

Literary Department.

A Spring Idyl.

“**H**AIL gentle Spring, ethereal mildness come”! Who has not retained at least this much from the well-thumbed pages of a “Third Reader”? And yet, how few there are who have paused for an instant, to wonder if Thomson, the laziest of poets, could have known aught of the house-cleaning feature of the gentle season!

Presumably not, for being an essentially mundane subject, it is one from which Minerva withholds her smiles, and upon which the harp of the minstrel is proverbially silent. Naturally then, we conclude, those periodical interruptions of domestic tranquillity known as: “Spring cleaning” had no part in disturbing the unbroken serenity of the “Castle of Indolence”, and that the author of “The Seasons” could never have doffed his coat or tucked up his sleeves preparatory to assisting Susan in adjusting the stove-pipe. It has often been a matter of wonder to me why that pensive, long haired, romantically gotten up, sky-ward gazing creature, the spring poet, should have neglected a theme of such deep interest to humanity. It may be because of the peculiar faculty, indigenous. I believe, to the optic nerve of those on whom the gifts of the Muse have been showered—of seeing what to others is invisible and vice-versa.

However, that may be, house-cleaning is a tangible, night-marish, uninviting reality, and poets, as I have heard, with the exception perhaps of an immortal few, rarely deal in realism.

Now that spring is here, and that oracular volume, the ‘Almanac’, assures shivering, doubting Ottawans it has at last arrived, let us take a sorrowful peep at petticoated humanity, and see if tearful clouds and mud-puddles have not given rise in the female heart, to an eager, restless desire to brandish duster, broom and scrubbing-brush for the purpose of restoring chaos to order. Our intellectual neighbors below the boundary line, those near but not on the historic bean-growing soil of Boston, are not free from this universal desire, but at the first dulcet notes welling up from the familiar hand organ, the first melancholy croak of the frogs