

Class B

(B)

MARGARET  
BEST PRIZE

Prize  
Very good

WARREN E. FALCONER, 11 A.

COMPOSITION

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THE DANGEROUS TRIO

## Outline

### The Dangerous Trio

1. The meeting of the tsetse fly, the mosquito, and the locust.
11. The discussion of the harm they do.
  - A. The tsetse fly:
    1. his location and background.
    2. means of doing harm.
    3. examples of harm done.
  - B. The mosquito:
    1. his location and background.
    2. means of doing harm.
    3. examples of harm done.
  - C. The locust:
    1. his location and background.
    2. means of doing harm.
    3. examples of harm done.
111. The break up of the meeting.

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*An Imperial Touch?*

The Dangerous Trio

By some strange prank of fate, a South African tsetse fly, an English locust, and a Canadian mosquito, all of whom are capable of speech, meet in a boggy swamp in South America. The three breeds of insects, known throughout the insect world as "The Dangerous Trio" are notorious for the harm they have done to mankind. As the three insects enjoy the stifling heat of the swamp, they talk about many subjects of mutual interest. It is not long before the topic of conversation is the one which is most fitting for all three, their common occupation and their aim in life; namely, to harm mankind.

As we, the humans, <sup>beings</sup> are the ones to be harmed, perhaps it would prove interesting to hear what harm these insects are able to inflict on us.

"I have one serious disadvantage that you, my colleagues, do not have," the tsetse fly begins. "You, fortunately, are spread over a much larger and more densely populated area of the earth's surface than I. Nevertheless, although my efforts are confined to the Western and Central African fly belts, I am one of the chief reasons why man's development has been so slow in these regions. In every clump of bush and every belt of forest, at the margin of every lake, river, and stream, we breed in huge numbers to make raids on man and his domestic animals at every opportunity. *good*

"You, Mosquito, do not draw blood, but leave the female to do whatever harm she may, while in the superior race of the tsetse fly, both males and females are blood suckers. Daily we make attacks in the hottest parts of the day. One nip from my mouth

is more likely than not to be fatal. Since I carry causal agents of fatal diseases, I am of high economic importance.

"Let me explain to you how I, and others of my kind, spread a disease; for example, sleeping sickness. We are not created with a poison of any sort within us, but when a tsetse fly sucks the blood from a subject upon which it alights, a number of pathogenic organisms may be taken into its body along with the blood. Inside the fly's body the tiny organisms undergo a change. When the change is complete, these new organisms are ready to pass into the blood-stream of any man or animal upon whom the insect alights. I, myself, have a large number of these trypanosomes in my body at the present time, all of which will infect a subject with sleeping sickness, or in the case of animals, the nagana disease. Thus the causal agents of diseases such as sleeping sickness are transmitted from man to man, and the causal agents for nagana are transmitted from animal to animal, and trypanosomes for both diseases may be carried simultaneously by me.

"I will cite examples of the destruction and harm my ancestors have done to man. My family has been given direct credit for the spreading of sleeping sickness from Western to Central Africa. Previous to our nineteenth century migration inwards from the west coast, sleeping sickness was unknown in Central Africa.

Another example of the work of my race was the five year plague in Uganda. Between 1901 - 1906, 200,000 natives died from sleeping sickness caused by our bites. In Lake Victoria, a region in Nyanza, the whole population was in constant fear of death for a period of nearly ten years after the arrival of the tsetse fly.



"Added to all this, we are an almost indestructible race. Man's attempts against us are most feeble. Our females do not lay eggs, but semi-developed pupae. Man's drives to clear bush and to poison us, annoy us but do no more. My race is indeed able to carry on a most effective campaign against the human race, despite all their efforts to exterminate us"

good point

"My friend, your feats and achievements are most commendable and your campaigns have been decidedly effective: But we mosquitoes have also done much to harm mankind. We have a much larger field of possibilities than the tsetse fly, as we are found from the tropics to the Arctic. In the tropics we are most plentiful, but near my home in the tundra we mature to the greatest size. Our family is not limited to fourteen varieties, as is that of the tsetse fly, but consists of approximately two thousand distinct varieties. We are able to breed wherever there is water, but find marshy ground the most suitable. We reproduce more rapidly than any other flies, as the female lays from forty to three-hundred eggs at one sitting. Thus there are many of us to work for the good of the cause, which is to strive against mankind."

good argument

"In the temperate parts of the world our bites are little more than troublesome, but the bite of the larger variety of mosquito found in the Arctic region has been known to cause hospitalization and even death to humans. We primarily harm man by piercing his skin with our long, needle-like mouths. We then remove a drop of blood and inject into the body of the human a little poison, thus causing a small welt to form on the surface of the skin, which, to say the least, proves annoying and often painful."

