suddenly declares to her great shock and humiliation that he does not want to. This peculiar behaviour of Amory, though surprising, is not inexplicable. At the very moment when Amory attains the desired goal, the moralist in him suddenly emerges and the result is the sense of revulsion that Amory feels for the whole incident. Fitzgerald, though romantic in his outlook, was still a puritan and moralist at heart. Naturally, this is reflected in the character of Amory and this dual sense of values continues later also.

When Fitzgerald wrote *This Side of Paradise*, he was definitely under the influence of H.G. Wells and he wanted to shape the novel on the model of a saturation novel: “He was well aware, as is evident from his letters that Hugh Walpole and Compton Mackenzie were faithful disciples of Wells and we must assume that Fitzgerald had drawn a lesson from him. The lesson was precisely that of saturation as a fictional method. We could not find a better definition for the type of novel represented by *This Side of Paradise*.”

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So when Amory refers to the "Quest" novels with their disillusioned young heroes, he has H.G. Wells in mind. The quest motif in This Side of Paradise really refers to Amory "going through experience". So, as Amory goes through different kinds of experiences, he tries to evaluate the experience and also to understand himself. But it is true that Amory is not quite successful in either of his attempts. Nevertheless it is clear that Amory tries to look into himself when he is in the intimate presence of a girl. This is what happens in the Myra Claire incident. As he looks into himself, he becomes aware of his own latent unscrupulousness, which overpowers him.

The code of conduct formulated by Amory, which is "a sort of aristocratic egotism," (340) reveals many interesting points. It is rather surprising that even at such young age Amory is aware that he is not a fixed entity, but "a certain variant, changing person" (340). He, as a young egotist, considers himself a fortunate youth capable of infinite expansion for good or evil. This is a view, which Fitzgerald himself shared. Amory thinks that he is exceedingly handsome and fancies himself an athlete of possibilities. But what is most interesting and revealing is the confession which Fitzgerald makes about Amory: "Amory had rather a Puritan Conscience ...at fifteen it made him consider himself a great deal worse than other boys... Unscrupulousness ...the desire to influence people almost every way even for evil" (340). This is clearly seen in Amory's odd behaviour in the Myra Claire incident.

Beatrice finally decides to let Amory have his way and it is decided that he should go to St. Regis's. Amory meets Darcy and this meeting proves to be a very significant thing in his life. Father Fay, for whom Fitzgerald always felt
a deep sense of respect and love, appears as Monsignor Darcy in *This Side of Paradise*. In fact, the novel is dedicated to Father Fay. It is interesting to note that there is no touch of irony in relating Amory's first meeting and the later meetings with Monsignor Darcy. Monsignor Darcy is presented as a brilliant personality who attracts both admiration and attention.

But for a few changes made to suit the narrative, it can be said that Fitzgerald's relation with Father Fay is the same as Amory's with Monsignor Darcy. Father Fay took Fitzgerald up when he had been a student at Newman. He used to take Fitzgerald out to dinner with a few other carefully selected undergraduates. When Fitzgerald visited the house of Father Fay's mother, he was dazzled by the mixture of luxury and intellectual life he found. Fitzgerald, who had never felt secure in St. Paul society, seemed to feel at home in Father Fay's world. Certain characteristics in Father Fay's personality also held an irresistible attraction for Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald, as a schoolboy, had his social and literary ambitions, and Father Fay understood them as he was a man of taste and intellectual interests. This made Fitzgerald feel emotionally closer to Father Fay, who seemed to satisfy fully Fitzgerald's inner need for a father:

"Fay was probably the greatest single influence on Fitzgerald. How much Fitzgerald admired him is clear from the portrait of his as Father Darcy in *This Side of Paradise* and from the dedication of the book to him." 6 Father Darcy closely resembles Father Fay and he understands Amory even as Father Fay understood Fitzgerald Amory feels rewarded by his meeting with Father Darcy:

"In all, a wonderful week, that saw Amory's mind turned inside out, a hundred of his theories confirmed, and his joy of life crystallized to a thousand ambitions"
Thus the account of Amory and Darcy, with its amazing honesty, shows more clearly than anything else the tangle of affection and sympathy which constituted the relation between Fitzgerald and Father Fay.

