



C. S. F. (2)

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# POETIC LOCALITIES

OF

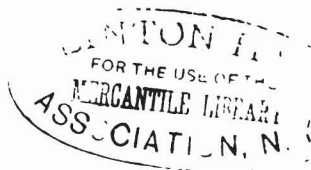
# CAMBRIDGE.

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Edited by

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## PREFACE.

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THE ravages of modern improvement bid fair to destroy within not many years the few things amongst us which our poets have made classical. In the hope that I may preserve them for another generation, I have photographed some of those which belong to Cambridge. This I have taken on myself to do, though no child of hers, but only a vagabond guest made free of her fields and memories, and not unknown in some of the houses which are her pride, that I may thereby pay my tribute of reverent admiration where the muse has given her highest favors.

Of my subjects, one, the Chestnut-Tree, is preserved, a maimed beggar for the grace of Cambridge city fathers, only on account of the poet's consecration. May the chrism be more potent, even, for the others, and Time do his gentlest with sacred roof and tree!

W. J. STILLMAN.

CAMBRIDGE, 1874.

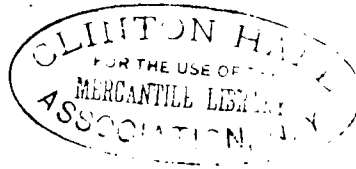
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FROM "THE GAMBREL-ROOFED HOUSE AND ITS OUTLOOK."

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

MY birthplace, the home of my childhood and earlier and later boyhood, has within a few months passed out of the ownership of my family into the hands of that venerable Alma Mater who seems to have renewed her youth, and has certainly repainted her dormitories. In truth, when I last revisited that familiar scene and looked upon the *flammaria moenia* of the old halls, "Massachusetts" with the dummy clock-dial, "Harvard" with the garrulous belfry, little "Holden" with the sculptured unpunishable cherubs over its portal, and the rest of my early brick-and-mortar acquaintances, I could not help saying to myself that I had lived to see the peaceable establishment of the Red Republic of Letters.

Many of the things I shall put down I have no doubt told before in a fragmentary way, how many I cannot be quite sure, as I do not very often read my own prose works. But when a man dies a great deal is said of him which has often been said in other forms, and now this dear old house is dead to me in one sense, and I want to gather up my recollections and wind a string of narrative round them, tying them up like a nosegay for the last tribute: the same blossoms in it I have often laid on its threshold while it was still living for me.

We Americans are all cuckoos, — we make our homes in the nests of other birds. I have read somewhere that the lineal descendants of the man who carted off the body of William Rufus, with Walter Tyrrel's arrow sticking in it, have driven a cart (not absolutely the same one, I suppose) in the New Forest, from that day to this. I don't quite understand Mr. Ruskin's saying (if he said it) that he could n't get along in a country where there were no castles, but I do think we lose a great deal in living where there are so few permanent homes. You will see how much I parted with which was not reckoned in the price paid for the old homestead.

I shall say many things which an uncharitable reader might find fault with as personal. I should not dare to call myself a poet if I did not; for if there is anything that gives one a title to that name, it is that his inner nature is naked and is

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not ashamed. But there are many such things I shall put in words, not because they are personal, but because they are human, and are born of just such experiences as those who hear or read what I say are like to have had in greater or less measure. I find myself so much like other people that I often wonder at the coincidence. It was only the other day that I sent out a copy of verses about my great-grandmother's picture, and I was surprised to find how many other people had portraits of their great-grandmothers or other progenitors, about which they felt as I did about mine, and for whom I had spoken, thinking I was speaking for myself only. And so I am not afraid to talk very freely with you, my precious reader or listener. You too, Beloved, were born somewhere and remember your birthplace or your early home; for you some house is haunted by recollections; to some roof you have bid farewell. Your hand is upon mine, then, as I guide my pen. Your heart frames the responses to the litany of my remembrance. For myself it is a tribute of affection I am rendering, and I should put it on record for my own satisfaction, were there none to read or to listen.

