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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SOME TYPES OF THE ESSAY

A Thesis

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## PREFACE

The various courses of study pursued by university students in the academic department make it necessary for them to write, on a great number of subjects, papers which are loosely styled essays. It is to be expected that their course in rhetoric, in addition to teaching them how to express themselves in clear and correct English, should also give them some notion of how to prepare a paper which shall be a complete piece of work. The study of the four forms of discourse and the course in the short story will aid them less in this than the study of the so called "essay" as it has been treated by writers whose works have become a permanent part of our literature. No amount of teaching will make a student original. Originality is a personal attribute, and not one which can be learned. The most that rhetoric can do, therefore, is to teach, not substance, but form. And since "nothing is more dangerous than the imitation of one writer, nothing more safe than the imitation of many," it is purposed to analyze essays of one type by different authors, to show the various methods of dealing with one class of subjects. This I decided to do after vainly searching in every likely place in this country and in England for a convenient book to serve my students as a guide. There are books on the structure of the short

story, books on the structure of the drama, books on the structure of verse, but no guide whatever to the inexperienced student on the structure of the essay. Of course this is easily accounted for by the fact that the structure of the essay is much less rigid than that of the other forms of writing; but I believe the papers, of which the students are required to prepare so many, would be of a much higher grade, in form if not in substance, and would be prepared with much more ease, if the students had a collection of short, complete essays to compare as to structure. Brewster's "Studies in Structure and Style" does not meet the requirement, as it takes up different forms of discourse, and treats incomplete pieces of work.

What the student specially needs is to learn how the best essay writers have begun their essays, how much or how little attention they have given to logical order of thought, and how they have concluded. Of the four common methods of introducing formal pieces of exposition: the stating of the theme, the definition of terms, the stating of the occasion, and the clearing away of unrelated matter, only a few of the great literary essays make use. It is of value to the student in his own writing to discover just when and where other methods of beginning an essay have been effective. The same may be said of the conclusion; since many essays neither recapitulate, summarize, show the effects or results of condi-

tions discussed in the body of the essay, nor present a new theory.

To make such a study possible it is necessary for each student to have in class the text of each essay studied . But the student cannot be asked to buy a dozen or more books for the sake of one essay from each author. Neither can a class of students be assigned a certain essay to prepare for a single recitation; since the libraries have not sufficient copies of any one essay to make this possible. The only satisfactory way is to have a collection of essays of different types, one essay from each author selected, and the comparisons printed with the essays. From this as a working basis the students can make an independent study of other essays of the same authors, constantly testing their observations by attempts to embody them in their own writing. As there has been some need for such a book expressed both by general readers at the public library and by university instructors, it may be that such a collection would be worth while.

## INTRODUCTION.

### THE ESSAY.

The essay is defined as a brief prose composition, highly finished, with unity of theme, and methodical development of thought. It is distinguished from higher prose forms by its briefness; in this respect bearing the same relation to higher prose forms that the lyric bears to higher forms of poetry. Like the lyric, also, it requires a high degree of literary finish.

Addison, writing of the essay, says: "The essay is neither a dissertation nor a thesis; properly speaking, it is a work of art, and must conform to artistic rules. Hence, it requires unity; it must hang together, and round itself off into a separate literary entity. When written, the essay should be able to remain a lasting contribution to literature."

The true essay, or personal essay, depending as it does on the rich personality of the writer, is of no other use to the student than to inspire in him a desire to express whatever he feels keenly, in as graceful a manner as possible. He may learn that the "wise lightness" of a Lamb differs from the dilettante frivolity which is supposed by many to be the only characteristic of the personal essay. But the real charm of the true essay he cannot hope to imitate because

that charm defies analysis or imitation. For this reason this study will not be confined to the analysis of the true essay. Nor will there be an attempt to treat the historical development of the essay. I am well aware that there has been no satisfactory classification of the essay, but it is not my purpose to attempt an original one. I have found one ready to my hand which seems to me to answer my purpose very well.

Of essays dealing with human nature, one essay each from Bacon, Emerson, Addison, and Lamb, has been selected. Bacon writes on ethical subjects; Emerson, on philosophical subjects; Addison, on morals and manners; Lamb, on personal affairs. Of essays dealing with external nature, one essay each from Muir, Lowell, Thompson and Thoreau, has been selected. Muir sees animal life as the child of nature in her freest haunts; Lowell, as the man of letters from his study window; Thompson, as the book lover in fields and woods; and Thoreau as the recluse who notes minutely all the details of vegetable and animal life which he can gather without going far afield.

Of essays dealing with the fine arts, one essay each from Meynell, Arnold, Newman, and Pater, has been selected: one essay on literature, one in literary criticism, one on Japanese art, and one on an Italian artist. Of the three



fundamental qualities of style: the intellectual, clearness;  
the emotional, force; and the aesthetic, elegance;  
Arnold represents the intellectual, Pater, the <sup>S</sup> aesthetic, and  
Meynell and Newman a nearly equal combination of all three.

. As this is intended for a beginning course for sophomores  
it did not seem desirable to make it elaborate or technical.  
The first point is to get our students as early in their  
course as possible into the habit of reading and enjoying  
essays. At present very few students upon their entrance  
into college read anything but short stories, and most of  
them think an essay the driest of all reading. But students  
have testified to their growing interest and delight in essays  
after they have once obtained some idea of the purpose, the  
plan, and the more obvious points of style in the essays  
studied.

