

LA CLOSERIE DE LILAS

out of an evening there, and, most of all, you had a fund of good humour thrust at you, and the conversation took on, not the quality of poetic prose spoken, as you had the quality of yourself and others, a kind of William James intimacy, which, as everyone knows, is style bringing the universe of ideas to your door in terms of your own sensations. There may have been a touch of all this at the once famed Brook Farm, but I fancy it was rather chill in its severity.

There is something of charm in the French idea of taking their discussions to the sunlight or the shadow under the stars, either within or outside the café, where you feel the passing of the world, and the poetry is of one piece with life itself, not the result of stuffy studios, and excessively ornate library corners, where books crowd out the quality of people and things. You felt that the café was the place for it, and if the acrobat came and sang, it was all of one fabric and it was as good for the poetry, as it was for the eye and the ear that absorbed it. Despite the different phases of the spectacle of Tuesday, at the Closerie de Lilas, you had the feeling of its splendour, its excellence, and, most of all, of its reality, its relationship to every other phase of life, and not of the hypersensitivity of the thing as we still consider it among ourselves in general; and if you heard the name of Paul Fort, or Francis Jammes, it was a definite issue in daily life, equal with the name of the great statesmen in importance,