

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

A Contemporary Poet Whose Works Will Survive Our Time.

His Epigrammatic Wit—Philosophy in the Garb of Dialect—A Born Reformer—One Whose Heart is Right.

The poetry of our language has been enriched not a little by the productions of that versatile bard James Russell Lowell, who now spends the declining years of his life at his lovely home, "Elmwood," at Cambridge, Mass. Perhaps his "Bigelow Papers" have done most to popularize him, in America, but meritorious as they are, he has left numerous other works which will ensure his memory to posterity when, the special "Bigelow Papers" were directed being but a reminiscence, they will come to exercise the force they do on the minds of the present generation, many of whom were on the scene when the curse of legalized chattel slavery was wiped out of America. His is not the poetry that dies with the poet.

He was born at Cambridge, Mass., on February 22nd, 1819, studied law and was in his twenty-fifth year admitted to the bar. The work was ungenial, although there are not lacking in his works evidences that he derived benefit from the course of study, and he soon abandoned it and turned his attention to literature. In 1841—when he was 22 years of age—his first published work, "A Year's Life," was given to the public. In the following year "A Legend of Brittany," and other poems, appeared and did not fail to attract attention and evoke criticism. Since that time his name has been more or less prominently before the world of letters. He engaged with Robert Carter in publishing a magazine called "The Pioneer," but not even the pens of Poe and the gifted elder Hawthorne could aid him to success. In 1845 the first of the series of "Bigelow Papers" appeared and were well received. Everything he wrote as to about that period breathed the spirit of the abolitionist. Into that movement he put his whole heart and influence, often to his own great personal discomfort and disadvantage. He cared not how great the odds against him, always exemplifying his belief that

"They are slaves who dare not be in the right with two or three."

From 1857 to 1862 he edited the "Atlantic Monthly," and from 1863 to 1872, in company with Charles Norton, he edited the "North American Review." His country honored him by appointing him Minister to Spain and, subsequently, to England, in both of which countries he gained an enviable popularity. It can scarcely be said that he was a brilliant diplomatist—indeed occasion never tried his powers—but he never failed to gather friends, and among all who have held the position in either of these countries, none leave behind such a fragrant memory. That he was no parish politician is breathed in his "Fatherland":

"Where is the true man's fatherland? Is it where he by chance is born? Doth not the yearning spirit yearn in such a case to be upland? O ye! His fatherland must be As the blue heaven wide and free."

Wherever a human heart doth wear Joy's inryle wreath or sorrow's eyes, Where'er a human soul doth yearn After a life more true and fair, There is the true man's birthplace ground, His is a world-wide fatherland.

It would be quite impossible, in a brief sketch, to give anything like representative extracts from his very voluminous works, but a few gems will not fail to show something of his versatility and wide range of mental vision. From his "Present Crisis," a poem of the abolition times, I quote:

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide, In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side; Some great cause (god's new Messiah, offering itself to bless or curse the world) doth present, on which all choice is given, for ever 'twixt that darkness and the light."

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched earnest; We her cause bring fame and profit and 'tis proper to be just; Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside, Doubting in his subject spirit, till his Lord is crowned; And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

For Humanity sweeps onward; where to-day the Martyr stands, On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hand; Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling flagots burn; While the hooding mob of yesterday is silent awe return;

To be a hero, the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

Perhaps there may be grander thoughts put into nobler verse and expressing more forcibly a great truth, but I have not met with the particular example. Woman's hardness to the unfortunate of her own sex seems to have forcibly impressed Lowell, and in his "Legend of Brittany," a beautiful story, after leaving the betrayed girl freezing at the door he administers this stinging rebuke to the "Levites" of the sex:

Thou wilt not let her wash thy dainty feet With such salt phrases as tears, or with rude scorn; Dry them soft Pharisae, that sit at meat With him who made her such, and speak at him (say); Leaving God's wanderer, lamb the while to bleed Unheeded shivering in the pitiless air; Thou hast made prisoned virtue show more woe And bawdied than a vice to look upon.