It has been the purpose to give the structure of each  
essay in so simple and brief a way that it can be seen almost  
at a glance, and retained in the mind as a whole. In dis-  
cussing paragraph structure only those points which the  
student must first learn are touched upon; namely, minimum  
and maximum length, variety in length, position of topic  
sentences, and manner of connection. Somewhat more has been  
done with sentences; but in the discussion of words little  
more has been attempted than to call attention to striking

or picturesque words. Students soon come to take pleasure in these; and are then willing to take up a study of synonyms, which before was thought intolerably dry. The following from Arlo Bates sums up about all that has been attempted in this work:

"To gain clearness it is necessary first to avoid all vagueness of thought and all vagueness of expression. It is needful to shun ambiguity of word or of phrase, and that more subtle ambiguity which may arise from ill-proportion, or from bad arrangement of the parts of a composition".

## BACON'S ESSAYS.

Lord Bacon was the first English writer to employ the prose form called the essay, which he defined as a series of notes set down significantly; and as such they must be regarded. The subjects he chose were intellectual or ethical, and these he treated in a distinctly intellectual, rather than an emotional, manner. Each essay is so condensed, so packed with food for thought, that every sentence might be taken by another writer for the theme of an entire essay. One could almost imagine that mental dyspepsia would result from reading and trying to digest his essays too rapidly. His saying of some books, that they must be chewed and digested, applies equally to his own essays. But, after all, they are suited only to purely intellectual consideration, as they lack entirely the power to quiet a fear or soothe a sorrow or charm an idle hour. As a means of arousing and quickening the intellect, however, they are stimulating in the highest degree.

BACON: OF STUDIES (Version of 1625).

Structure

I. Why we should study. Par. 1.

A. Studies have three uses:

1. Delight- in privateness
2. Ornament- in discourse
3. Ability- in judgment of business

B. But should not be too long dwelt upon

C. As they perfect nature and are perfected

by experience

1. Crafty men contemn them
2. Simple men admire them
3. Wise men use them

II. How we should study. Par. 2.

A. Not to confute or take for granted

B. But to weigh and consider

1. Read some books in parts
2. Read some entire but easily
3. Digest a few with attention
4. Read a few by deputy

III. What we should study. Par. 3.

A. History- for wisdom

B. Poetry- for wit

C. Mathematics- for subtilty

D. Philosophy- for depth

E. Moral- for gravity

F. Logic and rhetoric- for ability to contend

## I. BACON'S PARAGRAPHS.

The three paragraphs are of medium length and all of about the same length. They are without explicit connection but are arranged in a natural order of progression: why, how, and what, to study. There is no formal introduction but the opening paragraph begins at once with the use of studies. There is little room for elaboration of a point, though the opening sentence of the first paragraph is elaborated in the next sentence. The reason for the final statement made in the second sentence is given in sentence three. The fourth sentence, however, is an abrupt change of thought, which is followed by a reason again. Then the last sentence is another abrupt change. The second paragraph has only one abrupt change: in next to the last sentence; while the third treats of only one topic, with a final sentence for summary.

## II. BACON'S SENTENCES.

The sentences in this essay are either short, or if long, are balanced, so that they have the effect of short sentences. They are so largely balanced or antithetical that to give all the examples would be to give nearly all the essay. There are few subordinate clauses, the only noticeable one being near the close of the second paragraph: "And therefore if a man", etc. The short, emphatic sentences suit the character of the essays as a whole, the aphoristic precepts being hammered in sharply with a single blow.

### III. BACON'S WORDS.

In this essay as in others, Bacon shows a fondness for obsolete words and peculiar turns of expression, as well as for quotations from the Latin,

contemn, Par. 1

subtile, stond, Par. 3

like as, for as, Par. 3

and two Latin quotations in Par. 3.

With these exceptions the words are perfectly clear of comprehension by the ordinary reader, and are so apt that no attention whatever is drawn to them; the entire attention being given to the thought conveyed.

### IV. BACON'S FIGURES.

1. Natural abilities are like natural plants - Par. 1
2. Some books are to be tasted- Par. 2
3. Distilled books are like common distilled waters,  
flashy things- Par. 2

These figures are so plain and homely that they do not at once appear as figures at all, since the purpose is not to add poetic adornment but merely to illustrate or to point more clearly some analogy which the writer had discovered. In the other essays as in this one the figures are taken almost entirely from familiar objects and operations in nature and human life.

## EMERSON'S ESSAYS.

While Bacon gave us the intellectual or ethical treatment of human nature, Emerson in his essays gave us the philosophical treatment of human nature. But while he was devoted to philosophy he made no attempt to formulate a system, nor any attempt to present his subject in a connected manner. He lived always on the mountain heights, in that rare atmosphere where he saw more clearly than others the great truths of human existence, and he wished others to see as he saw. But his calm, invincible assurance of the ultimate victory of truth prevented him from feeling the urgency and anxiety of such an agonizing toiler as Carlyle, and so he never attempted to press his truth home by urging, exhorting and passionate pleading, but turned the various sides of a truth to the light like a magnificent diamond, cut so that its facets throw off a thousand rays. Emerson stands back and admires, while the reader is wrapt in breathless contemplation of the wonder. The cold, keen, clear, intellectual atmosphere of Bacon has given way here to the all-embracing warmth of the early summer sunshine, which shocks with electric thrills while it warms and comforts. For though the philosophical and spiritual dominate the essays, yet the intellect is stimulated at each step; it is impossible to read Emerson and be sluggish in intellect.

The reason for Emerson's apparent disregard for logical

## I. EMERSON'S PARAGRAPHS.

Emerson spoke of his paragraphs as incompressible; in other words, lacking a theme. The quatrain at the head of the essay, however, may well stand as a theme for the whole, and the first sentence of the prose as an occasion for the writing of the essay.

