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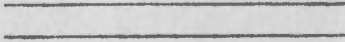
Subject A Study of the Structure of Emerson's Essays.

Name Luella M. Bussey.

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A Study of the Structure of Emerson's Essays.



A Thesis submitted to the faculty of the
Graduate School of the University of Minnesota by

Luella M. Bussey

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts.

May 16, 1914.

Outline.

- A. Introduction.
- B. Section I.--- Emerson's Philosophy of Art.
- C. Section II.-- The Unity of Subject Matter in Emerson's Essays as a Whole. Are his essays in any way an attempt to express a unified impression of life and its meaning, and are they thus related to each other in subject matter?
- D. Section III.-- The General Plan of Treatment in the Essay. Is there any large form of structure followed out at all consistently?
- E. Section IV.--- The General Characteristics of Style in Paragraph and Sentence.
- F. Conclusion.

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R E P O R T
of
COMMITTEE ON THESIS

THE undersigned, acting as a committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted by Miss Luella Mae Bussey for the degree of Master of Arts.

They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

J. M. Flinn
Chairman
Richard Burton
W. L. Nelson

May 21 1917

Miss Bussey appeared for oral examination on Thursday, May 21st, and her examination was approved by the committee appointed for that purpose.

J. M. Flinn

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 - VII. Society and Solitude.
 - VIII. Letters and Social Aims.
 - X. Lectures and Biographical Sketches.
 - XI. Miscellanies.
 - XII. Natural History of Intellect.
- Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1820-1824
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There is an old New England myth, still associated with the memory of Emerson, which epitomizes the criticisms of all his literary critics. The fable avers that Emerson once had a dream, in which he journeyed to Egypt and gazed long and intently on the ancient Sphinx. He awoke with a start, with the words of the Sphinx still ringing in his ears "You're another."

In spite of the liberal spirit of inquiry and investigation which characterized the New England of the early nineteenth century, there were few people outside of a little group of "idle dreamers" and "self-centralized intellectualists" who did not regard their most eminent thinker as, "mystical, revolutionary, crazy and affected; an imitator of Carlyle, and one who did not himself know what he meant." (1) The term "Transcendentalism", borrowed from Kant, was satirically applied to the "emotionalism" of Emerson and his little band of thinkers, and was promiscuously applied to all attempts at defining life on a spiritualistic basis. Emerson is regarded as ultimately inexplicable by many of his critics, and his philosophy of life defies interpretation.

But the "riddle" of Emerson's thoughts assumed by his critics; is only made the more confusing, by the utter lack of system and method attributed to all his literary expression. "When Emerson composed a lecture, he sifted out of his journal, thoughts which pertained to his theme and put them loosely into a paragraph.----He did not write with a running pen. His essay or lecture was a composite product of recombined thoughts and ideas, and when he wrote, he merely put them together again.----Thinking for him was not deliberate; neither was writing". (2) Such according to Professor George E. Woodberry was Emerson's method of writing his essays. "The past has baked the loaf, and in the strength of its bread the critic

(1) George E. Woodberry, Life of Emerson, P. 66.

(2) George E. Woodberry, Life of Emerson, P. 101.

would attack the oven." Emerson, the author of this figure is himself denied the oven which baked his loaves. We are told that his loaves are not baked, except as they harden in their own heat; his essays are not moulded and shaped with care. They are but the thoughts which have been jotted down in moments of ecstasy and inspiration.

In this opinion other critics concur. Carlyle says that Emerson's paragraphs "are not as beaten ingots; but as beautiful square bags of duck shot, held together by canvas;" that his first volume of essays notably "has no system what ever, but stretches beyond all systems." (1) Indeed Emerson himself confesses that he launched "little rafts afloat,---no ship building, no clipper, no skiff ever,---but only boards and logs tied together." (2) It is not enough that Emerson the man could charm his listeners; as an orator, Emerson could depend on his personal magnetism, but as an essayist form is indispensable. "In neither essay nor lecture," according to Richard Garnett, "so far as regards the literary form of the entire composition, distinguished from force and felicity of individual sentences, can he be considered as a classic model. The essay need not be too severely logical, yet a just conception of its nature requires a more harmonious proportion and a more consistent and intelligent direction towards a single definite end than we find in Emerson." (3)

W. C. Brownell maintains that, "he had no sense of composition; his compositions are not composed. They do not constitute objective creations. They have no construction, no organic quality, no evolution.---- His essays often begin happily with an arousing stimulant utterance, but there is no graded approach to any distinguishable middle, followed by some end; they do not terminate, they merely cease." (4) "Art in its constructive sense found no echo in Emerson's nature." (5) Few critics have denied Emerson

- (1) Emerson, Essays, Second Series, Volume 111, P. 290 Notes
- (2) Emerson, Letter to Carlyle, 1890.
- (3) Richard Garnett, Essays of an Ex-Librarian, P. 310.
- (4) W. C. Brownell, American Prose Masters, P. 184.
- (5) W. C. Brownell, American Prose Masters, P. 185.

power. With Augustine Birrel they admit that, "unlike the ugly duckling in the fairy tale, he emits sparks with the most electrical of cats,---but if one were to name the most non-sequacious author one had ever read, he could not help naming Emerson.---He makes no terms with his readers,--he gives them neither thread nor clue, and thus robs them of the keenest pleasures of reading, that of being beforehand with the author and going shares with him in his own thoughts." (1)

The stigma of "Transcendentalism" has been no more ruthlessly applied to characterize Emerson's philosophy, than have the adjectives, unsystematic, illogical and disconnected, to characterize his form of writing. Not only have his thoughts seemed to Augustine Birrel "thin and vague", (2) but his style has been compared to "thoughts shoveled down like coal in a cellar and left in a heap to be sorted." (3) The sentence was his unit, we are told; eloquence rather than exposition, his aim. His maxims and truisms have instant effect, but in the words of Carlyle, "they do not sometimes stick to their foregoers and their followers". His paragraphs are "incomprehensible, each sentence within, an infinitely repellent particle." His essays are but the expanded notes of his journal, and present merely a confusion of incomplete ideas. In short, Emerson's whole body of essays and lectures are but the intuitive glimpses of a mystical genius. That Emerson by his strains of eloquence and pungent phrases gave his New England hearers "ravishing glimpses of a new ideal," has not been denied. (4) In the words of Herbert Grimm, "some sentences shot like a beam of light into my soul," or of Matthew Arnold, "snatches of his strain fixed themselves in my mind as imperishably as any of the eloquent words I can quote." (5) There is little doubt that the essays and lectures are brilliant illuminations of great moral truths in striking epigrams. But whether they are more than this is the question which not only the casual reader of Emerson is so ready to answer in the negative, but critics themselves

(1) Augustine Birrel, *Obiter Dicta*, P.222-223-224.

(2) Augustine Birrel, *Obiter Dicta*, P. 220.

(3) E. H. L. Watson, "Unconscious Humorist," *The Essay*, P.5.

(4) Lowell--*My Study Window*, P. 12.

(5) Matthew Arnold, *Discourses in America*, P. 146.

find but few dissenting votes.

Put there is, on the part of a few, a certain confidence in Emerson's intellectual insight, inspired by his personality, which suggests some justification for the dissenting vote of the minority. There is the persisting query, recurring to the minds of these few, could so eminent a thinker as Emerson, (to whom has been conceded by his most antagonistic critics, a certain profundity and individuality of thought),--could he have been but the haphazard, hit and miss, illogical thinker and author that he is represented? Could Emerson with his definite views about life, and his fixed mental habits avoid being systematic?

His journal is full of allusions to his plans for acquiring knowledge and style. In speaking of his journal, he says: "The exercise which practice of Composition gives to this faculty (of imagination) is the cause which has swelled these pages to a voluminous extent." (1) Another extract from his journal further reveals his mental habits: "I propose to read before breakfast every A. M. a chapter in Greek testament, afterwards Le Clerc, then Nutford (history) Cicero, Everett, or Burke, Scott, Pope, Dryden." (2) "I hereby make resolution to acquaint myself with Greek antiquities and history by long study. To which end I hereby dedicate and devote to putting down of sentences, original and quoted, with regard to Greece, historical, poetical and critical,--page forty-seven of this register. I devote page forty-five to the notation of books to be sought." (3)

(3) Such passages in his Journal, of which there are not a few, do not suggest an idle dreaming youth for their author, but a persistent, persevering young scholar. Professor Woodberry in his life of Emerson, discloses further facts of Emerson's methods of thinking and reading. "The boyhood of the Emerson family was essentially studious. The boys were bred on good

- (1) Emerson's Journal, 1820-1824, P. 360-1
- (2) Emerson's Journal, 1824-1832, P. 20
- (3) Emerson's Journal, 1820-1824, P. 22-3.

literature. What most attracted them was the form of good writing. The first awakening of their minds was to a perception of rhetoric and to the sonorousness of declamatory prose. School boys at that time went wild over the turn of a phrase, the fall of a period. Boston boys at that time were excited by the grace of a spoken word. Rhetoric was a live art." (1) During his undergraduate days at Harvard, Emerson belonged to the "Pythologian Society" which by the preamble to its constitution is stated to have been interested primarily in the form of good prose. Emerson records in his journal, a portion of this preamble, which he helped to draw up. "The great design of public education is to qualify men for usefulness in active life; and the principal arts by which we can be useful are those of writing and speaking.--We are told there should be constant and unwearied practice in order to gain excellence in these arts." (2) There is no denying that Emerson's mature thoughts are the intuitive flashes of poetical insight. But to deny that such oracular expressions did not find their root and growth in a fundamental acquaintance with classic authors, sought deliberately and consistently in his youth, is hardly consistent with the facts of his life. Emerson's education and training may not have been instructive in the literal sense of the word, but it was distinctly provocative of all that he later claimed to be. His thoughts may have bubbled forth spontaneously and intuitively, but his knowledge was diligently and deliberately acquired. There is something methodical even in the very lack of method ascribed to Emerson. There is the fact that he kept a journal and recorded his thoughts in orderly form, which balances the fact that his method for putting those thoughts together to form an essay was mechanical. There are the facts, that he set aside pages of his journal for "phrases for use." (3) which reveals an early keenness for correct diction; that he wrote paragraphs on "The Right Word" (4) which intimates his belief in the laws of composition; there are these facts to balance the accusations

- (1) Woodberry, Life of Emerson, P. 11.
- (2) Emerson's Journal, 1820-24, P. 35.
- (3) Emerson's Journal, 1820-1824, P. 7.
- (4) Emerson's Journal, 1824-1832, P. 401.

of his critics that he wrote entirely unconsciously.

There is little doubt in reading Emerson's Journal that he was keenly sensitive to a fine pure prose style. His youthful admiration for Edward Everett's "eloquent style, made sacred and impregnable by the subject he had to enforce," kindled itself into a burning desire to be a successful master of style himself. His inherited love for eloquence became an ambition. In his own words, he "burned after the aliquid immensum infinite-risque which Cicero desired." (2) In his journal he confesses, "I have hoped to put on eloquence as a robe." (3) In speaking of a sermon by Doctor Channing he said, "the language was a transparent medium." (4) Again he comments, "The manner of using language is surely the most decisive test of intellectual power." (5) His critics have not denied him power, but they have denied him conscious power and attributed his power to prophetic genius. They have denied him orderliness and system. They have deemed him a seer rather than a self-willed intellectuatist; a poet rather than a philosopher. These passages from his journals suggest certain definite ambitions and an orderly if not a conventional method of thinking and writing on the part of Emerson. Can it be that a few isolated confessions in a man's journals are to have more weight in determining whether he has system or not, than the essays themselves? It is not the mechanical method of putting thoughts together to comprise an essay which determines its plan or lack of plan: it seems rather the inherent relation of the thoughts themselves. A man may collect his thoughts for an essay, one at a time from a notebook, and still retain unity and coherence of idea. Might not the result of such an apparent lack of method be at least as unified and complete as a puzzle picture which is made up of various shapes and sizes, and yet fits readily into one solid and consistent whole? In his Journal Emerson writes: "We have thoughts but we do not know what to do with them; materials but we cannot get high enough to see them in their order of reason. We cannot get warm

- (1) Emerson's Journal, 1820-1824, P. 76.
- (2) George E. Woodberry, Life of Emerson, P. 24.
- (3) Emerson's Journal, 1820-1824, P. 367.
- (4) Emerson's Journal, 1824-1832, P. 449.

enough to have them exert their natural affinities and throw themselves into crystal." (1) If we think high enough and far enough, the order of our thinking is inevitable. Intellectual force of any kind must show itself, and language is the vehicle.

