

distance resembling the gorse and broom, and in its general appearance very like our Golden Flowering Currant, though blooming much more profusely. A large cluster of them massed together has a quite dazzling effect in the bright sunshine. In the grounds of the White House was a magnificent *Pyrus Japonica*, whose gorgeous crimson made a rich contrast to the pale, pink-tinted *Magnolia* and the white blossoms of a small flowered *Spiræa* and a kind of honeysuckle, varied by the "dropping gold" of the *Forsythia*. In the Botanical Gardens are wild plum and cherry in full blossom, —apple trees in leaf and just bursting into bloom; —different kinds of holly in blossom, and we also noticed a peony in bud almost ready to flower. All this floral display, with a temperature somewhere about 70, and birds singing sweetly on all sides, in trees already showing a delicate green mist of verdure, might well make one think one's self in the middle of May. It seemed as if nature had come out in gala attire to welcome Easter, with the assurance that "the winter is over and gone and the time of the singing of birds is come!" and then—as we sit with windows opened wide,—we read in the evening paper of a blizzard in the west and people and animals perishing from cold. As we passed in the electric car towards Mount Vernon, through the woods, we saw not only peach trees in blossom but some of them apparently growing wild, and also noticed the ground sprinkled with hepaticas and blood root, but did not succeed in seeing any of the lovely Mayflower growing, though bunches of it, as well as of the sweet English violet, were freely offered for sale.

Mount Vernon is a quaint old colonial mansion, beautifully situated on the high bank of the Potomac—the lawn looking down on the river over a fringe of woodland. On a point opposite stands Fort Washington, distinctly seen from the windows. The rooms are small—though handsomely finished, and furnished in the fashion of Washington's times, some of the furniture being old family heirlooms. The room in which the hero died is plain almost to bareness, befitting a Republican patriot. The library is a pleasant room opening on the front verandah and next the banquet hall, which is a very handsome apartment, the fine ceiling, marble mantelpiece being the same in Washington's lifetime.

The tomb in which the mortal remains of the hero and his wife lie side by side, is a brick vault faced with stone, set in the side of a grassy slope and festooned with ivy and other creepers. The sarcophagi are of marble, plain and massive, and on the wall above are inscribed the sacred words which alone light up the darkness that veils the close of this mortal life—"I am the Resurrection and the Life—He that believeth in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live." That was our Good Friday sermon.

Going still farther south to Richmond, we found spring still farther advanced. Around the plain old capitol,—but for its pillars, a typical "meeting-house,"—which was for so long the seat of the Confederate Government, the elms and other trees were greening perceptibly and the old horse-chestnuts in the court-yard of "Jeff Davis'" mansion close by had already burst into leaf. Nevertheless, the day was cold, most unusually cold for Richmond, for the spring is coy and uncertain everywhere; the "cold wave" which here repre-

sented the north-western blizzard had already arrived, and we were glad to warm ourselves at the big wood fire in the great massive fire-place in the picturesque waiting-room at the station. We felt strongly tempted to take a ticket for New Orleans, which can be reached in twenty-four hours from here, and have a glimpse of the real south; but for the present this must remain a dream unfulfilled, and from hence our course lies northward, to meet our own slow, lingering and late, yet ever welcome northern spring.

FIDELIS.

## A SONG OF SPRING.

I lay in my terrible bands  
Invisible, silent and still,  
A ribbon of white through the lands,  
A slave to omnipotent will;  
No tremor of motion to tell  
Of the heart that was pulsing beneath,  
As a captive in fetters doth tenant a cell  
And prays for the Angel of Death:

But a warm wind blew out of the South  
And laid its soft cheek to my face,  
Caressed me as though glowing youth  
Took age in its loving embrace;  
Ah! sweetly it whispered to me,  
"I have blown from the garden of God,  
Blown far o'er the waves of an odorous sea,  
Where the spirit of Summer has trod."

It breathed on my prison of ice,  
And sighed on my desolate shore,  
That held in the jaws of a vice  
The manacles grim that I bore;  
As vapor in morning is lost  
When the sun in his glory doth shine,  
My chains, all exultant, in fragments I tossed,  
The triumph of springtime was mine.