Amory's two years at St. Regis's has very little real significance in his own life. He goes all wrong at the start and is generally considered both conceited and arrogant and is detested by all. He plays football intensely either with a reckless brilliancy or with a tendency to keep himself safe from hazard. He is resentful of all those in authority over him. He also shows a lazy indifference towards his work, which vexes every master in the school. As he is afraid of being alone, he makes a few friends but uses them as instruments for his own egotistic satisfaction.

The incident with Mr. Margotson, the senior master, who seeks to advise Amory shows that Amory hated people talk as if he were an admitted failure. Though Amory's first term at St. Regis's is miserable and makes him unpopular with both faculty and students, the football game played against Groton brings him certain glory. But the most important thing that happens to Amory during his two years at St. Regis's is that the school had very painfully drilled Beatrice out of him and begins to lay down new and more conventional planking on the fundamental Amory. But beneath the new planking, the fundamental Amory remains unchanged. His moodiness, his tendency to pose, his laziness, and his love of playing the fool come to be taken as a matter of course. These traits become the "recognized eccentricities in a star quarterback, a clever actor and the editor of the St. Regis's Tatler" (349).
Amory's attempt at classifying the boys at St. Regis's into slickers and big man is only to prove his own egotistic superiority. Though he declares that he and Rahill are not slickers, his secret ideal has all the slicker qualifications. This classification might have given Amory certain satisfaction but in his later years, when he recalls his stay at St. Regis's he is able "to picture himself only as the unadjustable boy who had hurried down corridors, jeered at by his rabid contemporaries mad with common sense" (351).

Amory's life at Princeton closely reflects many aspects of Fitzgerald's own experiences at Princeton. When Fitzgerald came to Princeton in the middle of September 1913, it was essentially an undergraduate college and it was a small world with most of its standards and conditions coming down very little changed from the 90s. This was largely true of the curriculum as well as of undergraduate morals and manners. As John Peale Bishop says, Princeton was a place, in those days, where "nothing matters much but that a man bear an agreeable person and maintain with slightly mature modifications the standards of prep school." Football was deadly serious affair and the success or failure of a university year depended on the outcome of a football game.

The same conditions and general atmosphere continue when Amory enters Princeton. He has already the notion of the "slicker" and the "big man" in his head. He walks up to 12 University Place developing a new tendency to glare straight ahead when he passes anyone. He meets Burne Holiday and Kerry Holiday, who are also freshmen put up at 12 University Place. He declares to Kerry his intention to take a whack at freshman football. He is
thrilled and fascinated at the sight of Allenby, the football captain, when he marches at the head of the white platoon. Amory loves Princeton from the beginning. He is charmed by "its lazy beauty, its half grasped significance, the wild moonlight revel of the rushes, the handsome prosperous big-game crowds" (355). But he is against the breathless social system that worship of the bogey Big Man that pervades Princeton. He reports for freshman football practices because he decides "to be one of the gods of the class" (355). But, playing quarterback, Amory hurts his knee seriously, which puts him out for the rest of the season.

Having been forced to retire from football for the second season, Amory tries to relate himself with the inmates of 12 University place. He is very much drawn to Burne Holiday but does not get the opportunity to understand him thoroughly. He cannot make out why Burne should try so hard to get the first place in the class. Amory is far from contended with the situation in general because he is little known and admired at Princeton. Yet Princeton stimulates him because "there were many things ahead calculated to arouse the Maccheavelli latent in him" (356). The upper class clubs, namely, Ivy, Cottage, Tiger Inn, Cap and Gown, and Literary Quadrangle, excites Amory's curiosity. Amory finds that writing for the Nassau Literary Magazine would get him nothing. He also discovers that it would get him a good deal to be on the board of the Daily Princetonian. He entertains a desire "to do immortal acting" with the English Dramatic Association. But this desire fades out when he finds that the most ingenious brains and talents are concentrated upon the Triangle Club, a musical comedy organization. All this makes Amory feel lonely and restless
even as new desires and ambitions begin to stir in his mind. He lets the first term go by in this mood.

