

**EARLY  
PROSE WRITINGS**

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Early Prose Writings by James Russell Lowell

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**JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL**

**EARLY  
PROSE WRITINGS**





**James Russell Lowell in 1843**

**Early Prose Writings**  
of  
**James Russell Lowell**

With a Prefatory Note by Dr. Hale, of  
Boston, and an Introduction by  
Walter Littlefield



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**Prefatory Note  
By Dr. Hale  
of Boston** 





I HAVE hardly an earlier recollection of my college life than those which are associated with Lowell. I was very young in college, and for three years I lived with my brother who was in the class in advance of mine. He was very intimate with Lowell, who was his classmate,—three months younger than he. I think that in their sophomore year Lowell was still living in his father's house, at Elmwood,—a mile distant from the college. Afterward he had his room quite near us. But at the time of which I speak, when Lowell was a sophomore, he and my brother would come in together after recitations,—would very likely study together,—would be arranging for meetings of the I. O. H., which was a literary society,—or the Institute of 1770, or of the Puddings or the Harvard Union,—and when 1837 came would be getting up the numbers of the *Harvardiana*.

The fourth volume of the *Harvardiana* was edited by Lowell, Hale, Scates, King and Lippitt, all of the Harvard class of 1838.

I have said, in public, a hundred times, that we knew as well, in 1838, when Lowell graduated, that he was to be a distinguished poet, widely esteemed, highly valued in the literature of the land, as we have since known that he had won that position. As nobody has as yet contradicted me, I will repeat that statement here,—as well founded,—and not merely the association of college friendship. Literature, I think, was more cared for and perhaps more highly valued in the college circles than it is now. Certainly the public opinion of the little "seminary" drifted in the lines which suggested the study of the authors of one race and of one time. Longfellow came to us before Lowell was half through college. He was cordiality itself in his intimacy with us boys,—and if Lowell had needed any stimulus in the study of the Continental masterpieces Longfellow's advent would have supplied it. But he did not. And every appreciation and every circumstance of his early life had led him to the kind of reading which occupied his under-

graduate life. Mrs. Putnam, his older sister, who had much of the charge of his childhood, told me that when he was almost a baby,—when he still took a daily nap in his cradle,—she entertained the boy by reading “The Faerie Queene” to him to his great delight.

While we were in college there appeared to us some of the young gentlemen from New York who were most interested in establishing Alpha Delta Phi, as a literary society which should affiliate the better students of many American colleges. Among the editors of *Harvardiana* of that year were Wheeler, Haywood, Hildreth, who became charter members of this new society,—and at the proper time they added to their number the young men whom I have named,—who became their successors in the editing of *Harvardiana*. I was one of the next year’s members,—and I suppose there is no harm in my saying that at the earlier meetings of Alpha Delta I heard Lowell read papers on the old English dramatists,—which are the basis of what he published afterwards in *The Boston Miscellany*.