From this point of view, is it so obvious that Emerson is totally lacking in system and method? The belief that he has no structure, no connection, no general form of any kind, has prevented us from understanding what ever structure or plan he may have. Are his thoughts isolated and disconnected, or is their relation merely subtle? In short, is Emerson really so "obscure"; or is there not reason to believe that he is merely difficult? Are his "bags of duck shot" merely "tied together by canvas," and is his "raft of logs" type of unity the only one he achieves? Is the lack of obvious connection in the course of his thought, an apparent or real lack; or does not the author address the mind of the reader rather than the eye, and thus create confusion? These are the questions which it is the task of this paper to answer. It seems quite apparent that Emerson had some definite mental habits. If he was not the scholar in a narrowed sense, neither was he the poet and the dreamer in a derogatory sense. That he aimed at intellectual development and expression and believed in the larger rules of composition and style, is his own confession. (2) Whatever style or structure may be safely attributed to Emerson's prose works, then, must come from a complete study of the Essays themselves. That Emerson is not a conventional essay writer in the same sense that MacCaulay is, or that he is not one of the great prose writers of the ages, is not to be denied. But that he did possess a certain general plan of treatment for all his subjects; that he did endeavor to express completely and consistently throughout his essays as a whole, a philosophy about life is the object of this study to discover. There is something to be said about Emerson's essays which suggests that the common criticism of their lack of structure and composition, has become for the

(1). Emerson's Journal, 1824-32, P.520

(2). Journal of Emerson, 1824-32, P. 401

most part but a literary habit.

It is perhaps a significant fact to be acknowledged here, by way of further introduction, that Emerson was somewhat reticent about publishing his works. Spoken words with their ring of eloquence, bore for him far more charm than written ones. As Shakespeare found the five act drama the most suitable medium through which to express his genius, so Emerson found that lecture room and the pulpit offered the greater opportunities for self expression. When urged to publish he did so reluctantly. He never could completely ignore his original calling as a preacher, and when he finally broke from the church he found even greater opportunities on the lecture platform. The demands of the lecture account for many of the peculiarities which characterize Emerson as an author. Consequently his essays very often show a taste and talent for treating the written as if it were spoken.

Of Emerson's twelve volumes of published works, only eight were published under his own direction. The selection and publication of certain other manuscripts was made in pursuance of the authority given by him to his literary executor, Mr. J. E. Cabot. The annoying experience which Emerson had had in connection with volume eight of his complete works, made him eager to relinquish all responsibility of revising and selecting what remained of his unpublished works. Sometime, perhaps in 1870, Emerson learned that a London publisher was intending, without consulting him, to make up a volume of his uncollected writings of the Dial and elsewhere. He was much distressed by the news and wrote immediately to have the publication stopped if possible. English publishers agreed to do so, but on the one condition, that Emerson himself make a selection of papers and add a few new ones, sending advance sheets to England so that the publication would appear simultaneously in England and America. Under pressure, Emerson consented to do so, but when his house burned in 1872 and his health was failing, he was forced to give it up and allow it to be done for him by his eager publishers. (1). Consequently there are but seven volumes

(1) Volume 8. Complete works of Emerson. Preface.

which Emerson intended for publication. When however, at the close of his life, he foresaw the probability of miscellaneous publications after his death, he appointed Mr. Cabot, his literary executor, to withhold or publish manuscripts as he saw fit. But such a precaution was but the choice of the lesser of two evils. Emerson's completed works thus included twelve volumes, but only seven of these were published under Emerson's direction. Of these seven there is Volume Nine, Poetry; Volume Five, "English Traits", is a book of travel, so that there remain but five volumes which can fairly answer for Emerson's structure. Of these five there is one, "Representative Men", which by the nature of its subject matter in contrast to that of the other four volumes, must be considered by itself elsewhere. Strictly speaking then, there are but four volumes of Essays (Volumes 2, 3, 6, 7.) published as such, the analysis of which can in any way bear upon the primary question of structure which this thesis proposes to discuss.

In attempting to solve the riddle of Emerson's thoughts then by means of determining what general plan of treatment he had for expressing them, it will be necessary first to determine Emerson's own theory of writing and trace out his own conception of the relation between thought and form. That Emerson was an individualist even in the style of his essays is not to be doubted. But that his individualism consisted in an individual theory rather than an absence of one, is the task of this paper to show. A brief survey of Emerson's philosophy of art will suggest certain general characteristics which ought consistently to appear in his essays themselves. According to his own conception, the relation of the thoughts themselves determines the form and sequence of their expression. (1) If the ideas of Emerson bear any logical connection one to another, the form of the essay is predetermined by the relation of the thoughts themselves. Emerson's own theory of writing can be adequately judged only by an analysis of the essays themselves in their relation to the three

(1). Emerson's Journal, 1824-32, P. 415.

following questions:

First; Are the essays of Emerson as a whole, in any way an attempt to express a unified impression of life and its meaning, and are the essays thus related to each other in subject matter?

Second; Is there any general plan of treatment in his essays and is there any large form of structure followed out at all consistently?

Third; Are there any general characteristics of style in paragraph and sentence?

Emerson's Essays are very obviously lacking in the formality of structure which characterizes many writers less mystical than he is. However, it is only fair to judge the essays of a man who prided himself on being an intellectualist, and of whom it has been said that he appealed essentially to reason as his final and supreme authority, on a basis which includes some element of reason and logic. This may be the basis of his own theory of writing, which he himself has very tersely summed up in the lines; "Things uttered in words, must affirm themselves, or no forms of logic or of oath can give it evidence. The sentence must contain its own apology for being spoken" (1) This, however is but an epigrammatic rendering of a rather complex theory of art, which it will be the purpose of the next few pages to elucidate.

Aristotle defined Art, universally as the "Creative Spirit." Emerson broadened this conception somewhat, and incorporated into its meaning, a certain passive element which he believed to be unconscious in the artist. The same "Universalism" which characterizes Emerson's attitude toward other phases of life, is apparent in his philosophy of art.

The Enigma of Genius has puzzled wise men ever since there have been great works of Art to account for, and the precocity of youths has practically defied explanation on any materialistic basis. But for Emerson, the man of genius was merely a man with a greater capacity for receiving that which was universally accessible to all. That hereditary and environmental forces, had some part to play in hindering or assisting this mysterious influx, Emerson would hardly deny. But that either one entirely accounted for the phenomenon we call genius, he was ready to deny vehemently. Almost paradoxical with his well known doctrine of Individualism, stands Emerson's philosophy of Universalism. All that is permanent in Art, in Letters, in Science, in Ethics and in History,

(1). Emerson's Journal, 1824-1832, P. 153.

belongs by some occult relation to a "Universal Harmony," of which the individual is but a microcosmic manifestation. In spite of the infinite variety which appears at the surface of things, there is unity at the center. All that man expresses and has through the countless ages expressed, represents a partial revelation of some guiding force and power. Consequently, the freedom of mankind is not so much the free will to act, as it is to receive. Man is not so much active, as he is receptive. A man's power is dependent on a source of inspiration which transcends his own ability to think and to act, and genius looks to something beyond heredity or environment for its source of inspiration.

Genius is but the concentrated expression of a single phase of life's universal essence, and exists irrespective of the artist's will or inclination. Much that the artist does, is, by the very nature of things, necessary and inevitable. In proportion to the entirety with which a man submits himself to the spiritual forces of his age and environment, will he represent to the future, those permanent and inevitable principles which exist in the Universe. Consequently a man is sometimes wiser than he knows; his powers are beyond his control. As a curious proof of this conviction, Emerson cites the illustration that very often an artist does not feel himself to be the parent of his work, and is much surprised at the effect which it has upon its admirers. "Our Arts are happy bits. We are like the musician on the lake, whose melody is sweeter than he knows." (1)

It is this unconscious element in art which distinguishes Emerson's conception. It was Emerson's favorite test of the genius of others, to recognise in more illuminating expression, the very thoughts which he himself sought to express. In praise of his literary favorite, Montaigne, he says, "I should have said the same myself." (2) The implication from this

(1) Emerson's Works--Volume of Uncollected Writings, "Thoughts on Art,"

(2) Emerson's Journal, 1824-32, P. 441

curious compliment to others is, that the more great minds there are which acknowledge a certain thought, the greater is the evidence that the thought is worth while; that it is a thought of universal importance. The fact that the painter or sculptor or the poet is unaware of the implied meaning in his Art is only further evidence of the overpowering force of Nature. The artistic impulse is but the inlet of a higher illumination which comes from Nature herself. "Man is Nature's finer successes in self explication. His love of speech, painting and Nature are but still finer successes. The artist employs symbols to convey this larger sense to his fellow men." (1) A man's style is thus only part under his control. In eloquence the greatest power is felt when a man loses himself in his art. A man's intellectual voice has its own proper tone and manner which, when he is not thinking of it, it will always assume. He may consciously imitate another's or attempt to remodel his own, but at some critical moment, where he is lost in his inspiration, it will again assume its original form. "The power to detach and to magnify by detaching is the essence of Rhetoric in the hands of the orator and poet. The power depends on the depth of the artist's insight of the object he contemplates." (2) "The best that there is of art, is something which rules do not teach; something beyond the talent in skillful surfaces and outlines; it is a radiation from the work of human character, of the deepest and simplest attributes of that Nature of which we are a part" (3) It is this Pantheistic conception of Nature which isolates Emerson's theory of Style in Art.

An "unconscious art", therefore must necessarily imply elements (or the lack of elements) in it, which the ordinary theory of Art does not accept. A man's style and form, according to this notion, is not dependent on his will or inclination. A man's logic, system or clearness is not a matter to be determined by an outline or chart. Skill in mechanical arrange-

- (1) Essay on Art, Vol. 2, Emerson's Complete Works, P. 352
- (2) Essay on Art, Vol. 2, Emerson's Complete Works, P. 355
- (3) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 2, "Art", P. 358

ment and method in pursuance of rules of labor, do not constitute the finer charms of Art. "The hand can never execute anything higher than the character can inspire" (1) But the significant feature of Emerson's theory is yet another deduction from this rather apparent truism. It is readily conceded that to have system and inclination, does not make a genius. A genius according to the common conception needs inspiration as well. But Emerson maintains that a genius may not be consciously systematic or regular in his artistic expression; that he may not consciously adopt a similar mould in which to cast all his thoughts, but that if he is a genius of the first order, his form and style are predetermined by the sublimity of the thoughts which he seeks to express.(2) In short, "great thought makes its own forms." (3). In other words, it is inconsistent to admit a man has great genius in one breath, and yet deny in the next, that he has any claim to a general and consistent form through which to express it. Form is the necessary sequel to genius and the former is no more deliberate and self-willed than the latter. Style and Thought cannot be separated, each is dependent on the other. In commenting on Plato, Emerson says; "He is intellectual in his aim; therefore in expression he is literary." (4) The latter fact is the inevitable result of the former.

What ever plan or form there is to Emerson's essays then, will not be found by examining the evidence of under what circumstances they were written, but by examining the essays themselves. If we grant Emerson a certain elevation of thought, we should assume that he has an adequate power over language, and examine his essays unprejudiced by the casual confessions in his journal. Thought makes everything fit for use, and the style of writing of an omniscient man should be as infallible as his knowledge.

But there is one more point to be considered in

- (1) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 2, "Art," P 317
- (2) G. E. Woodberry, Life of Emerson, P. 89.
- (3) Emerson's Journal, 1824-32, P. 552.
- (4) Emerson's Works, Vol. 4, P. 75, Essay on Plato.