I hope you will not say that I have built a pillared portico of introduction to a humble structure of narrative. For when you look at the old gambrel-roofed house, you will see an unpretending mansion, such as very possibly you were born in yourself, or at any rate such a place of residence as your minister or some of your well-to-do country cousins find good enough, but not at all too grand for them. We have stately old Colonial palaces in our ancient village, now a city, and a thriving one, — square-fronted edifices that stand back from the vulgar highway, with folded arms, as it were; social fortresses of the time when the twilight lustre of the throne reached as far as our half-cleared settlement, with a glacis before them in the shape of a long broad gravel-walk, so that in King George's time they looked as formidably to any but the silk-stocking gentry as Gibraltar or Ehrenbreitstein to a visitor without the password. We forget all this in the kindly welcome they give us to-day; for some of them are still standing and doubly famous, as we all know. But the gambrel-roofed house, though stately enough for college dignitaries and scholarly clergymen, was not one of those old Tory, Episcopal-church-goer's strongholds. One of its doors opens directly upon the green, always called the Common; the other, facing the south, a few steps from it, over a paved foot-walk, on the other side of which is the miniature front yard, bordered with lilacs and syringas. The honest mansion makes no pretensions. Accessible, companionable, holding its hand out to all, comfortable, respectable, and even in its way dignified, but not imposing, not a house for his Majesty's Counsellor, or the Right Reverend successor of Him who had not where to lay his head, for something like a hundred and fifty years it has stood in its lot, and seen the generations of men come and go like the leaves of the forest. I passed some pleasant hours, a few years since, in the Registry of Deeds and the Town Records, looking up the history of the old house. How those dear friends of mine, the antiquarians, for whose grave councils I compose my



## THE GAMBREL-ROOFED HOUSE AND ITS OUTLOOK.

features on the two rare Thursdays when I am at liberty to meet them, in whose human herbarium the leaves and blossoms of past generations are so carefully spread out and pressed and laid away, would listen to an expansion of the following brief details into an Historical Memoir!

The estate was the third lot of the eighth "Squadron" (whatever that might be), and in the year 1707 was allotted in the distribution of undivided lands to "Mr. ffox," the Reverend Jabez Fox, of Woburn, it may be supposed, as it passed from his heirs to the first Jonathan Hastings; from him to his son, the long-remembered College Steward; from him in the year 1792 to the Reverend Eliphalet Pearson, Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages in Harvard College, whose large personality swam into my ken when I was looking forward to my teens; from him to the progenitors of my unborn self.

I wonder if there are any such beings nowadays as the great Eliphalet, with his large features and conversational *basso profundo*, seemed to me. His very name had something elephantine about it, and it seemed to me that the house shook from cellar to garret at his footfall. Some have pretended that he had Olympian aspirations, and wanted to sit in the seat of Jove and bear the academic thunderbolt and the agis inscribed *Christo et Ecclesie*. It is a common weakness enough to wish to find one's self in an empty saddle; Cotton Mather was miserable all his days, I am afraid, after that entry in his Diary: "This Day Dr. Sewall was chosen President, for his Piety."

There is no doubt that the men of the older generation look bigger and more formidable to the boys whose eyes are turned up at their venerable countenances than the race which succeeds them, to the same boys grown older. Everything is twice as large, measured on a three-year-old's three-foot scale as on a thirty-year-old's six-foot scale; but age magnifies and aggravates persons out of due proportion. Old people are a kind of monsters to little folks; mild manifestations of the terrible, it may be, but still, with their white locks and ridged and grooved features, which those horrid little eyes exhaust of their details, like so many microscopes, not exactly what human beings ought to be. The middle-aged and young men have left comparatively faint impressions in my memory, but how grandly the procession of the old clergymen who filled our pulpit from time to time, and passed the day under our roof, marches before my closed eyes! At their head the most venerable David Osgood, the majestic minister of Medford, with massive front and shaggy overshadowing eyebrows; following in the train, mild-eyed John Foster of Brighton, with the lambent aurora of a smile about his pleasant mouth, which not even the "Sabbath" could subdue to the true Levitical aspect; and bulky Charles Stearns of Lincoln, author of "The Ladies' Philosophy of Love. A Poem. 1797." (how I stared at him! he was the first living person ever pointed out to me as a poet); and Thaddeus Mason Harris of Dorchester, (the same who, a poor youth, trudging along, staff in hand, being then in a stress of sore need,