Amory's desire "to do immortal acting" with the English Dramatic Association reflects Fitzgerald's interest in producing a play even before he came to Princeton. He wrote a drama called *The Captured Shadow* and he was inspired by Alias Gimmy Valentine in this regard. Fitzgerald's play was produced by The Elizabethan Dramatic Club and directed by Miss Elizabeth Magoffin. Miss Magoffin was much impressed by Fitzgerald and the play was great success. Fitzgerald played the part of the "gentlemen burglar" himself. In fact, Fitzgerald's choice of the University was settled by a musical score, which was found on the top of a piano. The musical score was meant for a show called "His Honour the Sultan" which was produced by the Triangle Club of Princeton University. He had also produced another play called *The Coward* which was a civil war melodrama. So it is only natural that Amory should think of acting in a play.

Amory's wish is that he should be accepted immediately among the elite of the class but he is also painfully aware that this is not possible: "We are the damned middle class, that's what" (357) he complains to Kerry, and he certainly does not like this. Amory wants his talents and importance to be recognized but he hates to get anywhere working for it. Kerry Holiday notices Amory's interest in literature, calls him a literary genius, and encourages him to write poetry like D'Invelliers in the *Nassau Literature*. D'Invelliers is also a freshman and Kerry and Amory read his poems with interest but fail to understand him. At this point, Amory makes a statement, which clearly reveals
his undecided state of mind: "I know I'm not a regular fellow, yet I loathe anybody else that isn't. I can't decide whether to cultivate my mind and be a great dramatist, or to thumb my nose at the Golden Treasury and be a Princeton slicker", (358) When, in response, Kerry suggests that there is no need to decide and advises him to drift like himself, Amory clearly says, "I can't drift - I want to pull strings, even for somebody else or be a Princetonian chairman or Triangle president. I want to be admired, Kerry" (358). This clearly shows that though Amory is undecided about the course to take he is quite definite about his desire to be admired. Kerry is unable to understand this contradiction in Amory's character. Amory wants to be prominent but hates to go out and try for something.

Amory gradually accepts Kerry's point of view and decides to inaugurate his career the next fall. Meanwhile he happens to meet D'Invelllers which proves significant. He discusses several writers with him and also comes to know about Oscar Wilde whom he has not read so far. He reads The Picture of Dorian Gray and enthusiastically and even painfully tries to make every remark an epigram. He also begins to read a heterogeneous mixture of writers like Swinburne, Shaw, Chesterton, Keats, Yeats, Synge, Arthur Symons, and so on. All this closely resembles Fitzgerald's own career at Princeton. He would sit down at the Peacock Inn and "he and Bishop could talk and talk about books, about Stephen Phillips and Shaw and Meredith and the Yellow Book." 8

The beginning of the war does not seem to have any impact on Amory: "Beyond a sporting interest in the German dash for Paris the whole affair failed either to thrill or interest him" (363). Having won an easy victory in the
first Sophomore Princetonian Competition, Amory steps into a vacancy of the cast as boiling oil; a pirate lieutenant, in the musical comedy *Ha-Ha Hortense* which is to be produced by The Triangle Club. During the Christmas vacation, the play is staged in eight cities and Amory enjoys himself throughout. When the time for disbanding comes, Amory hurries to Minneapolis to meet Isabelle Borge. He has known her only as little girl. This trip to Minneapolis to meet Isabelle, who is now grown up and has even developed a past, seems to Amory very interesting and romantic. He feels confident, nervous, and jubilant at the same time.

Though Amory enjoys himself on the Triangle trip, he becomes rather uneasy as he comes into constant contact with petting parties. The moralist in him is shocked by the change in the attitude to life, in young girls. "None of the Victorian mothers – and most of the mothers are Victorian – had any idea how causally their daughters were accustomed to be kissed" (365). Amory finds girls eating at three O' clock, attending after-dance suppers in impossible cafes and talking of every side of life with half seriousness and half mockery. These things, for Amory, even in his memory would have been impossible. For him these phenomena represent a real moral let down. This moral concern is, somehow, an inalienable part of Amory's consciousness, which keeps influencing him. Amory is now eighteen years old and quite handsome, but he lacks "that intense animal magnetism, that so often accompanies beauty in men or women" (366). Animal magnetism can be a dominating and over-powering trait, which can be taken to be against morality. Amory's innate moral texture must have perhaps prevented the development of
animal magnetism. That is why Amory's "personality seemed rather a mental thing" (366). This moral concern was an innate part of Fitzgerald's way of looking at life: "In Fitzgerald's book there is the constant play of an ingrained moral sense which, for all the charm and poignancy he finds in the life he portrays, places and evaluates it."  