The paragraphs vary in length; paragraph seven being two pages long, while five paragraphs, 12,20,32,35,44, have fewer than four sentences. This, however, counts for little with Emerson, who regarded the sentence as the only unit of written discourse. The paragraphs were connected by some explicit means, or not, just as it happened. In the essay on Self-reliance fewer than one-third of the paragraphs have any word used as a connective.

1. Par.'s 3 & 4, 5 & 6, 26 & 27, 32 & 33 are connected by the demonstratives.
2. Par.'s 4 & 5, 19 & 20, 44 & 45 by the repetition of the important noun.
3. 12 & 13, 28 & 29, 41 & 42 by "but"
4. 17 & 18 by "then"
5. 27 & 28 by "thus"
6. 48 & 49, 49n & 50 by "so"
7. 31 & 32 by "it"
- 36 & 37 by "another"

The paragraphs are not elaborated according to any plan



progression of thought in an essay, or even for any plan whatever, is due to the nature of his subject; for he has but one subject in effect, give the essay what name he will. He reveals in each essay his belief in the immanence of God; man, matter, and God, are simply different aspects of one and the same essence. Therefore man should hold himself royally, "A God, though in the germ." For this reason one man is as good as another, and each one has only to look within to study the Divine at first hand; consequently each one should rely implicitly upon his own instinct, which with Emerson means his openness to Divine inspiration.

Such a belief is the foundation for his wonderfully inspiring essay on Self-Reliance. Yet this essay, upon close study, reveals more of a plan than the reader intent wholly upon the lovely expression of new and beautiful ideas would expect. The thought proceeds in somewhat this manner:

It is our duty to be self-reliant, yet because of weakness we fail. But because we are part of the Divine it is possible for us to succeed. Therefore we should make the effort, for the need is great, and the result would be a spiritual revolution.

## EMERSON, SELF-RELIANCE.

### Structure

- I. The duty of self-reliance: Par.'s 1-5.  
Why we are not self-reliant.  
Because of:
  - A. Conformity, Par.'s 6-11
  - B. Consistency, Par.'s 12-17
  - C. Ignorance of self, Par. 18
  - D. Ignorance of others, Par.'s 19-20
- II. Why we should be self-reliant: Par.'s 21-29
  - A. Each is part of the divine, Par.'s 21-24
  - B. Self is an original agent, Par.'s 25-29
- ~~III~~  
IV. How we can be self-reliant: Par.'s 30-32
  - A. By speaking the truth, Par. 30
  - B. By obeying our own standard of right, Par. 31
- IV. How great the present need is: Par.'s 33,34
- V. What the result would be:  
A revolution in:
  - A. Religion, Par.'s 36-38
    1. Selfish prayers, Par. 36
    2. Regrets, Par. 37
    3. Creeds, Par. 38
  - B. Motives for travel, Par.'s 39-41
  - C. Intellectual independence, Par.'s 42,43
  - D. Spirit of society, Par.'s 44-50

or system arranged beforehand, as would naturally be inferred from the fact that so few of them have a topic sentence.

## II. EMERSON'S SENTENCES.

Emerson's sentences, like Bacon's, are short and simple: and so compact, so filled with thought, that, like Bacon's, each could be expanded into a paragraph or an entire essay. There is a lack of explicit coherence; as he himself says, "each sentence an infinitely repellent particle." But the thought of them all was one thought, as one of his neighbors remarked while Emerson was lecturing. "Can you tell me", said he, "what connection there is between that last sentence and the one that went before, and what connection it all has with Plato?" "None, my friend, save in God", was the reply.

One of the reasons for the apparent lack of continuity is the frequently abrupt change from the lofty to the homely, every day things of life. Yet this, while perplexing to some, is one of his chief charms. Nothing was commonplace to him; so that the mingling of the lofty and the every day, was as natural as the fact that his face showed, as one friend remarked, Greek on one side and Yankee on the other, or as Lowell put it:

"E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,

And looks coolly around him with sharp common-sense."

As was remarked before, it was to the sentence that Emerson

gave all his attention. To make that bright and sparkling was to him the great achievement. His allusions to nature are so apt and so beautiful that we rejoice as at lovely ornamentation. Yet Emerson's allusions were always an integral part of the subject matter. The most striking ones in this essay are, in: Par. 15. "My book should smell of pines---" Par. 24. "When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook---"

Other effective figures:

Par. 5- "But the man is, as it were, clapped into jail by his consciousness"

Par. 8. "Their works are done----as insane pay a high board".

Par. 14. "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

Par. 19. "Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic."

Par. 30. "I will do strongly, before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me."

Epigrams and oracular sayings abound:

Par. 7. "Thy love afar is spite at home"

"Truth is handsomer than the affectation of love"

"We cannot spend the day in explanation."

Par. 9. "What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think."

Par. 14. "With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do."

Par. 15. "To be great is to be misunderstood."

Par. 17. "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man."

Par. 26. "Life only avails, not the having lived"

Par. 29 "All men have my blood, and I have all men's."

The essay is packed so full of vital phrases that to give them all would be virtually to copy the entire essay.

Much of the effectiveness of Emerson's sentences is due to the balancing of short phrases or clauses: he frequently employs this method for less striking thoughts, as Par. 2, first and last sentences.

Par. 3, second and last sentences.

Par. 5, "You must court him: he does not court you."

Par. 9, last sentence.

### III. EMERSON'S WORDS.

Emerson made no display of pedantry in his use of words. He did not delight in foreign words as did Bacon, but used words so simple that a child could understand them. Like Bacon he never used a superfluous word; and like Bacon his vocabulary was wide and exact. His advice was to avoid the adjective and let the noun do the work. But unlike Bacon, he chose words for their picturesque quality. He says: "Just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes, the graceful fern or the finely vertebrated lizard are presented; so in words are beautiful thoughts and images- the imagination and feeling of past ages". And his use of words moved

Lowell to say:

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one  
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on."