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found all at once that somewhat was adhering to the end of his stick, which somewhat proved to be a gold ring of price, bearing the words, "God speed thee, Friend!") already in decadence as I remember him, with head slanting forward and downward as if looking for a place to rest in after his learned labors; and that other Thaddeus, the old man of West Cambridge, who outwatched the rest so long after they had gone to sleep in their own churchyards, that it almost seemed as if he meant to sit up until the morning of the resurrection; and bringing up the rear, attenuated but vivacious little Jonathan Homer of Newton, who was, to look upon, a kind of expurgated, reduced and Americanized copy of Voltaire, but very unlike him in wickedness or wit. The good-humored junior member of our family always loved to make him happy by setting him chirruping about Miles Coverdale's Version, and the Bishop's Bible, and how he wrote to his friend Sir Isaac (Coffin) about something or other, and how Sir Isaac wrote back that he was very much pleased with the contents of his letter, and so on about Sir Isaac, *ad libitum*, — for the admiral was his old friend, and he was proud of him. The kindly little old gentleman was a collector of Bibles, and made himself believe he thought he should publish a learned Commentary some day or other; but his friends looked for it only in the Greek Calends, — say on the 31st of April, when that should come round, if you would modernize the phrase. I recall also one or two exceptional and infrequent visitors with perfect distinctness: cheerful Elijah Kellogg, a lively missionary from the region of the Quoddy Indians, with much hopeful talk about Sock Bason and his tribe; also poor old Poorhouse-Parson Isaac Smith, his head going like a China mandarin, as he discussed the possibilities of the escape of that distinguished captive whom he spoke of under the name, if I can reproduce phonetically its vibrating nasalities, of "General Mmbongaparty," — a name suggestive to my young imagination of a dangerous, loose-jointed skeleton, threatening us all like the armed figure of Death in my little New England Primer. . . .

To come back to the old house and its former tenant, the Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages. Fifteen years he lived with his family under its roof. I never found the slightest trace of him until a few years ago, when I cleaned and brightened with pious hands the brass lock of "the study," which had for many years been covered with a thick coat of paint. On that I found scratched, as with a nail or fork, the following inscription:—

*E P E*

Only that and nothing more, but the story told itself. Master Edward Pearson, then about as high as the lock, was disposed to immortalize himself in monumental brass, and had got so far towards it, when a sudden interruption, probably a smart box on the ear, cheated him of his fame, except so far as this poor record may rescue it. Dead long ago. I remember him well, a grown man, as a visitor at a later period; and, for some reason, I recall him in the attitude of the Colossus of

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Rhodes, standing full before a generous wood-fire, not facing it, but quite the contrary, a perfect picture of the content afforded by a blazing hearth contemplated from that point of view, and, as the heat stole through his person and kindled his emphatic features, seeming to me a pattern of manly beauty. What a statue gallery of posturing friends we all have in our memory! The old Professor himself sometimes visited the house after it had changed hands. Of course, my recollections are not to be wholly trusted, but I always think I see his likeness in a profile face to be found among the illustrations of Rees's Cyclopædia. (See Plates, Vol. IV., Plate 2, Painting, Diversities of the Human Face, Fig. 4.)

And now let us return to our chief picture. In the days of my earliest remembrance, a row of tall Lombardy poplars mounted guard on the western side of the old mansion. Whether, like the cypress, these trees suggest the idea of the funeral torch or the monumental spire, whether their tremulous leaves make us afraid by sympathy with their nervous thrills, whether the faint balsamic smell of their leaves and their closely swathed limbs have in them vague hints of dead Pharaohs stiffened in their cerements, I will not guess; but they always seemed to me to give an air of sepulchral sadness to the house before which they stood sentries. Not so with the row of elms which you may see leading up towards the western entrance. I think the patriarch of them all went over in the great gale of 1815; I know I used to shake the youngest of them with my hands, stout as it is now, with a trunk that would defy the bully of Crotona, or the strong man whose *liaison* with the Lady Delilah proved so disastrous.

The College plain would be nothing without its elms. As the long hair of a woman is a glory to her, so are these green tresses that bank themselves against the sky in thick clustered masses the ornament and the pride of the classic green. You know the "Washington elm," or if you do not, you had better rekindle your patriotism by reading the inscription, which tells you that under its shadow the great leader first drew his sword at the head of an American army. In a line with that you may see two others: the *coral fan*, as I always called it from its resemblance in form to that beautiful marine growth, and a third a little farther along. I have heard it said that all three were planted at the same time, and that the difference of their growth is due to the slope of the ground, — the Washington elm being lower than either of the others. There is a row of elms just in front of the old house on the south. When I was a child the one at the southwest corner was struck by lightning, and one of its limbs and a long ribbon of bark torn away. The tree never fully recovered its symmetry and vigor, and forty years and more afterwards a second thunderbolt crashed upon it and set its heart on fire, like those of the lost souls in the Hall of Eblis. Heaven had twice blasted it, and the axe finished what the lightning had begun. . . .