The love stories in *This Side of Paradise* are narrated with a certain genuine intensity, but they are only passing experiences, which make their impression upon Amory's developing self. The Isabelle – Amory love episode is the story of Ginevra King and Fitzgerald's meeting. Ginevra King was a beautiful and wealthy girl from Chicago. She had already acquired a reputation for daring and adventurousness. Fitzgerald himself had become a figure at St. Paul and he was recognized as a handsome young man who was making a success at Princeton and likely to become a big man. So both Fitzgerald and Ginevra King cautiously approached each other. In *This Side of Paradise* Isabelle is the daughter of a Supreme Court judge of Alabama, and she has also developed a past. From what she has heard about Amory, she comes to feel strongly that "he summed up all the romance that her age and environment led her to desire" (368). As per Isabelle herself, she is a curious mixture of the social and the artistic temperaments. Her tact is instinctive and her capacity for love affairs is almost unlimited. Amory himself is full of confidence and vanity and is prepared to meet Isabelle with a certain open admiration. The meeting between Isabelle and Amory is vividly and precisely presented in the chapter entitled "Babes in the Woods": They "were distinctly not innocent, nor were they particularly brazen" (369). The meeting proceeds with
Isabelle and Amory playing their part as convincingly as possible: “She (Isabelle) accepted his pose—it was one of the dozen little conventions of this kind of affair. He was aware that he was getting this particular favour now because she had been coached” (370). Thus Isabelle and Amory “proceeded with an infinite guile that would have horrified the parents” (370). This sentence tells as much about Fitzgerald as it does about the situation in which it appears.

As the meeting between Isabelle and Amory reaches its desired climax, it is disturbed and Amory has to leave Isabelle without his heart’s desire being fulfilled. Still he continues to love her and writes her rapturous letters, which show certain genuineness of feeling.

Meanwhile Dick Humbird begins to draw Amory’s attention. Amory considers him a perfect type of aristocrat. Amory is very much impressed by people who dress like him (Humbird), and try to talk as he does. Amory’s hero-worship of Dick Humbird is depicted as something quite normal and without any trace of irony. Even as Amory tries, though not consciously, to surround his love for Isabelle in a romantic aura, Dick Humbird’s sudden death in motor car accident strikes him as a shocking reality. Amory feels the tragedy to be grotesque and squalid, useless and futile. If Amory’s romantic attitude towards his relation with Isabelle attempts to create a positive and yet unreal value of life, Dick Humbird’s death has the effect of piercing through the veil of unreality. But Amory makes a determined effort to shut the memory of Humbird’s death coldly away from his mind.

The second meeting between Amory and Isabelle brings them closer and everything looks hallowed by the haze of youth. Amory is very much
with himself and the qualities, which made him "see clearer than the great crowd of people that made him decide firmly, and able to influence and follow his own will" (383). But as he takes Isabelle into his hands, and as their lips first touched, a small incident takes place, which finally leads to the break up of the relationship. Amory's shirt stud hurts Isabelle and she comes to feel that Amroy is not sympathetic enough. As the situation develops, "it would interfere vaguely with his idea of himself as a conqueror" (385). This incident makes him wonder whether he is after all temperamentally unfitted for romance. Finally, the Isabelle-Amory episode seems to degenerate into a tiresome anti-climax. But Amory is not quite dejected because he strongly feels that his life will not be unfulfilled. A romantic vision is essentially a projection on the objective reality and this cannot be maintained endlessly. But here, Amory is not painfully affected by the reality, and on the other hand, he derives a certain somber satisfaction in thinking that Isabelle has been nothing except what he has read in to her. Yet the Isabelle episode makes Amory lose interest in studies and the idea of undergraduate success fails to grip his imagination. Amory's philosophy of success crumbles and his search for the reasons does not lead him far. Meanwhile, Amory's father dies and this affects the financial situation at home.

At this juncture, Amory is invited by Father Darcy to spend a week at Christmas with him at the Stuart Palace on the Hudson. Father Darcy very sympathetically tries to analyse Amory's situation for him. In this process, the tries to distinguish "personage" from "personality". This greatly appeals to Amory. Father Darcy tells Amory that "personality is a physical matter almost entirely, it lowers the people it acts on. Now a personage on the other hand
gathers. He is never thought of apart from what he's done" (392). Amory immediately begins to feel that he should be classified under "Personage". Father Darcy attempts this classification, perhaps, to show Amory the real way to develop oneself. The central point of this classification is that glittering success or bleak failure does not really affect a personage. Though Father Darcy's aim must have been to wean Amory from his egotistic preoccupation, his classification and the letters he writes to Amory give Amory only "more egotistic food for consumption" (393).

