



The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table

By Oliver Wendell Holmes

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The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table (1858) is a collection of essays written by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. The essays were originally published in the Atlantic Monthly in 1857 and 1858 before being collected in book form. The author had written two essays with the same name which were published in the earlier The New-England Magazine in November 1831 and February 1832, which are alluded to in a mention of an "interruption" at the very first essay. The essays take the form of a chiefly one-sided dialogue between the unnamed Author and the other residents of a New England boarding house who are known only by their profession, location at the table or other defining characteristics. The topics discussed range from an essay on the unexpected benefits of old age to the finest place to site a dwelling and comments on the nature of conversation itself. The tone of the book is distinctly Yankee and takes a seriocomic approach to the subject matter. (*Information from Wikipedia)

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