Beyond the garden was "the field," a vast domain of four acres or thereabout,

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by the measurement of after years, bordered to the north by a fathomless chasm,—the ditch the base-ball players of the present era jump over; on the east by unexplored territory; on the south by a barren enclosure, where the red sorrel proclaimed liberty and equality under its *drapeau rouge*, and succeeded in establishing a vegetable commune where all were alike, poor, mean, sour, and uninteresting; and on the west by the Common, not then disgraced by jealous enclosures, which make it look like a cattle-market. Beyond, as I looked round, were the Colleges, the meeting-house, the little square market-house, long vanished; the burial-ground where the dead Presidents stretched their weary bones under epitaphs stretched out at as full length as their subjects; the pretty church where the gouty Tories used to kneel on their has-socks; the district school-house, and hard by it Ma'am Hancock's cottage, never so called in those days, but rather "tenfooter"; then houses scattered near and far, open spaces, the shadowy elms, round hilltops in the distance, and over all the great bowl of the sky. Mind you, this was the WORLD, as I first knew it; *terra veteribus cognita*, as Mr. Arrowsmith would have called it, if he had mapped the universe of my infancy.

But I am forgetting the old house again in the landscape. The worst of a modern stylish mansion is, that it has no place for ghosts. I watched one building not long since. It had no proper garret, to begin with, only a sealed interval between the roof and attics, where a spirit could not be accommodated, unless it were flattened out like Ravel, Brother, after the millstone had fallen on him. There was not a nook or a corner in the whole house fit to lodge any respectable ghost, for every part was as open to observation as a literary man's character and condition, his figure and estate, his coat and his countenance, are to his (or her) Bohemian Majesty on a tour of inspection through his (or her) subjects' keyholes.

Now the old house had wainscots, behind which the mice were always scampering and squeaking and rattling down the plaster, and enacting family scenes and parlor theatricals. It had a cellar where the cold slug clung to the walls, and the misanthropic spider withdrew from the garish day; where the green mould loved to grow, and the long white potato-shoots went feeling along the floor, if haply they might find the daylight; it had great brick pillars, always in a cold sweat with holding up the burden they had been aching under day and night for a century and more; it had sepulchral arches closed by rough doors that hung on hinges rotten with rust, behind which doors, if there was not a heap of bones connected with a mysterious disappearance of long ago, there well might have been, for it was just the place to look for them. It had a garret, very nearly such a one as it seems to me one of us has described in one of his books; but let us look at this one as I can reproduce it from memory. It has a flooring of laths with ridges of mortar squeezed

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up between them, which if you tread on you will go to—the Lord have mercy on you! where *will* you go to?—the same being crossed by narrow bridges of boards, on which you may put your feet, but with fear and trembling. Above you and around you are beams and joists, on some of which you may see, when the light is let in, the marks of the conchoidal clippings of the broadaxe, showing the rude way in which the timber was shaped as it came, full of sap, from the neighboring forest. It is a realm of darkness and thick dust, and shroud-like cobwebs and dead things they wrap in their gray folds. For a garret is like a sea-shore, where wrecks are thrown up and slowly go to pieces. There is the cradle which the old man you just remember was rocked in; there is the ruin of the bedstead he died on; that ugly slanting contrivance used to be put under his pillow in the days when his breath came hard; there is his old chair with both arms gone, symbol of the desolate time when he had nothing earthly left to lean on; there is the large wooden reel which the bleary-eyed old deacon sent the minister's lady, who thanked him graciously, and twirled it smilingly, and in fitting season bowed it out decently to the limbo of troublesome conveniences. And there are old leather portmanteaus, like stranded porpoises, their mouths gaping in gaunt hunger for the food with which they used to be gorged to bulging repletion; and old brass andirons, waiting until time shall revenge them on their paltry substitutes, and they shall have their own again, and bring with them the fore-stick and the back-log of ancient days; and the empty churn, with its idle dasher, which the Nancys and Phœbes, who have left their comfortable places to the Bridgets and Norahs, used to handle to good purpose; and the brown, shaky old spinning-wheel, which was running, it may be, in the days when they were hanging the Salem witches.

Under the dark and haunted garret were attic chambers which themselves had histories. On a pane in the northeastern chamber may be read these names: "John Tracy," "Robert Roberts," "Thomas Prince"; "*Stultus*" another hand had added. When I found these names a few years ago (wrong side up, for the window had been reversed), I looked at once in the Triennial to find them, for the epithet showed that they were probably students. I found them all under the years 1771 and 1773. Does it please their thin ghosts thus to be dragged to the light of day? Has "*Stultus*" forgiven the indignity of being thus characterized?

