

when that permanent caucus of Toryism is attacked. And yet, on the other hand, he will vote for a member of this very body in the person of the new Premier, without being conscious of any inconsistency. With the inside House of Commons intrigues he has nothing to do; he is interested in the great bread and butter question, and he believes that Rosebery is interested in it, too. And Lord Rosebery has attained this position of commanding influence simply by doing what nearly every other Liberal leader was afraid of doing or opposed to doing—by professing to care for the interests of labor, by presiding over the London County Council, by attending meetings of workingmen, by declaring for the shortening of the hours of labor, and so forth. He is to a great number of people, despite the fact that he is an earl, the representative of social radicalism. I say that Lord Rosebery professes to care for labor; whether he does so or not we shall see, for the time of his trial is come. He may have been merely playing a very astute game, perceiving, as he does, the inevitable drift of things; and, of course, one naturally supposes that a politician is playing a game; that, in fact, that is what he is there for. And when one recalls the fact that Lord Rosebery is a sporting man, a stock exchange speculator, and a jingo-imperialist (or, at any rate, that he has been these things), one necessarily feels dubious, and requires ample proof of sincerity before one places confidence in him. But if he can prove himself of sterling metal, if he can resist certain insidious influences that surround him, he has a great opportunity before him of leading the new social development and of being the first Premier of the thoroughly modern type.

But at first he will have a rough time. If he backs down from his professed Radical position, the very men who have put him up will be compelled to pull him down. And if he brings in, on the other hand, a strong social programme, the Liberal manufacturing capitalists in the North of England will be in revolt, and will transfer themselves and their money to the Tory side. The Irish Nationalists, apart from Michael Davitt, who has already approved the Rosebery nomination as against Harcourt, are suspicious, knowing as they do that Lord Rosebery is a very lukewarm friend to the Home Rule cause. The Parnellites will probably be in direct opposition, thus bringing the Liberal majority in the House of Commons down to twenty-two. Under these circumstances, I regard the Rosebery Cabinet as merely a dissolution cabinet, and a general election as near at hand.

One's thoughts revert to-day to two men who must be suffering the keenest disappointment. Ten years ago, had any one asked who were the probable successors of Mr. Gladstone in the Liberal leadership, ninety-nine out of a hundred persons would have pointed to Joseph Chamberlain and John Morley. The former has wrecked a great position by the most deliberately suicidal policy that any English public man ever followed. He and Mr. Gladstone might easily have been reconciled, and have agreed on a Home Rule scheme; in fact, they did so agree. But Mr. Chamberlain's bitter spite, overweening vanity, and self-seeking destroyed him. He is ruled out of the Liberal party, and he can never be a Tory leader; his day, so far as one can see, is over, unless he chooses to occupy the humiliating position of playing second fiddle to Mr. Balfour. Mr. Morley has made shipwreck, too, though from a very different cause. Honest above most men, and unwilling to assent, for the sake of office, to theories in which he did not believe, Mr. Morley became hardened and confirmed in that unhappy individualism which he derived from absorption in the superficial French literature and philosophy of the last century. And he was too much a man of the closet to correct his narrow theories by intimate contact with the world. He opposed the new labor movement, and he has been broken by it; for, in the words of Scripture, on whomsoever that stone falls, it grinds him to powder. Mr. Morley is sadly sensible of the fact, and has for a long time been in a state of pensive melancholy, which has been intensified by indifferent health. How needful is it to keep one's self free from egotism and revengeful feelings on the one hand, and to keep up with the general trend of human thought and feel-

ing on the other! Joseph Chamberlain has neglected the first, John Morley the second, course of conduct; and hence to-day both are forgotten when the question of the Liberal leadership is being settled.

London, England.

## The Bluebird

By Clarence Hawks

Fair herald of the coming spring,  
Who fearest not the northern snow,  
The friendly fields begin to show:  
O haste thy gayly painted wing!  
I long to hear thee caroling  
Upon the treetops, sweet and low;  
For when I hear thy song I know  
That soon the robin, too, will sing,  
And all the leafy woods will ring  
With springtime's well-remembered song;  
That flowers will wake from slumber long  
And raise their fragrant offering.  
Didst know what joy thy song would bring,  
Dear little harbinger of spring?

