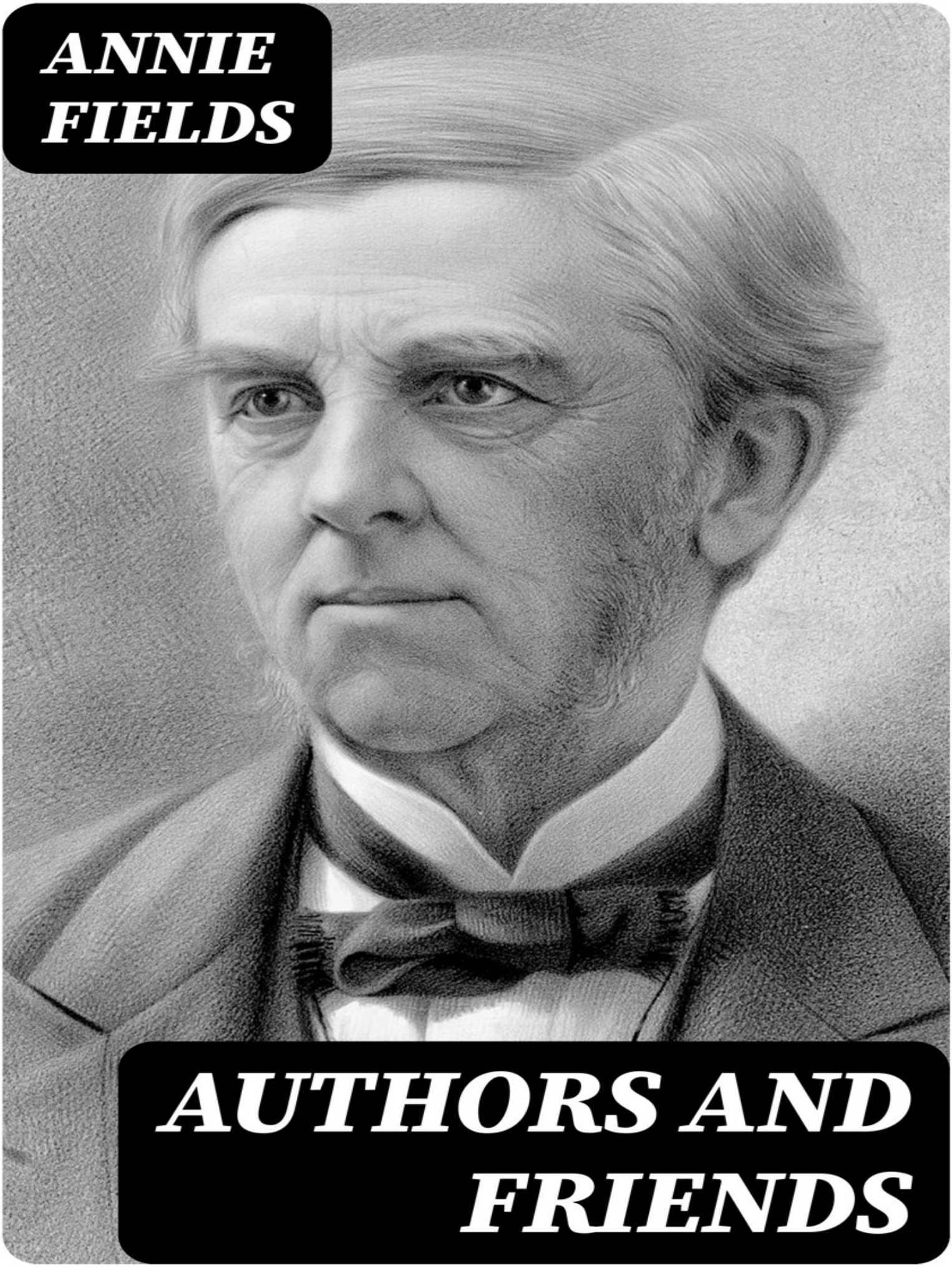
ANNIE FIELDS



AUTHORS AND FRIENDS

Annie Fields

Authors and Friends

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Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

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Every year when the lilac buds begin to burst their sheaths and until the full-blown clusters have spent themselves in the early summer air, the remembrance of Longfellow—something of his presence—wakes with us in the morning and recurs with every fragrant breeze. "Now is the time to come to Cambridge," he would say; "the lilacs are getting ready to receive you."