Emerson's Philosophy of Writing which has not been thus far mentioned. If it should be granted that "Great thought makes its own form," there would still be room for dispute over what constitutes the standard forms. Emerson might still be conceded a form all his own, and yet remain as unintelligible and obscure as some of his critics have declared him to be. The "form" of the essay which intends to enlighten the world, rather than merely to entertain, is considered to be a medium through which comprehension of the author's thoughts is facilitated. The skeleton of an essay should, we are told, be just obscure enough so as not to attract attention away from the style of writing, and yet obvious enough to guide the reader's mind through a maze of premises, assertions et cetera, clear through to the final conclusion. When all the intricacies of style and charm have faded into a mist of general impression, the skeleton of general propositions ought to remain fast and clear in the memory. Form in this sense is indispensable in an essay. But the standard form of a didactic essay presupposes something more. It presupposes labels, signposts and signals of what is coming, as well as paragraphs inserted here and there, to repeat in a nut shell, all that has been read thus far. It is too much for the ordinary mind to follow the thread of a man's thoughts without these little aids along the way; these little warnings that now there is a jog in direction, now a halt to untie a knot, and there a sudden twist or turn. Our modern essayists, John Morley or William Mallock, are adepts in presenting their thoughts in a lucid and concise fashion. In William Mallock's essay on "The Scientific Basis for Optimism," which I choose as one representing accuracy and precision of form, one is at no time, except by his own fault, at a loss to know at just what point in the discussion he has arrived. After clearing away a few erroneous impressions which the connotations of his title suggest, the author halts for a moment with, "And

now we come to the question which I propose to ask-- Are its propositions true? Or are we certain that they are true? And if certain, on what kind of evidence do we base our certainty?" By Reductio ad absurdum, he proves each question in turn to be answerable only in the negative. All along the way, such sign posts as "And now let us turn;" "To sum up then;" "How as I pointed out;" and "all this while we have been supposing," et cetera, point out a new proposition or a subtle distinction in interpretation.

To the reader who is accustomed to such assistance, no doubt Emerson's thoughts must seem obscure. To read Mallock and then Emerson is like getting used to a crutch and then suddenly abandoning it. Emerson's essays are obviously lacking in the structural preciseness of such essayists as Morley or Mallock. But he is not therefore lacking in all semblance to form and system. The greatest defect in Emerson's Essays, according to the standards of the critics themselves, is a lack in obvious connection between sentences and paragraphs. But as David Maulsby has said, in a passage quoted previously, "this lack is commonly apparent, not real."

Emerson did not believe in signposts. He addressed more particularly the mind rather than the eye and assumed that his readers were as nimble in intellectual jumping as he was himself. His paragraphs he assumed were related, but he felt no obligation to point out that relation. His sentences grew out of others, but he believed that their connection was inherent, and needed no reinforcing connectives. "Things uttered in words must affirm themselves, or no forms of logic or of oath can give them evidence. The sentence must contain its own apology for being spoken." It is his old Doctrine of Self Reliance stretched almost humorously in its application, to the paragraphs of his essays. Each paragraph and sentence must rely on itself for its own power and

force, in order that the best completed effect should be obtained. His moral philosophy expressed in such extravagant paradoxes as, "Society in Solitude," "Universalism in Individualism," suggests a parallel Rhetorical philosophy expressed in such paradoxes as Coherence in Independence or Unity in Variety.

Emerson believed then, that correct thinking made correct writing and that great thought provided its own adequate form of expression. Coherence and Unity, he believed, were principles which applied primarily to thought, and did not need the assistance of rules and definitions to accomplish their ends. If his essays are lacking in connectives, we shall see if they are also lacking in outline; if they lack the conventional plan, we shall see whether they are totally lacking in system by examining carefully the essays themselves.

Henry James says that Emerson had but a single style and manner which he used even in his notes and Journals. (1). It is a similar characteristic that he had a rare singleness in his nature, and that his thoughts possessed an unusual homogeneity. Most of us are made up of "ill-assorted pieces", but in Emerson's "transmitted Unity", there were no crowding elements. (2) Life presented him with but a single purpose and never bribed him to look at anything but the soul. Consequently, in spite of the apparent variety of titles which introduce his pages, there is a consistent unity of subject matter preserved throughout the whole body of essays. The thorough reader of Emerson feels entirely at home after the first half dozen essays, and begins to look forward to a further illumination of that fundamental truth which he is just beginning to grasp.

If there is one predominant impression of Emerson's essays which remains with even the casual reader, it is this very impression of the completeness with which the author has expressed his views about life and living. Emerson, after all has but one thing to say to the world, and his essays constitute but the very consistent application of this single truth, to the various phases of life which came under his observation and reflection. This unity of subject matter is not readily apparent at first. It takes Emerson some half dozen essays or more to establish his premise. Emerson, it is true was not a systematic philosopher who expounded upon a certain set of rigid hypotheses. He was rather a commenting philosopher who attempted informally to apply his doctrine to all the phases of life which he recognized as common to all mankind. Therefore, although Emerson cannot be said to be a formal philosopher, he may not justly be called merely a collector of maxims, or a poetic commentator upon life. There is unity in Emerson's essays as a whole, and there appears to have been an effort on the part of the author to express himself

- (1) Partial Portraits --- P. 17.
(2) Partial Portraits --- P. 5 & 9.

fully and completely on all that related to his one fundamental premise. This premise is most clearly summarized in the essay, "The Over Soul", and will be but briefly suggested here.

In their persistent attempts to silence all those who would conceive of a larger hope for mankind, "Materialists", so called, have ever made their appeal to experience. But however much we may disparage this "hope which springs eternal", it still remains necessary to explain that hope. "We grant that human life is mean, but how did we find out that it was mean? What is the ground of this uneasiness of ours; of this old discontent? What is the universal sense of want and ignorance but the fine impende by which the soul makes its enormous claim?" (1). When man considers the mysteries attending the source from which he sprang, he seems to resemble a stream, the source of which is for the most part hidden. "Our being is descending into us from we know not whence" (2). Man seems not a cause of energy and life, so much as a result of some tremendous power. There seems to be a great enveloping nature "in which we rest as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that unity within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other". (3). All life seems to show that the soul of man is not "an organ but exercises and animates all organs; it is not a function like the power of memory, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty but a light; it is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and will. It is the background of our being in which we lie, an immensity not possessed, and that cannot be possessed. Man is the facade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide". (4). Life is surrounded and circumscribed by a Universal Soul which transcends experience and abolishes time and space.

Within the Over Soul lies the germ of intellectual growth and genius. The highest potentiality lies within each individual, and every divine impulse which breaks the bounds of the finite and the visible,

- (1) Emerson's Essays, Vol 11. P. 267 The Over Soul
- (2) Emerson's Essays, Vol 11. P. 268 The Over Soul
- (3) The Over Soul. P. 266 Vol 11.
- (4) The Over Soul P. 270 Vol.11.

lifts a man, not into the realm of a particular virtue, but into a region which contains them all. The Soul is the "perceiver and revealer" of a truth which envelops the Universe. (1) Now and then an individual feels himself invaded or possessed by this Universal spirit. A general enthusiasm attends this divine influx, the character and duration of which vary from a poetic ecstasy or trance, to a prophetic inspiration or revelation. The nature of these revelations is the same; they are all manifestations of the same absolute law. "Revelation is but the disclosure of the soul". When this same "Omniscience" takes hold of the intellect we have genius of a similar divine character.

This doctrine of the Over Soul offers a fitting introduction to Emerson's Essays as a whole, for it establishes the Doctrine of the Universal Mind on which either all his other thoughts are dependent, or of which they are strikingly illustrative. (2) This Unity which underlies the "Flowing Nature through endless cycles of disguises", is the basis of Emerson's whole philosophy. In Emerson's "Philosophy of History" (1856-57) he outlined the following list of lectures in which he meant to concern himself with the larger phases of life as they appeared to pertain to this fundamental doctrine. (3). Besides the lecture entitled Introduction, there appear the following: (1) Humanity of Science, (2) Art (3) Literature (4) Politics (5) Religion (6) Society (7) Trades and Professions (8) Manners (9) Ethics (10) Present Age (11) Individualism. In his journal likewise Emerson lays out the course in advance, with the belief that the "Over Soul" is the foundation of all. I quote here the eleven short sentences which briefly apply this doctrine to the phases of life suggested in the above classification.

1. There is one Soul.
2. It is related to the world.
3. Art is its action thereon.
4. Science finds its methods.

(1) The Over Soul, P. 279 Vol. 11.

(2) Appendix to Edition of Emerson by E. W. Emerson
Vol 11. P. 379

(3) See Vol II of Complete Works, P. 580, Appendix.

5. Literature is its record.
6. Religion is the emotion of reverence that it inspires.
7. Ethics is the soul illustrated in human life
8. Society is the finding of this soul by individuals, in each other.
9. Trades are the learning the soul in nature by labor.
10. Politics is the activity of the soul illustrated by power.
11. Manners are silent and mediate expressions of the soul. (1).

In the present centenary edition of Emerson's complete works, the essays and lectures do not appear under the titles suggested by the course in "The Philosophy of History". However, it is fairly obvious at the outset, that Emerson did intend in one way or another to treat the larger subjects which I have already quoted, in a manner which should leave with his readers a unified impression of his doctrine. Emerson made these two classifications somewhere about the year 1836 (2), when he was still a comparatively young author, so that it is apparent that he was not long arriving at his entire philosophy. One might say that upon the publication of his first work "Nature" in 1836, at the age of thirty-three, he had arrived at his conclusions about life, and was ready to spend the rest of his time in expressing them. This fact, that he had as early as 1836 outlined his whole philosophy in eleven short sentences, applicable to eleven large phases of life, speaks well in behalf of his serious intent to offer to the world, a complete, if not a formal exposition of his thoughts. Most men are still searching after new truths when they are old men. Emerson found his philosophy early in life and spent the remaining years in applying those principles which he had discovered. This fact alone suggests an incentive to express himself completely. He was no longer to be distracted by further doubt and inquiry. Is there not

(1) P. 380, Appendix of E. W. Emerson. Vol II of Complete Works.

(2) Emerson's Works, Vol. II. P. 379, notes.

then an evidence of system and method in these youthful intentions to comment upon life as a whole, and make all that he wrote a further revelation of his original premise?

For purpose of referring to the essays of Emerson with as little confusion as possible the following classification has been made. (1).

I. Essays which set forth fundamental conceptions of Ethical Doctrine; The Over Soul, Spiritual Laws, Compensation, Circles, Fate, Power, Worship, Experience, Nature.

II. Essays which treat of the character of the Individual: Heroism, Prudence, Courage, Character, Self Reliance, Success, Love.

III. Essays which treat of the conduct of the individual in his relation to the rest of the world: Society and Solitude, Domestic Life, Farming, Clubs, Politics, Gifts, Friendships, Manners, Behavior, Old Age, Works and Days.

IV. Essays which treat of the growth and cultivation of the individual and mankind: Civilization, Culture, History, The Poet, Art, Beauty, Intellect, Books, Eloquence.

The Essays of the first group are all related to the Over Soul. They set forth fundamental conceptions of ethical doctrine which underlie Emerson's attitude toward the life of the individual in the world. Spiritual Laws recognizes a "preponderance of nature in intellectual life, moral nature and practical living". "Our life might be easier and simpler than we make it, if we could learn from nature" (2). Compensation seeks to establish a spiritual balance in the Soul's life, "Optimism is the native faith of the soul which finds inward

(1) The essays referred to, include the total number which, for reasons stated earlier, are the ones which pertain only to this Thesis.

