

INTRODUCTION.

I. THE POET.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW was born at Portland, Maine, on February 27th, 1807. His boyhood to the age of fifteen years was spent in his native town. In 1822 he entered Bowdoin College, the State University, which was situated at Brunswick. At college he was studious and reserved, and took high scholastic rank. Among his classmates was Nathaniel Hawthorne, afterwards one of the greatest of American romancers. Upon graduation (1825), Longfellow was appointed to the new Chair of Modern Languages in his Alma Mater, under the condition that he should go to Europe and acquire the necessary additional learning. To Europe he went, accordingly, in May of 1826, remaining three years and a half. He entered upon his collegiate duties in 1829.

The young professor was married in 1831. His connection with Bowdoin extended over a period of six years. In December, 1834, he received an offer of the Modern Languages Professorship in Harvard University, which he at once accepted. The spring of 1835 saw him again in Europe, where he travelled for eighteen months. On this occasion he visited England, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and France, and made a careful study of the principal European languages.