What Scott has ever read his "An Incident in a Railroad Car" without a swelling of the heart? Where was ever more modest or feeling tribute to Scotland's immortal bard than in those quiet verses:

He spoke of Burns: Men rude and rough Pressed round to hear the praise of one Whose heart was made of manly, simple stuff, As homespun as their own.

And when he read they forward leaped, Drunken with thirsty hearts and ears His hoarse-like songs whom story never weaned From humble homes and tears.

Slowly there grew a tender awe, Such-like o'er faces brown and hard, As if in him who read they felt and saw Some presence of the bard.

If there is any Scot, any lover of Burns, or any one who appreciates the charm of poetry of feeling, who has not read the poem I quote from he has no sympathy. Lowell gives Burns a high rank and warm reception in his heart. His

"At the Burns Centennial" is also a noble tribute to the great poet; and a proper rebuke to those whose superior righteousness nerves them to sit in judgment upon him is contained in the verse:

They make religion be abhorred Who round with darkness gulf her, Who think no word can please the Lord Unless it small or suppur. Dear Post—heart that could like guess The Father's loving kindness, Come now to rest! 'Tis thus that His best, If haply 'twas in blindness.

In his "Anti-Apis" he expresses in a verse a great truth concerning the growth of laws as founded upon our ideas of right and justice, and the hope of improvement ever present amid the blunders natural to humanity.

But dig down, the old unbury; thou shalt find on every stone That each age hath carved the symbol of what god to them was known; Ugly shapes and brutish sometimes, but the fairest that they know; If their sight was dim and earthward, yet their hope and aim were true.

And mark the rebuke that is administered in a succeeding verse:

Think you Truth a farthing rushlight to be pinched out when you will With your deft official fingers and your politician's skill? Is your god a wooden fetish, to be hidden out of sight?

That his block eyes may not see you do the thing that is not right?

I cannot see with better grace could utter such words, for Lowell has been pre-eminently a man having the courage of his convictions, and as such he is universally respected. Criticism he has had and of the most biased and unjust kind, when his pen was one of the most active in the advocacy of the abolition of slavery; but his honesty of motive has never been impugned. By the way, his "Fable for Critics" is a most interesting production—a real work of genius, whether viewed as a poem or merely as a jingling rhyme, but which space forbids further reference to here. But a glance at his "Bigelow Papers," How is this for dialect philosophy?

Ez fer war, I call it murder— There you hev it plain an' dat; I don't want no go no order; Than my testament fer dat; God her sed so plump an' fairly, It's as long ez it is broad, An' you've got to git up fairly; If you want to take in God.

'Taint your epylets an' feathers Make the thing a grain more right; 'Taint afoleerin' your bell wethers Will excuse ye in His sight; Ef you take a sword an' drop it, An' go stick a feller thru, 'Gawment aint to answer for it, God 'll send the bill to you.

I dunno but what it's poetry 'Trains in 'roun' in 'botral cats— But 't's curus Christian doctry This 'ere cuttin' folks throats.

And in the same strain he makes our philosophical friend "Birdofreedom Sawin," remark on his Mexican war experiences:

There's suthin' gits into my throat that makes it hard to swallow, It comes so natural to think about a hempen collar: Its glory—but in spite o' all my tryin' to get callin', I feel a kind o' in a card 'ritin' to the gallow.

And how correctly he valued much of the current political demagoguery of the age:

The side of our country must a'ways be took; An' President Polk, you know, he 's our country, An' the angel that writes all our sins in a book Put the debit to him an' to us the per centry.

Wal, its a marcy we've got folks to tell us The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters I God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellows To start the world the moment when it gits in a slough;

Fer John P. Robinson he Says the world'll go right if he hollers out Gee! Lowell had a good deal of experience with "practical politicians" and certainly never were those professionals more lampooned than by him. He had seen that

Resolves air a thing we most gen'ally keep ill, They're cheap kin' o' dust for the eyes o' the people.

And that so far as the professional politician is concerned

A marvellous providence fashioned us holler O' purpose that we might our principles swallow.