It was the most natural thing in the world that he should care for this common flower, because in spite of a fine separateness from dusty levels which everyone felt who approached him, he was first of all a seer of beauty in common things and a singer to the universal heart.

Perhaps no one of the masters who have touched the spirits of humanity to finer issues has been more affectionately followed through his ways and haunts than Longfellow. But the lives of men and women "who rule us from their urns" have always been more or less cloistral. Public curiosity appeared to be stimulated rather than lessened in Longfellow's case by the general acquaintance with his familiar figureand by his unceasing hospitality. He was a tender father, a devoted friend, and a faithful citizen, and yet something apart and different from all these.

From his early youth Longfellow was a scholar. Especially was his power of acquiring language most unusual.

As his reputation widened, he was led to observe this to be a gift as well as an acquirement. It gave him the convenient and agreeable power of entertaining foreigners who sought his society. He said one evening, late in life, that he could not help being struck with the little trouble it was to him to recall any language he had ever studied, even

though he had not spoken it for years. He had found himself talking Spanish, for instance, with considerable ease a few days before. He said he could not recall having even read anything in Spanish for many years, and it was certainly thirty since he had given it any study. Also, it was the same with German. "I cannot imagine," he continued, "what it would be to take up a language and try to master it at this period of my life, I cannot remember how or when I learned any of them;—to-night I have been speaking German, without finding the least difficulty."

A scholar himself, he did not write for scholars, nor study for the sole purpose of becoming a light to any university. It was the energy of a soul looking for larger expansion; a spirit true to itself and its own prompting, finding its way by labor and love to the free use and development of the power within him. Of his early years some anecdotes have been preserved in a private note-book which have not appeared elsewhere; among them this bit of reminiscence from Hawthorne, who said, in speaking of his own early life and the days at Bowdoin College, where he and Longfellow were in the same class, that no two young men could have been more unlike. Longfellow, he explained, was a tremendous student, and always carefully dressed, while he himself was extremely careless of his appearance, no student at all, and entirely incapable at that period of appreciating Longfellow.

The friendship between these two men ripened with the years. Throughout Longfellow's published correspondence, delightful letters are found to have been exchanged. The very contrast between the two natures attracted them more

and more to each other as time went on; and among the later unpublished letters I find a little note from Longfellow in which he says he has had a sad letter from Hawthorne, and adds: "I wish we could have a little dinner for him, of two sad authors and two jolly publishers, nobody else!"

As early as 1849, letters and visits were familiarly exchanged between
Fields and himself, and their friendship must have begun even earlier.
He writes:—

"My dear Fields,—I am extremely glad you like the new poems so well. What think you of the enclosed instead of the sad ending of 'The Ship'? Is it better?... I send you also 'The Lighthouse,' once more: I think it is improved by your suggestions. See if you can find anything more to retouch. And finally, here is a letter from Hirst. You see what he wants, but I do not feel like giving my 'Dedication' to the 'Courier.' Therefore I hereby give it to you so that I can say it is disposed of. Am I right or wrong?"

Of Longfellow's student days, Mr. Fields once wrote: "I hope they keep bright the little room numbered twenty-seven in Maine Hall in Bowdoin College, for it was in that pleasant apartment, looking out on the pine groves, that the young poet of nineteen wrote many of those beautiful earlier pieces, now collected in his works. These early poems were all composed in 1824 and 1825, during his last years in college, and were printed first in a periodical called 'The United States Literary Gazette,' the sapient editor of which magazine once kindly advised the ardent young scholar to give up poetry and buckle down to the study of

law! 'No good can come of it,' he said; 'don't let him do such things; make him stick to prose!' But the pine-trees waving outside his window kept up a perpetual melody in his heart, and he could not choose but sing back to them."

One of the earliest pictures I find of the every-day life of Longfellow when a youth is a little anecdote told by him, in humorous illustration of the woes of young authors. I quote from a brief diary. "Longfellow amused us to-day by talking of his youth, and especially with a description of the first poem he ever wrote, called 'The Battle of Lovell's Pond.' It was printed in a Portland newspaper one morning, and the same evening he was invited to the house of the Chief Justice to meet his son, a rising poet just returned from Harvard. The judge rose in a stately manner during the evening and said to his son: 'Did you see a poem in to-day's paper upon the Battle of Lovell's Pond?' 'No, sir,' said the boy, 'I did not.' 'Well, sir,' responded his father, 'it was a very stiff production. G——, get your own poem on the same subject, and I will read it to the company.' The poem was read aloud, while the perpetrator of the 'stiff production' sat, as he said, very still in a corner."

