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Latest literary essays and addresses of James Russell Lowell Item Preview [remove-circle](#) [Share](#) or [Embed This Item](#). by Lowell, James Russell,

Rees and Earl N. Harbert, University of Wisconsin Press, , pp. Of these only two qualify as full-scale historical biographies: Written shortly after his death by those who saw him as the dominant literary figure of America, these books have little to recommend them to the modern scholar. Both authors are more interested in praising than in portraying and evaluating Lowell. His nature was not always serene and pellucid; it was sometimes roiled by the currents that counter and cross in all of us; but it was without the least alloy of insincerity, and it was never darkened by the shadow of a selfish fear. His genius was an instrument that responded in affluent harmony to the power that made him a humorist and that made him a poet, and appointed him rarely to be quite either alone. That appears for the most part the clearest ideal of those who handle the English form, and he was altogether in the straight tradition. This tradition will surely not forfeit its great part in the world so long as we continue occasionally to know it by what is so solid in performance and so stainless in character. While Scudder, like Norton, is cautious and conservative when it comes to the proprieties of biography, one must credit him at least with an attempt at objectivity. It is a tribute to Scudder that subsequent biographers have been indebted to him and that his work was the standard biography for over sixty years. Ferris Greenslet, *James Russell Lowell: Perhaps the best brief biography of Lowell was that written for the Dictionary of American Biography by M.* Both studies are limited. As a southerner, Beatty seems incapable of forgiving Lowell for being a northerner and an abolitionist. He proved himself, from his undergraduate days, a dupe of the most irresponsible propaganda his age afforded. Perhaps it need disappoint only those who still consider Lowell primarily as a litterateur, as a man who gave American letters a dignity that it has seldom had in our history. A glib and superficial study, it contributes nothing to our understanding of Lowell. One of the difficulties that have faced his biographers and one of the reasons why the essential Lowell has in one way or another eluded all of his biographers, is that he was so diverse and so versatile. If comparison often places him second in some category of literary or other endeavors, rarely has one man demonstrated excellence in so many facets. The silence is entirely in keeping with nineteenth-century reticence; it indicates no scandal, but it cuts off a means of insight into Lowell as a creative artist. That he had a morbid streak far deeper than his contemporaries realized or reported can be deduced from many *passim* remarks. There is speculation that Maria was more devoted to abolition than he was and that she was more creative. Perhaps there are parts of the Lowell puzzle which we will never find, but until we understand more about the complexities of his personality we will never completely understand him as a creative artist. Perhaps the key to the puzzle lies in the works themselves. In almost every decade since he started writing, he has been praised by some critics and damned by others—sometimes for the same thing. One could generalize, however, that before his death Lowell was praised for things that were not true of him and after his death damned for things that were. Margaret Fuller was more sharply critical of Lowell and, in her estimate of his reputation, almost prophetic. We cannot say as much for Lowell, who, we must declare it, though to the grief of some friends, and the disgust of more, is absolutely wanting in the true spirit and tone of poesy. His interest in the moral questions of the day has supplied the want of vitality in himself; his great facility at versification has enabled him to fill the ear with a copious stream of pleasant sound. But his verse is stereotyped; his thought sounds no depth, and posterity will not remember him. Thomas Wentworth Higginson is perhaps representative of those who were extravagant in their evaluations of Lowell. The entire section is 6, words.

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But I should rather be inclined to say that it was his mind that was alienated from the present. Tu tensely and even vehemently engaged in the ques tion of the day, his politics were abstract and theoretic, and a quotation from Sophocles has as much weight with him as a constitutional precedent. His.