Aint principle precious? Then who's going to use it? Wen there's reek o' some chap's gittin' up to abuse it? He was early disgusted with the glittering generalities in which some alleged statesman delight ever to deal, and this is how he gets at it:

I'm willin' a man should go tollable strong 'Gain wrong in the abstract, fer that kind o' wrong Is allers unpop'lar an' never gets pitied; 'Cause it's a wrong no one ever committed; But he mustn't be takin' on per'tier airs; 'Cause then he'll be kickin' the people's own shins.

His "Pious Editor's Creed" is a very neat thing of its kind, but I must not pause to quote. The temptation to do so is great but space is limited. In sorrow's moods Lowell's poetry holds the deepest feelings in sway. What mother can read his "After the Burial" unmoved?

Console if you will, I can bear it; 'Tis a well-meant aim o' breath; But not the preaching since Adam Has made Death other than Death.

Yes, it's pegan; but wait till you feel it; That jar of our earth, that ill shock When the plagueshare of deep passion Tears down to our pur mitive rock.

That little shoe in the corner, So worn and wrinkled and brown, With it's emptiness confute's you, And argues your wisdom down.

But for the present I must close a volume from which I have derived not a little pleasure and profit. Versatile beyond many great authors; ever natural; possessing a manly heart and gifted with the true poetic fire, nothing that he has produced will be found profuse. He has not yet ceased to woo the Muse, although he has "wed both hands at the fire of life," and bids fair to realize

TOUCHING INCIDENT.

A Dead Fireman's Child Tried to Wake Him from His Last Sleep.

"What is the matter with my papa?" Steve Neall's 5-year-old daughter had caught sight of her dead father in his coffin last Friday evening, says the San Francisco Examiner, and asked the question of those who had gathered about the bier. "Papa is asleep," they told her. "Why is papa in that ugly box?" she persisted. "He can sleep better there." "Good night, papa." She passed into the adjoining room and was soon asleep.

The mourners sat about the coffin of the dead fireman all night. Shortly before 1 o'clock in the morning the young girl had so often summoned him to his duty changed an alarm for the Polk street fire. It had sounded once and was repeating the alarm when the little girl came flying into the room in her long white nightdress.

She looked at the silent watchers and then ran to the side of the dead man. Climbing on a chair she reached into the coffin and shook her father by the shoulder. "Papa, papa, wake up!" she cried. "There's a fire! Wake up!"

The looks of the people in the room and the strange silence of her father frightened her. "Wake up, please, papa," she pleaded, her voice beginning to quiver. "Can't you hear the bell? You'll miss the fire."

The father still not opening his eyes she looked around wonderingly and then added what she thought could not fail to bring him to his feet:

"Wake up, papa. You'll miss the fire and be fined!" When he did not stir she knew that something was wrong, and turned her fearful, puzzled face to the older people.

"Never mind the bell, darling," someone answered, "papa won't go the fire tonight."

"But," persisted the baby, "he always got up before when the bell rang; why wouldn't he get up? What's mamma crying for? What's everybody crying for?"

And the troubled little child burst into tears and, crying piteously at what she did not know, was carried gently back to her cot to cry herself to sleep again.

How to Entertain Well.

A hostess should think twice before she invites people to her house. She should be so generous as to let her friends alone, unless she wishes to treat them well. Then, having made up her mind to invite them, she must remember that, from that attention and all civility. If she has nothing to offer them but a cup of tea, she must make it a "baker full of the warm south" by her manner. In the smallest house, the humblest surroundings, the hostess is queen, and she must be gracious. If she is not, she is a snob, a vulgarian and a poor creature, no matter if her husband is a millionaire, a president, or a great scholar. A lady should be very particular to specify whom she wishes to see, and no lady should go to a strange house uninvited, on the spoken belief of some other person that she will be welcome. Still less should a gentleman presume too much. A young gentleman may be taken by a married lady, who is all powerful, to a ball, as she is supposed to endorse his respectability, but it is always better for him to leave his card, and for him to receive an invitation. If, however, through any misapprehension, a person gets into a house uninvited, a hostess should never show by word or manner that she observes it. The very fact that a person has crossed her threshold gives, for the moment, that person a claim on the politeness of a hostess.—Mrs. John Sherwood in Ladies' Home Journal for November.

