

MAY DAYS.

Oh, the days are fair when May has come,
 With the robin's call and the wild-bee's
 hum;
 Each forest nook is a shimmer of green,
 Glancing in sunlight and dewy sheen,
 And the snowy bloom wreathes the bud-
 ding bough,
 That was so grey and bare, but now;
 For the woods have waked from the win-
 try night,
 'Neath the kiss of the sunshine soft and
 bright,
 And the meadows bask in the golden
 light,
 When May is here —
 The fairest month in the circling year!
 Yes, May has come, with the blossoms
 sweet,
 That hide 'mid the brown leaves 'neath
 our feet,
 Pale hepaticas, just awake,
 Peep shyly out from the woodland brake,
 Dewy violets, with tender faces,
 Lilies gleaming in shady places,
 Columbines crimson the rock's grey side,
 Mirrored where quiet waters glide,
 For the world is fair in the sweet May-
 tide;
 Fair and bright
 Are the woods, with snowy bloom be-
 dight.
 And the air is filled with the wandering
 scent
 Of the bursting leaves, with the zephyr
 blent,
 And the birds pour forth from their tiny
 throats
 Showers of music, in clamouring notes,
 Till the soft air throbs with the tide
 of song,
 The matin-chant of the joyous throng—
 Till bud, and blossom, and flower, and
 bee,
 Are blent in one exquisite symphony,
 That breathes out the season's witchery;
 Words cannot tell
 The charm of the May, with its magic
 spell.
 For hope is bright, when the spring is
 young,
 And the bridal hymn of the earth is sung
 By myriad voices, mingling clear
 In the morning hymn of the waking year;
 Lost is the mournful minor tune,
 In the swell of the great diapason!
 Death and winter have had their day,
 But their chilling shadow hath passed
 away,
 And, even to sorrow, Spring's voices say—
 Smiles conquer tears,
 And Joy shall rule the eternal year!
 FIDELIS.

SOME POPULAR REQUIREMENTS.

Mr. Walter Bagehot in "Physics and Politics" has called attention to the fact that the idea of Progress entertained in such a degree as to form the prevailing and absorbing drift of a nation is at present confined to a small minority of the people inhabiting the earth: the Eastern races, from whom all settlement once radiated, being still undisturbed by its force. On this newly settled continent of America Progress is regarded as everything, and the fact is ignored that the price paid for the advancement is often too great. The grinding down of the human subject and the stifling of the conscience being amongst the evils that have followed in the wake of an unrestrained competition in things material. The Christian system of morals distinctly embodies a considerate regard for the claims of the individual, based as those claims are upon the grand principles of human brotherhood, just and equal treatment, and the supreme masterhood of God, the Creator of all we enjoy. The rule of life and of business that has held sway in

the now vanishing era in Europe, and more particularly in Britain, its birth-place, largely ignored those mutual claims. At present there is probably more competitive gridding in Germany than elsewhere, and it is little wonder if the "masses" are disturbed through its effects.

Under the title "Political Economy," ingeniously usurped for its purposes, and with "necessity the tyrants' plea" ever on its lips, the new philosophy drew in its train for a good part of a century the thinking and the practice of the leading commercial countries. Our friend of the Montreal Witness, addressing large numbers as he does, finds it hard to shake of a system which is at war with all his own best ideas of the economy of the social life.

The journal was founded in a spirit of beneficence by the late John Dougall, to promote the social advancement of his adopted country, and must be admitted to have attained a large success in the grand enterprise set before it. But, for the reasons adduced, it has now become in a great degree a house divided against itself. Its lantern fails to penetrate the clouds it has gathered about its path. As our social theories become crystallized into practice, difficulties will inevitably arise. He and we had better be deliberate and persevering in examining them, than be putting our trust in any of the dicta of the old world which are so evidently losing their hold over the minds of men. Mr. Bagehot has lent himself too much to eliminating the spiritual element from the social advances of the past in the promotion of the life-values and the money-values of men in community. But it is spirit that rules, notwithstanding; and if the moving spirit of the Witness will come back to this good old doctrine—one which he has never quite deserted, there will be better hope of his future influence in our young and aspiring Dominion. Our country has been less torn by the social controversies of the time than almost any other. We may continue patiently to study the movements of the world outside, whilst ever convinced that a philosophy that will not adapt itself to the life of the individual and his family is defective, and has to be amended. There is little fear of our allowing ourselves, through commercial or other considerations, to become, as Mr. Angers expressed it at St. John, the white slaves of the people to the south of us.

There are new and at present rather hazy movements among the politicians. The Montreal Star's, however, pretty definite in its views of tariff requirements. If tariff adjustments were all that would be needed, its philosophy would be complete. It is to be hoped the platforms will be more comprehensive than heretofore; for in the political sphere we have been groping in the dark. We do not even yet know with clearness why the farmer gives up his holding and strikes out for new scenes. The causes are, doubtless, somewhat complex; but we need more evidence. Our party leaders know something of the old feudalism that came into the place of the Imperial rule of Rome, but few of them, it is to be feared, have studied with care the working of the new feudalism of the great Railway Corporations which has now for some time held sway among the so-called democratic and constitutional communities of this continent. An Indian massacre in the little war of 1885, by which the Queen's sovereignty was estab-

lished in our North West through the bravery of the Canadian troops, ably led by Generals Middleton and Strange, is a frightful thing in the recounting; but upon how small a scale of destruction it all took place compared with the repeated immolation by these State-endowed Railway Companies! The control of the State must be effectually secured over its own creations; and will not this become the hustings cry of the people, as soon as they shall prove themselves really worthy of the vote they exercise? After five years from now, by act of Congress, power-brakes and automatic-couplings are to become universal on the railways of the United States. Observe how our journals in Canada have avoided comment upon this striking political decree. What does the really scandalous omission arise from, if it be not a result of the action of the new feudalism, that is of serf-hood, as applied to the very brain and leadership of our free Dominion, as we love to consider it? Bought with money? Not exactly that—only bribed with printing and advertising patronage, and railway, as opposed to patriotic, influence. This conspiracy of silence is not a thing you can appoint Commissions to investigate. It forms hardly a measurable offence; but its effects are none the less serious on that account nor any the less ruinous and death-dealing in the case of the people at large. Our friends of the press will take this comment in kindness, as a word in season. They cannot wish to make their gain out of the weaknesses and the very lives of their supporters.

The railway reforms over the broad area of the adjoining States will, most likely, from their magnitude, and close connection with our own system, take the initiative, now that a great and progressive people are becoming awake to the deep necessity of remedial action. Let us not find ourselves derelict in Canada in this—one of the greatest public movements of the day.

The acquired habits of our people are largely to blame for the destruction that has gone on in the past. They want to use the tracks for walking on, and do not want to have to pay anything for sidewalks. From this cause alone, the great number of deaths on the railways of this continent occur annually.

They neglect to see to it, that arrangements be made at the level crossings with which we are afflicted, to protect their poor little school-children, the little sons and daughters whom they love so fondly. They indulge a foolish vanity in jumping on or off the cars while in motion, and they do not think the practice vulgar. Those who are the best judges will say it is not only vulgar but causes a great many broken limbs and deaths of worthy people. We do not want our leading journals, who take so much pains in addressing large numbers of the people to deal with these points. In their hearts they cannot like to see the people perish, and they believe they are gulled by the broad principles of our common humanity.

They will not fail, surely, soon to arouse themselves to compete effectually with a great public need like this one which stultifies the humanitarian teaching that now forms so important a part of the reading of our young people. In a recent press despatch from Belleville, on the Grand Trunk Railway, and now raised to the dignity of a city, we read: "About