

selves against the enforcement of law ; and the Socialists of France and Germany, and the Nihilists of Russia, will be still more emphatically on the same side. That other people should tolerate the notion shows only that they have not thought out its whole meaning. When they understand that it is an attack on every man who has bought a plot of ground and cultivated it or built a house upon it, that it is a threat which endangers the position of every freeholder in Canada as well as every landowner in Ireland, they may hesitate to accept the theory which they do not oppose now simply because they do not see its meaning and consequences.

APRIL POETS.

THE jubilant notes of the poets at the approach of spring are as sweet and varied as the liquid syllables of the returning birds. For at least one hour in his life, it is said, every man is a poet, and surely this blessed chance could befall in no more likely time than when in the prosaic human consciousness, as well as on the barren earth,

The tender air
Quickens places poor and bare.

But before these places appear on black hillsides, sodden meadows, and leafless woodland, the impatient desire of every beauty-loving heart for Nature's grand spring opening has been fed by the continuous rains and snows of a winter in which there has been what the farmers term "a good deal of downfall." When the downfalling is followed by a general uprising—an insurrection of earth's forces against the tyrannous skies—and

When by melting beds of snow
Wind flowers blossom all alone,
Then I know
That the bitter winter's dead.
Over his head
The damp sod breaks so mellow,
Its mosses tipped with points of yellow.

Happy winter, to have his tomb so beautifully bedecked! Surely nothing became his life so well as the leaving of it. It is a pleasure to hear the funeral dirges of the birds: the robin's dismal wail, the unutterable despair of the chickadee, and the infinite heart-break of the bobolink. Perhaps—yes, I know it is a hackneyed thought, repeated so often as to have nearly lost its meaning, yet I cannot pass it by—perhaps when our dumb and wintry lives, inexpressive of the grace and beauty that lie frozen beneath, shall melt into the after life, the birds will repeat the blissful assurances that we are so slow to accept in this world. Perhaps! But the true poet never doubts, and we, in listening to the unreasoning joy of the song sparrow, can echo Mrs. Thaxter's passionate profession of faith:

God never meant to mock us with that voice!
That is the keynote of the universe,
That song of perfect trust, of perfect cheer,
Courageous, constant, free of doubt or fear.

The coming of spring, like every other gracious and wonderful experience, needs but a few choice words for its description. A lavish and chaotic profusion of epithets is wearisome, from their inability to contain or convey the beauty that palpably strikes the dullest eye and ear at every turn. But here are a few transparent lines from Maurice Thompson, which seem to me the perfection of artlessness—or of art:

I heard the woodpecker pecking,
The blue-bird tenderly sing;
I turned and looked out of my window,
And, lo, it was spring!

A breath from tropical borders,
Just a ripple flowed into my room,
And washed my face clean of its sadness,
Blew my heart into bloom.

Has not this the very "look and face that makes simplicity a grace?" And how clearly the successive steps are pointed out by which spring works her miracles upon the poet. She calls him with the imperativeness of the woodpecker, with the tenderness of the blue-bird, his face is washed clean of its sadness—and the courage it took to use the words "washed" and "clean" must have been supported by the conviction of their entire fitness, sadness of any kind being always of the earth earthy—and then at the touch of her breath his heart bursts into bloom. But behold her crowning transformation in the last verse:

I forget my old age and grow youthful,
Bathing in wind-tides of spring,
When I hear the woodpecker pecking,
The first blue-bird sing.

This, though wonderful, is not an unusual experience. It receives the melodious confirmation of Emerson, who is generally a harsher-voiced poet.

Spring still makes spring within the mind,
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew the throbbing heart,
And we are never old.

The "morning of the year" not only renews our youth, but brings with it the vague restlessness and longing inseparable from one's earlier days. It is best expressed in "John Reed's Thoughts," as interpreted by Bayard Taylor:

There's something comes with the spring, a lightness or else a weight,
There's something comes with the spring, and it seems to me it's fate.

It's the hankering after a life that you never have learned to know,
It's the discontent with a life that is always thus and so,
It's the wondering what we are, and where we are going to go.

This arises from our instinctive sympathy with Nature's varied moods, which is at no other season so strong as now. We are buoyant in April's smiles, and weighted with her gloom; the sun-coloured raindrops bring us mingled pleasure and pain. In no other month do we so intimately feel our kinship with the outer world, and realise that we are the legitimate offspring of

The bridal of the earth and sky.

