



## The Poets and Our Easter Faith.

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AS the Easter time draws near the significance of its splendid hope and confidence is impressed anew upon our minds and hearts. The essence of that sublime faith that God is in his world a present, thinking, willing, caretaking Father, that man is his child, with whom the divine Being holds communion schooling him for immortality, pulses with new vigor in the veins of our intellectual and moral life. It is interesting and comforting at such a time to notice the sensitiveness of our great poets to the presence of God in the human soul, and the wreath of confidence and trust they twine about the brow of the Easter Christ.

James Russell Lowell closes his splendid song of "The Oak" with this expression of his faith :

"Lord ! All thy works are lessons ; each contains  
Some emblem of man's all-containing soul ;  
Shall be made fruitless all thy glorious pains,  
Delving within thy grace an eyeless mole ?  
Make me the least of thy Dondona grove,  
Cause me some message of thy truth to bring,  
Speak but a word through me, nor let thy love  
Among my boughs disdain to perch and sing."

Here again are words very sweet and tender in their revelation of the simple confidence of his own heart :

"I, that still pray at morning and at eve,  
Loving those roots that feed us from the past,  
And prizing more than Plato, things I learned  
At the best academy, a mother's knee."

Looking through a great European cathedral, Lowell exclaims :

"Let us be thankful when, as I do here,  
We can read Bethel on a pile of stones,  
And, seeing where God has been, trust him."

John Greenleaf Whittier, the great-souled minstrel of human freedom, had a sublime faith in the presence of God among men and in the power of Jesus Christ to gain victory over every force of evil. How inspiring to listen to his optimistic words :

"The world sits at the feet of Christ,  
Unknowing, blind, and unconsoled ;  
It yet shall touch his garment's fold,  
And feel the heavenly Alchemist  
Transform its very dust to gold."

Many people are so inflated by their own pride and self-sufficiency that they do not discern the unspeakable beauty of the character of Jesus; but great natures, like the old Quaker poet, through their humility find the way into the secret of his presence, and can sing with him :

"O hearts of love ! O souls that turn  
Like sunflowers to the pure and best !  
To you the truth is manifest :  
For they the mind of Christ discern  
Who lean like John upon his breast!"

The poems of Whittier are so full of these gems of living light that one is embarrassed with the abundance of riches. But this triumphant utterance of his own Christian experience cannot fail to strengthen our faith :

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