

## By the same Author.

- POEMS. *Household Edition*. With Portrait. 12mo, \$1.50; full gilt, \$2.00.  
*Family Edition*. Illustrated. 8vo, \$2.50.  
*Handy-Volume Edition*. With Portrait. 2 vols. 32mo, \$2.50.  
*Illustrated Library Edition*. With Illustrations and Portrait. 8vo, \$3.00.
- BEFORE THE CURFEW. 16mo, \$1.00.  
SONGS IN MANY KEYS. 16mo, \$1.50.  
ASTRÆA: The Balance of Illusions. 16mo, 75 cents.  
SONGS OF MANY SEASONS. 16mo, \$2.00.  
THE SCHOOL-BOY. Illustrated. 8vo, \$2.50.  
THE IRON GATE, and Other Poems. With Portrait. 12mo, \$1.25.  
ILLUSTRATED POEMS. With etched Portrait and Illustrations. Royal 8vo, \$4.00.
- THE LAST LEAF. With twenty full-page phototypes, and other decorations. Quarto, \$10.00.  
GRANDMOTHER'S STORY, etc. 16mo, paper, 15 cents.  
THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, \$2.00.  
*Handy-Volume Edition*. 24mo, \$1.25.  
*New Birthday Edition*. With engraved title-page. 2 vols. 16mo, gilt top, \$2.50. Limited *First Edition*. 2 vols. 16mo, uncut, \$3.00.
- THE PROFESSOR AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE. Crown 8vo, \$2.00.  
*New Birthday Edition*, revised and with Notes. With engraved title-pages. 2 vols. 16mo, \$2.50. Limited *First Edition*. 16mo, uncut, \$3.00.
- THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE. Crown 8vo, \$2.00.  
*New Birthday Edition*, revised and with Notes. With engraved title-pages. 2 vols. 16mo, \$2.50. Limited *First Edition*. 16mo, uncut, \$3.00.
- THE BREAKFAST-TABLE SERIES. 3 vols. crown 8vo, \$6.00.  
*New Birthday Edition*. 6 vols. 16mo, \$7.50.
- ELSIE VENNER. Crown 8vo, \$2.00; paper, 50 cents.  
THE GUARDIAN ANGEL. A Novel. Crown 8vo, \$2.00; paper, 50 cents.
- PAGES FROM AN OLD VOLUME OF LIFE. Crown 8vo, \$2.00.  
A MORTAL ANTIPATHY. Crown 8vo, \$1.50.  
OUR HUNDRED DAYS IN EUROPE. Crown 8vo, \$1.50.  
MEDICAL ESSAYS. Crown 8vo, \$2.00.  
OVER THE TEACUPS. Crown 8vo, \$1.50.
- THE BREAKFAST-TABLE SERIES, together with *Elsie Venner*, *The Guardian Angel*, *Pages from an Old Volume of Life*, *A Mortal Antipathy*, *Medical Essays*, *Our Hundred Days in Europe*, and *Poems (Household Edition)*. 11 vols. \$18.50.
- JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY. 16mo, \$1.50.  
RALPH WALDO EMERSON. With Portrait. 16mo, \$1.25.
- SELECTIONS FROM BREAKFAST-TABLE SERIES, etc. 32mo, 75 cents.  
MY HUNT AFTER THE CAPTAIN, and Favorite Poems. 32mo, 40 cents.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY,  
BOSTON AND NEW YORK.

# OVER THE TEACUPS

650  
—  
56

BY

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

AUTHOR OF "THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE"



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
 HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY  
 The Riverside Press, Cambridge  
 1891

Copyright, 1890,  
By OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

*All rights reserved.*

EIGHTEENTH THOUSAND.



U-42324-50

*The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.*  
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Company.

THE Teapot represented on the title-page seems entitled to special mention. Its inscription shows it to be the gift of pupils to their Instructor, in the year 1738. The pupils were students of Harvard College; the Instructor was Henry Flynt, Fellow and Tutor from 1699 to 1754. The three nodules of *flint* on the escutcheon belong to what are called in heraldry "canting arms."

Henry Flynt was a bachelor. The Teapot passed by descent to his niece Dorothy (Quincy) Jackson, from her to her daughter Mary (Jackson) Wendell, then to *her* daughter Sarah (Wendell) Holmes, and from her to her son, the present owner,

O. W. H.

# OVER THE TEACUPS.



## I.

### INTRODUCTION.

THIS series of papers was begun in March, 1888. A single number was printed, when it was interrupted by the course of events, and not resumed until nearly two years later, in January, 1890. The plan of the series was not formed in my mind when I wrote the first number. In returning to my task I found that my original plan had shaped itself in the underground laboratory of my thought so that some changes had to be made in what I had written. As I proceeded, the slight story which formed a part of my programme developed itself without any need of much contrivance on my part. Given certain characters in a writer's conception, if they are real to him, as they ought to be, they will act in such or such a way, according to the law of their nature. It was pretty safe to assume that intimate relations would spring up between some members of our mixed company ; and it was not rash to conjecture that some of these intimacies might end in such attachment as would furnish us hints, at least, of a love-story.

As to the course of the conversations which would take place, very little could be guessed beforehand.