(2) Spiritual Laws, Vol II of Complete Works, P. 135.

peace to balance all inequalities of condition." (1) Differences of power and faculty are balanced by Love; Calamities are turned into blessings by the fact that they make room for growth of the soul and lead us to larger and nobler relations with the "Greater Life" and the "Over Soul". The Essay on Circles finds an analogy between the unattainable in nature and a circle. The life of man in thought, in valor, idealism, conversation, literature, poetry, nature, is comparable to an infinite series of circles. "But whilst the eternal generation of circles proceeds, the eternal generator abides". (2). The Over Soul is stable and constant. Fate so-called is the ring of necessity which limits man's growth in matter, mind and morals. But the limitations thus applied by Nature, which thus cramp the individual are but the obstacles which a great soul must overcome. "Fate is a name for facts not yet passed under the fire of thought" (3). The soul of man in its ascent finds laws in Nature which seek to check its progress. But only as it refines and develops through struggle is it worthy of its ultimate victory. Power in man is a "sharing of the nature of the world, an affirmative force a personal ascendancy, a plus health" (4), which lies within the reach of man's will. Religion or Worship is the attitude of those who see this Unity (Over Soul); who see that against all appearances, the nature of things works for truth and right forever. Experience shows us that life at best is but a "co-etaneous growth of parts;" but if we "bear with these distractions, they will one day be members and obey one will." (5). Nature is too often regarded as passive. But when one considers that "the craft with which the world is made, runs into the mind and character of man" (6), Nature becomes alive and rich in meanings.

I have briefly suggested the essence of each essay included under my first group of essays and its relation to The Over Soul. In all but two of these

- (1) Compensation, Vol. II. Complete Works P. 123.
- (2) Circles, Vol. II. Complete Works P. 316.
- (3) "Fate" Vol. 6. Complete Works. P. 51.
- (4) Power, Vol. 6. Complete Works. P. 56 & 58.
- (5) "Experience" Vol. 3. Complete Works. P. 70.
- (6), "Nature" Vol. 5. Complete works. P. 187.

nine essays, Nature and Circles, Emerson seems to be dealing with a new conception of old words and interpretations. The optimism of Emerson's philosophy needs a secure foundation, and such a foundation could be easily undermined unless care had been taken to re-define terms which have a more or less doubtful connotation. For instance, "Fate", "Power" and "Experience" need to be interpreted anew, in order that they may not seem to contradict the optimism of The Over Soul. Compensation takes care that circumstance may not be misunderstood in its apparent misuse of the individual. Thus it appears that Emerson's Doctrine of the Over Soul has taken into account current misconceptions of every day terms and beliefs. All of these essays have but furthered his end in setting forth his essential theory of the Over Soul.

Emerson firmly believed that the individual was a microcosmic expression of the universal. Consequently, his primary interest in his essays is to emphasize his theory of the Over Soul by its particular manifestation in the individual. All the rest of the essays which I have included in my classification, pertain in greater or less degree to the individual. The essays of the second group treat of the character of the individual as it is an expression of the Universal in man. Heroism, Prudence, Courage, Self Reliance, Love, these are the qualities of the Soul which strive eternally to bring the "Central Life" into relation with the individual. Success is not talent or fame, but the sensibility to the highest and best; a cultivation of that "inner life" which is the individual's share of a great universal truth.

The conduct of an individual who thus relies on Emerson's interpretation of life will find special direction in living. The relation of the Over Soul to the affairs of the world, to Politics, Class, Society, Friendship, Farming, Domestic Life, or what

not, is most strikingly summarized in Emerson's own words: "Society is the finding of this soul (Over Soul) by individuals in each other; trades are the learning of the soul in nature by labor; Politics is the activity of the soul illustrated in power; Manners are the silent and mediate expressions of the soul". The essays of my third group then, treat of the relation of the individual to the world; just how much the progress of the world is dependent on him, and in just what way he is to dispose of his life amid all the distracting influences around him. It is in this stage of his philosophy that Emerson becomes most strikingly emphatic in his doctrine of individualism. A man's first and supreme duty is to himself. Such a doctrine, according to Emerson's theory, is entirely removed from the selfishness which it implies, when we consider that the progress of the world does not depend on man's will alone, but on greater moral forces which are let loose in the world and which do not depend on the immediate action of the individual. The natural unfolding of those powers which lie latent within him is the function of the individual. Only by thus passively submitting himself first to the power within himself, can man become ultimately an influence for good in relation to his fellow men. Emerson's comments on "Society", "Domestic Life", "Farming", "Clubs", "Politics", "Manners", "Behavior", are all illuminations of this primary obligation of the individual to himself. Only when he shall be able to grow from within, will he be able to hold communion with that greater Self of which he is a part, the Over Soul.

The last group of essays included in the classification, treats of the growth of the individual as has been manifested through Civilization, History, remains for the individual, as a living document from which he draws new inspiration and assurance. "Of the works of the Universal Mind, History is the record" (1). Culture, Art, Beauty, Intellect, Eloquence, Poetry, :- these are the products of the centuries, which mark the epochs of man's unfolding. Books are the monuments of genius and testify to the universal residuum which lasts even after

(1) History. Vol II. Complete Works. P. 3.

time and change have eaten away the temporary products of each century.

That Emerson's essays do group themselves consistently about this doctrine of the Over Soul is now readily apparent. They have been published under no general plan of arrangement, consequently, the unity of their subject matter is not at first inquiry, apparent. Had Emerson been as eager to publish his works as his friends were for him, or had he been as ambitious to convince the world as he was to convince himself, he might have, by a mechanical re-arrangement, left his essays in a form that would have made his philosophy more obviously unified and complete.

There is a very noticeable tendency in all of Emerson's exposition, to express in elaborate generalizations what seems at first to be hopelessly contradictory. It is perhaps a significant tribute to his intellectual balance, that he always recognized two sides to the question he proposed to dispose of. This tendency is very uniformly present in the treatment of his individual essays. Whether or not Emerson arrived at his philosophic conclusions by means of a deduction from one intuitive premise, or whether such a conclusion was the result of a series of inductions from general observations, is difficult to decide. But this much is fairly certain, that in presenting his evidence to his readers, and in formulating his proofs in his own mind, he is strikingly inductive in his method. It may be that he found his proofs after his conviction was already secure; be that as it may, in reorganizing his thoughts at least, he found it to his advantage to reason from the general to the particular. This tendency prevails with striking regularity through the great number of his essays.

The typical essay of Emerson is divided into three large divisions. Of forty-two essays which represent four volumes of essays on related subject-matter, all but three have this general characteristic.

The first division of Emerson's essay deals with the broader phases of his subject; that is, it deals in general terms with a recognition of a contradiction between the general conception of a term or phase of life and Emerson's own. It is for the most part a concession to popular opinion or obvious definition of what he recognizes to be at variance with his ultimate conclusion. It is as if he were allaying the suspicion of his readers before announcing his diverging opinion. In his Journal, speaking of writing Emerson says, "One must avoid too great elevation at first. He must lull the suspicion of Art asleep by the unambitious use of familiar commonplaces". (1). A notable example of this is to be found in his essay on Fate. After a brief intro-

(1) Emerson's Journal, 1820-24 P. 315.

duction Emerson says, "But let us honestly state the facts". The facts which he states are the well known facts in the history of circumstance or fate. Nature does not pamper us. All that the Fatalist would attribute to an arbitrary law, Emerson concedes gracefully; he concedes the facts, but later contradicts the interpretation of those facts.

The first division of the essay, also, is very often a mustering together of general illustrations from Nature, History, Science or Society, which are either to be interpreted or refuted in the remainder of the essay. In the Essay on Civilization the first section is devoted to an elaborate exposition of the indexes of civilization as illustrated by History. The essay on Domestic Life commences with a description of domestic living. "The household is the home of the man, as well as of the child. The events that occur therein are more near and affecting to us than those which are sought in senates or academies". (1). The Essay on Clubs begins with a general description of society as it represents a tonic which nature has secured by a certain social instinct in man. Farming first dwells on the general aspects of nature and her relation to man as apparent in this profession. "The Farmer tunes himself to nature; Nature confides trusts to him; Earth and air work for him" (2), etc; These are the type of generalizations which introduce the central theme of the essay.

In his essay on Compensation (although this essay contains four divisions and does not entirely illustrate the general characteristics of Emerson's typical essay) is a striking illustration of the general introduction out of which grows more specific statements, "Polarity or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and light, in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female; --- The same dualism underlies the nature and condition of man, ---Every excess causes a defect; every defect, an excess. Every sweet has its sour, every evil, its good." (3)

(1) Complete Works, Vol. 7. p. 107.

(2) Complete Works, Vol. 7. p. 140, 144.

(3) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 2. p. 96-98.

A long series of general observation from nature and History set forth the larger aspects of the question which Emerson finally considers minutely. In this essay, as in most of his essays, Emerson reasons from the general to the particular. Sometimes this characteristic is varied somewhat, if perchance Emerson is dealing with a subject which suggests an appropriate analogy, or which demands an exposition of his own philosophic premise at the outset. In Circles Emerson as usual draws his illustrations from Nature, but at the same time fits them into an analogy which later he applies in specific detail.

A further variation of this form is illustrated in The Over Soul. Emerson here draws attention to a question which the general attitude of the world toward Hope and Immortality ought consistently to raise; that is, since hope does undeniably exist, it is entitled at least to some sort of explanation and definition, however satisfactory that may (or may not) be. Those whose skepticism has denied immortality, have failed to account for the hope which is instinctive in man. Such an introduction, while more or less general in its purpose, is a slight modification of the most characteristic introduction of Emerson's essays.

The second large division of the essay is more easily characterized. It is, in general a contradiction, modification or unique interpretation of the general facts considered in the introduction. For example, in Society and Solitude, Part Two denies that Solitude is justifiable by any metaphysics. The introduction of this essay in its general description of the love of solitude in man does not disclose the author's opinions but his attitude definitely changes in considering the question minutely. In Art Part Two is a modification of Aristotle's definition of Art according to Emerson's own transcendental conceptions. Old Age in the body of the essay suggests an original interpretation of the "signs of old age". For example, after

Emerson has described the condition of old age, he points out specifically the benefits of old age. These benefits are; first, Fear has been removed; second, old age can live on the credit of the past; and third, old age has found expression, and can therefore devise its pleasure from the fact that it has "finished its work".

Thus it is, that this second large division of Emerson's typical essay, represents a discussion or exposition of the particular aspect of the subject which he cares to deal with. Perhaps it imposes a condition on some well known theory or custom, perhaps it contradicts it all together; but most often it presents Emerson's own interpretation of the facts set forth in the introduction. If the information in Part One is general definition, that in Part two is, strikingly, specific definition. Or perhaps, as in Gifts, where the introduction is but the re-statement of an obvious truth, Part Two is a specific condition imposed upon a general acceptance of this truth. In Part One Emerson says, "The impediment of giving lies in choosing what to give". (1) This fact needs little support. Part Two becomes specific; "Necessity does well for common gifts, but the only real gift is a portion of thyself". (2). In Society and Solitude Emerson's introduction states the following: "In Nature there are substances like potassium which, to be kept pure must be kept under naphtha. Genius often feels this necessity of polation". (3). Part Two begins, "But this banishment to the rocks and echos, no metaphysics can make right or tolerable. A man must be clothed with society or there is a feeling of barrenness and poverty" (4). Exception to the truth in Part One is thus taken in Part Two. In his essay on Art, previously mentioned, Emerson's introduction deals with the general aspects of Art as they are universally accepted. "Art is the creative spirit". (5) Part Two conditions the statements of Part One by imposing a relation between the Artist and Universal mind which is not specifically implied in the general definition. Therefore, "to make anything useful or beautiful, the individual

- (1) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 3. p. 159.
- (2) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 3. p. 160.
- (3) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 7. p. 6.
- (4) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 7. p. 10.
- (5) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 7. p. 39.

must be submitted to Universal Mind" (1). Part Two again represents the divergence between the general conception and Emerson's own.