After his second meeting with Father Darcy, Amory begins to give more value to the study of literature. He comes closer to Tom D'Invelliers and reads a great variety of writers. Meanwhile Amory has an extraordinary experience. Though he cannot immediately realize its value, this experience haunts Amory for three years.

The entire episode of the "devil" appearing to Amory is depicted with a telling evocative effect, which speaks of Fitzgerald's excellent narrative skill. But it is not clear why the devil should appear at this particular time in Amory's life and what its significance is. When Amory and his friends "burst into the café like Dionysian revellers" (396), there is a girl called Phoebe among Amory's friends who says she likes Amory, and sits behind him and rests her head on his shoulder. Again it is not clear if the girl Phebe's presence strikes Amory's subconscious chords of moral repulsion. Amory feels the whole eerie experience not only unbelievable but inexpressibly terrible. The devil first appears as middle-aged man dressed in a brown sack suit but finally turns out to be Dick Humbird. Amory strongly feels that the vision is an expression of "a
sort of infinite evil” (400). It is only when Tom D'Invelliers himself declares that he has seen the devil at the window that one feels that the whole thing is not, perhaps, a hallucination suffered by Amory. It is significant to note that on the train for Princeton Amory is filled “with a fresh burst of sickness” (401) by the presence of a painted woman across the aisle. This suggests that the woman, devil, and evil are closely associated in the whole episode. But why the devil should have been Dick Humbird remains to be answered. One reason can be that Amory does not try to face squarely the fact of Dick Humbird's death with all its implications. He only piles a “present excitement upon the memory of it and it and shut it coldly away from his mind” (401). This he does because of his preoccupation with the romantic affair with Isabelle. Unknown to himself a certain sense of guilt is created in the deeper layers of Amory's mind. This throws light on the woman-devil-evil association, the devil being Dick Humbird.

In “Narcissus Off Duty,” Amory tries to define the hero of a “quest” book as one who sets off in life “armed with the best weapons and avowedly intending to use them as such weapons are usually used” (402). The hero of a quest book also uses his weapons to push himself ahead as selfishly and blindly as possible. But he discovers that there might be a more magnificent use for them. There can be little doubt at this point that Amory whishes to develop himself into the hero of a quest book.

Amory's admiration for Burne Holiday differs from what he has had for Dick Humbird. His interest in Burne Holiday is only an intellectual one. It is Burne's intense earnestness that impresses Amory most. The discussions on economics, religion and ethics and on writers like Tolstoy that Amory holds with
Burne seem to open many new intellectual vistas in his mind. "Amory crept shivering into bed...with his mind aglow with ideas and sense of shock that some one else has discovered the path the might have followed" (404). As days pass, Amory's admiration for Burne Holiday grows more intense though at times he does differ with Burne as in the discussion of will. Amory and Burne strongly differ with each other in this discussion and in fact "their courses began to split on that point" (409). For Burne, a rotten life is always an expression of a weak will. For Amory, a strong-willed man can be evil, and yet strong and sane. Amory's line of argument suggests the path of development that he would like to follow. Even later, Amory differs with Burne on the point of pacifism, which Burne very strongly advocates. But still he admires Burne for what he calls his "primal honesty". Discussing the impact of Burne Holiday, Kenneth Eble observes, "The conversations become, heavy with ideas, less convincing, and a good deal less amusing." 10 Though what Eble says is true to a certain extent, we have to say that the discussions between Amory and Burne Holiday do reveal the state of Amory's mind. Amory may not be very clear in his ideas and not quite precise in his logic, but it is clear that there is a certain earnestness about Amory's arguments. Again, it is significant that a discussion on will is taken up with Clara, whose "calm virility and a dreamy humour, marked contrasts to her level headedness" (413).