The great sensitiveness of his nature, one of the poetic qualities, was observed very early, and the description of him as a little boy was the description of the heart and nature of the man. "Active, eager, impressionable; quick-tempered, but as quickly appeased; kind- hearted and affectionate,—the sunlight of the house." One day when a child of ten he came home with his eyes full of tears. His elder brother was fond of a gun, and had allowed Henry to

borrow his. To the little boy's great distress, he had aimed at and shot a robin. He never tried to use a gun again.

Longfellow was said to be very like his mother. His brother wrote of him: "From her must have come to Henry the imaginative and romantic side of his nature. She was fond of poetry and music, and in her youth, of dancing and social gayety. She was a lover of nature in all its aspects. She would sit by a window during a thunderstorm enjoying the excitement of its splendors. Her disposition, through all trials and sorrows, was always cheerful, with a gentle and tranquil fortitude."

No words could describe her son's nature more nearly. When he was only sixteen years old we find him writing to his father: "I wish I could be in Washington during the winter, though I suppose it is rather vain to wish when it is almost impossible for our wishes to become realities. It would be more pleasant to get a peep at Southern people and draw a breath of Southern air, than to be always freezing in the North; but I have very resolutely concluded to enjoy myself heartily wherever I am. I find it most profitable to form such plans as are least liable to failure."

His mother's sympathy with his literary tastes was certainly unusual. He writes to her from college when he was sixteen years old. "I have this evening been reading a few pages in Gray's odes. I am very much pleased with them." … To which she replies: "I wish you would bring Gray home with you. I have a strong inclination to read the poems, since you commend them so highly. I think I should be pleased with them, though Dr. Johnson was not. I do not think the Doctor possessed much sensibility to the charms

of poetry, and he was sometimes most unmerciful in his criticism."

The single aim of Longfellow's life, the manner in which from his earliest days he dedicated himself to Letters, would prove alone, if other signs were lacking, the strength of his character. When he was only eighteen he wrote to his mother: "With all my usual delinquency, however, I should have answered your letter before this, had I not received, on Monday, Chatterton's Works, for which I had some time since sent to Boston. It is an elegant work in three large octavo volumes; and since Monday noon I have read the greater part of two of them, besides attending two lectures a day, of an hour each, and three recitations of the same length, together with my study-hours for preparation."

This is said to have been the first handsome book the young student owned, and it was earned by the work of his pen. In this same year, too, we find him hurrying with his lessons (not slighting them), that he might get leisure to read and think. "Leisure," he wrote his father, "which is to me one of the sweetest things in the world." ... "I wish I could read and write at the same time."

The eager activity of his mind was already asserting itself, an activity which hardly slackened to the very end.

The severe criticism of his poem on the Battle of Lovell's Pond may have cost him a few tears one night, but it did not alter his determination. He continued to send contributions to the newspapers, and when his father somewhat later suggested that he should consider the question of "studying for a profession," he replied: "If so, what profession? I have a particular and strong prejudice for one course of life to

which you, I fear, will not agree." He was not unwilling to pay the price for what he intended to attain. He knew himself, and his only suffering was at the thought of being obliged to turn aside from the aims which Nature held before him.

He was seventeen years old when he wrote to a friend: "Somehow, and yet I hardly know why, I am unwilling to study a profession. I cannot make a lawyer of any eminence, because I have not a talent for argument; I am not good enough for a minister,—and as to Physic, I utterly and absolutely detest it."

To his father the same year he wrote: "I have already hinted to you what would best please me. I want to spend one year at Cambridge for the purpose of reading history, and of becoming familiar with the best authors in polite literature; whilst at the same time I can be acquiring the Italian language, without an acquaintance with which I shall be shut out from one of the most beautiful departments of letters.... The fact is—and I will not disguise it in the least, for I think I ought not—the fact is, I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature; my whole soul burns most ardently for it, and every earthly thought centres in it.... Whether Nature has given me any capacity for knowledge or not, she has at any rate given me a very strong predilection for literary pursuits, and I am almost confident in believing that, if I can ever rise in the world, it must be by the exercise of my talent in the wide field of literature. With such a belief I must say that I am unwilling to engage in the study of the law.... Whatever I do study ought to be engaged in with all my soul,— for I WILL BE EMINENT in

something.... Let me reside one year at Cambridge; let me study belles-lettres; and after that time it will not require a spirit of prophecy to predict with some degree of certainty what kind of a figure I could make in the literary world. If I fail here, there is still time left for the study of a profession." ...His father could not make up his mind to trust his son to the uncertain reed of literature. "As you have not had the fortune (I will not say whether good or ill) to be born rich, you must adopt a profession which will afford you subsistence as well as reputation."