The southeast chamber was the Library Hospital. Every scholar should have a book infirmary attached to his library. There should find a peaceable refuge the many books, invalids from their birth, which are sent "with the best regards of the Author"; the respected, but unpresentable cripples which have lost a cover; the odd volumes of honored sets which go mourning all their days for their lost brother; the school-books which have been so often the subjects of assault and battery, that they look as if the police court must know them by heart; these and

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still more the pictured story-books, beginning with Mother Goose (which a dear old friend of mine has just been amusing his philosophic leisure with turning most ingeniously and happily into the tongues of Virgil and Homer), will be precious mementos by and by, when children and grandchildren come along. What would I not give for that dear little paper-bound quarto, in large and most legible type, on certain pages of which the tender hand that was the shield of my infancy had crossed out with deep black marks something awful, probably about BEARS, such as once tare two-and-forty of us little folks for making faces, and the very name of which made us hide our heads under the bedclothes. . . .

The rooms of the second story, the chambers of birth and death, are sacred to silent memories.

Let us go down to the ground-floor. I should have begun with this, but that the historical reminiscences of the old house have been recently told in a most interesting memoir by a distinguished student of our local history. I retain my doubts about those "dents" on the floor of the right-hand room, "the study" of successive occupants, said to have been made by the butts of the Continental militia's firelocks, but this was the cause the story told me in childhood laid them to. That military consultations were held in that room when the house was General Ward's headquarters, that the Provincial generals and colonels and other men of war there planned the movement which ended in the fortifying of Bunker's Hill, that Warren slept in the house the night before the battle, that President Langdon went forth from the western door and prayed for God's blessing on the men just setting forth on their bloody expedition, — all these things have been told, and perhaps none of them need be doubted.

But now for fifty years and more that room has been a meeting-ground for the platoons and companies which range themselves at the scholar's word of command. Pleasant it is to think that the retreating host of books is to give place to a still larger army of volumes, which have seen service under the eye of a great commander. For here the noble collection of him so freshly remembered as our silver-tongued orator, our erudite scholar, our honored College President, our accomplished statesman, our courtly ambassador, are to be reverently gathered by the heir of his name, himself not unworthy to be surrounded by that august assembly of the wise of all ages and of various lands and languages.

Could such a many-chambered edifice have stood a century and a half and not have had its passages of romance to bequeath their lingering legends to the after-time? There are other names on some of the small window-panes, which must have had young flesh-and-blood owners, and there is one of early date which elderly persons have whispered was borne by a fair woman, whose graces made the house beautiful in the eyes of the youth of that time. One especially — you will find the name of Fortescue Vernon, of the class of 1780, in the Triennial Catalogue — was a favored visitor to the old mansion; but he went over seas, I think they told

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me, and died still young, and the name of the maiden which is scratched on the window-pane was never changed. I am telling the story honestly, as I remember it, but I may have colored it unconsciously, and the legendary pane may be broken before this for aught I know. At least, I have named no names except the beautiful one of the supposed hero of the romantic story.

It was a great happiness to have been born in an old house haunted by such recollections, with harmless ghosts walking its corridors, with fields of waving grass and trees and singing birds, and that vast territory of four or five acres around it to give a child the sense that he was born to a noble principality. It has been a great pleasure to retain a certain hold upon it for so many years; and since in the natural course of things it must at length pass into other hands, it is a gratification to see the old place making itself tidy for a new tenant, like some venerable dame who is getting ready to entertain a neighbor of condition. Not long since a new cap of shingles adorned this ancient mother among the village — now city — mansions. She has dressed herself in brighter colors than she has hitherto worn, so they tell me, within the last few days. She has modernized her aspects in several ways; she has rubbed bright the glasses through which she looks at the Common and the Colleges; and as the sunsets shine upon her through the flickering leaves or the wiry spray of the elms I remember from my childhood, they will glorify her into the aspect she wore when President Holyoke, father of our long since dead centenarian, looked upon her in her youthful comeliness.

The quiet corner formed by this and the neighboring residences has changed less than any place I can remember. Our kindly, polite, shrewd, and humorous old neighbor, who in former days has served the town as constable and auctioneer, and who bids fair to become the oldest inhabitant of the city, was there when I was born, and is living there to-day. By and by the stony foot of the great University will plant itself on this whole territory, and the private recollections which clung so tenaciously and fondly to the place and its habitations will have died with those who cherished them.

Shall they ever live again in the memory of those who loved them here below? What is this life without the poor accidents which made it our own, and by which we identify ourselves? Ah me! I might like to be a winged chorister, but still it seems to me I should hardly be quite happy if I could not recall at will the Old House with the Long Entry, and the White Chamber (where I wrote the first verses that made me known, with a pencil, *stans pede in uno*, pretty nearly), and the Little Parlor, and the Study, and the old books in uniforms as varied as those of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company used to be, if my memory serves me right, and the front yard with the stars of Bethlehem growing, flowerless, among the grass, and the dear faces to be seen no more there or anywhere on this earthly place of farewells.