The episode between Amory and Clara is in fact the episode between Fitzgerald and his cousin Cecillia. He was a ribbon-holder at her wedding and he later fell in love with her: "She (Cecilia) was a young widow living in Norfolk and he was an undergraduate; she turns up in This Side of
When Amory tells Clara that he does not have "a bit of will - I am a slave to my emotions, to my likes, to my hatred of boredom, to most of my desires" (416), Clara tells him that he is really a slave to his imagination and that he mistakes this for his lack of will. Amory has never looked at himself from this point of view and so he is, naturally, quite surprised to discover that he is a slave to his imagination and that he really lacks judgement. He pities "his poor, mistreated will that he had been holding up to the scorn of himself and his friends" (416). So we can see that the question of will has really been in the mind of Amory, and Clara's words seem to clarify the point for him. Amory, we should say, is on the move towards knowing himself, and this is part of the quest motif of *This Side of Paradise*. All the incidents and events in *This Side of Paradise* will, in the final analysis, be seen as factors helping Amory know himself. It is significant to note that the first chapter of part II of the novel is called "The Education of a Personage." Father Darcy has already explained to Amory how a personage differs from a personality. The love episode between Amory and Rosalind, which occupies the major portion of this part, should also be taken as a factor, which helps Amory grow into a personage. The love episode of Amory and Rosalind reflects that of Fitzgerald and Zelda. Fitzgerald's fond hope and deep despair are genuinely expressed in Amory. Fitzgerald fell in love with Zelda because "...she attracted him enormously, because she was desired by many, because she seemed to feel exactly as he did - and to have far more courage, to do what she felt." Amory falls in love with Rosalind for much the same reasons. Like Fitzgerald's, Amory's love for Rosalind is an act of identification and dedication. Rosalind, like Zelda, has the
habit of doing without hesitation the things she always wants to do. Though Rosalind is prone to make every one around her pretty miserable when she does not get what she wants, in the true sense she is not spoiled. According to Fitzgerald: "Her fresh enthusiasm, her will to grow and learn, her endless faith in the inexhaustibility of romance, her courage and fundamental honesty – these things are not spoiled" (430).

Within two weeks of their meeting Amory and Rosalind fall deeply and passionately in love with each other. Their critical senses are dulled by "the great wave of emotion that washed over them" (439). Rosalind's mother considers the love affair an insane one because Amory's financial prospects look rather bleak. Rosalind tells her anxious mother, "it may be an insane love affair, but it is not inane" (430). Like Fitzgerald, his hero Amory joins an advertising agency with the hope of making some money. Amory also goes through a sense of uncertainty as Fitzgerald did. Fitzgerald was ambitious and very much wanted to prove himself a great success. Zelda was as ambitious as Fitzgerald was in her own way. She wanted, just as Fitzgerald did, luxury and largeness in her life. That was the reason for her not committing herself as Fitzgerald did though she was in love with him. But in This Side of Paradise Rosalind appears to be somewhat different in this respect. She declares to Amory, "I want to belong to you. I want your people to be my people. I want to have your babies" (440). But as days go by Rosalind comes to the painful conclusion that Amory and she cannot get married. She also feels that she cannot be a success because "The very qualities I love you for are the ones that will always make you a failure" (443). Rosalind does not want her life to be a
failure, and she does not want to ruin both lives by marrying Amory. Amory's view of facing the hardships of life does not appeal to her. She would rather save her love for Amory by marrying Dawson rather than kill her love for Amory by marrying him. But it is also to be noted that the worship of fortune, comfort and success is equally a reason for Rosalind's refusal to marry Amory: "I like sunshine and pretty things and cheerfulness — and I dread responsibility. I don't want to think about pots and kitchens and brooms. I want to worry whether my legs will get slick and brown when I swim in the summer" (445). Amory understands Rosalind's view of life because it is not very different from his own. As Kenneth Eble says, "She (Rosalind) refuses to marry Amory for much the same reason that Amory himself could not be content without fame, fortune and the girl." 13 That is why Amory does not really blame Rosalind for refusing to marry him though he is almost heart-broken by it. The Rosalind episode ends on the romantic note of "Oh! Amory, what have I done to you?" (446). There is a note in parenthesis which is in keeping with the above romantic note: "And deep under the aching sadness that will pass in time, Rosalind feels that she has lost something, she knows not what, she knows not why?" (446). But what is of greater interest in the novel is what Rosalind has done to Amory because Amory is in the process of knowing himself and growing into a personage.

