**The Whirlwind Calendar 1907**

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of J. Rainis

In 1906 Rainis had just arrived in Switzerland. The poet received an invitation from the book publisher Dāvids Zeltiņš to create literature appendixes for calendars. In the literary sense they are close to the “Little Horseflies”. They also have original works as well as translations — both poems and texts of prose. In the “Whirlwinds” Rainis focuses on the world humor, but it isn’t as carefree anymore and is dominated by satire. “It was the most furious time, when the “Whirlwinds” were written, — the reaction from the barons and tsar reached its highest level of violence, its victims now counted not in hundreds, but in thousands,” recalled Rainis. “Against this kind of enemy, to whom the idea of humanity is foreign, the “Whirlwind” went with its own humor. Could this humor be gentle? Could this fight be won somehow else than with the sharpest and highest weapons of the spirit? Could we have called other forces to help than the highest spirits of humanity which would prove the highest human rights? It was the highest internationalism of the spirit, on which the hopes were placed in the name of a tormented folk.”

Rainis was introducing the readers with the most progressive representatives of the world literature, that were little know in Latvia at the time — Pierre Jean de Beranger, Sándor Petőfi, Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, etc. He emphasized some other part of the calendar — “One more place must I remark, where I gave a name to the world literature: “Caller Voices” (*„Saucēju balsis”*). Sentences of the greatest minds of the world are inserted there, and all of them approve freedom, a person’s independence, equal rights, and a new world order that is built on justice. For me all of them are witnesses for the rightness and necessity of freedom fights. I don’t know where else they would have been summoned for similar goals.” Was this edition appropriate for readers? For a regular joke calendar or humor book there is too much literature and seriousness here. They were too sharp for criticism, too literalistic for the public. However they were still sold out and came into the hands of readers. Rainis was preparing new materials for the next calendar of 1909, but because of the pressure from censorship, it was never published.