

AN AUTHOR-FRIEND.

There is a quality of *heart* in certain books which brings us into feelings of immediate intimacy with their authors. It can be counterfeited neither by cleverness of thought nor trick of style. This force of true *personality* is seldom so strongly felt as in a perusal of the writings of Oliver Wendell Holmes. What reader of his Breakfast Table Series has not felt toward that inspired writer-conversationalist, an ever-deepening friendship?

Saddening, as must be our first realization of death's call to the last figure of that grand New England group—Emerson, Bryant, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier and *Holmes*—we are not without our present solace. Though the life-worn octogenarian has finished his "good fight," there yet lives with us, in as real a sense as he ever lived, our friend, the Autocrat, Poet and Professor. Having touched his personality not merely through, but *in*, the written expressions of his thought, we shall have ever in our midst the presence of an enduring friend.

The mind of the writer will always revert with a glow of reminiscent gratefulness and pleasure to his first introduction into this, now long-established, friendship. It was one of those excessively hot June days, upon a week or so of which our erratic Canadian summer sometimes, expends the stored-up energy rightfully due to the next fortnight or two. A lazy-looking individual, he lay stretched upon the floor in a city dwelling, holding with languid grasp a small green volume. At length in perspiring indecision he opened at the first page, and directed his eyes drearily toward the opening sentences of the Autocrat.

The first paragraph, to a drowsy consciousness, seemed an appalling combination of psychology, mathematics, and metaphysics, but with sleepy perseverance he continued to the second. He too *stared* when "they all stared," and continued to do so as with growing attention, he turned each successive leaf. What a breakfast of intellectual ambrosia followed this arousing of his half-slumbering mentality! Interesting though instructive, amusing yet tender, playfully didactic but never pedantic, in manner at once delightfully contemplative and brightly