The deep emotional crisis created by Rosalind's abrupt decision not to marry Amory drives Amory to a drinking spree for weeks. Fitzgerald uses his own experience in vividly creating the scenes of Amory's drunkenness: "Amory takes the most violent method to submerge his own sorrow and protect himself from the painful memories. While it was not a course he would have
prescribed for others, he found in the end that it had done its business: he was over the first flush of pain" (452).

Now Amory gives up his job and tries his hand at writing a story which features his father's funeral. He also begins to read enormously. It is interesting to note that Amory is puzzled by *A Portrait of the Artist as a young Man* and impressed by Shaw. Amory's ideas of socialism are inspired by Shaw. Again Fitzgerald's own reactions at this time are reflected in Amory's admiration for Wells and his bewilderment with James. Amory begins to take interest in discussing once again, religion, literature, and "the menacing phenomena of the social order: ...he wanted people to like his mind again – after a while it might be such a nice place in which to live “ (454). This clearly indicates the direction which Amory's mind wants to take and his discussion of socialist outlook and values with Mr. Femby is a result of this. Amory's discussion with Femby is probably due to the influence that Shaw and Wells were still exercising upon Fitzgerald. It is also significant that there is no sense of irony throughout the long discussion: "The debate over socialism with father of Jesse Femby ... is synthetic in the argument as in the contrivance which brings Amory and the elder Femby together." 14

The whole last section, "Out Of The Fire, Out Of The Little Room", presents Amory's final analysis of himself. In spite of his efforts to think on socialist lines, Amory, on a close look at himself, seems to realize that he has "not one drop of the milk of human kindness": "I can make sacrifices, be charitable, give to a friend, endure for a friend, lay down my life for a friend ...all because these things may be the best possible expressions of myself" (496).
Also, there has been in the consciousness of Amory with reference to his moral concern the problem of evil: "The problem of evil had solidified for Amroy into the problem of sex. He was beginning to identify evil with the strong phallic worship in Brooke and the early Wells. Inseparably linked with evil was beauty" (497). Even the traditional religion does not offer him any solace, though he considers the Church of Rome a "traditionary bulwark against the decay of morals" (497). He comes to experience a vivid and disturbing vision of his generation, " a new generation dedicated more than the last to the fear of poverty and the worship of success ; grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken" (498). Amory is sorry for the people of his generation, but he is still not sorry for himself.

He feels that he is safe now, free from all hysteria and that he can accept life as it comes to him. Of course, Amory has no complacent feeling of having arrived at a goal. He knows that he is not religious and that his ideas are still in riot. There is even the pain of memory and the regret for his lost youth but what gives him hope as he stretches out his arms to the crystalline, radiant sky is the genuine feeling that he knows himself.

*This Side of Paradise* as a quest novel, very aptly ends on Amory's cry, "I know myself." The novel is really a series of experiences aimed at educating Amory, the hero of the novel. This education consists in directing Amory's attention towards himself. The purport of this education is to help Amory see clearly his own emotions, thoughts, and his reactions to life situations, so that he can relate himself to the world in a more meaningful way. Fitzgerald expresses this in terms of a personality growing into a personage.
When Amory cries out "I know myself," he does not mean that he has come to know about some unchanging, static object. Nor does he imply that he has attained the wisdom of a Socrates. "The Crystalline radiant sky", towards which Amory stretches out his arms consists in Amory's seeing himself as he is, that "there was no God in his heart ...his ideas were still in riot." That "there was ever the pain of memory", and still he does not feel sorry for himself. In this way Fitzgerald successfully presents the quest motif in *This Side of Paradise*.

It is an accepted thing that *This Side of Paradise* is an autobiographical novel. Fitzgerald himself described it as "a somewhat edited history of me and my imagination." 15 *This Side of Paradise* gives expressions to Fitzgerald's favourite story and theme, and Amory Blaine calls this "definite type of biographical novel, a "quest book". There were also several literary influences on Fitzgerald when he was writing *This Side of Paradise*. The title of the novel itself is taken from a poem by Rupert Brooke. Of all the influences, the influence of Wells and that of Mackenzie seem to be very prominent. The influence of Mckenzie's *Sinister Street* on *This Side of Paradise* is well known and is acknowledged by Fitzgerald himself. He was also greatly influenced by the novels of Wells and especially by the way they had been written. Fitzgerald's enthusiastic praise of Wells' *Boon*, clearly suggests his general attitude towards the novel. In the Wells-James controversy, the novels of Wells came to be called "Saturation novels". While James pleaded for the novel of selection, Wells defended "the novel of saturation."

