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Oliver Wendell Holmes.

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THE subject of this sketch was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the year 1809. He springs from what is called a "good family." His father, the Rev. Abiel Holmes, D.D., was a Congregational minister of literary tendencies, while his relatives on the maternal side, the Wendells and the Olivers, were old colonial families of wealth and influence in Boston.

Young Oliver received a part of his early education in small private schools. Afterwards he attended a large school just outside his native town. Among the future poet's classmates here, two were destined to become nearly as famous as himself—Richard Henry Dana, jr., and Margaret Fuller. At the age of fifteen he began to attend the Phillips Academy at Andover. It is said that his father's expectation in sending him here was that the religious influences of the place might lead him to study for the ministry. And truly a droll old preacher Oliver Wendell Holmes would have been in the present year of grace if his good parents' wishes had been followed!

After a year spent at the academy, he entered Harvard University. It does not appear that he was especially distinguished during his undergraduate career for either application or ability. He belonged, however, to several college clubs, and gained the reputation among his companions of being a good fellow generally. There is sufficient internal evidence in his books to warrant us in believing that the doc-

trine of total abstinence from certain beverages would not have been well received at Harvard in those days. John Lothrop Motley, James Freeman Clarke and Charles Sumner were among his fellows here. He graduated in arts at the age of twenty, and subsequently spent a short time in the study of law. But this subject proved distasteful to him, and he abandoned it for the more congenial profession of medicine. He spent two years in European hospitals, and finally took a degree in medicine from Harvard in 1836. Dr. Holmes now rapidly began to acquire celebrity in his profession, and before two years had passed he was appointed to a position on the medical faculty of Dartmouth College. In 1847 the Professorship of Anatomy in Harvard University was offered to him, and this position he filled very successfully until his retirement in 1882. He has since occupied himself in literary work.

Oliver Wendell Holmes gave the first marked indication of his literary ability in the columns of his college paper, the *Harvard Collegian*. In the year 1830 he contributed a number of poems to this periodical. The author has justly recognized the excellence of several of these juvenile poems by including them in the complete editions of his works. Shortly afterwards appeared one of his best lyrics, "Old Ironsides." This is a thrilling patriotic poem written in protest against the proposed dismantling of the famous old