He frequently employed the root meaning of words. Only a  
few of the more striking words will be noted.

Par. 7 "I ought to speak the rude truth." (rudis = unpeeled)

Par. 7 "I shun father-when my genius calls me"

(gigno = to be born, that which is inborn,)

Par. 9 "Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic"

Par. 10 "Every word chagrins us." Rare in active

Par. 15 "In this pleasing, contrite wood life which God allows  
me"--(con terere = to rub together)

Par. 17---"conformity and consistency. Let the words be  
gazetted." (A gazette - a bi-weekly London paper with bank-  
rupts' names)

Par. 17 ---"he is confounded with virtue and the possible  
of man." (possum = can, depends on the power of the agent)

Par. 21 "Perception is whimsical, it is fatal, (fatalis =  
according to fate)

Par. 26 "There will be power not confident, but agent" (ago  
= to act)

Par. 36 "In what prayers do men allow themselves" (allow =  
justify or sanctify)(in the Cent. Dict.)

Par. 43 "Every great man is a unique." Rare as a noun.

## ADDISON'S ESSAYS.

Addison was the first to give the essay the informal style of the letter. His purpose was really to write letters which should be read every morning by the wit and fashion of London, as they idled over their coffee. For this reason he chose subjects in which they were interested, and treated them in a style suited to the themes. Probably no other writer ever succeeded in preaching so many effectual sermons on such seemingly trivial subjects, all the while deluding his readers with the idea that they were merely being entertained.

Rigidly excluding politics, he treated only the follies and foibles of the time; extravagance, vulgarity, foppery, idleness, affectation. This he did with so much irony, satire, and at the same time with such an air of perfect good breeding that wit became the strongest weapon of virtue. Up to that time the great wits of the age had turned all their shafts of ridicule against virtue; with the same weapon Addison succeeded in establishing a higher standard of manners and morals, being careful always to aim his ridicule not at persons, but at a class. Every word of the essays was chosen with the most fastidious care, with the one purpose of producing an effect of lightness, ease, and elegance. For this reason syntax is sometimes sacrificed to smoothness and rhythm, and the quality of force is never admitted.

The most famous of all the essays are the Spectator papers; and of these the best loved are the Sir Roger de Coverley character sketches. Every one loves the old knight, for his kind heart, his good morals, his unsuccessful love, and his oddities. Nowhere do the last show more delightfully than in the essay "Sir Roger at Church", where he wakes from his nap to reprove a parishioner whom he finds inattentive; pronounces Amen several times to the same prayer; counts heads to see who is missing; and calls out to John Matthews not to disturb the congregation! No wonder the simple people loved him! No wonder we love him to-day as if he had really been among us! His religion may seem to us to be of the distinctly utilitarian variety, concerned altogether with the comfort of the body, and with regard to appearances; but it was at least a great improvement upon what was to be found elsewhere, surely better than open scoffing at the very forms of religion.

The structure of this essay is informal, but not formless; in this respect marking a slight step in advance over the best type of friendly letter, which may be supposed to be written for private reading only, while this is intended as a permanent contribution to literature.



ADDISON: Sir Roger at Church.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par. 1.

A. Sabbath observance the best means of civilizing mankind.

1. Country people meet to visit and worship.
2. Discuss parish politics in churchyard.

II. Body, Par.'s 2 - 6.

A. Sir Roger is very active in church matters. Par. 2.

1. Beautified the church.
2. Furnished comforts.
3. Employed a singing master to teach the parishioners.

B. His peculiarities show here as elsewhere. Par. 3

1. Allows no one to sleep but himself.
2. Sings out of time.
3. Makes responses to prayers.
4. Counts the congregation.

C. In spite of his foibles he benefits the people, Par.'s 4 - 6.

1. As is shown in their respect for him.
2. He rewards fidelity.

III. Conclusion, Par.'s 7,8.

A. Great contrast to next parish, Par. 7.

B. Such feuds are fatal to ordinary people, Par. 8.

### ADDISON'S PARAGRAPHS.

The informality of the letter style of essay is shown in the construction of the paragraphs. These vary somewhat in length, the last one being the shortest; but although most of them have unity of thought, the chief reason for their division is evidently their appearance on the page. The first sentence contains the theme of the essay, which is followed by an explanation of the statement made in the theme. The second is a narrative paragraph without a theme; the third, narrative with the theme in the first sentence; the fourth, which continues the theme of the third, closes with a statement of the effect; the fifth and sixth go back to details of Sir Roger's manners at church; and the last two picture the different state of affairs in the next parish, and the effect on the people.

The order of thought is sufficiently coherent not to confuse the reader, but not so rigid and formal as to lose the ease which Addison always sought. This may be the reason why there are no paragraph connectives.

### ADDISON'S SENTENCES.

The structure of Addison's sentences shows even more than his paragraphs that he constantly worked for ease and naturalness. There is a greater number of long sentences than one would expect to find in so short an essay; but most of them

are compound or complex-compound, and very loose; merely a tacking on of phrase or clause. Sentence connectives are few; "and", "but" and "thus" constituting most of the specific connectives. There is no attempt at balance or antithesis; on the contrary some sentences are so loosely constructed as to be ambiguous. For instance, the last sentence in paragraph two contains the relative clause beginning with "upon which", referring in position to "tunes", but in thought equally to "instruct". The last sentence in paragraph 5 closes in this way: ---"inquires how such an one's wife or father do, whom he does not see at church; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent." To put "do" at the end of the clause would make an awkward but a more logical order. To have said "He inquires after the health of such an one's wife" would also have been to sacrifice something of ease. "Which" in the last clause has no antecedent; and here the construction might have been bettered without much loss of ease, by writing "an inquiry which".