FROM "TO A CHILD."

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

ONCE, ah, once, within these walls,  
One whom memory oft recalls,  
The Father of his Country, dwelt.  
And yonder meadows broad and damp  
The fires of the besieging camp  
Encircled with a burning belt.  
Up and down these echoing stairs,  
Heavy with the weight of cares,  
Sounded his majestic tread ;  
Yes, within this very room  
Sat he in those hours of gloom,  
Weary both in heart and head.



THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

**U**NDER a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands ;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands ;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,  
His face is like the tan ;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face,  
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,  
You can hear his bellows blow ;  
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,  
With measured beat and slow,  
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,  
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school  
Look in at the open door ;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

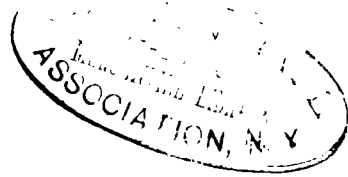
He goes on Sunday to the church,  
And sits among his boys ;  
He hears the parson pray and preach,  
He hears his daughter's voice,  
Singing in the village choir,  
And it makes his heart rejoice.

POETIC LOCALITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,  
Singing in Paradise !  
He needs must think of her once more,  
How in the grave she lies ;  
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes  
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes ;  
Each morning sees some task begin,  
Each evening sees it close ;  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,  
For the lesson thou hast taught !  
Thus at the flaming forge of life  
Our fortunes must be wrought ;  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
Each burning deed and thought !





FROM "AN INDIAN-SUMMER REVERIE."

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

I.

DEAR marshes! vain to him the gift of sight  
Who cannot in their various incomes share,  
From every season drawn, of shade and light,  
Who sees in them but levels brown and bare;  
Each change of storm or sunshine scatters free  
On them its largess of variety,  
For Nature with cheap means still works her wonders rare.

In Spring they lie one broad expanse of green,  
O'er which the light winds run with glimmering feet:  
Here, yellower stripes track out the creek unseen,  
There, darker growths o'er hidden ditches meet;  
And purpler stains show where the blossoms crowd,  
As if the silent shadow of a cloud  
Hung there becalmed, with the next breath to fleet.



FROM "AN INDIAN-SUMMER REVERIE."

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

II.

THERE gleams my native village, dear to me,  
Though higher change's waves each day are seen,  
Whelming fields famed in boyhood's history,  
Sanding with houses the diminished green ;  
There, in red brick, which softening time defies,  
Stand square and stiff the Muses' factories ;—  
How with my life knit up is every well-known scene !





ASSOCIAT  
MAY 1911

## THE OAK.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

WHAT gnarled stretch, what depth of shade, is his !  
There needs no crown to mark the forest's king ;  
How in his leaves outshines full summer's bliss !  
Sun, storm, rain, dew, to him their tribute bring,  
Which he with such benignant royalty  
Accepts, as overpayeth what is lent ;  
All nature seems his vassal proud to be,  
And cunning only for his ornament.

How towers he, too, amid the billowed snows,  
An unquelled exile from the summer's throne,  
Whose plain, unincinctured front more kingly shows,  
Now that the obscuring courtier leaves are flown.  
His boughs make music of the winter air,  
Jewelled with sleet, like some cathedral front  
Where clinging snow-flakes with quaint art repair  
The dints and furrows of time's envious brunt.

How doth his patient strength the rude March wind  
Persuade to seem glad breaths of summer breeze,  
And win the soil that fain would be unkind,  
To swell his revenues with proud increase !  
He is the gem ; and all the landscape wide  
(So doth his grandeur isolate the sense)  
Seems but the setting, worthless all beside,  
An empty socket, were he fallen thence.

So, from oft converse with life's wintry gales,  
Should man learn how to clasp with tougher roots  
The inspiring earth ; — how otherwise avails  
The leaf-creating sap that sunward shoots ?

POETIC LOCALITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

So every year that falls with noiseless flake  
Should fill old scars up on the stormward side,  
And make hoar age revered for age's sake,  
Not for traditions of youth's leafy pride.

So, from the pinched soil of a churlish fate,  
True hearts compel the sap of sturdier growth,  
So between earth and heaven stand simply great,  
That these shall seem but their attendants both ;  
For nature's forces with obedient zeal  
Wait on the rooted faith and oaken will ;  
As quickly the pretender's cheat they feel,  
And turn mad Pucks to flout and mock him still.