Emerson, it has been said elsewhere, was essentially a preacher and a moral philosopher. This fact is no less obvious in his essays than in his sermons and lectures. I have said that Part One of the essay dealt with a general survey of popular conception which was either contradicted or modified in Part Two. If there is an element of contradiction and destructive thinking in the middle portion of his essay, it is offset with equal regularity by a series of constructive assertions in Part Three. If Part One is concessive and Part Two contradictory, Part Three is just as characteristically assertive in its general tone. If Part One is general, Part Two destructive, Part Three is essentially constructive in its thought. But this last division of the essay is even more significantly distinct in its characteristics. The preacher's instinct appears most emphatically in the conclusion of Emerson's essays. Part Three of the essay is devoted, with barely an exception, to a moral appeal to the reader. There is a personal note ever present in this section of the essay which is closely related to the imperative tone of the preacher. Or again, if it is unnecessary to admonish or influence the reader, perhaps it seems advisable to offer hope and encouragement on some subject which usually suggests worry or pain or is usually associated with apparent impossibility. In his essay on Heroism, the theme of Section Three is, "Any where, any time is a place for heroism". In Courage the same personal appeal is made with this concluding statement; "He has not learned his lesson of life who has not every day surmounted a fear." Emerson was interested in Universal principles, but he was therefore none the less ardent in his hopes for the development of the individual. It is as if he had whittled down his big proportions of Part One of the essay, to fit the individual in Part Three. Courage, Heroism, Eloquence, are not remote and difficult attain-

(1) Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 7. p. 40.

ments of character. Emerson in his conclusions offers them to every individual of any age who will live in the spirit and not in the flesh. Part Three is an application to the individual in practical living of the principles set forth in Parts One and Two.

Sometimes Part Three is devoted to an optimistic appreciation of some undisputed fact. Always there is the emotional appeal in this section. In Old Age, the the third division of the essay is devoted to examples of American "centenarians who are examples of dignity and wisdom" (1). Sometimes, also Part Three is devoted to a set of "hindrances to be put aside" (2), as in the case of Self Reliance or of "Positive rules for manners" (3) as in the essay on Behavior. Or again sometimes Part Three is an expression of a final ray of hope in the recognition of two antagonistic points of view.

I have previously stated that Emerson was capable of seeing two sides of a question at the same time and that a favorite literary habit of his, was to reconcile two apparently opposing ideas. Sometimes this reconciliation is but a recourse to faith as in the essay on Illusions. In this essay, Part One maintains that "we live by our imaginations and sentiments, walking amid heaps of illusions." (4). Part Two furthers this thought specifically, "Our estimates are therefore loose and fleeting". (5). But Emerson would never think of leaving his thought thus suspended. In one way or another he would arrive at a definite attitude. Part Three of this essay consistently concludes; "But in spite of all --- a faith remains that there is no chance, and that all is system". (6). When he cannot supply his readers with a reasonable evidence he substitutes faith. In "Society and Solitude" Emerson's final compromise between the impracticability of solitude and the fatal hindrances of Society is; "Let each (society and solitude) reinforce each mood. We must keep our head in one, and our hands in the other. (7)

- (1). Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 7. p. 331.
- (2). Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 2. p. 77.
- (3). Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 6. p. 197.
- (4). Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 6. p. 312.
- (5). Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 6. p. 320.
- (6). Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 6. p. 325.
- (7). Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 7. p. 13.

But part Three is not only assertive, constructive, emotional, admonishing and reconcilatory; it would be possible to distinguish this section of the essay by yet another common feature. It is in this final section of his essay that Emerson returns to a consideration of that one re-occurring thought of the Over Soul. Like the spokes of a wheel, all of Emerson's essays finally center at this hub of his philosophy. Sometimes the direct relation of Part Three to his doctrine is not easily detected. But either by inference or direct statement, the appeal to the individual is usually neatly and cleverly wrapped in a phrase of the Over Soul. In Behavior, the only rules for manners are expressed in "Nature inspires them". (1). In Books appears the following concluding remarks: "Books are the majestic expression of Universal conscience". (2).

One of the first hints that the reader of Emerson has, of an approach to a conclusion of an essay, is the change of mode in the verbs. The imperative mood the hortatory subjunctive and rhetorical questions take the place of the indicative mood of the plain expository style. In Spiritual Laws for example the final words are "Be--do not seem; Do not apologize or fear inconsistency." In Experience, "Bear with these distractions". or "we must hold hard,---etc; or, "never mind the ridicule", etc. In Part Three of his essay it is as if Emerson were talking directly to the reader in the second person. He clinches his hold on the thoughts of the reader by a direct emotional appeal at the close. He does not do as the proverbial preacher does, appeal to the emotions first and to the intellect afterwards. Whatever may have been the emotional effect of Emerson, the man, on an audience at the outset of a lecture or sermon, in his essay at least he commences on a broadly intellectual plain and ascends to a dramatic eloquence at the end. His essays are essentially climactic in arrangement according to the plan he himself expressed in his journal, "One must avoid too great elevation at first. He must lull the suspicion of Art

- (1) Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 6. 189.
- (2) Emerson's Complete Works. Vol. 7. 219.

asleep by the unambitious use of familiar commonplaces". This comment, quoted earlier, offers a significant clue as to the arrangement of essay and paragraph.

Emerson's essays then, broadly speaking, have a common basis of structure. All of them fall under the same general plan of treatment, a plan made up of three large divisions, each of which has characteristics which are related to the development of the central idea of the essay. These divisions are not always definitely marked off. Sometimes one part overlaps ostensibly the next. Sometimes there are transitional paragraphs which assist the reader in changing his point of view, but most often he must shift for himself, and adapt his thoughts to a new position unaided by the author. It is not an easy task to outline Emerson's essays; there are frequent digressions and awkward insertions in subject matter. But when, once the essays have been outlined according to their large general topics of thought, their three divisional plan of arrangement is quite obvious. Emerson then, did follow regularly a certain general plan of treatment in his essays. His thoughts are systematically arranged according to this definite scheme and his essays are all expressions of a certain general tendency in his method of thinking and writing.

Outlines

The following outlines illustrate the tendency of Emerson's essays to fall into three general divisions. The essays are grouped according to subject matter as follows: (1) Essays which set forth fundamental conceptions of doctrine. (2) Essays which treat of the character of the Individual; (3) Essays which treat of the conduct of the individual in his relation to the rest of the world; (4) Essays which treat of the growth and cultivation of the individual and mankind. - The title at the left hand side of the page refers to the Essay itself, and at the right is the title of the volume in which it is found. In some essays, where the connection is not already obvious in the outline itself, there is a bracketed note which explains the general relation of the three divisions to each other.

Group I.

I. Spiritual Laws. Volume II. Essays, 1st Series.

1. Preponderance and genius of nature in intellectual life, in moral nature, in practical life. Our life might be easier and simpler than we make it; we could learn from nature.

Note: (General premise)

- (Specific application)
2. Truth tyrannizes over the unwilling members of the body; we cannot cover up ourselves. Our nature and character publishes itself.

Imperative appeal 3. Be, not seem. Do not apologize or fear inconsistency.

II. The Over Soul, Volume II. Essays, 1st Series.

Note: General raising of the question.

1. The argument of those who wish to silence those who conceive extraordinary hopes for mankind is invalid. Hope, since it does not exist, must be explained.

Specific Answer

2. Explanation is the "Unity" and Over Soul which surrounds us. We live in succession, division and parts, yet within man is the soul of the whole.

Appeal to Individual

3. Within this sentiment is the germ of intellectual growth and genius. "Let man then learn the revelation of all nature and all thought to his heart, namely, that the highest dwells within him."

III. Nature. Volume III. Essays, Second Series.

- General. 1. The enchantments of nature are medicinal.
2. The beauty of nature is unreal and mocking unless landscape has human figures in it.
- Specific Nature should not be regarded as passive but active. The craft with which the world is made runs into mind and character of man.
3. There is something throughout nature which leads on and on and seems to arrive nowhere.
- Reconciliation. We live in system of approximations. But this uneasiness with the thought of our helplessness results from looking too much at one condition of nature, namely, motion.

IV. Circles. Volume II. First Series.

1. Analogy of circle to nature and the unattainable.
2. No fictions in nature; Universe is and volatile; nature and life of man is comparable to growing circumference; facts are only first in series; valor, idealism, conversation, literature, poetry, nature, are all games of circles.
3. Whilst the eternal generator of circles proceeds, the eternal generator abides. The soul is stable. We should thus always seek to draw a new circle, to lose our sempiternal memory.

V. Fate. Volume VI. Conduct of Life

Introduction.

We should be sure from observation that necessity does comport with liberty, the individual with the world, and my polarity with the spirit of the times.

1. But let us honestly state the facts. Great men have been percievers of the terror of life and manned themselves to face it. The History of Fate is the history of Power and Circumstance.
2. But Fate has its limitations also. If Fate follows and limits Power, Power attends and limits fate. Man confronts Fate with Fate.
3. We will allow limitations as a sign of the "Growing Man". Let us build alters to this beautiful necessity.

VI. Experience. Volume 3. Second Series.

1. General
Observation A certain evanescence, lubricity of all objects is the hardest part of our condition. Temperament is the iron wire on which all nature seems to be strung. But there is a necessity to this illusiveness of life.
2. Specific
Illustration. What help is there for these fineries and pedantries of life? The middle zone of our being is temperate. Nature is made up of power and form. Between extremes of thin cold realm of geometry and lifeless science and that of sensation, is the equator of life, spirit, poetry.

3. Bear with these distractions, with this coetaneous growth of parts; they will one day be members and obey one will. Illusion, temperament, Succession, Surface, Reality; we dare not give their order but merely name them as we find them. We are merely fragments, but each fragment we can know and love.

Note: (Hortatory)

VII. Power Volume 6. Conduct of Life.

1. All power is a sharing of the nature of the world. A man is made of the same stuff of which events are made - an affirmative force, a personal ascendancy, a plus health. Power is found in excess in certain animals and people.
2. This plus energy should be directed in right place.
3. (1) Concentration is secret of strength in war, trade and all human affairs.
(2) Use and Routine increase Power.
(3) Power is within reach of our will.

VIII. Worship. Volume 6. Conduct of Life.

1. Present age is one of transition in which religion is on the decay.
2. Worship stands in relation to health of man

and his highest powers-source of intellect.
All great ages have been ages of belief.

3. Man is equal to every event, therefore when there is love, humility, faith etc. there is worship also.

Note: (1. General, concerning present (19th cent) condition of religious activity; 2. Specific definition & explanation of worship; 3. Optimistic reconciliation between 1 & 2.)

IX. Compensation. Volume II. First Series.

The following outline does not fall into three general divisions but nevertheless retains some of the structural characteristics of the others.

1. Polarity and action and reaction in nature, human life, commonwealth.
2. Cause of this lies in unity or moral quality of the universe.
3. The Folly of trying to escape this law.
4. But in the soul itself, there is something deeper than compensation; the soul's own life. Optimism is the native faith of the soul which finds inward peace to balance all inequalities of condition.

Differences of power and faculty-reduced by love. Calamities turned into blessings by the fact that they make room for growth of some and lead us to larger and nobler relations with life.

Note: (1. has general observations from nature. 2, 3, constitute the 2 of the other essays and 4 has the hortatory tone of the third division of other essays.)

Group II.

I. Herosim, Volume II. First Series.

1. Elder English dramatists wrote of heros; we need books of heroism like Plutarch; our culture should arm a man.
2. Heroism is the military attitude of the soul
 - a. Self trust is the essence.
 - b. Works in contradiction to vice of the man.
 - c. Temperance, good humor and hilarity - its qualities.
3. Anywhere, any time is suitable for heroism. We all have unattained problems in which to shine as heros. Persistency, truth and self reliance in each individual is the essence of heroism.

Note: (Application to individual life).

II. Self Reliance, Volume II. Essays, 1st Series.

1. Nature teaches self reliance.
 - (a) An instinct of childhood & youth.
 - (c) Society tries to crush it.

- (c) Virtue must be natural, not conventional.
 - (d) We are afraid of unpopularity & inconsistency.
2. What is this self on which one should rely?
A personal manifestation of the Universal life.
 3. Hindrances to self reliance to be put aside
 - (a) Fake creeds and prayers.
 - (b) Travel and idolization of foreign and remote.
 - (c) Reliance on progress of society, property or government.

Note (The appeal to individual in 3 is no less strong altho it is done negatively)

III. Prudence. Volume II. Essays, First Series.

1. Culture corrects false prudence.
2. Subjection to nature is good discipline.
3. No virtue should be cultivated alone, therefore prudence should be joined with courage, truth, love, etc.

