

coils they only became more inextricably entangled in them. Then, high above the tumult, Lowell's voice rang out, warning them that capable, incorruptible leaders must be had; that the slave power must first be attacked; that this serpent must be vanquished before there was hope of peace or union. The thrilling words of "The Present Crisis" quickened the pulses of the nation in the midst of war's fiery ordeal:—

"They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors
to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes, freedoms new-lit altar fires."

"They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

The north at length saw that he was right, and boldly assaulted "the earth-born Cyclops, fellest of the giant brood." Lowell, still singing, ever held up before his country the highest ordeal of manhood and patriotism:—

"New occasions teach new duties; time makes ancient good uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of truth."

"Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue, carved upon our fathers' graves."

When at length the war-cloud parted and the bright sun of peace shone forth, how gladly he rejoices:—

"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind."

After the war, when the leaders of that nation which had poured forth its blood so generously for the protection of its flag would have trailed its honor in the mire of repudiation, Lowell's voice rang out in indignant protest against such infamy. When the nation turned from the path of dishonor to that of justice and integrity, none rejoiced more than he.

As ambassador to England, Lowell represented not only the American government but the highest type of American culture and scholarship. His fine conversational ability, his brilliancy, humor and eloquence as a public speaker, his kindness, gentleness, and wonderful tact,—all won him the greatest esteem of the English people. More than any other man he elevated America in the eyes of other nations, and strengthened the ties which bind her to Great Britain. He always stood firm for American institutions and rigidly upheld his country's dignity. For James Russell Lowell the man, he asked nothing, but for James Russell Lowell the representative of the United States, he exacted every particle of due respect and deference.

No poet ever had a greater love for nature than Lowell, nor a deeper insight into her mysteries, and to him she "spoke a various language." He loved not merely the grand and beautiful in nature,—her simplest forms, each dew drop, tiniest flower and blade of grass shared his affection, and the most timid bird half forgave his being human.

Instead of seeking his themes in imagination or in events and times forgotten, Lowell snatched them from the stream of life which boiled and eddied around him. He did not write poetry merely for the sake of drawing beautiful figures and adjusting the cadences of well-measured lines; he wrote for a much more definite and practical object,—that he might bring into contempt things that were contemptible, and stamp with the ineffaceable stigma of condemnation things against which reason, truth and humanity had long cried out in vain. With consummate skill he took advantage of the fact that ridicule will often demoralize and put to flight the opposing forces of sin and wrong which all the vehement eloquence and fiery invective of the greatest orators cannot move. With scorching satire he ridiculed things that should have been made ridiculous and would long ago have been suppressed, had the world

been governed more by truth and justice and less by falsehood and crime.

Lowell outranks all other Americans as a critic. There was nothing caustic or bitter about his criticisms. They were characterized by justice, clear understanding of meaning and style, and an earnest desire to give full credit without fulsome eulogy.

But great as he was as a poet and critic he was still greater as a patriot, and it is in that capacity he has the strongest hold on our affections. He loved his country passionately—not for the fat offices she could give him, but for herself alone. She was to him an ideal, not a great opportunity for self-aggrandizement. Where, in song or story, is a more beautiful or touching love song to be found than that of Lowell's when the stars and stripes once more wave over a united nation! Out of the depths of a heart, stricken and well-nigh broken by the loss of three loved nephews offered on the altar of their country, he sings gloriously:—

"O Beautiful! My country! Ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war disbevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet,
Could tell our love and make thee know it
Among the nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee,
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else and we will dare!"

He rejoiced with her in her triumphs, he suffered with her in her defeats, he was as jealous of her good name as of his own.

"My country, right or wrong" voiced not his motto,—rather his affection for his native land made him note more acutely her faults. Recognizing so fully of what a splendid present and future she was capable, he could not bear to see her falter or turn back in her glorious career. He could not have so loved his country had he not loathed her shame. Whenever he saw her false to her highest ideals he poured forth an indignant protest. He illustrated his own lines:—

"He is a slave who dare not be in the right with two or three."

Lowell brought us nearer that ideal American for which we all long. He was a typical American and as such will be enthroned in our hearts by the side of Lincoln. Of good Puritan stock, endowed with the New England traditions, with its intellect, its culture, its humor, and its genius, he was as truly American as he was original, and there has been but one Lowell. Who else could have taken that rugged, homely Yankee dialect and by throwing into it his own personality have created the "Biglow Papers"? And what else could have accomplished what they achieved?

Lowell was a poet, a scholar, a critic, a statesman, a patriot and above all, a *man*, fresh from Nature's finest mould. And now that the lyre is still and the sweet voice hushed in death, with sorrowful hearts we realize what a void he has left. We think of the sweet songster who sang because he loved to sing, whose pure notes struck and answering chord in every heart; we read his prose, bright, keen, imaginative, showing a knowledge deep and wide; we pour over his verse, gushing forth like a mountain torrent, dashing along over rocks and boulders, sparkling with wit, scintillating with satire, bubbling and foaming with eloquence, or rippling along over mossy stones with a sound like trickling tears; we think of all he was to his country and to the world, and we sadly ask ourselves: "Who is there to take his place?"

He sought no praise, no popular applause; he served his country; he benefited his race; above all he set before his fellowmen a grand example of uncompromising fidelity to