#### ADDISON'S WORDS.

Ease and simplicity are again the most apparent reasons for the choice of words made by Addison. He avoids figures of speech, uses the simplest words, and often omits connectives that readers of to-day think necessary:

Par. 1. "and think, if keeping the holy seventh day"---omitting "that" before "if".

"It is certain the country people",-omitting "that"

before "the".

"degenerate into a kind of savages", instead of "degenerate into savages"

--"puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms"

--"apt to give them a figure in the--village."

Par. 2. --"upon which they now very much value themselves."

Par. 3. --"a short nap at sermon"

--"particularities break out"

--"till Sir Roger is gone out of the church"

More loosely still:

Par. 3. --"everybody else is upon their knees"

---"almost in every sermon"

Par. 8. ---"as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning"

## LAMB'S ESSAYS.

Charles Lamb, the best beloved of English essayists. Only a few essays, all written within the period of a few years, yet must they endure so long as the human heart can throb with sympathy, the imagination kindle at quaint conceits, mirth rise at unexpected wit, and the throat tighten at the grip of pathos. For Lamb's essays are Lamb himself; the truest, most loyal, most tender, most gentle, most affectionate; most melancholy, most witty, of all our writers. He never can have an imitator until some one else lives the same tragic life, in the same self-sacrificing, loving manner, and keeps under the crushing agony by constantly diverting himself and his friends with the gentle summer lightning of his wit.

These remarks from some of his legions of friends sum up all that can be said of him:

A. S. Hill: "Lamb put himself, with whatever belonged to him, on paper. A reader is less interested in the essays than in the essayist."

Mrs. Oliphant: "He is, in the best sense of the word, one who writes for writing's sake, not because he has much to tell us, but because it is a pleasure to him to make friends with us, to jest and sigh and trifle, to play some whimsical trick upon us, to transport us all in a moment, all unwittingly,

from laughter into weeping, to play upon all the strings of our hearts."

Blackwood's: "We rise from his works, if not with any general truth more vividly impressed, yet prepared by gentle and almost imperceptible touches to be more social in our companionships and warmer in our friendships."

Talfourd: Lamb's works "are most immediately directed to give us heart's ease and make us happy"

Ainger: "One must have come to entertain a feeling toward him almost like personal affection."

Leigh Hunt: "How natural it was for Charles Lamb to give a kiss to an old folio, as I once saw him do to Chapman's "Homer."

C. C. Felton: [He] "is a child, looks at the world through a child's eyes, has his night-fears, his day-dreams, his attachments, his repulsions, his awe of the unknown, and his shrinking from the unfamiliar."

Swinburne: "There is in his work a sweetness like no other fragrance, a magic like no second spell in all the world of letters."

LAMB: Old China.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par.'s 1 - 7.

Love for old china, because of quaint decorations,

Transition, Par. 8

A recent purchase of old china set Bridget last night  
to recalling old times.

II. Body, Par.'s 9 - 15.

She said:

- A. "Now a purchase is only a purchase; while in our  
happy poverty we could save for luxuries, Par. 9
  1. A shabby suit was willingly worn to pay for an  
old folio; while now we can buy any book we please  
Par. 10
  2. A print was a great luxury in old times; now  
we do not care for prints because we have money,  
Par. 11
  3. Holidays were spent in walking; now when we can  
ride we do not care to. Par 12
  4. We used to see the play from the gallery; now  
we sit in the pit but do not enjoy it. Par. 13
  5. A dish out of season used to be a delightful  
treat; now a treat is not necessary, Par. 14
  6. It used to be a pleasure to reckon the year's  
expenses; now no reckoning is necessary, Par. 15

### III. Conclusion, Par. 16

"Competency to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but--the best that is to be had."

Transition.

"Now let us talk about our china."

#### LAMB'S PARAGRAPHS.

The paragraph structure of this essay is as informal as possible, the paragraphs varying in length from one sentence to one page; and eleven of the sixteen having fewer than four sentences. Paragraphs 9 to 15 each relate a single experience, so that there is no need of paragraph connectives; there are only three in the entire essay: These, Par. 8; then, Par. 12; now, Par. 13. Yet there is method in the divisions; each paragraph except the last has a separate topic, though there is not always a development of the topic. And the introduction proceeds in an orderly manner, from the general statement of the love for old china to the reasons; then to the occasion which gave rise to the remark; from that, by a natural transition, to Bridget's recollections, which form the body of the essay.

The happy device of having Bridget recall the old times, preserves the essay from too great egotism or intimacy.

We know, and Lamb knows that we know, that "Bridget", his "cousin", is his sister Mary; and that Lamb himself is



telling us of his early hardships. Yet although the device is one which we see through perfectly, our taste is not merely satisfied, but gratified, to have Lamb admit us to the family intimacy rather than to his private recollections. The transition at the beginning of the last paragraph from Bridget's recollections to the author's reply is carefully made; and the last sentence of the essay recalls us again to the tea table and the pictures on the old blue china. This conversational touch, by making some reference to the beginning, keeps the essay from hanging in mid-air.

#### LAMB'S SENTENCES.

It would be a waste of words to analyze Lamb's sentences. They are the most conversational of any essay writer, the most noticeable peculiarity being the frequent use of the dash. Parentheses are common, also, but not long or involved ones; simply explanations such as one would naturally use in conversation. A sentence sometimes rambles on for half a page, but never with the slightest confusion, and always with a goal, which is reached sooner or later. Hazlitt says: "No one ever stammered out such fine, piquant, deep, eloquent things in a half-dozen half-sentences as Lamb did."