IV. Courage. Volume VII. Society & Solitude.

1. Three qualities which conspicuously attract wonder and reverence of mankind. Disinterestedness, practical power and Courage.

Note (general analysis of undisputed fact).

2. Knowledge is the antidote to fear, and the aid to courage.

(Specific statement requiring proof.)

3. True courage is not ostentatious; flashes of genius comprise chief charm; he has not learned lesson of life who has not every day surmounted a fear.

Note (Appeal to individual in practical life).

V. Success. Volume VII. "Society & Solitude".

1. Our civilization is made up of a million contributions of human power.
2. But these feats do not signify so much as we say. They are but local conveniences and do not really add to our stature. Not talent but sensibility is the best.
3. This sensibility appears in homage to beauty, in knowledge of music, love and poetry. Good mind chooses what is positive rather than negative. The cultivation of the "Inner Life" is success.

VI. Character. Volume 3, Essays, Second Series.

1. There is something finer in men than they know. Their influence is greater than their deeds or their words. In History, Politics, trades, etc. there is a power indefinable.
2. (Definition and explanation)
2. Truth is the summit of being; justice the

application to affairs; character is the moral order seen in an individual. It consists in (1) resistance to circumstances; it is (2) self sufficient; it is (3) nature in highest form.

3. Character is greatest where only nature has had a hand in it.

(Note:- a further appeal to "return to native")

VII. Love. Volume II. First Series.

1. Power of love over nature; its influence and power over youth is great.
2. Essential nature of this strong influence is alliance to beauty.
3. But love, the beautiful is but one scene in our play- we are in training for a love which knows no sex nor person; which seeks wisdom everywhere to the end of increasing virtue and wisdom.

* Group III.

I. Domestic Life. Volume 7. "Society & Solitude"

1. Description of household; domestic events are the concern of every individual; progress of domestic living confined to arts and means of ventilation, etc: our ways of living imply wealth to execute it.

(Note: Common generalization).

2. But a real household should have Culture for its end. The vice of housekeeping is that, it does not hold man sacred. Happy is that house in which relations are formed from character.

3. Beyond primary ends of conjugal and parental and amicable relations, the household should cherish beautiful arts and sentiments of veneration.

(a) educate eye, ear, hand, purify and enlarge.

(b) Home a sanctuary,

Note: (Hortatory - appeal of preacher)

II. Gifts Volume 3 Second series.

1. The impediment of giving lies in choosing what to give.
2. Necessity does well for common gifts but the only real gift is a portion of thyself.
3. The discords of giving are accounted for by the discrepancy between the man and the gift.

III. Behavior, Volume 6, "Conduct of Life"

1. History and origin and definition of: Manners are the happy ways of doing things, each a stroke of love or genius once, now repeated or hardened into usage. Manners are (a) factitious (b) they grow from character.

2. Basis of manners is Self Reliance.

Note: (Emerson's self imposed limitations or interpretations)

3. Positive rules for manners: nature inspires them

IV. Clubs. Volume 7. "Society & Solitude"

1. Society is a tonic; Nature has secured communication of knowledge by a certain social instinct in man. Conversation is the most natural thing in youth and man.
2. All that man can do for man is found in the market; great prizes out in the world. Society a necessary school; Conversation a training.
3. But the best conversation is rare, -between two people. To meet these advantages, clubs were formed. To organize conversation is or should be purpose of clubs.

V. Farming Volume VII. "Society & Solitude"

1. Farmer's office is important and necessary; Farmer tunes himself to nature; nature confides great trusts to him, he is continuous benefactor, Earth and air work for him.
2. But Farmer is not painted in rose color;

he is habitually engaged in small economics.

3. Such a life influences the life of Farmer; Subdued and silenced by great forces.

VI. Old Age Volume VII. "Society & Solitude"

1. Illusions of time in which nature delights is evidenced in Age.
2. Particular benefits of Old Age.
 - a) Chief evil of life, fear, has been removed.
 - b) Old age lives on credit of past.
 - c) Old age has found expression, pleasure of having finished its work.
3. America has examples of robust countenances and examples of dignity and wisdom.

VII. Society & Solitude. Volume 7 "Society & Solitude"

1. In nature there are substances, like potassium, which to be kept pure, must be kept under naphtha. Genius often feels this necessity of isolation. Some protect themselves by solitude, some by courtesy and worldly manners, etc. The moment we meet with any body, we become a fraction, not a whole.

(Note: Statement of general, and accepted facts or condition)

2. But, this banishment to the rocks and echoes, no metaphysics can make right or tolerable. A

man must be clothed with society, or there is a feeling of barrenness and poverty. When you coop up men, you undo them. To learn fine Arts, men must frequent the public square. "For behavior-men learn it as they take diseases, from men."

(Note: First sentence holds that Solitude is not justifiable by any metaphysics; contradictory element.)

3. The remedy for the two extremes, Society and Solitude, is to reinforce each mood by the other. That is, Solitude is impracticable, and Society is fatal. We must keep our head in one and our hands in the other.

(Note: A reconciliation of two extremes, constructive and hortatory in its appeal.)

VIII. Politics Volume 3 Essays Second Series.

1. State follows, not leads the progress of the citizen. History of state outlines progress of thought and follows at a distance the delicacy of culture and aspiration; Persons and Property are those for whose protection, State exists.
2. Form and methods of government are secured by a necessity proper to each nature and to its habit of thought. There is a larger force governing politics than either radicalism or conservatism. There is a beneficent necessity which shines through all laws.
3. Tendencies of the time favor the idea of self government and leave the individual to rewards and penalties of his own constitution. There is

not, even among instructed and religious nations enough reliance on moral sentiment or a sufficient belief in unity of things to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints.

IX. Manners. Volume 3, Essays, Second Series.

1. What more conspicuous fact in history than creature of "the gentleman", Altho there have been frivolous and fantastic additions associated with this name, there is an element in it which unites the most forcible persons in every country, power, and the leading class.
2. Exclusive and polished circles are always filled or being filled from class of naturally powerful men and women. Fashion is a kind of posthumous honor-hall of the past; Fashion made up of children of great men. The minority of active men who are forces, supply society with Fashion, otherwise it would go to seed.
3. Within this circle of "good society" there is always an inner, narrower circle, constituted of those persons with whom heroic dispositions are native. Everything called fashion and coudesy humbles itself before cause of the fountain of honor-namely the heart of love; this is royal blood.

X. Friendship Volume II. Essays, First Series.

1. Elements of Friendship: naturalness, mutual sincerity, tenderness.

2. Its limitations-affinity of two determines it.
3. Its requirements-Reverence, delicacy, reserve and intervals of silence.
4. Ideal friendships are dreams which we hope will be fulfilled in better regions.

(Note: This essay does not fall into the typical form. It contains four rather than three divisions.)

XI. Works and Days. Volume VII. "Society & Solitude"

1. Nineteenth century is age of invention; mechanical aids of all sorts; inventions breed invention.
2. But what have our arts done for character?
3. Element of illusion in important of things makes us hide values of the present. Works are wonderful but "Days" are the important. An every day of "living", the use^{of} history, invention, etc. not in itself but as it gives value to the present moment. Not long life but deep life that counts. Just to fill the hour, that is happiness.

(Note: I. General, II. raises question III sermon)

Group IV.

I. Civilization ----Vol. VII. Society & Solitude.

1. The skill that pervades complex details of living, the tendency to combine antagonisms and utilize evil, these are the indexes of civilization.

(Note: Definition, general)

2. Civilization is result of highly complex organization; climate, morality, borrowing aid from elements, these are the agents of civilization. But these are the traits and modes; True test of civilization is not census, cities, etc. but the kind of a man the country turns out.

(Note: Divergence from general conception into the particular phase which Emerson conceives to be most important)

3. The vital refinements are moral and intellectual steps.

(Note: Appeal to culture and morality in the individual)

II. History. Volume II. Essays First Series.

1. Introductory:

- a. There is one mind common to all individual men.

- b. Of the works of this Universal Mind, history is the record.
- c. Of the Universal mind, each individual man is one more incarnation.
- d. It is the universal nature which gives worth to particular men and things.

- 2. History is to be read actively, not passively. The world exists for education of each man.
All history should be subjective.
- 3. The identity of history is equally as intrinsic and the diversity equally obvious, as nature itself. There is at surface of things, infinite variety; at center, simplicity of cause. All public facts are individualized; all private are to be generalized. History becomes fluid and true. Biography, deep and sublime.
- 4. Man is no less implicated in history of external world than in civil and metaphysical history.

(Note: This essay again violates the three divisional plan. It is an exception to the general tendency.)

III. The Poet Volume 3. Essays, Second Series.

- 1. The Poet is a representative man, an interpreter of what all men see and feel. Talent may frolic and juggle but genius realizes and adds.

(General distinction.)

2. Nature is the language of the poet. It is because a poet can see and make use of the eternal symbols that he is a poet.
3. Nature has higher end in production of poets than security; namely ascension of soul into higher forms. Imagination intoxicates the poet and emancipates man into clear space-an appeal to poet to leave the world and abandon himself to nature and the muse.

IV. Intellect. Volume II. Essays, First Series.

1. The growth of the intellect is spontaneous.
2. Intellect lies behind genius; genius is intellect constructive.
3. If constructive power or genius is rare, yet every man is receiver of intellect. The Universal is for every man.

(Note - an appeal to individual, again).

V. Beauty Volume 6, Conduct of Life.

1. Beauty is the form under which intellect prefers to study world.

(Note -general definition)

2. Beauty reaches perfection in human form.
3. Sovereign attribute - when it speaks to imagination.

VI. Eloquence. Volume VII. "Society & Solitude"

1. The lust to speak marks the universal feeling of energy of the engine and the curiosity men feel to touch the springs. Power resides in speech.

Note: General characterization and introduction.

2. Successive stages of oratory.
 - (a) animal magnetism.
 - (b) attractiveness - pleasing to ear and imagination.
 - (c) personal ascendancy-rich coincidence of powers; intellect, will and sympathy. Eloquence is the appropriate organ of the highest personal energy.
 - (d) rivalry between orator and occasion.
 - (e) facts and method-two primary laws.
 - (f) crisis in affairs

Note: specific analysis.

3. He who will train himself for oratory must place emphasis on character and insight, not on education and popular arts.

Note: Advice to those who would be orators.

VII. Books. Volume 7. "Society & Solitude.

1. Books are of great importance in a man's life.
2. Rules and comments for reading books.

- (1) books that are old.
- (2) books that you like.
- (3) books that are famous.

- 3. Books are majestic expression of universal conscience and are more to our daily conscience than reading. They should be read with reverence and respect.

Note (I general, agreement with accepted notion; II. Specific III Appeal to action)

VIII. Culture Volume 6 Conduct of Life

- 1. Nature has secured individualism by giving a person a high conceit of his weight in the system. This individuality is the basis of culture; the end of culture is to train this dominant talent but not to do away with it.
- 2. Education should be brave and preventive. Elements are; books, art, travel etc. Intellectual quality in all.

(Note: Specific limitations to generalizations of I)

- 3. But over all, culture must reinforce from higher flux.

IX. Art Volume 7. "Society & Solitude.

1. The conscious utterance of thought by speech or action to any end, is Art.

Note- (General, Aristotle's definition; exposition of accepted theory)

2. The Universal Soul is the creator of the useful and the beautiful, therefore to make anything useful or beautiful, the individual must be submitted to the Universal Mind.

Note- (Modification of, or condition imposed upon, this general definition)

3. Hence- a study of Art sharpens our perceptions of the beauty of nature; a certain analogy reigns throughout wonders of Art and Nature. Art is dependent on nature.

Note; (Appeal to see art thro nature rather than convention).

Miscellaneous Outlines.

I. Art. Volume II. Essays, First Series.

1. The inevitable in Art has a higher charm than individual talent can give. Elements of historical and universal in Great Art.
2. Highest Art, therefore, should be Universally intelligible.
3. Art, therefore must begin far back in a man,

"for the hand can not execute any higher than the character can inspire."