There was, however, a friendly compromise between father and son, and the young student was allowed to pass a year in Cambridge. He replied to his father: "I am very much rejoiced that you accede so readily to my proposition of studying general literature for one year at Cambridge. My grand object in doing this will be to gain as perfect knowledge of the French and Italian languages as can be gained without travelling in France and Italy,—though to tell the truth I intend to visit both before I die.... The fact is, I have a most voracious appetite for knowledge. To its acquisition I will sacrifice everything.... Nothing could induce me to relinquish the pleasures of literature;... but I can be a lawyer. This will support my real existence, literature an IDEAL one.

"I purchased last evening a beautiful pocket edition of Sir William Jones's Letters, and have just finished reading them. Eight languages he was critically versed in; eight more he read with a dictionary: and there were twelve more not wholly unknown to him. I have somewhere seen or heard

the observation that as many languages as a person acquires, so many times is he a man."

Happily—how happily we can hardly say—Madam Bowdoin had left the sum of one thousand dollars towards establishing a professorship of modern languages at the college which was then only a few years older than Longfellow. No steps had yet been taken; but one of the Board, Mr. Orr, having been struck, it appears, by the translation of an ode from Horace made by Longfellow for the senior examination, warmly presented his name for the new chair.

It is impossible to overestimate the value of these benefactions to men of talent and genius. Where would Wordsworth have been, what could he have done, without the gift bestowed upon him by Raisley Calvert! In America such assistance is oftener given in the more impersonal way of endowment of chairs or creating of scholarships. No method less personal or more elevating for the development of the scholar and man of genius could easily be adopted.

The informal proposal of the Board that Longfellow should go to Europe to fit himself for his position was precisely in a line with his most cherished wishes. It was nearly a year from that time, however, before he was actually on his way, "winter and rough weather" and the infrequency of good ships causing many delays. Possibly also the thought of the mother's heart that he was not yet twenty—still young to cut himself off from home and friends—weighed something in the balance. He read law in his father's office, and wrote and read with ceaseless activity on his own account; publishing his poems and prose papers in

the newspapers and annuals of the day. He sailed from New York at last, visiting Boston on his way. There he heard Dr. Channing preach and passed part of an evening with him afterward. Also Professor Ticknor was kind to him, giving him letters to Washington Irving, Professor Eichhorn, and Robert Southey. Dr. Charles Lowell, the father of the future poet, gave him a letter to Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, and President Kirkland was interested in his welfare. Thus he started away with such help and advice as the world could give him.

From that moment his career was simply a question of development. How he could turn the wondrous joys, the strange and solitary experiences of life into light and knowledge and wisdom which he could give to others; this was the never-ending problem of his mind; to this end he turned the labor of his days.

His temperament did not allow him the effervescent expression common to the young. On the contrary, when writing to his sisters from Italy during these student days, he says: "But with me all deep impressions are silent ones." And thus the sorrows of life, of which he early bore so heavy a burden, found little expression. He wore them in his heart, whence they came again in his poems to soothe the spirit of humanity. The delightful story of his three years of study and absence can be traced step by step in the journals and letters edited by his brother; but however interesting it is to follow him in every detail, it is nevertheless true that the singleness of aim and strength of character which distinguished Longfellow, combined with extreme delicacy

and sensitiveness of perception, were his qualities from the beginning and remained singularly unchanged to the end.

His history is not without its tragedies, but they were coördinated in his spirit to a sense of the unity of life. He was the psalmist, the interpreter. How could he render again the knowledge of divine goodness and divine love which were revealed to him? First came the duty of acquiring learning; of getting the use of many languages and thus of many forms of thought, in order to master the vehicles of expression. To this end he labored without ceasing, laughing at himself for calling that labor which gave him in the acquisition great pleasure. "If you call it labor!" he wrote in one of his letters home after speaking of his incessant studies.