## My Study Fire

The Poet's Corner

On dark days, when the fire sings its merry song in the teeth of sullen winds, the poet's corner is a place of refuge. There the great singers stand, row upon row, a silent but immortal choir; and the serene face of Emerson hangs on the little space of wall beside them. In the glorious company are those who sang the first notes in the earliest dawn of history, and those whose voices are just rising above the turmoil of to-day. What a vast movement of life have they set to music, and how many generations have they stirred to heroism or charmed into forgetfulness! There have been great teachers, but none so persuasive as these; there have been great leaders, but none so inspiring as these. I have often envied the Athenian boy sans grammar, sans arithmetic, sans reading-books, sans science primer; with no text-book but his Homer, but with Homer stored in his memory and locked in his heart. To be educated on the myths—those rich, deep interpretations of life—and upon the heroic history of one's race; to have constantly before the imagination, not isolated incidents and unrelated facts, but noble figures and splendid achievements; to breathe the atmosphere of a religion interwoven with the story of one's race, and to approach all this at the feet of a great poet—were ever children more fortunate? And when it comes to results, was ever educational system so fruitful as that which in the little city of Athens, in the brief period of a century and a half, produced a group of men whose superiority as soldiers, statesmen, poets, orators, architects, sculptors, and philosophers seems somehow to have been secured without effort, so perfectly is the spirit of their achievements expressed in the forms which they took on? The superiority of that training lay in its recognition of the imagination, and in its appeal, not to the intellect alone, but to the whole nature. We have great need of science, and science has been a grave and wise teacher, but the heart of life and the meaning of it belong to poetry; for poetry, as Wordsworth says, is "the impassioned expression which is in the face of all science." Science gives us the face, but poetry gives us the countenance—which is the soul irradiating its mask and revealing itself.

Upon all those who "cannot hear the Plannet-like Musick of Poetrie" Sir Philip Sidney, a poet in deed as in word, called down the direful curse, "in the behalfe of all Poets," "that while you live, you live in love, and never get favour for lacking skill of a Sonnet; and when you die, your memory die from the earth for want of an Epitaph." The

range of that curse is more limited than appears at first sight, for while it is true that many of us have never listened to the children of the Muses, those of us are few who are not in some way poets. We call ourselves practical, and imagine, in our ignorance, that there is a certain superiority in thus separating ourselves from the idealists, the dreamers, the singers. But Nature is wiser than we, and suffers us to apply these belittling epithets to ourselves, but all the time keeps us in contact with the living streams of poetry. The instant our nobler instincts are appealed to, and we cease to be traffickers and become fathers, mothers, children, lovers, patriots, we become poets. To get away from poetry one must begin by emptying the universe of God; to rid life of poetry one must end by following the hint of the great pessimist and persuading men to commit universal suicide. While the days come to us with such radiance of dawn, and depart from us with such splendor of eve; while flowers bloom, and birds sing, and winds sport with clouds; while mountains hold their sublime silence against the horizon, and the sea sings its endless monotone; while hope, faith, and love teach their great lessons, and win us to work, sacrifice, purity, and devotion—we shall be poets in spite of ourselves and whether we know it or not. There is no choice about the matter; there is a divine compulsion in it; we must be poets because we are immortal.