II. Considerations by the Way. Volume 6. Conduct of Life.

1. Nature yields mastery but about once in a century; spawning productivity.
2. First lesson in history is the good of evil. Everything comes in use, passion, war, revolt, etc.
3. Obvious rules of life.
 1. health, 2, general manners, 3, travel,
 4. conversation, 5, friendship, 6, the wish to serve, to add something to well being of man.

III. New England Reformers. Volume 3. Second Series.

1. The spirit of reform.
 - (a) Protest against existing evils - keener scrutiny of institutions and life.
 - (b) This indicates growing trust in individual.
2. These are indications of the faith of man.
3. All these facts in reform point out that man stands in direct connection with a higher fact never yet manifested.

IV. Nominalist and Realist. Volume III. Second Series.

1. Man is an amphibious creature; we adjust our

instrument for both general and specific study of universals, general ideas round and ~~can~~noble the most partial and sordid way of living. Nature prefers genius to parts.

2. But it is not the intention of nature that we should live by general views alone. Nature takes care that the whole tune shall be played; if we were not kept among surfaces, everything would be large and universal.
3. If we cannot make voluntary and conscious steps in science of universals, at least let us see parts wisely and infer genius of nature from the best particulars.

V. Wealth. Volume 6. Conduct of Life.

1. Wealth has its source in applications of the mind to nature, (1) for articles of necessity (2) master pieces of chief men of each race.
2. Whilst it is to each man's interest that wealth should exist, it need not be in his hands. Arts should be owned by states, towns, etc. wealth and money value is all relative; wealth brings its checks and balances.
3. A few measures of economy.
 - (1) each man's expense must proceed from his character.
 - (2) Spend by system.
 - (3) Follow custom of country.
 - (4) Look for seed of same kind as you sow.
 - (5) All that we do should, as in nature, ascend.

VI. Illusions. Volume 6. Conduct of Life.

1. We live by our imagination and sentiments.
The child walks amid heaps and illusions.
2. Our estimates are therefore loose and floating.
3. But in spite of all, there remains the faith that there is no chance; all is system.

(Note: III offers a concluding hope to inspire the individual).

Outlines of Lectures.

Note: (The following outlines of lectures are appended as further evidence of the "three divisional tendency" of Emerson's writing.)

- I. Man the Reformer Volume I. "Nature"
 1. A new spirit has invaded the times.
A general inquest into abuses because of the practical impediments that stand in the way of virtuous young men. In trade, commerce, etc. in all lucrative professions.
 2. Doctrine of labor applies here as a necessary education by which to overcome these abuses in society.
 3. What help for these ills? How to make labor effect our end?
Let us learn the meaning of economy of self help.
Let men be reformers and renounce everything which is not true to him.

II. Transcendentalism Volume I. "Nature"

Introduction-Transcendentalism is merely idealism of 19th century.

1. Idealists have clashed with materialists for ages; materialists base tho't on experience; Idealists on intuition; one from within, the other from without.
2. There is really no transcendental party or sect, only a certain lonely class of people who reject institutions and are dissatisfied with society on its established basis.
3. But this class of people - tho open to criticism, some there are who advocate cant and pretension- nevertheless want tolerant sympathy and interest. Society has its duties in reference to this class.

III. The Young American Volume I. "Nature"

1. Facilities are now in progress from travel and transportation; this fact food for thought.
2. Utility of these improvements in creating an American sentiment.
 - (a) acquaintance with boundless resources of country enlarging American conception.
 - (b) Anti feudal power - democracy.
 - (b) Sequel of trade- communion, socialism.
3. Great opportunity for young American. Why depend on the Past? Let young men

obey their own heart and make the United States,
a nation among nations.

IV. The American Scholar. Volume I. "Nature"

1. Influences on the scholar.

(1) Nature (2) Mind of Past. (3) Contact
with world of present.

2. Duties of scholar

To cheer, to raise, to guidemen by showing
them facts amid appearances.

3. What can be said to present time and this
country?

This confidence in the unsearched might of
man belongs by all motives, all prophecy
and all preparation to the American scholar.

V. An Address delivered before Senior class of
Divinity School. Volume I. "Nature"

1. The intuition of the moral sentiment is an
insight of the perfection of the laws of the
soul. These laws execute themselves. Truth
is not instructive but provocative. Unless
one finds this primary faith in him, all
outside institutions fail. The base doctrine
of the majority has usurped the doctrine of the
soul.

2. These general views find contest in the His-
tory of the church.

1. Christianity has fallen into an exaggera-

tion of the personal, the positive and the ritual.

2. Limited way in which christianity uses the mind of Christ constitutes second defect.
3. What then, in these desponding days can be done by us?
In the soul let redemption be bought.
God is not was;
 1. Go alone to God-leave models alone, dare to love God without mediator or veil.
 2. Faith makes us, not we it.
 3. Christianity has given us to start with
(1) Sabbath (2) institution of preaching.

VI. "Literary Ethics" Volume I. "Nature.

1. Resources of the scholar
 - a) proportional to confidence in attributes of intellect.
 - b) Coextensive with nature and truth.
 - c) History and minds of past are to increase self trust.
 - d) Biography
 - e) Loyalty to ~~abstract~~ truth.
2. But -

The first observation you make in the sincere act of your nature dissolves all theories of past. Each generation and individual should teach man not to hate, fear or mimic his ancestors.
3. Discipline of scholar.

Put himself in harmony with things.

Solitude and Society

Hard work and responsibility.

Passivity to superincumbent spirit.

"Be content with a little light-so it be your own"

VII. Aristocracy Volume 10. *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*

1. Permanent traits of aristocracy never go out of vogue.
2. The real and terrible aristocracy is not in caste - but in nature.
3. The claims by which men enter this superior class.
 1. Commanding talent.
 2. Genius.
 3. Elevation of sentiment.

VIII. Character Volume 10 *Lectures and Sketches*

1. Morals implies freedom of will; is the direction of the will or Universal ends.
2. Moral sentiment is omnipotent.
3. In this age, the tendency toward the individual does not signify loss of moral restraint but a change from coarser to finer checks.

IX. Perpetual forces. Volume 10. *Lectures*

1. Take a look at the power of nature. The air-the agencies of electricities, light, etc. These laws inexorable, leaving

us room for the individual.

2. But all these powers-the power of man in enduring defeat and learning steadily as he meets *resistance* and learns his tools are most wonderful. Obedience alone gives right to command.
3. World is thus delivered into man's hands on two conditions.
 - (a) Not for property or self indulgence-but for use.
 - (b) Things in nature work to their end not yours.

X. Demonology Volume 10.

1. Dreams-dislocation of nature.
2. Dreams have poetic integrity and truth. Secret analogies tie together the remotest parts of nature.
3. We should not be impatient at our ability to brook the *supernatural* and attribute such things to magic, mesmerism, etc. The world is an omen and a sign. Why look so wistfully in a corner? Man is the image of God-why run after a ghost or a dream.

XI. Emancipation in the British Isles.

Volume XI. "Miscellaneous"

1. History of acts in English Parliament about west India emancipation.
2. This movement is signal step in civilization.
3. Emancipation is the result of moral resolu-

tion. Other revolutions have been insurrection of the oppressed; this one repentance of tyrant.

XII. "War" Volume XI. "Miscellanies"

1. What does war - thus beginning from lowest races, signify?
 - a) Principle of nature - self help.
 - b) War a juvenile and temporary state.
2. History then, besides a history of war, is the history of decline of war towards peace.
3. How is new aspiration toward peace to accomplish its ends? War uses self dependence as principle - so may peace. A man of principle does not yield.

XIV. "American Civilization" Vol. XI. "Miscellanies".

1. Slavery not an institution but a destitution.
2. If American people hesitate, it is because of lack of courage rather than of warning and advice.
3. One weapon is surely held by American people - Edict of Congress.

XV. "Women" Volume XI. "Miscellanies".

1. Plato's idea of women; man's will, woman sentiment.
2. Starry crown of woman is in her power of affection and sentiment.
3. Answers to objections to woman's movement.

Let women determine whether they wish ballot, and if they do, they should have it.

XVI. "The Method of Nature" Volume I. "Nature"

1. We honor the accomplishments of science, commerce, etc, which give us the railroad and all conveniences, but these do not call for unmitigated adulation.
2. Festival of intellect and the return to its source casts strong light on interesting topics of man and nature. The method of nature does not exist to anyone or to any number of particular ends but to numberless and endless benefit.
3. A man should be on his guard against enchantments of nature and look at it with piety.

XVII. "The Conservative" Volume I. "Nature"

1. There is always a certain meanness in the argument of conservatism, joined with a certain superiority in its fact. It affirms because it holds.
2. That which is best about conservative is the "Inevitable". If there were no antagonism between these two, progress would be slow. No reform unless preceded ~~by~~ conservatism. To row out in a lake you have to contend with the shore you wish to leave as a leverage to get your first push into the lake.
3. Great men are not hindered by either kind.

Amidst planet peopled by conservatives, one reformer is born.

XVIII. "Lecture on the Times" Volume I. "Nature"

1. The Times, so called are the masquerade of the eternities. To draw typical pictures of "Times" will contain all that is advanced in this age.
2. The two parties of History- the Past and the Present, divide Society as usual. Reform versus conservatism, etc.
3. But have a little patience with these two conflicting parties. The main aspect of the times is that the great spirit gazes thro them. The true aspects of the departments of life is the information they yield of the supreme nature. For that reality, let us serve and stand.

Outline of "Nature" Volume I.

Introduction-

The ways in which to speak of nature:

- (1) When we speak of nature, sometimes we mean in a poetical sense, the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects.
 - (2) It is certain that the power to produce this delight does not reside in nature but in man-or in a harmony of both.
- I. There are a multitude of causes which enter as

parts into the final cause of the world. These all can be thrown into: Commodity, Beauty, Language, Discipline. Nature may be regarded as serving these ends.

II. A noble doubt suggests itself-whether the Universe outwardly exists. The frivolous make themselves merry with the theory as if it affected the stability of nature. While we acquiesce in permanent laws, the question of absolute existence in nature remains open. But five things seek to emancipate the physical world into spiritual world.

(1) Natural illusion (2) Poetry (3) Philosophies
(4) Intellectual science (5) Religion & ethics.

III. Thro all its kingdoms, the universe is faithful to the cause from whence it had its origin, namely, Spirit. As a plant upon the earth, man rests upon the Spirit from whence it derives its being.

I have already shown how in the larger plan is his essay, Emerson proceeds from the general to the particular, and how his third section is an eloquent exhortation to action and belief on the part of the readers. I have further shown how in the first part of his essay, he allays the suspicion on the part of his readers of any diverging opinion on his part, by first conceding to popular interpretation or general definition. I have already quoted also a passage from his journal which is his own testimony on this point: "One must avoid too great elevation at first" etc. This general plan of developing an idea, of proceeding from the general to the specific and from the accepted to the unaccepted, is duplicated in the paragraphs of the essays.

