

POSTSCRIPT.

THE RATE OF THE WORLD'S PROGRESS.

To the Editor of The Boston Transcript.—The *Transcript* of March 30th, 1888, contained a review of "Looking Backward," in response to which I beg to be allowed a word. The description to which the book is devoted, of the radically new social and industrial institutions and arrangements supposed to be enjoyed by the people of the United States in the twentieth century, is not objected to as depicting a degree of human felicity and moral development necessarily unattainable by the race, provided time enough had been allowed for its evolution from the present chaotic state of society. In failing to allow this, the reviewer thinks that the author has made an absurd mistake, which seriously detracts from the value of the book as a work of realistic imagination. Instead of placing the realization of the ideal social state a scant fifty years ahead, it is suggested that he should have made his figure seventy-five centuries. There is certainly a large discrepancy between seventy-five centuries and fifty years, and if the reviewer is correct in his estimate of the probable rate of human progress, the outlook of the world is decidedly discouraging. But is he right? I think not.

"Looking Backward," although in form of a fanciful romance, is intended, in all seriousness, as a forecast, in accordance with the principles of evolution, of the next stage in the industrial and social development of humanity, especially in this country; and no part of it is believed by the author to be better supported by the indications of probability than the implied prediction that the dawn of the new era is already near at hand, and that the full day will swiftly follow. Does this seem at first thought incredible, in view of the vastness of the changes presupposed? What is the teaching of history, but that great national transformations, while ages in