Defending the novel of saturation, Wells said that the novel must be various and discursive if it was to follow life. For him, life is diversity and
entertainment, not completeness and satisfaction. Wells viewed the novel as a vehicle for problem discussion. There are four elements which characterize the novel of saturation or the discursive novel as it was being written by Wells, Arnold Bennet, D.H. Lawrence, Compton Mackenzie, Hugh Walpole, and others:

1. Character, not action, is the center of the novel;
2. Very little or nothing is irrelevant in the novel;
3. Author – intrusion is a virtue in the novel; and
4. The novel is a vehicle for problem discussion.

*This Side of Paradise* has all the traits of a saturation novel mentioned above. The novel is the story of Amory Blaine during the formative years of his life. The novel is episodic in its nature and it is significant that Fitzgerald referred to an early version of *This Side of Paradise* as a "Picaresque ramble". There is no continuous line of action and the novel is rather a series of episodes, related to one another by Amory Blaine, the protagonist of the novel. The episodes can be considered related only in the sense that they constitute collectively the education of the hero or in the sense that they collectively express the quest motif of the novel. Hence there is no single plot – line which would unify the novel. This loose structure provides a lot of scope for including any number of detailed incidents and the only requirement that they have to fulfill is that they should revolve around the hero. As *This Side of Paradise* is in fact the biography of Amory Blaine and as it has no central action, the novel has no beginning, middle, or end in the conventional sense.
In the Wells-James controversy, one of the crucial points is Henry Jame's great demand for a centre of interest or a motivating idea in a novel. Even Wells was not really against this and as he said in Boon, "The thing his novel is about is always there." So it may well be asked what This Side of Paradise is about Edmund Wilson says, "In short, This Side of Paradise is really not about anything; intellectually it amounts to little more than a gesture — a gesture of indefinite revolt." What Edmund Wilson says is quite true because, by definition, the saturation novel is not about any one thing. It is about "life", and therefore it includes many irrelevancies, which prevent it from coming to a focus. But still Wilson's phrase "a gesture of indefinite revolt" suggests that there is a central interest in This Side of Paradise though it may not be a precise, pointed intention.

It is the method of "saturation" which prevents the "gesture of indefinite revolt" from being expressed in a clear and strong way. In fact, most critics are of the opinion that Fitzgerald failed to see his material objectively in This Side of Paradise. There is no machinery as an integral part of the novel, which could be used to evaluate the characters and the incidents. The autobiographical nature of the novel is also a main reason for Fitzgerald's failure to see his material objectively. The story is told from the point of the hero, Amory Blaine. The reader has to accept Amory's judgement unless it is modified by Fitzgerald's intervention. Fitzgerald's intervention is very clear in the Amory — Rosalind episode. Fitzgerald's assertions on Rosalind's behalf show that he is in sympathy with her and also that he emphasizes her romantic rather than realistic nature. He runs into contradictions by attributing certain
qualities to Rosalind and then showing her acting in a very different way, as James Miller has noted, "The Portrayal of Rosalind is technically a failure in characterization. For, Fitzgerald attributes qualities to her, which are mutually exclusive. His assertions that Rosalind is not spoiled is in conflict with the way he portrays her as acting." 18

Henry James said "to be saturated is to be documented" 19. What he meant by this was that a writer who adopts the saturation method squeezes a situation to the utmost but does not apply art to the experiences of life. This is the reason for Fitzgerald's inability to make the theme, the revolt of his generation, emerge in clear terms. As Amory moves from one situation to another, there is a questioning of the institutions related to all phases of American life, including educational, religious, political, and moral. But much of the "revolt" does not constitute the central action of the novel. At one point in the story Amroy says. "My whole generation is restless" "This Side of Paradise" is more a representation of the restlessness and this makes the novel retain its importance in literary history. "It is the first of the post war novels by the then new generation of authors, the generation which had grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken." 20

Though the central theme of the novel remains vague, the expression of the restlessness of the younger generation is clear enough to capture the imagination of the readers and make This Side of Paradise a big success.
REFERENCES


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