Edit Lowell was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, son of a Unitarian minister, and educated at Harvard. He began active life as a lawyer, but soon abandoned business, and devoted himself mainly to literature. In he published a 3rd vol. Among my Books appeared in 2 series, in and His later poems included various "Odes" in celebration of national events, some of which were collected in Under the Willows, The Cathedral, and Heartsease and Rue. In he was appointed U. He died atpage Elmwood, the house in which he was born. He was a strong advocate of the abolition of slavery. Lowell believed that the poet played an important role as a prophet and critic of society. He used poetry for reform, particularly in abolitionism. Lowell attempted to emulate the true Yankee accent in the dialogue of his characters, particularly in The Biglow Papers. Family and youth File: Charles Russell Lowell, Sr. Instead, his poem was printed and made available thanks to subscriptions paid by his classmates. Having decided to practice law, he enrolled at the Harvard Law School in and was admitted to the bar 2 years later. During this time, Lowell was admittedly depressed and often had suicidal thoughts. He once confided to a friend that he held a cocked pistol to his forehead and considered killing himself at the age of They had 4 children, though only Mabel born survived past infancy. Blanche, was born December 31, , but lived only 15 months; Rose, born in , survived only a few months as well; their only son, Walter, was born in but died in His grief over the loss of his first daughter in particular was expressed in his poem "The First Snowfall" He wrote a series on "Anti-Slavery in the United States" for the London Daily News, though it was discontinued by the editors after four articles in May After only a year, he was asked to contribute half as often to the Standard to make room for contributions from another writer and reformer named Edmund Quincy. A satire , it was published anonymously; in it, Lowell took good-natured jabs at his contemporary poets and critics. It proved popular, and the first three thousand copies sold out quickly. Her death left Lowell depressed and reclusive for 6 months, despite the birth of his son Walter by the end of the year. He wrote to a friend that death "is a private tutor. We have no fellow-scholars, and must lay our lessons to heart alone". He also edited volumes with biographical sketches for a series on British Poets. Francis James Child said that Lowell, who he deemed was typically "perverse", was able to "persist in being serious contrary to his impulses and his talents". He set sail on June 4 of that year, [57] leaving his daughter Mabel in the care of a governess named Frances Dunlap. Primarily, however, Lowell spent his time abroad studying languages, particularly German, which he found difficult. He stayed there, along with his daughter Mabel and her governess Frances Dunlap, until January However, in , surprising his friends, he became engaged to Frances Dunlap, who many described as simple and unattractive. Though Lowell advocated suffrage for blacks, he noted that their ability to vote could be troublesome. Even so, he wrote, "We believe the white race, by their intellectual and traditional superiority, will retain sufficient ascendancy to prevent any serious mischief from the new order of things". The majority of these people, he said, "treat ideas as ignorant persons do cherries. They think them unwholesome unless they are swallowed, stones and all. Abolitionist Samuel Joseph May accused Lowell of trying to quit the movement because of his association with Harvard and the Boston Brahmin culture: He urged for better conditions for factory workings, opposed capital punishment, and supported the temperance movement. His friend Longfellow was especially concerned about his fanaticism for temperance, worrying that Lowell would ask him to destroy his wine cellar. His friend Edward Everett Hale denied these allegations and, even then, Lowell considered joining the "Anti-Wine" club and later became a teetotaler during the early years of his first marriage. When he drank, he had wild mood swings, ranging from euphoria to frenzy. With its first issue in November of that year, he at once gave the magazine the stamp of high literature and of bold speech on public affairs. As he wrote to his friend Briggs, "I am back again to the

place I love best. I am sitting in my old garret, at my old desk, smoking my old pipe I begin to feel more like my old self than I have these ten years". For the Review, he served as a co-editor along with Charles Eliot Norton. Lowell himself was generally a pacifist. Even so, he wrote, "If the destruction of slavery is to be a consequence of the war, shall we regret it? If it be needful to the successful prosecution of the war, shall anyone oppose it? Under the Willows, and other poems was released in , [79] though Lowell originally wanted to title it The Voyage to the Vinland, and other poems. The book, dedicated to Norton, collected poems Lowell had written within the previous 20 years, and was his first poetry collection since They visited England, Paris, Switzerland, and Italy. While overseas, he received an honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Oxford and another from Cambridge University. They returned to the United States in the summer of James Russell Lowell, That year, he served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, speaking on behalf of presidential candidate Rutherford B. He had trouble socializing while in Spain, however, and amused himself by sending humorous dispatches to his political bosses in the United States, many of which were later collected and published posthumously in as Impressions of Spain. Lowell was already well known in England for his writing and, during his time there, he befriended fellow author Henry James, who referred to him as "conspicuously American". James Russell Lowell grave. Also that year, the Boston Critic dedicated a special issue to Lowell on his seventieth birthday to recollections and reminiscences by his friends, including former presidents Hayes and Benjamin Harrison and British Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone as well as Alfred Tennyson and Francis Parkman. His last few months, he was administered opium for the pain and was rarely fully conscious. Though not officially affiliated with them, he shared some of their ideals, including the belief that writers have an inherent insight into the moral nature of humanity and have an obligation for literary action along with their aesthetic function. Instead, he called for a natural literature, regardless of country, caste, or race, and warned against provincialism which might "put farther off the hope of one great brotherhood". I believe that no poet in this age can write much that is good unless he gives himself up to [the radical] tendency At least, no poem ever makes me respect its author which does not in some way convey a truth of philosophy. As he wrote in his introduction to The Biglow Papers, "few American writers or speakers wield their native language with the directness, precision, and force that are common as the day in the mother country". His poem, "Commemoration Ode", cost him sleep and his appetite, but was delivered on July 21, , [] after a hour writing binge. Mencken , and Ring Lardner. Here, a fictional version of Lowell says he does not believe that women will ever be equal to men in the arts and "the two sexes cannot be ranked counterparts".