Salvation Leases in Saucena.

The women of the Salvation Army have taken to visiting the liquor saloons of New York and Brooklyn in order to sell the War Cry, the newspaper of the army. Two of the very pretty army girls were in a notorious saloon not a thousand miles away from the Sun office, on this mission the other night. Leaning against the bar were gamblers and pugilists, and one or two who have been jailed for using their pistols too freely. They seemed to be shocked at the appearance of the girls among them. The modest dress and red ribbons on the ugly straw bonnets easily told them who the visitors were. Several papers were bought, when a strapping pugilist strode up and said: "Young women, I'll buy the whole bundle if you promise never to come here again." The proposition was not considered for a second. They said they believed it to be their duty to visit such places, adding that the nuns of the Roman Catholic Church did so. "But, don't you know that somebody might insult you?" the big man almost pleaded. "No, sir," replied the speaker of the two, and in words touched with scorn, she added: "No man will insult us; the remarks of others would not hurt us." It was only after persistent entreaty from the proprietor that the zealous women were induced to leave the place.

Dancing Round Dances.

You may, with propriety, strive to climb hills, even if you are not a climber. You are justified in surf bathing, even though you cannot swim. It is not a heinous offence to go driving along the sands when you do not know how to drive. You may converse with a Boston girl, even though you have never read a page of Browning and know not Emerson. You may be forgiven for losing your heart to a Newport girl when you haven't a cent to your name; but, young man, be warned in time—if you insist upon entering the ballroom and dancing round dances when you don't know how, says the *Galop*, exemption by electricity is too good for you, hanging would render you illustrious, and death by the slow, torturing process of being shot in the back with a baked apple would be your just desert.

The easiest way for a good wife to get along pleasantly is to practice what her husband preaches.

The runaway horse always gets hitched to a rotten post.

Some things are so rocky that they need blasting.

THE JOKE OF THE SEASON.

Just a Thread on the Shoulder, But You Never Find the End of it.

The drummer always brings the latest trick. Here it is, says the Lewiston, Me., Journal:

Take a spool of white basting cotton. Drop it into your inside coat pocket and, threading a needle with it, pass it up through the shoulder of your coat. Leave the end an inch or so long on the outside of your coat and take off the needle. Four men out of five will try to pick that whole thread off your shoulder, and will pull on the spool until it actually does seem as though your clothes are all basting, and that they were unraveling not only your clothes, but yourself.

"I was in to see Wilson Barrett in 'Clandian' in Boston last week," said the travelling man. "It was in the most interesting and pathetic portion of the play. Everybody was rapt. I was sitting bolts upright, and didn't know or care to know a soul around me, when suddenly I felt some one tugging at that basting cotton that I myself had clean forgotten. I didn't say a word and did not move. Foot by foot it unrolled. Hal! clamoring around, I saw a man—a total stranger—yanking at that thread. His face was scarlet. He had pulled out about ten yards and was now hauling in hand over hand. He didn't dare stop because he had decorated my back and the whole aisle with basting cotton. He hardly dared to go ahead, for he didn't know what portion of my domestic interior economy he was trifling with. Rip! Rip! went the thread. Hand over hand he yanked it in. The aisle was full of it. 'For Heaven's sake! will it never end?' said he above his breath. I sat perfectly still and ran the spool while he pulled. How I wanted to yell. I never saw anything in my life half so funny."

The whole section of the house got onto it. They didn't know whether to laugh at me or to cry. At last the stranger behind me gave one frantic rip and yanked out about 11 yards on one bunch, and as the cotton got twisted around his watch chain, over his eye-glasses, in his very hair and filled his lap, I turned around and producing the spool from my pocket, said: "I am very much obliged for your interest and very sorry that I misled you. You see I have about 124 yards left, but I presume that you don't care for any more tonight. I am honestly sorry, but I can't help smiling."

