

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, the poet, came from one of the old Massachusetts families, his grandfather being Judge of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and his father a distinguished clergyman of Boston. He was born at Cambridge, Mass., February 22nd, 1819. Graduating in 1838 at Harvard College, he qualified himself as a lawyer, and was admitted to the bar in 1840, but as he never liked the profession it was soon abandoned, and his whole attention given to literature. In later life, however, he was appointed United States Minister to Spain.

A little before his twenty-second birthday Lowell published a small volume of poems called "A Year's Life," which bears a favorable comparison with other fruits of budding genius. By means of his *Biglow Papers*, written in 1848, he became widely known. They are mainly an exposure of national injustice and political dishonesty, and form one of the best satires in the language.

In Lowell's verse there is something of Wordsworth's simplicity, something of Tennyson's sweetness and musical flow, and something of the manly earnestness of the Elizabethan poets. The obvious characteristic of many of his poems is their high religious spirit. It is not a mild and passive morality that we perceive, but the aggressive force of primitive Christianity.

A writer in one of the magazines thus characterizes Lowell's poetry: "If, whenever one is tempted to quote an author that presents diamonds in the mire unwashed and uncut, he will select Lowell, rather he may find the diamonds without the dirt, every facet clear as light, cut and clean, ready for queenly ornament. This poet everywhere and always is pure, though not always singing from star pavilions. Sometimes he tenderly stirs the soul's pellucid depths unto welling tears, anon he leads us onward and upward as with the clarion's startling, thrilling call. There are sobs in some lines, laughter in a few, and war-cries of justice, courage, and victory in many; but all are in the name of humanity, country, and God."

In person, Lowell was of medium height, rather slender, but sinewy and active. His hair, at maturity, was dark brown in tint. His habits were scarcely methodical; reading, correspondence, composition, exercise, and social converse, coming often hap-hazard, yet being incapable of idleness, he accomplished much.

His affections were singularly deep and steady. He had not only a tender, but a very large heart. His love for his friends was such that at times, if it did not blind, it at least colored his judgment. He was sure to like what they did. He was to them all that a faithful and generous friend could be. His thoughtfulness for them, his readiness to take trouble for them, and to put all his resources at their disposal outweighed the common rules and experience of friendship. In the more intimate relations of life, the depth, the soundness, the sweetness and the simplicity of his nature

secured happiness for himself and for those whom he loved.

One who knew him well, said: "He never grew old. The spirit of youth was invincible in him. Life battered at the defences of youth with heavy artillery of trial and sorrow, they did not yield. His healthy temperament resisted with success."

During the anti-slavery days Lowell's heart and soul and pen were given to the cause of the enslaved race. Lowell helped many a fugitive slave to escape; he gave money to husbands to buy their wives and children out of slavery, and when he did not have the money to give, he subscribed an amount to be paid when he had.

No man ever loved his country more devoutly than Lowell, or served her more faithfully. "There is something magnificent," he writes, "in having a country to love. It is almost like what one feels for a woman. Not so tender, perhaps; but to the full as self-forgotten."

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL AT HOME.

BY REV. M. H. ALEXANDER.

ONCE had the rare privilege of seeing our great American poet in his home. It was one afternoon in June. As our little party, consisting of three adults and one child, drew near Elmwood, we saw the poet under the trees in his garden. He had a saw in his hand and was assisting in trimming the trees.

Though it was not his regular day for receiving callers, Mr. Lowell came into the house and received us with his unfailing characteristic courtesy. When we expressed our fear that we would trench on his time, he put us thoroughly at our ease by telling us that he was "invalided" for the summer and, therefore, his time was not valuable.

Had the exquisite pleasure not only of seeing Mr. Lowell's famous study, but of having him for our guide to point out the various objects of interest.

The study is a large room. At first



JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL'S STUDY.

His letters, written during the war, while they indicate that their writer was alert to the gravity of the situation, and awake to its difficulties—nevertheless have a calmness and a confidence that must have been very reassuring to Lowell's friends. One wonders if now for the first time he learned that

"Behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadows
Keeping watch above his own."

Not far from the entrance to beautiful Mount Auburn there lies a grave. Above it, in the splendid group of trees, the birds build and sing in the summer. A tombstone such as might mark the last resting place of the humblest of earth's children is this; but the path leading to the grave is worn bare by the countless feet of the worshipping multitudes who have come thither. The stone bears this simple inscription: "Sacred to the memory of James Russell Lowell, and to his first wife, Maria White, and to his second wife, Frances Dunlap."

sight it looks like two rooms separated by a partition. Such is not the case. A huge chimney in the middle of the room is responsible for the deception. On either side of this chimney there is an archway.

In the front study one sees the very fireplace where the poet has often sat and "toasted his toes." Then there is his carefully-selected library of 4,000 volumes, some of which are rare and beautiful works, evincing the poet's fondness for certain departments of literature.

Mr. Lowell called our attention to two small pieces of crayon work which were done by Miss Tennyant, afterwards Mrs. Henry M. Stanley. He also showed us a portrait of Tennyson, which is very different from the pictures one generally sees, but Mr. Lowell said it looks very like him and was preferred by Tennyson himself.

Mr. Lowell pointed to a curious old picture over the fireplace in the rear study. The picture had been there since the days of his grandfather. It repre-