His journals and letters, except the few early ones to his father, seldom speak either of the heat of composition or of the toils of study. He kept any mention of these, like all his deeper experiences, to himself, but writes chiefly of more external matters; of his relaxations and pleasures,—such as are surely indispensable to an author and student after extreme tension of the brain and hours of emotion.

Longfellow was twenty-two years old when he took up his residence as professor at Bowdoin College, where he translated and prepared the French grammar and the French and Spanish text-books which he desired for his classes. He was also made college librarian—a duty which required only one hour a day in those early times, but, added to his other duties, gave him all the occupation he needed. "The intervals of college duty I fill up with my own studies," he wrote to his friend, George W. Greene, with whom he had

already formed a friendship which was to continue unbroken during their lives.

At the age of twenty-four Longfellow married a lovely young lady, the daughter of Judge Potter, of Portland. She was entirely sympathetic with his tastes, having herself received a very unusual education for those days in Greek and Latin among her other studies. In the "Footsteps of Angels" she is commemorated as

"the Being Beauteous Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me."

His brother writes of this period: "They were tenderly devoted to each other: and never was a home more happy than theirs, when, soon after their marriage, they began housekeeping in Brunswick.... In this pleasant home, and with this blessed companionship, Mr. Longfellow devoted himself with fresh interest to his literary pursuits."

The monetary returns for all his labors at this period in America were inconceivably small. He amused his friends one day in later years by confessing that Mr. Buckingham paid him by one year's subscription to the "New England Magazine" for his translation of the "Coplas de Manrique" and several prose articles. After this he sent his poems to Messrs. Allen and Ticknor, who presented him the volume in which they appeared and sundry other books as compensation.

What a singular contrast was this beginning to his future literary history! Late in life his publisher wrote: "I remember how instantaneously in the year 1839 'The Voices of the Night' sped triumphantly on its way. At present his currency in Europe is almost unparalleled. Twenty-four publishing

houses in England have issued the whole or a part of his works. Many of his poems have been translated into Russian and Hebrew. 'Evangeline' has been translated three times into German, and 'Hiawatha' has not only gone into nearly all the modern languages, but can now be read in Latin. I have seen translations of all Longfellow's principal works, in prose and poetry, in French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, and Danish. The Emperor of Brazil has himself translated and published 'Robert of Sicily,' one of the poems in 'Tales of a Wayside Inn,' into his native tongue, and in China they use a fan which has become immensely popular on account of the 'Psalm of Life' being printed on it in the language of the Celestial Empire. Professor Kneeland, who went to the national millennial celebration in Iceland, told me that when he was leaving that faraway land, on the verge almost of the Arctic Circle, the people said to him: 'Tell Longfellow that we love him; tell him we read and rejoice in his poems; tell him that Iceland knows him by heart.' To-day there is no disputing the fact that Longfellow is more popular than any other living poet; that his books are more widely circulated, command greater attention, and bring more copyright money than those of any other author, not excepting Tennyson, now writing English verse."

Meanwhile the young professor, after four years of retirement and work at Bowdoin, began to look about him and to contemplate another flight. Before his plans were laid, however, Professor Ticknor relinquished his position at Harvard, which was immediately offered to Mr. Longfellow under what were for that period the most delightful

conditions possible. President Quincy wrote to him, "The salary will be fifteen hundred dollars a year. Residence in Cambridge will be required.... Should it be your wish, previously to entering upon the duties of the office, to reside in Europe, at your own expense, a year or eighteen months for the purpose of a more perfect attainment of the German, Mr. Ticknor will retain his office till your return."

During his second visit to Europe in the year 1835, this time accompanied by his wife, she became ill and died at Rotterdam, "closing her peaceful life by a still more peaceful death." Longfellow continued his journey and his studies. Into his lonely hours, which no society and no occupation could fill, came, his brother tells us, "the sense and assurance of the spiritual presence of her who had loved him and who loved him still, and whose dying lips had said, 'I will be with you and watch over you.'" At Christmas of the same year a new grief fell upon him in the death of his brother-in-law and dearest friend. He received it as an added admonition "to set about the things he had to do in greater earnestness."

"Henceforth," he wrote, "let me bear upon my shield the holy cross."

No history of Longfellow can hope to trace the springs which fed his poetic mind without recording the deep sorrows, the pain, the loneliness of his days. Born with especial love of home and all domesticities, the solitary years moved on, bringing him a larger power for soothing the grief of others because he had himself known the darkest paths of earthly experience.