"The man was a modest sort of gentleman in appearance. His face was red as fire even to his ears. He looked at me then at the spool. He changed color once or twice, and then as the crowd caught on to the big laugh went up right in one of the painful passages of 'Clandian' and the gentleman who had intended to pull that thread off joined in the laugh and said: 'I will square that up on my wife when I get home; but, my friend, I swear to heaven that I did think at one time that I was going to undress you where you sat.'"

It catches every time, and my own wife has been fooled twice on it."

(From the New York Times.)

A little thread hung on the shoulder of Broker Dan Dixon's coat when he went on the floor of the Produce Exchange after lunch yesterday. Prince Claggett, during one of the lulls, called his attention to it.

"Pull it out," said Dixon.

Claggett pulled and pulled until he had pulled out about six feet of cotton thread. Mr. Dixon had had concealed under his arm a whole scroll of it. There was great laughter at Mr. Claggett's expense. He walked wisely and went away. Presently he reappeared. A little thread also hung from the seam in the arm of his coat. He intended to get even. He walked into the wheat pit. Everybody there had been posted by Mr. Dixon.

"Claggett," said two or three as he walked about, "there's a loose thread on your coat."

"Pull it out," said Claggett.

About twenty brokers rushed at him, and amid much shouting and hilarity, they not only pulled the thread, but they ripped the coat up the back "like a shad," as a member put it.

Otherwise the Produce Exchange proceedings were uneventful yesterday.

This is the Very Latest Style in Jokes.

First Mattress—"How do you feel?"
Second Mattress—"Full as a tick."

First Electric Wire—"What's the news?"
Second Electric Wire—"Shocking."

First Whiskey Barrel—"Are you empty?"
Second Whiskey Barrel—"Not by a jugful."

First Tree—"How's business?"
Second Tree—"Branching out."

Old Sol—"You're five minutes behind time."
Town Clock—"Oh, well, I work by the day."

First Cannon—"How's biz?"
Second Cannon—"Booming."

Old Mustaches—"Dyed, but not dead."
Young Mustaches—"Downy, but not downed."

First Key—"Well, what ails you now?"
Second Ditto—"Oh! I am in a hole again."

The Coffee—"I am boiling with rage."
The Pot—"You have good grounds for your anger."

A Dinner Done For.
Angry Man—"See here, confound you, I don't propose to have you dun me for that bill any more."
Angry Collector—"You don't, eh? How're you going to prevent it?"
"By paying up."

Under Certain Conditions.
"Do you like the Scotch?" asked one travelling man of another who was reading Burns.
"Yes," was the reply, "if it's cold weather and the Scotch is hot enough."

In January next Louis Kossuth will become a man without a country. On the 9th day of that month he will have completed the period of absence from Hungary which will terminate and forfeit his citizenship of that country. His two sons have become Italian citizens and the venerable patriot has been strongly urged to do likewise, but he probably will not do so.

IRENE'S LOVE.

Was Strong Enough to Brave the Wrath of Her People.