Lord ! all thy works are lessons, — each contains  
Some emblem of man's all-containing soul ;  
Shall he make fruitless all thy glorious pains,  
Delving within thy grace an eyeless mole ?  
Make me the least of thy Dodona-grove,  
Cause me some message of thy truth to bring,  
Speak but a word through me, nor let thy love  
Among my boughs disdain to perch and sing.



CLIFFTON JAIL  
FOR THE USE OF THE  
MERCANTILE LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION, N. Y.

TO THE RIVER CHARLES.

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

RIVER! that in silence windest  
Through the meadows, bright and free,  
Till at length thy rest thou findest  
In the bosom of the sea!

Four long years of mingled feeling,  
Half in rest, and half in strife,  
I have seen thy waters stealing  
Onward, like the stream of life.

Thou hast taught me, Silent River!  
Many a lesson, deep and long;  
Thou hast been a generous giver;  
I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illness,  
I have watched thy current glide,  
Till the beauty of its stillness  
Overflowed me, like a tide.

And in better hours and brighter,  
When I saw thy waters gleam,  
I have felt my heart beat lighter,  
And leap onward with thy stream.

Not for this alone I love thee,  
Nor because thy waves of blue  
From celestial seas above thee  
Take their own celestial hue.

Where yon shadowy woodlands hide thee,  
And thy waters disappear,  
Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,  
And have made thy margin dear.

POETIC LOCALITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

More than this ;— thy name reminds me  
Of three friends, all true and tried ;  
And that name, like magic, binds me  
Closer, closer to thy side.

Friends my soul with joy remembers !  
How like quivering flames they start,  
When I fan the living embers  
On the hearth-stone of my heart !

'Tis for this, thou Silent River !  
That my spirit leans to thee :  
Thou hast been a generous giver,  
Take this idle song from me.



## BEAVER BROOK.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

HUSHED with broad sunlight lies the hill,  
And, minuting the long day's loss,  
The cedar's shadow, slow and still,  
Creeps o'er its dial of gray moss.

Warm noon brims full the valley's cup,  
The aspen's leaves are scarce astir;  
Only the little mill sends up  
Its busy, never-ceasing burr.

Climbing the loose-piled wall that hems  
The road along the mill-pond's brink,  
From 'neath the arching barberry-stems,  
My footstep scares the shy chewink.

Beneath a bony buttonwood  
The mill's red door lets forth the din;  
The whitened miller, dust-imbued,  
Flits past the square of dark within.

No mountain torrent's strength is here;  
Sweet Beaver, child of forest still,  
Heaps its small pitcher to the ear,  
And gently waits the miller's will.

Swift slips Undine along the race  
Unheard, and then, with flashing bound,  
Floods the dull wheel with light and grace,  
And, laughing, hunts the loath drudge round.

The miller dreams not at what cost  
The quivering millstones hum and whirl,  
Nor how for every turn are tost  
Armfuls of diamond and of pearl.



POETIC LOCALITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

But Summer cleared my happier eyes  
With drops of some celestial juice,  
To see how Beauty underlies  
Forevermore each form of Use.

And more : methought I saw that flood,  
Which now so dull and darkling steals,  
Thick, here and there, with human blood,  
To turn the world's laborious wheels.

No more than doth the miller there,  
Shut in our several cells, do we  
Know with what waste of beauty rare  
Moves every day's machinery.

Surely the wiser time shall come  
When this fine overplus of might,  
No longer sullen, slow, and dumb,  
Shall leap to music and to light.

In that new childhood of the Earth  
Life of itself shall dance and play,  
Fresh blood in Time's shrunk veins make mirth,  
And labor meet delight half-way.



FOR THE U.S.  
MERCANTILE LEAGUE  
ASSOCIATION, N

FROM "UNDER THE WILLOWS."

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

**A**MONG them one, an ancient willow, spreads  
Eight balanced limbs, springing at once all round  
His deep-ridged trunk with upward slant diverse,  
In outline like enormous beaker, fit  
For hand of Jotun, where 'mid snow and mist  
He holds unwieldy revel. This tree, spared,  
I know not by what grace, — for in the blood  
Of our New World subduers lingers yet  
Hereditary feud with trees, they being  
(They and the red-man most) our fathers' foes, —  
Is one of six, a willow Pleiades,  
The seventh fallen, that lean along the brink  
Where the steep upland dips into the marsh,  
Their roots, like molten metal cooled in flowing,  
Stiffened in coils and runnels down the bank.  
The friend of all the winds, wide-armed he towers  
And glints his steely aglets in the sun,  
Or whitens fitfully with sudden bloom  
Of leaves breeze-lifted, much as when a shoal  
Of devious minnows wheel from where a pike  
Lurks balanced 'neath the lily-pads, and whirl  
A rood of silver bellies to the day.