But there is a great difference between being or doing something by compulsion, and being or doing something by choice. They only get the joy of poetry who love it and make fellowship with it. The richest poetry must always be that which lies in one's soul, in its deep and silent communion with nature and with life; but this unuttered and, in a true sense, unutterable poetry, becomes more definite and available as a resource if we make intimate friends with the masters of poetical expression. Shakespeare saw more of life than falls to the lot of all save his greatest readers; perhaps no one has yet brought to his pages the same degree of force and veracity of insight which are to be found in them. To read Shakespeare, therefore, is, for the greatest no less than for the least, a resource of the noblest kind; it is an interpretation of life through the imagination; a disclosure of what lies in its depths, to be revealed only when those depths are stirred by the tempests of passion, or by some searching experience. A recent writer says that Shakespeare is to mankind at large what a man of perfect vision would be in a world of half-blind persons—people who saw nothing clearly or accurately. Shakespeare does not describe an imaginary race and a visionary world; he describes men as they are, and the world as it is; the sense of unreality in his work, if one has it, comes from one's own limitations of sight. In other words, it is not the so-called practical mind which sees things as they are, but the mind of imaginative force and poetic insight. We move about in a world half realized, full of dim figures, vague outlines, hazy vistas; Shakespeare lived in a world which lay in clear light, and which he searched through and through with those marvelous glances of his. Who has read English history with such an eye as the greatest of English poets? Hume recites the facts about Henry V. in an orderly and careful manner, but Shakespeare looks into the soul of the robust and virile king, and makes us see, not the trappings and insignia of power, but the interior source of that authority which flung the English yeomen like a foaming wave over the walls of Harfleur. The diamond is none the less in the quartz because we fail to see it, and the heroic and tragic possibilities are not lacking in hosts of human lives which seem entirely commonplace to most of us. That which makes some ages so much more inspiring and productive than others is not so much a difference in the material at hand as in the skill and power with which the possibilities of that material are discerned and turned to account; men do not differ so much in the possession of opportunities as in the clearness of sight to discern them and the force to make the most of them. This world can never be commonplace save to the dull and unseeing; and life can never be devoid of tragic interest save to those who fail to recog-

nize the elements at work in every community and in every individual soul.

The men of poetic mind have many gifts, but none so rare and of such moment to their fellows as this clearness of vision. To really see clearly into the soul of things is one of the rarest of gifts, and it is the characteristic gift of the poetic imagination. That second harvest of which Emerson speaks is reaped only by the sickle of the imagination; to the common vision it does not even exist. This round world is distinctly visible to the dullest mind; but to such a mind the beauty, wonder, and mystery in which its secret lies hidden are as if they were not. Men walk through life almost without consciousness of the daily miracle performed under their eyes; they become so familiar with their surroundings that they lose the sense of awe and wonder which flows from the clear perception of the fathomless sea of force in which all things are borne onward. One may drop his plummet in the nearest pool, and, behold, it also is fathomless. Every path leads into the presence of that infinite power to which we give different names, but which is the one great and eternal reality behind these apparitions of to-day. Now, of this unseen but sublime presence the imagination keeps us continually conscious; and the great poetic minds, in prose and verse—in Plato's "Dialogues" and in Dante's "Divine Comedy"—fulfill their highest office in seeing and compelling us to see the spirit behind the form, the soul within the body. In the records which the imagination has kept in the art of the world are written the true story of the soul of man, the authentic history of his life on earth. And the charm of this revelation lies in its freshness, its variety, and its beauty. It does not preserve the past after the manner of the historians by pressing it like dried and faded flowers between the leaves of massive quartos; it preserves the very vitality which flowered centuries ago. The one supreme quality by which it lives is its marvelous life—that life which keeps Ulysses still sailing the ancient seas and Romeo still young and beautiful with the passion that, in spite of its own short life, is the evidence of immortality.

H. W. M.



## President Tucker's Lowell Lectures

By Julius H. Ward

Those who have watched the intellectual and religious development of Dr. W. J. Tucker since he has been an Andover professor have been deeply interested in his use of the opportunity of expressing his mature convictions on "The Influence of Religion To-Day," which was the subject of his Lowell Institute Lectures. It has been felt by many that he was specially qualified, by his keen intuition and comprehensive sense of the movements of social and religious thought, to give a course of lectures that would be of the first importance, and it is truth to say that the expectations of the public have not been disappointed. They have attracted large audiences and held them, and a large proportion of the most thoughtful and influential people in Boston and its suburbs have been his constant audience. His method as a lecturer is close to perfection. He is never hurried, never slow, does not raise his voice unduly, but pitches it so that he is readily heard, and his matter is so presented that one easily catches his thought and understands it. His style is simple and direct, making impression rather by weight of utterance than by brilliancy of rhetoric. The way in which he has held attention to closely reasoned and almost severe discussions of religious truth is something remarkable. He has the ability to interest a popular audience in religious discussion, and, while his lectures have not avoided sharp corners and burning issues, they have been so presented that nobody could be aggrieved by unwise statements, and no one could make up the lecturer's creed by what he said. This is reaching the acme of a very high style of religious discussion before a popular audience, and it is this note of distinction that President Tucker has reached