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Lowell was elected the poet of the class of [11] and, as was tradition, was asked to recite an original poem on Class Day, the day before Commencement on July 17. Instead, his poem was printed and made available thanks to subscriptions paid by his classmates. Barzillai Frost because of his neglect of his studies. His Class Day poem satirized the social movements of the day; abolitionists, Thomas Carlyle, Emerson, and the Transcendentalists were treated. He ultimately enrolled at Harvard Law School in and was admitted to the bar two years later. During this time, he was admittedly depressed and often had suicidal thoughts. He once confided to a friend that he held a cocked pistol to his forehead and considered killing himself at the age of She was a member of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society and persuaded her husband to become an abolitionist. They had four children, though only one Mabel, born survived past infancy. Blanche was born December 31, , but lived only fifteen months; Rose, born in , survived only a few months as well; their only son Walter was born in but died in His grief over the death of his first daughter in particular was expressed in his poem "The First Snowfall" He wrote a series on "Anti-Slavery in the United States" for the Daily News, though his series was discontinued by the editors after four articles in May After only one year, he was asked to contribute half as often to the Standard to make room for contributions from Edmund Quincy, another writer and reformer. It proved a popular satire, and the first 3, copies sold out quickly. Her death left Lowell depressed and reclusive for six months, despite the birth of his son Walter by the end of the year. He wrote to a friend that death "is a private tutor. We have no fellow-scholars, and must lay our lessons to heart alone. He also edited volumes with biographical sketches for a series on British Poets. Francis James Child said that Lowell, whom he deemed was typically "perverse", was able to "persist in being serious contrary to his impulses and his talents". He set sail on June 4 of that year, [58] leaving his daughter Mabel in the care of a governess named Frances Dunlap. Primarily, however, Lowell spent his time abroad studying languages, particularly German, which he found difficult. He stayed there, along with his daughter Mabel and her governess Frances Dunlap, until January However, in , surprising his friends, he became engaged to Frances Dunlap, who many described as simple and unattractive. With its first issue in November of that year, he at once gave the magazine the stamp of high literature and of bold speech on public affairs. As he wrote to his friend Briggs, "I am back again to the place I love best. I am sitting in my old garret, at my old desk, smoking my old pipe I begin to feel more like my old self than I have these ten years. For the Review, he served as a coeditor along with Charles Eliot Norton. Lowell himself was generally a pacifist. Even so, he wrote, "If the destruction of slavery is to be a consequence of the war, shall we regret it? If it be needful to the successful prosecution of the war, shall anyone oppose it? His poem, "Commemoration Ode", cost him sleep and his appetite, but was delivered on July 21, , [75] after a hour writing binge. The book, dedicated to Norton, collected poems Lowell had written within the previous twenty years and was his first poetry collection since They visited England, Paris, Switzerland, and Italy. While overseas, he received an honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Oxford and another from Cambridge University. They returned to the United States in the summer of That year, he served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, speaking on behalf of presidential candidate Rutherford B. He had trouble socializing while in Spain, however, and amused himself by sending humorous dispatches to his political bosses in the United States, many of which were later collected and published posthumously in as Impressions of Spain. Lowell was already well known in England for his writing and, during his time there, befriended fellow author Henry James, who referred to him as "conspicuously American". Also that year, the Boston Critic dedicated a special issue to Lowell on his seventieth birthday to recollections and reminiscences by his friends, including former presidents Hayes and Benjamin Harrison and British Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone as well as Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Francis Parkman. His last few months, he was administered opium for the pain

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4: James Russell Lowell Books - Biography and List of Works - Author of 'A Fable For Critics'

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6: James Russell Lowell - Wikipedia

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