He continued his lonely studies at Heidelberg during the winter, but with the spring, when the almond-trees were blossoming, the spirit of youth revived and he again took up his pilgrimage and began the sketches published some years later as the consecutive story of "Hyperion." In the opening chapter of that book he says: "The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone. Shadows of evening fall around us, and the world seems but a dim reflection,—itself a broader shadow. We look forward into the coming lonely night. The soul withdraws into itself. Then stars arise and the night is holy. Paul Flemming had experienced this, though still young."

Seven long, weary years elapsed between the death of his young wife and the second and perfect marriage of his maturity. In spite of the sorrow and depression which had overwhelmed him, he knew that his work was the basis upon which his life must stand, and in those few years he planted himself firmly in his professorship, published "Outre Mer," and the early poems which won for him an undying reputation as a poet. During this period, too, he made the great friendships of his life, of which he allowed no thread to break during the long years to come. His characteristic steadiness of aim never failed even in this trying period. He enjoyed the singular advantage of travel in a Europe which is now chiefly a demesne of the past and of the imagination. Having known all the picturesqueness and beauty of England, he settled himself in the old Vassall (or Craigie) House, in Cambridge, with serene enjoyment and appreciation. This house was then in a retired spot, and overwrought as he frequently found himself, the repose of

the place was helpful to him. In 1842 he again visited Europe, for the third time. His health suffered from solitude and the continued activities of his mind. "I sometimes think," he said, "that no one with a head and a heart can be perfectly well." Therefore in the spring he obtained leave of absence for six months, and went abroad to try the water cure at Marienberg. One of the chief events of this journey was the beginning of his friendship with Freiligrath. The two men never met again face to face, but they began a correspondence which only ended with their lives. It is in one of his letters to Freiligrath that he writes: "Be true to yourself and burn like a watch-fire afar off there in your Germany." His mind was full of poems; much of his future work was projected although little was completed. He wrote one sonnet called "Mezzo Cammin," never printed until after his death; perhaps he thought it too expressive of personal sadness.

Upon the return voyage, which was a stormy one, he accomplished a feat that many a storm-tossed traveler would consider marvelous indeed. "Not out of my berth," he wrote, "more than twelve hours the first twelve days. There cabined, cribbed, confined, I passed fifteen days. During this time I wrote seven poems on slavery. I meditated upon them in the stormy, sleepless nights, and wrote them down with a pencil in the morning. A small window in the side of the vessel admitted light into my berth, and there I lay on my back and soothed my soul with songs." These poems, with one added as a dedication to Dr. Channing, "threw the author's influence on the side against slavery; and at that

time it was a good deal simply to take that unpopular side publicly."

He took up his correspondence at this period with renewed fervor, and what other life can show such devotion to friendship or such a circle of friends? Through good report and evil report his friends were dear to him, and the disparagements of others failed to reach the ear of his heart. In one of his letters to G. W. Greene he says: "It is of great importance to a man to know how he stands with his friends; at least, I think so. The voice of a friend has a wonder-working power; and from the very hour we hear it, 'the fever leaves us.'"

Upon his return home in December, 1836, he began his life in Cambridge among the group of men who became inseparable friends,—Felton, Sumner, Hillard, and Cleveland. They called themselves the "Five of Clubs," and saw each other continually. Later came Agassiz and a few others. How delightful the little suppers were of those days! He used to write: "We had a gaudiolem last night." When, several years after, he married Frances Appleton and began, as it were, "the new life," his wife wrote to Mr. Greene: "Felton and the rest of the club flourish in immortal youth, and are often with us to dine or sup. I have never seen such a beautiful friendship between men of such distinct personalities, though closely linked together by mutual tastes and affections. They criticise and praise each other's performances, with a frankness not to be surpassed, and seem to have attained that happy height of faith where no misunderstanding, no jealousy, no reserve, exists." It appears, however, that even these delightful friendships

had left something to be desired. In his journal he wrote: "Came back to Cambridge and went to Mr. Norton's. There I beheld what perfect happiness may exist on this earth, and felt how I stood alone in life, cut off for a while from those dearest sympathies for which I long." His brother said of him that having known the happiness of domestic life for which his nature was especially formed, "he felt the need of more intimate affection." Thus, after many years of lonely wandering, another period of Longfellow's life opened with his marriage in 1843. Had he himself been writing of another, he might have divided his story into cantos, each one with a separate theme. One of aspiration, one of endeavor, one with the despair of young sorrow, and one of triumphant love. Advancing thus through the gamut of human experience he might have closed the scene with the immortal line loved of all poets:—

"In sua voluntade e nostra pace."