#### LAMB'S WORDS.

Lamb's use of words is almost as difficult to discuss, except in a general way, as is his sentence structure.

Ainger seems to me to express the truth about Lamb's style better than anyone else has done, when he says: "It is in vain to attempt to convey an idea of the impression left by Lamb's style. It evades analysis. One might as well seek to account for the perfume of lavender or the flavour of quince." The scent of old folios, to him so delicious, is in the quaintly turned expressions, giving to the whole that air of homely leisure which is the greatest charm of the personal essay. His humor, his pathos, his wit, are so inextricably mingled that to try to separate them is like pulling the petals from an apple blossom in order to separate the pink tint from the white. A few examples to give an idea of what is meant by the "elderly" flavor of his words:

Par. 5 - "hither side---of the river".

Par. 8 - "sentiment seemed to overshade the brows"

Par. 9 -- "we were used to have a debate"

Par. 12 -- "when we had a holyday"

"Walton has described many a one"

"when we go out a day's pleasuring"

Par. 13 "obliged to attend the more"

Par. 14 "both halves of the blame to his single share"

Par. 15 "We used to have--to account for our exceedings"

"betwixt ways"

"we pocketed up our loss"

The colloquial, conversational effect is partly due to the frequent use of clauses or verb phrases ending in prepositions:

Par. 1 "First exhibition, that I was taken to"

Par. 9 "we might spare it out of."

"what saving we could hit upon"

Par. 14 "what the actual poor can get at"

Par. 16 "we had much to struggle with"

"the sufficiency which you now complain of"

"those good old days you speak of".

"willing to bury more wealth in."

Other expressions which add to the conversational effect:

Par. 10 "since we have become rich and finical"

"your old corbeau"

"nice old purchases"

Par. 12 "chance country snaps"

Par. 13 "a little difficulty overcome heightened the

snug seat"

Par. 14 "a nice supper, a treat"

"no harm in people making much of themselves"

Lamb's affection for everything quaint shows itself in this essay when he says:

Par. 2 "I had no repugnance--to those--azure-tinctured grotesques"

Par. 4 "I love the men with women's faces"

Par. 7 "Here-a cow and rabbit couchant,--seen through the  
lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay";

His humor:

"Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver - two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady---is stepping into a little fairy boat--which--must--land her in the midst of a flowery mead - a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!"

His affection:

"I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget"

"I could not help smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up."

"could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours and the delicious, Thank God, we are safe, which always followed when the topmost stair--let in the first light of the--theater--beneath us"

And his pathos:

"but sight and all---is gone with our poverty."

"could these days return---I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Croesus had".

JOHN MUIR.

The Douglas Squirrel.

In "The Douglas Squirrel" as in all essays collected under the title, "The Mountains of California," there is careful division into introduction, body, and conclusion. The structure is very simple, and while the order of topics is not inevitable, it is certainly planned with care; so that both in position and length of treatment the most important topics receive the most emphatic notice; the first four topics, size, color, popular names, and speech are each treated in a single paragraph; the last three topics, movements, food, and relation to other animals, each require five or six paragraphs.

There is not a quotation or literary allusion in the essay, or any reminder of learning except the scientific names of the different squirrels mentioned. The reader feels certain, however, that he is receiving accurate information, resulting from long and careful observation, and not that he is possibly being deluded by an imaginative person who has the power of writing pleasantly without saying much that anyone might not be supposed to know. The delightful instance recorded in paragraphs 21, 22, and 23, in which the author tried the effect of singing and whistling various tunes, is one of those touches which are perennially charming.

We too wonder with the author why squirrels do not like "Old Hundredth." Everything is simple, fresh and delightful, breathing of the out-of-doors, of the solitary places seen by few men, but of the perennial charm of life lived in close and loving contemplation of nature.

MUIR: The Douglas Squirrel.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par.'s 1, 2.

A. Theme of essay in first sentence- character, number, extent of range, influence. Par. 1.

B. Points above given more fully. Par. 2.

II. Body, Par.'s 3 - 23.

A. Size, Par. 3.

B. Color, Par. 4.

C. Popular names, Par. 5.

D. Speech and movements, Par. 6.

Transition Par. 7.

E. Ways of moving on a tree. Par.'s 7 - 11.

F. Kinds of food and enemies. Par.'s 12 - 17.

Transition Par. 18.

G. Relation to other animals, Par.'s 19 - 23.

III. Conclusion. Par.'s 24, 25.

Not a pet although much admired.

Seldom killed because so small.

## I. MUIR'S PARAGRAPHS.

The paragraphs vary in length from one sentence in paragraphs 2 and 24 to one paragraph of one and one-half pages. There are two paragraphs of transition, 7 and 18; while in three instances the transition occurs at the end instead of at the beginning: 3, 5, and 10. The paragraph sentences are at the beginnings of the paragraphs. The most common paragraph connectives are pronouns, personal, demonstrative, indefinite; while nine paragraphs have no explicit connection.

## MUIR'S SENTENCES.

The sentences are of medium length, and prevailingly loose. Dependent clauses and prepositional phrases vary the normal order of construction and give coherence. Coherence is generally effected, however, by adverbs of time, conjunctions and pronouns. The only periodic sentences are in paragraphs 23 and 25, and these are not noticeable. In the sixth paragraph are two instances of parallel construction, both of which are attained by the use of the present participle:

"He threads the tasseled branches of the pines, stirring their needles like a rustling breeze; now shooting across openings in arrowy lines; now launching in curves, glinting deftly from side to side in sudden zigzags, and

swirling in giddy loops and spirals around the knotty trunks; getting into what seem to be the most impossible situations without sense of danger; now on his haunches, now on his head; yet ever graceful, and punctuating his most irrepressible outbursts of energy with little dots and dashes of perfect repose."