So now on my course to the deep,  
The perfection of peace I may glide,  
Till, crossing the bar, I shall steep  
My veins in its languorous tide;  
With the hush of the woods in my breast,  
The strength of the hills in my voice,  
I may dally and loiter along to my rest,  
In ripples and eddies rejoice.

ALAN SULLIVAN.

## A FIRST OF APRIL HOMILY.

Solomon has many a scornful sentence on the mirth of fools. Yet gravity seems even less becoming to this much afflicted class. There is no sadder anomaly in nature than a solemn visaged fool. There can be no congenial fellowship between seriousness and folly, and when these are found together, the effect is repulsive in the extreme. Therefore to all those who, while lacking wisdom have still a capacity for mirth, I would recommend the advice of the old adage, "It is better to laugh than be sighing." Let not a feeble-witted conscience lord it over you too much. The world has more need of your contagious hilarity than of the poor results accruing from your knitted-browed anxiety.

To alleviate the miserable condition of those unhappy fools who have been suddenly smitten with a sense of their own folly, I would offer these few suggestions:

Firstly. It is well to realize at once the unchangeableness of your position. "Though you bray a fool in a mortar," begins the wise man in one of his tirades. So by wearing a long face and allowing the heart to sink below the diaphragm, you will not cease to be a fool, but merely become a melancholy one.

Secondly. There seems to be no immediate necessity for the exhibition of extra-

ordinary wisdom. The world is very old and has lived down a great many clever people who from time to time have threatened its stability. It has at present many scores of blind Samsons fumbling about its pillars, trying to find some weak spot, where they may bring down immortality upon themselves and let who will pay for the damage, "but, by my sooth, they'll wait a wee." Let us simple ones rest in the certainty of our obscurity, many arrive at the same destination after much vexatious toil.

Thirdly. Think not too lightly of yourself. It is something even to be a fool. Chance is in your favor. Blanks are often the trump dominoes in the game of life. Look at the men who occupy high positions, examine them closely; you will find them brothers, members of the great fraternity of fools.

Fourthly. Never ask from heavenly or hellish power the gift to see yourself as others see you. Give them joy of their spectacle, but do you prefer to look upon a less pitiable object.

Fifthly. A great deal may be said in favor of a state of acknowledged stupidity. Little is required of him that hath little, nor is a fool's wisdom subject to the discount of expectation. Like the speech of Balaam's ass it adds the element of wonder to its intrinsic worth.

Sixthly. Consider the greatness and glory of your order. While wise men in all ages have moped and grumbled, doubting the worth of life, and coming to doleful conclusions that all is vanity and vexation of spirit, the humble, unambitious simpletons have cheerily clung to existence, "content-ed wi' little an' canty wi' mair." To them we owe the principal part of all that makes life endurable. The incisive insight of wise men has done less for mankind than the patient, persistent blundering of fools. Their practical optimism is continually showing the fallacies in the pessimistic theories of the wise. Being satisfied to wait for the slow but infallible reasonings of time and experience they often attain to greater knowledge than is given to the keen but impatient foresight of cynical seers. Cheered by the past achievement of our kind, let us, therefore, if we cannot illumine others by our wisdom exhibit at least in all hopefulness the sunny side of our folly.

WILLIAM MCGILL.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## UNIVERSITY EXTENSION.

To the Editor of The Week:

Sir,—More than a month ago you made a sweeping charge against Canadian Universities of having failed to throw themselves into the work of University Extension. Last week you recurred to the subject for the purpose of stating that the charge was too sweeping. "We are aware, for instance," you add, "and should have stated that Queen's University, at Kingston, has carried on extension work, to some extent at least, by means of a series of lectures delivered by its able and versatile principal, and, if we are not mistaken, by other professors as well, though we are unable to say at present whether these lectures are now continued, and whether other methods, such as examinations and practical work by students are connected with them." Will you allow me to say that I prefer the total darkness of your first article to the partial illumination of the second. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," and may be more misleading than a frank confession of ignorance.

Queen's has engaged for years in University Extension work of different kinds. Two of these were set forth fully by me,