This secret sympathy is most strongly possessed by the poet. In his veins he feels—

A genial flood,
Such as through the sapwood spurs,
Swells and shapes the pointed bud
Of the lilac; and besets
The hollows thick with violets.

Even the hardened realists cannot escape the potent influences of spring. Some years ago there appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* an unsigned poem, entitled "In Earliest Spring," to which was modestly affixed in the index the name of W. D. Howells. In this poem the eminent realist confesses to feeling a

Rapture of life ineffable, perfect, as if in the briar,
Leafless there by my door, trembled a sense of the rose.

This seems to border on romance. The only self-respecting way to treat a briar bush is to look at it first in the coldly accurate light of reality; it should be considered in all its agricultural and botanic details, and full explanations given of the reason why it grew by that door, instead of some other door; then there should be a lengthy altercation between the proprietor of the bush and his wife as to whether it would not be better to have the bush grow by a window, and not by a door at all. But in those of us who find real life very frequently empty and leafless, or thorny and paltry, a "trembling sense of the rose" is almost the only thing that gives it value, and we joy to believe that so far as neglected and seemingly lifeless hearts and briars are concerned

There is not anything
Beyond the chance of blossoming!

ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

NOTES OF A LITERARY PILGRIMAGE.

It was in the true spirit of the old-time pilgrim that I recently made a visit to the two great literary centres—if there can be more than one centre at the same time—of our republican neighbour. I went to worship at the shrine of the Muse, and to hold communion with her votaries, and the editor of THE WEEK, having first bound me over to brevity, has invited me to set down some of my impressions, so, without more ado, I shall proceed.

I.—NEW YORK.

Whatever side one may take in the animated discussion which has been going on for some time past as to the respective claims of New York and Boston to be considered the literary centre of the United States, there can be no uncertainty as to the former city being the publishing centre, and as wherever the publishers are, there will the authors be gathered together, its becoming the supreme literary centre is perhaps only a question of time. At all events there is a vast amount of literary life and stir and movement there already, which it is very delightful to observe and feel and mingle in, especially when the experience is enjoyed for the first time. In many respects the Authors' Club is the place in which one may most readily appease his desire to see something of the men whose names are so familiar in the periodicals and publishers' announcements. For although quite a modest institution, its membership being limited to one hundred and fifty, and its rooms very unpretentious, the fact that no person can become a member without holding "a recognised position in distinctively literary work," renders its fortnightly meetings, when from fifty to a hundred members usually turn up, uniquely interesting to literary pilgrims. The night I had the privilege of being present, a fairly representative gathering filled the rooms with talk and tobacco smoke. R. W. Gilder, the poet-editor, slight, sallow, stooping, his splendid brown eyes full of the fire of genius; W. Hamilton Gibson, the artist-author, rotund, black-bearded, bright-faced; Brander Matthews, shaggy and spectacled, yet looking very much a man of the world; Loretta Metcalf, of the *Forum*, keen of visage, and quick of movement, as one would expect the guiding spirit of so progressive a periodical to be; Dr. Hayes Ward, of the *Independent*, tall, slender, and studious in appearance; Hamilton Mabie, of the *Christian Union*, short, stout, and hearty, evidently brimming over with good work and good will; Poultney Bigelow, of *Outing*, introducing to everybody Thomas Stevens, the hero of the "Round-the-world Bicycle Excursion"; C. Ledyard Norton, editor of that all-too-good-to-live periodical, the *Continent*, in its palmiest days; Frank Stockton, the most rare humourist, his slight, bent form and deeply lined face bearing testimony to the stress of neuralgic anguish which is said to inspire his quaintest conceits; R. U. Johnson and C. C. Buel, Gilder's right-and-left-hand men in the tremendous task of editing the *Century*; big and burly Col. Knox, whose "Boy-Travellers" have circumnavigated the globe, both in his imagination and his books; H. H. Boyesen, G. P. Lathrop, Jonas M. Libbey, and a host of others, whose names are known to every reader of modern American literature.

Another rendezvous to which the literary people flock is the weekly reception given by Edmund Clarence Stedman, the man who combines within himself the strangely varied elements of successful broker, critic, and poet. Here I met Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, who has inherited so much of her peerless father's beauty as well as his brains; Starr H.