"His busiest time is in the Indian summer. Then he gathers hurs and hazelnuts like a plodding farmer, working continuously every day for hours; saying not a word; cutting off the ripe cones at the top of his speed, as if employed by the job, and examining every branch in regular order, as if careful that not one should escape him; then, descending, he stores them away beneath logs and stumps, in anticipation of the pinching hunger days of winter."

The last sentence of the essay is noticeable both for its brevity and for its form, an exclamation: "May his tribe increase!" For while the essay breathes sympathy in every paragraph it is sparing of exclamations. And an exclamation at the close of an essay is particularly noticeable.

#### MUIR'S WORDS.

In this essay the only words that are not perfectly simple of comprehension by the ordinary reader are the few scientific names. Yet much of the beauty of the essay depends on the happy choice of words used in unexpected relations. Especially noticeable is the use of the noun, the verb,



and finally the adjective, this order being the exact one which denotes skill in descriptive writing.

Examples:

1. "Every wind is fretted by his voice."
2. "--provinces over which he holds sway."
3. "--his dominion extends over all the Redwood Belt"
4. --"tail--which he so effectively uses in interpreting his feelings"
5. "the lusty exclamation he utters on his way up a tree when excited."
6. "possessing every attribute peculiarly squirrelish enthusiastically concentrated."
7. "crisp and glossy and undiseased as a sunbeam."
8. He threads the tasseled branches of the pine"
9. "glinting deftly from side to side."
10. "swirling in giddy loops"
11. "punctuating his most irrepressible outbursts of energy with little dots and dashes of perfect repose."
12. "sputtering little bolt of life luxuriating in quick oxygen and the woods best juices."
13. "cutting off the ripe cones at the top of his speed as if employed by the job"
14. "in anticipation of the pinching hunger days of winter."
15. "The resinous essences of the pines pervade every pore of his body,"
16. "One never tires of this bright chip of nature"

17. "his niny gossip is as savory to the ear as balsam to the palate"
18. "a torrent of angry notes comes rushing from his whiskered lips that sounds remarkably like swearing."
19. "finding that the big, forked animal (man) doesn't scare, he prudently beats a retreat"
20. "churring and chirping"
21. "his tail-robe neatly spread"
22. "his comforter is long enough to come forward around his nose."
23. "one creamy Indian summer morning"
24. "It is difficult, indeed, to realize that so condensed a piece of sun-fire should ever become dim or die at all"

The rich yet delicate humor in 4, 18, 19, 21, 22, is not the least charm of this delightful essay.

## LOWELL.

### My Garden Acquaintance.

As unlike as possible to John Muir's nature writing is Lowell's essay on My Garden Acquaintance; yet is it an essay replete with charm, of the same sort as Lowell himself found in White's Natural History of Selborne--the charm of the writer's own personality. Muir's essays make us feel that he is one with nature: when he climbs a pine tree in a wind-storm in the forest of the Yuba, and rocks and sways for hours in ecstasy with the wild roar of the forest, we are borne along on the same enchanting ocean. Here is no scientist, but a poet; a lover of nature who is so content in her society that no other is necessary. What he sees and hears and feels fills his heart, and satisfies his mind. No books are necessary, no allusions to literature, no quotations from great poets. Yet his observations are so keen, so exact, and his records of them so authoritative that learned scientists from all over the world have sought him out to do him honor, and persuade him to accept a chair in some great university. The fact that no persuasion moves him, and that so little comes from his pen, although that little is well nigh faultless, indicates that his life is sufficient as he is living it, alone in the mountains.

At the other extreme of the continent lived Lowell, in close touch always with his kind, the scholar and the man of culture. Not even in a nature essay could he get away from

books and literary allusions in prodigal variety. Matthew Arnold wrote to him concerning the volume which contains this essay: "My Dear Mr. Lowell: Your latest volume gives me great pleasure, indeed, but your manifold references and allusions often weigh down and crush your subject like the shields of the Romans on the breast of Tarpeia."

Lowell's study of nature was a relaxation from literary work. His observations were sometimes literally from his study windows. He loved, not the water-ouzel of Muir's essay, that shy bird which is never seen except in the high altitudes far from the haunts of men; but the robin, the cat-bird, the blue jay and the humming bird of the orchard and the farm close. His love was warm and earnest and sincere, his observation keen and sympathetic: so that one writer declares that "nothing escaped him - not the plumage of a bird, the leafage of a tree, the color of a blossom, nor a trait upon a human countenance." But Lowell was not an authority upon scientific matters; the charm of his writing depends upon his humor and quick play of fancy, and upon his love for his garden acquaintance, more than upon his actual observations. The structure of this essay is of the simplest, so loose that it can hardly be said to have any form. The writer seems to be talking happily about his favorite birds, rambling from one to another in a delightfully informal manner.

LOWELL: My Garden Acquaintance.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par.'s 1 - 5.

Having derived much pleasure from White's Natural History of Selborne, the author decides to write out his own observations.