Thus indeed, reviewing Longfellow's life as a whole, we discern his days to be crowded with incident and experience. Every condition of human life presented itself at his door, and every human being found a welcome there,—incidents and experience coming as frequently to him through the lives of others as through the gate of his own being. The note of love and unity with the Divine will was the dominant one which controlled his spirit and gave him calm.

He early chose Craigie House as the most desirable place for his abode in all the world. The poems and journals are full of his enjoyment of nature as seen from its windows. In the beginning of his residence there he persuaded Mrs.

Craigie to allow him to have two rooms; but he soon controlled the second floor, and at the time of his marriage to Miss Appleton her father presented them with the whole of the beautiful estate.

Here his life took shape and his happiness found increase with the days. It was like him to say little in direct speech of all this; but we find a few words describing his wife, of whom his brother wrote that "her calm and quiet face wore habitually a look of seriousness." And then evidently quoting from Henry, he adds, "at times it seemed to make the very air bright with its smiles." She was a beautiful woman of deep but reserved feeling and cultivated tastes and manners. She understood and sympathized in his work, and, even more, she became often its inspiration. During their wedding journey they passed through Springfield, whence she wrote: "In the Arsenal at Springfield we grew quite warlike against war, and I urged H. to write a peace poem."

Finally established in Craigie House, as the children grew and his library enlarged, and guests, attracted by personal love and by his fame, became more numerous, he found the days almost overburdened with responsibilities. He wrote one day to Charles Sumner: "What you quote about the *pčre de famille* is pretty true. It is a difficult role to play; particularly when, as in my case, it is united with that of *oncle d'Amérique* and general superintendent of all the dilapidated and tumble-down foreigners who pass this way!" The regulation of such a house in New England was far more difficult than it is at present, and Cambridge farther away from Boston, with its conveniences and privileges, than appeared. What anxieties if the hourly omnibus should be

crowded! and what a pleasant slow ride into the far green land it seemed!

Nevertheless, this was his chosen home, his house beautiful, and such he made it, not only to his own eyes, but to the eyes of all who frequented it. The atmosphere of the man pervaded his surroundings and threw a glamour over everything. Even those who were most intimate at Craigie House felt the indescribable influence of tenderness, sweetness, and calm which filled the place. Neither Longfellow nor his wife was a brilliant talker; indeed, there were often periods of speechlessness; but in spite of mental absences, a habit of which he got the better in later years, one was always sure of being taken at one's best and of coming away with a sense of having "breathed a nobler air."

"Society and hospitality meant something real to him," his eldest daughter writes. "I cannot remember that there were ever any formal or obligatory occasion of entertainment. All who came were made welcome without any special preparation, and without any thought of personal inconvenience."

The decorations and splendors of the great world neither existed nor were needed there. His orange-tree, "that busie plant," always stood in his study window, and remains, still cherished, to-day. The statuette of Goethe, to which he refers in "Hyperion," stands yet on the high desk at which he stood to write, and books are everywhere. Even closets supposed to be devoted to pails and dust-cloths "have three shelves for books and one for pails." In his own bedroom, where the exquisite portrait of his wife by Rowse hangs over the fireplace, there is a small bookcase near his bed which

contains a choice collection of the English poets. Vaughan, Henry King, and others of that lovely company of the past. These were his most intimate friends. In the copy of Henry King, I found the following lines marked by him in "The Exequy:"—

"Sleep on, my love, in thy cold bed,
Never to be disquieted!
My last good-night! Thou wilt not wake,
Till I thy fate shall overtake;
Till age, or grief, or sickness, must
Marry my body to the dust
It so much loves."

His daughter says, "This library was carefully arranged by subjects; and although no catalogue was ever made, he was never at a loss where to look for any needed volume. His books were deeply beloved and tenderly handled."

Such was Craigie House and such was the poet's life within it from the beginning to the end. "His poetry was not worked out from his brain," his daughter again writes, and who should know better than herself! "it was the blossoming of his inward life."