FROM "CAMBRIDGE CHURCHYARD."

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

OUR ancient church ! its lowly tower,  
Beneath the loftier spire,  
Is shadowed when the sunset hour  
Clothes the tall shaft in fire ;  
It sinks beyond the distant eye,  
Long ere the glittering vane,  
High wheeling in the western sky,  
Has faded o'er the plain.

Like Sentinel and Nun, they keep  
Their vigil on the green ;  
One seems to guard, and one to weep,  
The dead that lie between ;  
And both roll out, so full and near,  
Their music's mingling waves,  
They shake the grass, whose pennoned spear  
Leans on the narrow graves.



EDWIN H. HARRIS  
FOR THE USE OF THE  
CATHERINE LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION, N. Y.

FROM "AL FRESCO."

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE dandelions and buttercups  
Gild all the lawn ; the drowsy bee  
Stumbles among the clover-tops,  
And summer sweetens all but me :  
Away, unfruitful lore of books,  
For whose vain idiom we reject  
The soul's more native dialect,  
Aliens among the birds and brooks,  
Dull to interpret or conceive  
What gospels lost the woods retrieve !  
Away, ye critics, city-bred,  
Who set man-traps of thus and so,  
And in the first man's footsteps tread,  
Like those who toil through drifted snow !  
Away, my poets, whose sweet spell  
Can make a garden of a cell !  
I need ye not, for I to-day  
Will make one long sweet verse of play.

Snap, chord of manhood's tenser strain !  
To-day I will be a boy again ;  
The mind's pursuing element,  
Like a bow slackened and unbent,  
In some dark corner shall be leant.  
The robin sings, as of old, from the limb !  
The catbird croons in the lilac-bush !  
Through the dim arbor, himself more dim,  
Silently hops the hermit-thrush,  
The withered leaves keep dumb for him ;  
The irreverent buccaneering bee  
Hath stormed and rifled the nunnery  
Of the lily, and scattered the sacred floor

POETIC LOCALITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

With haste-dropt gold from shrine to door ;  
There, as of yore,  
The rich, milk-tingeing buttercup  
Its tiny polished urn holds up,  
Filled with ripe summer to the edge,  
The sun in his own wine to pledge ;  
And our tall elm, this hundredth year  
Doge of our leafy Venice here,  
Who, with an annual ring, doth wed  
The blue Adriatic overhead,  
Shadows with his palatial mass  
The deep canals of flowing grass.

O unestranged birds and bees !  
O face of nature always true !  
O never-unsympathizing trees !  
O never-rejecting roof of blue,  
Whose rash disherison never falls  
On us unthinking prodigals,  
Yet who convictest all our ill,  
So grand and unappeasable !  
Methinks my heart from each of these  
Plucks part of childhood back again,  
Long there imprisoned, as the breeze  
Doth every hidden odor seize  
Of wood and water, hill and plain.  
Once more am I admitted peer  
In the upper house of Nature here,  
And feel through all my pulses run  
The royal blood of breeze and sun.

Upon these elm-arched solitudes  
No hum of neighbor toil intrudes ;  
The only hammer that I hear  
Is welded by the woodpecker,  
The single noisy calling his  
In all our leaf-hid Sybaris ;  
The good old time, close-hidden here,  
Persists, a loyal cavalier,  
While Roundheads prim, with point of fox,  
Probe wainscot-chink and empty box ;  
Here no hoarse-voiced iconoclast  
Insults thy statues, royal Past ;  
Myself too prone the axe to wield,  
I touch the silver side of the shield  
With lance reversed, and challenge peace,  
A willing convert of the trees.





ASSOCIATION, N. Y.

## UNDER THE WASHINGTON ELM.

APRIL 27, 1861.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

**E**IGHTY years have passed, and more,  
Since under the brave old tree  
Our fathers gathered in arms, and swore  
They would follow the sign their banners bore,  
And fight till the land was free.

Half of their work was done,  
Half is left to do, —  
Cambridge, and Concord, and Lexington!  
When the battle is fought and won,  
What shall be told of you?

Hark! — 'tis the south-wind moans, —  
Who are the martyrs down?  
Ah, the marrow was true in your children's bones  
That sprinkled with blood the cursed stones  
Of the murder-haunted town!

What if the storm-clouds blow?  
What if the green leaves fall?  
Better the crashing tempest's throes  
Than the army of worms that gnawed below;  
Trample them one and all!

Then, when the battle is won,  
And the land from traitors free,  
Our children shall tell of the strife begun  
When Liberty's second April sun  
Was bright on our brave old tree!