

may say his say well or ill, it matters very little. Such is the position in which I find myself. For a large section of the humorous poetry of America is as well known and appreciated in this United Kingdom as in America itself. In this country, the names of Lowell, Holmes, Hay, Harte, Saxe, and Leland, to mention only a few, are household words. Indeed, it is just a question if some of these authors be not a little oftener read, and a trifle more thought of here than in their native land. Their works have been published and republished in all shapes and sizes ; their names have appeared in every anthology where Americans found admission ; and their popularity, as great now as it ever was, shows no sign of waning. All that can be said for and against their work has been said many times over, and so, in this introduction, I will content myself with the privilege of mentioning their names.

Many people are inclined to think that the humour of America reached its zenith a couple of decades ago, and that there is no younger generation of writers on whom the mantle of the gods has fallen. This is a mistake. There are plenty of young writers to-day upholding the best traditions of humour in America. A glance at the periodical literature should convince any one that the writing of humorous verse is not a decaying art on the