Irene Washburn, the daughter of an aristocratic branch of the Six Nations Indians, has created a very considerable sensation by eloping with a young Montreuil named W. L. Krosson. Irene is the daughter of Mrs. Emma Washburn, the well known Indian songstress, "Neokalee," whom she sometimes accompanies when on her concert tours. It was on one of these trips that she met the young Montreuil. They were in Montreal, and the mother of young Bruce thoughtlessly invited "Neokalee" and her black eyed daughter Irene to be her guests. The invitation was accepted and the visit lasted a week. During this time young Bruce was devoted to the fascinating Indian maiden, and she was as fascinated by his devotion so that when the parting came there was a tacit understanding that the friendship so quickly formed should be continued by letter. Irene returned to her home on the Six Nations Reservation, where she resided with her aunt, Mrs. Powless, and though she wrote regularly to her darling she did not always get an answer. Believing something wrong she enlisted the aid of a young Indian friend to assist her, and set on a sort of distributing post-office. Every week came the love laden missives, and faithfully were they answered. Each one but served to what Bruce's determination to possess the daughter of "Neokalee," and finally he wrote that he would meet her on Sunday last, and that they should drive to a minister, he married and leave at once for Montreal. Mrs. Powless "smelled a rat" and was determined that Irene should not marry the young man. Though she knew nothing of the arrangements for Sunday, there was something in Irene's actions that made her very suspicious. Mrs. Powless told certain of her friends among the Indians to keep a sharp lookout for the young pale-face, and when he put in an appearance to run him off the Reservation. But little Irene had her staunch Indian friends, too, and they assisted to smooth the way. On Sunday Bruce drove from Brantford accompanied by a well-known young Indian through whom it is supposed the correspondence was kept up. At a spot near Kanyengah, the lovers met, but their meeting was intruded upon. Irene was carried back to her home, and Bruce was put on a ferry and sent across the river. Irene's friends arranged for a meeting on Monday. They met, drove rapidly to a church, were married and had just started away when she was again taken from him. Bruce could do nothing alone, and with a whisper of hope to her drove rapidly to Brantford to institute legal proceedings for the recovery of his lawful wife. But while he sat cloistered with his lawyer, Irene's friends were at work. During Monday night they stole her from the house, brought her to this city and delivered her up to her husband. On Tuesday they left for Montreal as happy as two young doves.—*Brantford Espositor.*

Britain's Greatness.

The Chicago Herald says: Let us not deceive ourselves with fictitious greatness. There is another country at whose greatness we may well pause for contemplation. Its area exceeds eight and a half million square miles. The basis of its power is not land but water. Its greatness is maritime, and its coast line is twenty-eight thousand five hundred miles long. It lies on both sides of the equator and its boundaries touch the extreme of heat and cold. Its unutilized area which can be made to feed unborn millions without the help of the United States, covers millions of square miles—it contains one hundred thousand square miles of forests, which are being jealously preserved, while ours are being ruthlessly sacrificed. Its population amounts to 215,000,000 souls including pretty nearly all the races known to man. Its revenue for the government amounts to more than a thousand million dollars annually, only one fourth of which is levied in direct taxation. It has nearly a million of men under arms. It has one policeman for every sixteen square miles of its entire area. Its 246 war vessels are all in commission, not rotting in harbors. Its merchant navy consists of 30,000 ships, manned by 270,000 sailors. Its sea-going tonnage amounts to eight and a half millions. It surpasses in steamers all other powers on the globe and nearly equals their combined total in sailing vessels. Forty-nine per cent of the carrying power of the world is under its flag. Nearly half the entire yearly cargo of the world is under that flag; more than half the ship earnings from freights and passengers belong to it. Two-thirds of the tonnage annually built belongs to it. The banks of that Empire transact one-third of the business of the entire world. Its manufactures comprise one-third those of all Europe. It uses 30 per cent of the horse power of the world. Its enormous debt, which it uses as the most profitable investment of its own earnings, amounts to only 9 per cent of its wealth. It is the wealthiest State in the world, and its wealth has been made by its exports. Its name is Great Britain, and it abandoned, after a full and fair trial, the economic policy to which the United States factually cling. It sends its ships to every time; it offered its wares in every port; it asked no tax on articles offered in exchange, and the cargoes its ships carried back to their wharves enriched it as much as those they had borne away.

The Safest Part of the Train.

That was a keen observer who exclaimed as he clambered over the wreck at Ninth and Brown streets yesterday, that he would not ride hereafter on either end of a railroad train. The middle cars are always the safest. They do not receive a destructive blow from either a front or rear collision; if the engine leaves the track they usually remain in place, and they are never snapped off, as the rear car sometimes is. Almost the only case in which the middle cars suffer is when they are thrown off track by the breaking of a coupling or of some part of the running gear, and that is as likely to happen to one part of the train as another.—*Philadelphia Inquirer.*

It has been estimated that the habitual cotton-catchers in the United States number 600,000.