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"A secondary means of harming man in the tropical regions is to transplant parasites from our bodies into the body of the victim. These parasites are the causal agents of the dread disease, elephantiasis, which is communicable and often fatal to both man and beast. Although these parasites are of microscopic size, the harm they do with our aid cannot be ignored.

"In the tropics, my cousins inject a fluid into a subject, which will cause him to be stricken with yellow fever.

"In 1899 it was discovered that we were responsible for the spread of malaria. Until the twentieth century, our efforts along this line had gone unnoticed. The spread of malaria among whites and natives alike in Natal and tropical Africa has given the region the reputation of being the "unhealthiest place on the earth". As our work in the spread of disease is so wide spread, I believe the mosquito to be the most harmful insect in the world."

"You both attack directly at a subject himself," commenced the locust, "while the harm I do to man is indirect; I strike at his food supply. A locust is able to survive in any temperate region, and at the choicest of breeding places river deltas we increase to incredulous numbers. In all reed-grown areas with a hot, dry climate we increase and mature very rapidly. Unfortunately, man has several strong defences against us. He may cultivate the land, making it entirely unsuitable for a locust; he may destroy our eggs; he may kill off our larvae. But we have a counter-defensive measure; if our race becomes extinct in one area, a new family of locusts is able to fly many hundreds of miles to fill the gap.

*This is one of the few essays which has acknowledged that the mosquito's harm is not confined to the spread of malaria.*



"In destroying man's food, we generally strike when the vegetation is green. Once we attack a plant, we usually strip it right down to the stalks, as also does the cicada with whom we are sometimes confused. Our own destructive efforts however, apart from those of the lesser known cicada, cost mankind millions of dollars annually.

"Our children begin work when they are young. As soon as the nymphs hatch they commence their destructive career. As they mature, their appetites increase greatly, and a locust like me is able to consume many times his own weight in vegetation, which is of such great value as food to man.

"As we come of age, we take on a migratory character. We carry on these migrations to satisfy a psychological urge and not to find regions where food is more plentiful. (Our American cousins have, to some extent, lost this migratory tendency, and have now become more permanently located). We eat little on our migrations, but before and after the movement we consume great quantities of food, leaving many square miles bare of vegetation. We do most of our noticeable harm when we are gathered together in these large groups. When we discontinue a flight, it is not usually because we have found a suitable location, but, again, because we wish to satisfy a psychological desire.

*good touch*

"Our families have existed in groups covering an area as large as two thousand square miles. My grandfather was one of a group which crossed the Atlantic, whereas my father lost his life in a tropical storm twelve hundred miles from the shore of the nearest continent. I am one of the largest breeds of grasshoppers, but the smaller locusts of other regions also have a capacity for food consumption more than comparable to their size.



"In dry years, and in dry regions, we are most active. In preparing for a raid on man in Cyprus, we were foiled by a cunning human plan. Our attack was foreseen and one of our scouts reported that thirteen hundred tons of eggs had been destroyed. This was a single campaign of the many preventive measures the citizens of Cyprus put into effect against us.

"Our greatest North American campaign was in 1940. In Montana and Saskatchewan we were credited with what was later called the biggest insect invasion known.

"My friends, my harm, like yours, is done in my hunt for food. As I believe in action, and not words, I suggest we stop boasting and start eating. As my flight home is long, I must leave you now. Farewell."

With these words the locust began his return trip to England. There is little further talk between the mosquito and the tsetse fly before they, too, depart for their native lands.

Which do you think is the most harmful of these three insects - the tsetse fly who causes death; the mosquito who causes and spreads disease; or the locust who causes famine? You will form your own opinions, but you will not forget the dangerous trio.

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*very good*  
*see P. 4 note*

Bibliography.

Encyclopaedia Britannica

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