

children were in the habit of visiting both their father and mother freely, and carrying affectionate messages or letters to each other. During my residence in London, which lasted about eighteen months, I was sometimes invited to breakfast at Devonshire House where I often met both literary and artistic notabilities,

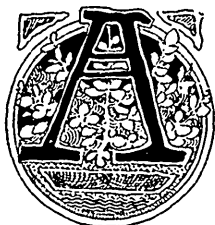
whose very names I now forget, with the exception of the two Landseers and their sister, Daniel Maclise, R.A., and the celebrated engraver, Cousins. After my removal from the great metropolis, I never had the pleasure of meeting Charles Dickens or any of his interesting family.

L. C. P. F.

HOCUS-POCUS.

Boss Town, April 30, 1890.

Dear Owl :



SPRING poem is what you want, a real inspired rhapsody on the mendacious theme, but your dull correspondent has not yet sinned against the "fitness of

things" to the extent of committing a vernal rhapsody (to paper)—no, his poetry, like all that's good and true in him is suppressed, indeed: were you to see him now as he nestles close to the tepid steam coils, in his room, you would scan his face in vain for anything that rhymes with "ethereal mildness." It is to save himself from a *brown* study, that he banishes the thought of a *green* one, and from past experience turns to THE OWL for comfort: THE OWL is his turtle dove, his nightingale, his skylark. All that ornithology has done for poets, THE OWL does for me, only I can't set the odes etc. to any tune. What's the news from Boston? Well, barring the topic of Spring openings down on Washington street, the year two thousand has not yet come, so the shops hold good, barring all you can see for yourself in the papers on file in your cosy (?) reading room, barring the Sunday doings in Tremont Temple, and some magic lantern revelations out on Jamaica Plain, there's no news as I can gather. Public Schools and Parochial Schools all full to overflowing, the wrong *text book* gets into some Dominie's hands now and then, E PLURIBUS UNUM

is still translated into ERIN GO BRACH, so you see there's nothing new in these parts.

My text, hocus etc. authorizes me to ignore the unities of discourse, *ergo* I ramble. I have some good chances of noting some of the notabilities as come to town, (I'm speaking indefinitely with regard to time,) *Max O'Rel!* was here once, you know and was well received—as to his book on Jonathan—you don't want a review of it do you, after all that has been said? Such books are only to be enjoyed, not analyzed. It amuses me though, to see Jonathan laughing so good naturedly at himself. Howells knows the old man better than Max, and in "A Hazard of New Fortunes" holds the mirror up to the queer American face with much better effect, don't you think so? It makes precious little difference what the flitting foreign connoisseurs say of us, they may come and they may go, but we go on for ever, and Max O'Rel or any other man may poke fun at us as long as it gives him fun. Please don't ask me my opinion of "*Looking Backward*." I'm too straight-forward to duly appreciate anything requiring an abnormal direction of my orbs, and Mr. Bellamy's version of the Golden Age needs a few supplementary chapters—don't ask me about any of the newest books, not even about the "Book without a parallel!" When Mr. Gladstone condescends to immortalize a little girl's autobiography, why that will do; the great statesman must unbend sometimes I suppose, a propos of "The parallel," haven't you heard that one of the Boston Lights has found a