

process of readjustment was complete, the flowering time of the old Puritan stock came. Holmes, Lowell, Emerson, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Channing, Everett, Prescott, Motley, Philipps, Parker, Garrison, Sumner, Parkman: this is a list of great and worthy names, a list of which New England may well be proud. And there were others, not so well known to the present generation, who were felt by those just mentioned to be their intellectual peers. It is an unusual society which reckoned among its less conspicuous members, Benjamin Pierce, Jeffries Wyman, Dean Gurney, Asa Gray and Charles Eliot Norton.

Versatile as Holmes was, he is free from the charge of *cacoethes scribendi*. His table-talk is sometimes a little garrulous in style, but self-control is seen in the comparative paucity of his production. He doubtless wrote with facility. The American people bought his books with a free hand. And yet all his contributions to literature—with the exception of a few memoirs—are contained in the twelve small volumes of the "Riverside" edition. To criticize the writings of Holmes seems a work of supererogation. "Fanny" Bowen covered the ground very well when he said in an old number of the *North American Review*: "As he is everybody's favorite, there is no occasion for critics to meddle with him, either to censure or praise. He can afford to laugh at the whole reviewing fraternity." The qualities revealed in Holmes' books are the qualities which make a man beloved in daily intercourse. Wit, humor, information, observation, sagacity, benevolence, affection made Holmes dear to the hundreds of his friends and to the thousands of his readers. It is by no means a grateful business to tabulate the strong points of a favorite author for the purpose of deducting therefrom his limitations. *Chacun à son goût*, in literature as in gastronomy. It is the opinion of the writer that Lowell, Emerson, Hawthorne and Thoreau are each to be credited with works which, either in point of form or as contributions to the world's stock of ideas, must be ranked higher than the best work of Holmes. But this is no bar to his full and free enjoyment of every book which the latter published, from the Poems of 1836 to "Over the Teacups."

One strong point of Holmes' writing it is always well to emphasize. While his knowledge of literature was most unusual in a doctor, his habits of scientific observation were of great service to him in literature. In the combination of literary and scientific attainments he recalls Goethe more than does any other American. Unlike the mass of professional men, he was able to rise above his profession. We never feel that his knowledge of medicine is a bar to our non-professional intercourse with him. Special

study and active practice brought him in contact with many phases of life which are little known to the layman. That for which we have reason to be thankful is that wide acquaintance with mankind made him reflective, without making him cynical or pedantic.

It is always pleasant to read a selection of pieces which show the wide range of Holmes' moods and knowledge. To pass from the broad fun of the "Height of the Ridiculous" to the perfect grace of "Dorothy Q," or to the elevating beauty of the "Chambered Nautilus;" to pass from the *persiflage* of lighter passages in the Breakfast Table series to the serious discourses of the same, or from a descriptive essay like "The Seasons" to a scientific essay like "Automatism and Crime:" this is a test of the writer's power and the man's breadth. Lowell, of all the New England brotherhood, is the only one whose compass is not less than that of Holmes.

The public career of Holmes was a career of unbroken success, and numerous passages testify to his domestic happiness. Rarely has a life been so well rounded. His friends were the foremost men of his own land. He had no enemies,—except, it may be, the homœopaths. Health, comfort, worthy posterity, power of enjoyment in old age were all his. A fitting fifth act to his long and happy life was a triumphal reception in England in 1886. We who feel defrauded if we are unable to visit Europe every two or three years may wonder that Holmes crossed the Atlantic but twice. Such is the fact; but on the occasion of his second visit he was covered with enough glory to have satisfied a Roman dictator. It is interesting to read the list of receptions and dinners which were given in his honor. It is pleasant to think of his visit to Quaritch's shop in Piccadilly. It is positively delightful to know that Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh gave him their degrees; that on arriving at the House of Commons after all the places reserved for distinguished strangers were occupied he was put among the ambassadors to hear Gladstone's speech on the Second Reading of the Home Rule Bill. Every circumstance which shows the warmth of English good-will is gratifying to Holmes' admirers in America. But for real light upon Holmes' own character, two incidents of his visit to Paris are worth the whole catalogue of social ovations. He called upon Pasteur without a letter of introduction, simply to pay him homage. "I told him I was an American physician who wished to look in his face and take his hand—nothing more." The other incident carries us back to 1836 when Holmes was a student in the Quartier Latin. Returning to Paris fifty years later, he went alone to the Café Procope, illustrious for its association with great Frenchmen from Voltaire to Gambetta. Here, Holmes had seen