In a brief paper upon Longfellow written by Mr. William Winter I find the universal sentiment towards him more fully and tenderly expressed, perhaps, than elsewhere. Mr. Winter writes: "I had read every line he had then published; and such was the affection he inspired, even in a boyish mind, that on many a summer night I have walked several miles to his house, only to put my hand upon the latch of his gate, which he himself had touched. More than any one else among the many famous persons whom, since then, it has

been my fortune to know, he aroused this feeling of mingled tenderness and reverence."

The description of his person, too, as given by Mr. Winter, seems to me clearer and closer to the truth than any other I have chanced to see.

"His dignity and grace, and the beautiful refinement of his countenance, together with his perfect taste in dress and the exquisite simplicity of his manners, made him the absolute ideal of what a poet should be. His voice, too, was soft, sweet, and musical, and, like his face, it had the innate charm of tranquillity. His eyes were blue-gray, very bright and brave, changeable under the influence of emotion (as afterward I often saw), but mostly calm, grave, attentive, and gentle. The habitual expression of his face was not that of sadness; and yet it was pensive. Perhaps it may be best described as that of serious and tender thoughtfulness. He had conquered his own sorrows thus far; but the sorrows of others threw their shadow over him.... There was a strange touch of sorrowful majesty and prophetic fortitude commingled with the composure and kindness of his features.... His spontaneous desire, the natural instinct of his great heart, was to be helpful,—to lift up the lowly, to strengthen the weak, to bring out the best in every person, to dry every tear, and make every pathway smooth."

Although naturally of a buoyant disposition and fond of pleasure, Longfellow lived as far as possible from the public eye, especially during the last twenty years of his life. The following note gives a hint of his natural gayety, and details one of the many excuses by which he always declined to speak in public; the one memorable exception being that

beautiful occasion at Bowdoin, when he returned in age to the scenes of his youth and read to the crowd assembled there to do him reverence his poem entitled "Morituri Salutamus." After speaking of the reasons which must keep him from the Burns festival, he adds:—

"I am very sorry not to be there. You will have a delightful supper, or dinner, whichever it is; and human breath enough expended to fill all the trumpets of Iskander for a month or more.

"I behold as in a vision a friend of ours, with his left hand under the tails of his coat, blowing away like mad; and alas! I shall not be there to applaud. All this you must do for me; and also eat my part of the haggis, which I hear is to grace the feast. This shall be your duty and your reward."

The reference in this note to the trumpets of Iskander is the only one in his letters regarding a poem which was a great favorite of his, by Leigh Hunt, called "The Trumpets of Doolkarnein." It is a poem worthy to make the reputation of a poet, and is almost a surprise even among the varied riches of Leigh Hunt. Many years after this note was written, Longfellow used to recall it to those lovers of poetry who had chanced to escape a knowledge of its beauty.

In spite of his dislike of grand occasions where he was a prominent figure, he was a keen lover of the opera and theatre. He was always the first to know when the opera season was to begin and to plan that our two houses might take a box together. He was always ready to hear "Lucia" or "Don Giovanni" and to make a festival time at the coming of Salvini or Neilson. There is a tiny notelet among his letters, with a newspaper paragraph neatly cut out and pasted

across the top, detailing the names of his party at a previous appearance at a theatre, a kind of notoriety which he particularly shuddered at; but in order to prove his determination in spite of everything, he writes below:—

"Now for 'Pinafore,' and another paragraph! Saturday afternoon would be a good time."

He easily caught the gayety of such occasions, and in the shadow of the curtains in the box would join in the singing or the recitative of the lovely Italian words with a true poet's delight.

The strange incidents of a life subject to the taskmaster Popularity are endless. One day he wrote:— "A stranger called here and asked if Shakespeare lived in this neighborhood. I told him I knew no such person. Do you?"

Day by day he was besieged by every possible form of interruption which the ingenuity of the human brain could devise; but his patience and kindness, his determination to accept the homage offered him in the spirit of the giver, whatever discomfort it might bring himself, was continually surprising to those who observed him year by year. Mr. Fields wrote: "In his modesty and benevolence I am reminded of what Pope said of his friend Garth: 'He is the best of Christians without knowing it.'"

In one of Longfellow's notes he alludes humorously to the autograph nuisance:—"Do you know how to apply properly for autographs? Here is a formula I have just received, on a postal card:

"'DEAR SIR: As I am getting a collection of the autographs of all honorable and worthy men, and think yours such, I hope you will forfeit by next mail. Yours, etc.'"