

JOURNAL OF THE
FRANCE-AMERICA SOCIETY
AND
BULLETIN DE LA MAISON FRANÇAISE

With the issue of the present number of the BULLETIN, the France-America Society, Inc., assumes its publication under the title of JOURNAL OF THE FRANCE-AMERICA SOCIETY AND BULLETIN DE LA MAISON FRANÇAISE. The activities and proceedings of the Society will be recorded in its pages, which will also be devoted as heretofore to the promotion of the mutual intellectual interests of America and France. The Journal and Bulletin will continue to be issued from the headquarters of France-America Society, the Maison Française, 411 West 117th Street, New York City.

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A Spring Midnight's Talk

"Busts of Demosthenes, Emerson, Irving, Goethe, Franklin, Macaulay, Hawthorne, Scott, and Dante adorn the Portico on the western façade of the Library of Congress."

—*Guide-books for Washington, D. C.*

[On the first of May, 1917, in the evening after Marshal Joffre's and Premier Viviani's reception in the Capitol. Cloudless spring midnight; nothing, now, disturbs the stillness, except from time to time the banging of a belated street-car along the tracks, or the flapping of a night-bird's wings. It is the hour when, on rare occasions, some of the busts in the north angle of the Portico indulge in conversation. Demosthenes and Dante, being around the extreme corners, are left to themselves by force of circumstance; Sir Walter Scott, whose eyebrows arch rather uninterestedly, contemplates the landscape, and tries to find in it a likeness to his dear Edinburgh, without really joining the talk, except by occasional chuckles. From among the other busts, as the secrecy of night increased, come murmuring sounds, which gradually grow more distinct.]

IRVING (*clearing his throat*): Er . . . Hm . . .
(*No reply, blank silence*).

IRVING (*insisting*): It was rather noisy at noon, below here, wasn't it, Mr. Emerson?

EMERSON (*trying first to look unconcerned*): Well . . . yes, I suppose so. . .

IRVING (*ironically*): Too rapt in the Transcendental, eh! for noticing earthly hubbubs?

FRANKLIN (*bluntly, but goodnaturedly*): I don't wish to be impertinent, Mr. Emerson; but you can't pretend to have kept aloof from the excitement under the Big Dome opposite. What a tumult there was, down there! Enough to raise the dead! I did once express the wish, in order to observe the state of my beloved country, some hundred years later, to be immersed, at the