Emerson's favorite paragraph commences with a short sentence; a thought tersely and briefly stated in bold and uncompromising terms. Sometimes the sentence is but three words long. It is not often a complex sentence and in any case it is a short general statement without proof or illustration. The final sentence in this typical paragraph is a long involved sentence, concrete, illustrative, eloquent and graphic. As a striking illustration of this characteristic I quote two sentences from Self Reliance. The first sentence in the paragraph is, "Society never advances." The final sentence is the following: "If the traveler tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad axe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave." Again in Spiritual Laws, the first sentence is, "A man passes for what he is worth," while the final sentence is, "Pretension never wrote an Iliad, nor drove back Xerxes, nor christienized the world, nor abolished slavery." As perhaps an even more significant illustration of Emerson's paragraph development. I quote the following paragraph from Nature:

"These enchantments are medicinal, they sober and heal us. These are plain pleasures, kindly and native to us. We come to our own and make friends with matter

- (1) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. II, P. 84, 85.
- (2) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. II, P. 157.

which the ambitious chatter of schools would persuade us to despise.---- We go out daily and nightly to feed the eyes on the horizon and require so much scope, just as we need water for a bath.---- There is the bucket of cold water from the spring, the wood fire to which the chilled traveler rushes for safety,- and there is the sublime moral of autumn and of noon. We nestle in nature and draw our living as parasites from her roots and grains, and we receive from the heavenly bodies, which call us to solitude and foretell the remotest future.--- I think if we should be rapt away into all that, and dream of heaven, and should converse with Gabriel and Uriel, the upper sky would be all that would remain of our furniture." (1)

It is quite obvious, I believe, that Emerson in this paragraph gains force in diction and expression as he approaches the end of the paragraph. His first sentence is general and short. As he approaches the middle zone of the paragraph, he becomes more concrete and graphic by specific illustration. Another illustration from the essay on Beauty makes this climactic arrangement more clear. The first sentence of a long paragraph is: "We love any forms, however ugly, from which great qualities shine." The final sentence is the climax of both thought and expression. "If a man cut such a head on his stone gate post as shall draw and keep a crowd about it all day, by its beauty, good nature and inscrutable meaning;-if a man can build a plain cottage with such symmetry as to make all the fine palaces look cheap and vulgar; can take such advantages of nature that all her powers serve him; making use of geometry instead of expense; tapping a mountain for his water jet; causing the sun and moon to seem only the decoration of his estate;- this is still the legitimate dominion of Beauty." (2) This is one of the cumulative effects which are so common throughout Emerson's paragraphs. Another illustration of this climactic ending is the following from the essay on New England Reformers: "The same insatiable criticism may be traced in the efforts for

(1) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 3, P. 171.

(2) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 6, P. 300.

the reform of Education.----- The sight of a planet through a telescope is worth all the course on astronomy; the shock of the electric spark in the elbow outvalues all the theories; the taste of the nitrous oxide, the firing of an artificial volcano are better than volumes of chemistry." (1)

Emerson's paragraphs obey this general law of structure which I have illustrated regularly a definite tendency in their development. In the essay on Fate selected at random as the first essay of the first volume I happened to pick up, there are a total number of sixty-six paragraphs. Of these sixty-six, ten are very short ones of eight lines or less; twelve are of such length that a very long sentence at the end would be out of proportion with the rest of the paragraph, and fourteen are typical paragraphs which illustrate the climatic arrangement while I have already discussed. The following citations serve to make clear the sentence arrangement in these fourteen paragraphs in the essay on Fate.

(1) "Savages cling to a local god of one tribe or town.----- We must see that the world is rough and surly and will not mind crowning a man or a woman, but swallows your ship like a grain of dust.----- Providence has a wild, rough incaluable road to its end, and it is of no use to try to whitewash its huge, unmixed instrumentalities, or to dress up that terrific benefactor in a clean shirt and white neckcloth of a student in divinity." Vol. 6, P. 6-8.

(2) "A good deal of our politics is physiological.----- But strong natures, back woodsmen, New Hampshire giants, Napoleons, Burkes, Broughams, Websters, Kossuths are inevitable patriots, until their life ebbs and their defects and gout, palsy and money, warp them." Vol. 6, P. 13.

(3) "In science, we have to consider two things:

(1) Emerson's Complete Works, Vol. 3, P. 257-8

Power and circumstance,----- Nature is the tyrannous circumstance, the thick skull, the sheathed snake, the ponderous, rock-like jaw;necessitated activity; violent direction; the conditions of a tool, like the locomotive, strong enough on its track but which can do nothing but mischief off of it; or skates, which are wings on the ice but fetters on the ground." Vol. 6, P. 14-15.

(4) "Nor can he blink the free will.----- They who talk much of destiny, their birth star, etc., are in a lower dangerous plane, and invite the evils they fear." Vol. 6, P. 23.

(5) "Fate involves the melioration.----- The whole circle of animal life - tooth against tooth, devouring war, war for food, a yell of pain and a grunt of triumph, until at last the whole menagerie, the whole chemical mass is mellowed and refined for higher use--pleases at a sufficient perspective." Vol. 6, P. 35.

(6) "But these are magazines and arsenals. ----- If Fate is ore and quarry, if evil is good in the making, if limitation is power that shall be, if calamities, oppositions, and weights are wings and means,- we are reconciled." Vol. 6, P. 35.

(7) "How is this affected?-----Do you suppose he can be estimated by his weight in pounds, or that he is contained in his skin,-this reaching, radiating, jaculating fellow? The smallest candle fills a mile with its rays, and the papillae of a man run out to every star." Vol. 6, P. 38.

(8) "The secret of the world is the tie between person and event.----- All the toys that infatuate men, and which they play for,-houses, land, money, luxury, power fame, are the self-same thing, with a new guise or two of illusion overlaid.-----At the conjurers, we detect the hair by which he moves his pup-

pet, but we have not eyes sharp enough to descry the thread that ties cause and effect." Vol. 6, P. 39.

(9) "The correlation is shown in defects.----- If a man has a see-saw in his voice, it will run into his sentences, into his poem, into the structure of his fable, into his speculation, into his charity. And as every man is hunted by his own daemon, vexed by his own disease, this checks all his activity." Vol. 6, P. 45.

(10) "This correlation really existing, can be divined.----- Some people are made up of rhyme, coincidence, omen, periodicity, and presage: they meet the person they seek; what their companion prepares to say to them, they first say to him; and a hundred signs apprise them of what is about to befall." Vol. 6, P. 45-6.

(11) "A man's fortunes are the fruit of his character.----- The tendency of every man to enact all that is in his constitution is expressed in the old belief that the efforts which we make to escape our destiny only serve to lead us into it: and I have noticed a man likes better to be complimented on his position, as the proof of the last or total excellence, than on his merits." Vol. 6, P. 41-2.

(12) "Steam was till the other day, the devil which we dreaded.----- He could be used to lift away, chain and compel other devils far more reluctant and dangerous, namely, cubic miles of earth, mountains, weight or resistance of water machinery, and the labors of all men in the world; and time he shall lengthen, and shorten space." Vol. 6, P. 33.

(13) "The one serious and formidable thing in nature is a will.----- A personal influence towers up in memory only worthy, and we gladly forget numbers, money, climate, gravitation and the rest of Fate." Vol. 6, P. 30.

(14) "Tis frivol^ous to fix pedantically the date of particular inventions.-----This kind of talent so abounds, this constructive tool making efficiency, as if it adhered to the chemic atoms; as if the air he breathes were made of Vaucansons, Franklins and Watts." Vol. 6, P. 17.

References to pages whose paragraphs further illustrate the sentence arrangement described on preceding pages.

(For example 6-8 means that the paragraph begins on p. 6 and ends on 8;)

Volume 6, pages 6-8; 13; 14-15; 23; 35; 35-36; 39-40; 63-64; 66-67; 88-90; 102-103; 118-119; 125-126; 136; 144; 149-150; 154-155; 164-165; 172-173; 175-176; 183-184; 186-187; 188-190; 191-192; 210-211; 218; 218-219; 223-224; 239-240; 262; 283; 292-294; 300-302; 321-322; 325;

Volume 7 pages 7-8; 25-26; 27; 40-41; 66-67; 117-118; 128; 141; 144-146; 157; 171; 181; 232-233; 244-245; 257-258; 264; 291-292; 299-300; 326-328;

Volume 3, pages 5-6; 7-8; 31-31; 32-33; 38-40; 50-51; 55-56; 57-58; 59-61; 64-65; 92-93; 103-104; 108-110; 119-120; 126-127; 145-147; 162-164; 171-172; 206-207; 211-212; 212-213; 231-232; 242-244; 246-247; 255-6; 257-258; 269-27-;

Volume 2, pages 3-4; 4-5; 7; 9; 12; 14-15; 38-39; 47-50; 53-54; 55-56; 57; 58; 62; 67-68; 69-70; 71-72; 75-76; 83-84; 84-85; 97; 98-99; 100; 102; 108; 117-118; 122-123; 133-134; 135-136; 145; 152; 153; 154; 157-158; 161-162; 176; 183-186; 191-3; 194-5; 200-1; 201-4; 225-6; 224-5; 233; 235-6; 251-3; 260; 274-5; 275-6; 278-9; 282-283; 285-6; 292-4; 303-4; 304-5; 306-7; 309-10; 312-13; 326-317; 327-8; 330; 331-2; 333; 345-7; 356-7; 357-8;

At the conclusion of this thesis, I return to a quotation from W. C. Brownell; "Emerson's essays have no graded approach to any distinguishable middle, followed by some end; they do not terminate, they merely cease." Emerson's essays as I have shown in the foregoing pages do have a "middle" and they have even more obviously an "end". The gentle and quiet divergence away from general opinion into a forceful exposition of a unique phase of his subject matter, and the final climax of an emotional appeal to the reader in his closing paragraphs seems to me quite a "distinguishable middle" and a definite end. It is true Emerson's essays, no more than his paragraphs, are not formal and mechanical models of an unvarying pattern. If Emerson did not have an artist's mould into which to cast his thoughts, he had at least an acquired habit of thinking in a definite and prescribed manner, so that his essays and paragraphs followed broad, but no less definite tendencies. His paragraphs and essays do not obey the conventional rules of structure any more than Emerson's mind adhered to the orthodox demands of thought and criticism. It is furthermore commonly true that his transitions are abrupt and his connections are subtle. His paragraphs do lack the qualities of Carlyle's "beaten ingots." But Emerson's whole genius was a genius that ignored details, and attempted to grasp the universal significance of life. But such a genius was not haphazard; it obeyed tendencies and general laws which were as well defined, if not as minute, as the more detailed requirements of technical rhetoric.

The common criticisms that Emerson "had no form", that he followed no rules of composition and that he lacked method and system, have been unjustified exaggerations of a few passages from his journal, which, in their most liberal interpretation are no more than interesting but minor inconsistencies of a very consistent man. If we are to judge a man by occasional weaknesses admitted candidly in his journal, rather than by the larger tendencies and habits of a whole life, we may indeed con-

clude that Emerson was an illogical thinker and an un-systematic writer. If we are to attack undue significance to a few isolated passages from his journals and leave entirely out of consideration any estimate of the tendencies of his essays as a whole, we may safely agree with the critics of Emerson who judge his structure on a conventional basis.

If we are fair however, we will not seek a formal essay of Macaulay or Arnold with which to compare Emerson's essays on the basis of form. We will grant that an inspirational writer perhaps ignores many minor details of Rhetoric, but we will not be too hasty to conclude that he therefore "violates all system." We will grant that there are faulty transitions and obscure passages to his essays, but we will not then have convicted Emerson of illogical sequence of thought and unrelated ideas. To be fair to Emerson, we must judge his essays not in comparison with more formal essayists, but as they are representative of certain general tendencies which Emerson intended to follow. If we do this, we will conclude that he omitted transitions, signposts and labels deliberately; that he recognised inherent relation of thoughts and ideas themselves, as the only essential principle of coherence; and that he regarded good form as the result of thought rather than conducive to it. Such a philosophy of Art suggests a fair basis for criticising the Essays of Emerson. It suggests that the ordinary rules of Rhetoric will not fit his method of exposition. A study of the essays themselves, however has proved three things; first, a certain large and very definite and fundamental relation to each other and to a single doctrine of Emerson's philosophy, thus suggesting a certain Unity of Subject Matter throughout all his exposition; second, in each individual essay a general method of treatment is consistently carried out, and the same broad tendencies of style are apparent in all; and finally in the paragraphs themselves, there is a common basis of form and prevailing tendencies in the greater portions of them.

Thus it appears that Emerson was not merely the mystic who relies totally on the inspiration of the moment. There was system and habit to his manner of thinking; there was similarly method and deliberation in his writing.

No doubt there are riddles still unsolved within his essays; perhaps there are times when he suggests the inexplicable enigma of the Sphinx. But if we are considering the essays of Emerson as a whole; if we are interested in the larger tendencies of a man's genius, rather than its peculiarities, we cannot safely conclude that the name of the man whom James Russel Lowell coupled with that of Abraham Lincoln as representing the two most eminent personalities of America of the nineteenth century, is merely suggestive of idle dreaming, illogical intuitions and haphazard, unsystematic "thoughts shoveled down like coal in a cellar to be sorted."