Because:

- A. In certain moods they give pleasure, Par. 3
- B. It is a healthful pleasure, Par. 4
- C. It turns the mind from self, Par. 5

II. Body, Par.'s 6 - 16

- A. Observations on birds show them to be no better weather prophets than men, Par. 6
- B. The robin is a welcome visitor though a robber, Par.'s 7 & 8
- C. The catbird is more welcome, because a greater singer and not so great a robber, Par. 9
- D. Birds are quarrelsome as proved by:
  - 1. The catbirds when they destroyed the yellow birds' nests, Par. 10
  - 2. The robins when they drove off the bluebirds, Par. 11 & 12
  - 3. The crows, which were driven off by boys, Par. 13

E. There are other birds left:

1. Orioles and humming birds remain. Par. 14
2. The bobolink makes chance visits. Par.'s 15-17
3. The flicker is near by. Par. 18

III. Conclusion, Par.'s 19 - 21

Some birds have left with encroaching civilization  
but others are constant and afford unending pleasure.

#### LOWELL'S PARAGRAPHS.

In this essay of 21 paragraphs only two, paragraphs 5 and 12, contain fewer than four sentences. There is considerable variety in length, the longest covering nearly two pages. There are topic sentences at the beginnings of the paragraphs, but paragraph connectives are lacking in paragraphs 6, 7, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19. The other paragraphs are connected by personal or demonstrative pronouns.

#### LOWELL'S SENTENCES.

The sentences in this essay are nearly all short, and loose rather than periodic. Now and then a periodic sentence is used, rather for coherence or for the sake of variety than for emphasis. A few balanced sentences seem to be used for the same reason. The effect of the whole is easy and natural; an effect to which the sentence connectives largely contribute. Pronouns, mostly personal pronouns, and adverbs make up the greater number of connectives.

Seven short poetical quotations are scattered through the essay, and more than twenty literary and historical allusions. Two short Latin phrases and four French expressions occur, and three expressions imitative of sounds made by different birds.

#### LOWELL'S WORDS.

The single words in this essay are not noticeable, with the exception of "anthropophagous", and the form "oölogized"; the latter coined by the author. But the unexpected turns and twists given to words by the author's nimble wit are so numerous that only a small part of them all can be given:

Par. 2 "Most of us have known our share of owls, but few can boast of intimacy with a feathered one."

Par. 2 ---"stilted plover--no back toe--liable to perpetual vacillations! I wonder---if metaphysicians have no hind toes."

Par. 2 --"family tortoise---he fell in love with at first sight---no means of tracing the growth of his passion---we find him eloping with its object in a post-chaise"

Par. 3 "I might suspect his thermometer---for we Harvard men are apt to think ill of any graduation but our own."

Par. 4--"dwell rather upon the indigestions of the elements than his own,"

Par. 7 ---the robin---eats with a relishing gulp not inferior to Dr. Johnson,"

Par. 8 ---"expand their red waistcoats with the virtuous air  
of a lobby member"

Par. 11 ---"he who came to feast remains a prey."

Par. 13 "The crow---to hear him--soften his croak to the  
proper Saint Preux standard, has something the effect of a  
Mississippi boatman quoting Tennyson."



MAURICE THOMPSON: Shrike-Notes.

In Maurice Thompson's "My Winter Garden" we find another nature lover, this time under southern skies. Like Muir he loves to wander far into the forest alone, and like Lowell he takes a book wherever he goes. But unlike either one, he seems to be thinking more of himself than of his books or the birds. The reader cannot help feeling that the bow and arrow which he always carries is something of a pose, assumed for the sake of its picturesqueness and for its harmony with the exotic southern climate. In spite of all this, however, he makes us feel the lure of the southern skies, the southern birds and the southern warmth. We are taken, too intimately, perhaps, into the companionship of the writer and his wife as they wander through idyllic days in this rich atmosphere.

In the essay "Shrike-Notes", with a Buffon Interlude, the first half of the essay is given up to a discussion of the charm of Buffon's "Natural History". The essay starts out with two paragraphs about the shrike, shifts by a short paragraph of transition to Buffon, and again in paragraph 16 by a transition back to the shrike. The only apparent justification for cutting the essay into halves is the fact that Buffon wrote about birds, though shrikes are not mentioned. It is all very interesting, however, though the humor is not of the rich quality so noticeable in Lowell; in one or two

places being decidedly commonplace and even vulgar in tone.

Like Lowell, Thompson makes frequent use of literary and mythological names, and quotes now and then from Latin and French literature. And although he does not overawe with his learning as does Lowell, he is continually reminding the reader that he is a literary man on a vacation. And the reader proceeds to enjoy both the literature and the vacation.

THOMPSON: Shrike-Notes, with a Buffon Interlude.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par.'s 1,2

The shrike is independent and difficult to study.

II. Body, Par.'s 3 - 28

A. Buffon Interlude, Par.'s 3 - 15.

1. Buffon interesting, in spite of Voltaire's criticism, because of imaginative writing.  
Par.'s 3 - 6
2. He had assistants, but wrote principal parts of bird book himself, Par. 7
3. Though it is poor science it is charming literature. Par.'s 8,9.
4. Essays on woodpecker, mocking bird, kingfisher, heron and nightingale are charming.  
Par.'s 9 - 14
5. Yet Buffon's information was all second hand.

B. The Shrike.

1. Transition. Par. 16
2. Shrike a blood thirsty tyrant hard to understand, Par.'s 17 - 19
3. In catching a sparrow it hovers like a hawk, Par.'s 20 - 22
4. It catches a butterfly with its foot, Par. 23
5. Unable to discover whether shrikes carry sticks for their nests in their claws. Par. 24
6. Japanese shrike much like American, Par.'s 25,26
7. Shrikes and mocking-birds live peaceably together and resemble each other so much that a writer mistook the song of a mocking-bird for that of a shrike; though the latter cannot sing, Par.'s 27,28.

III. Conclusion, Par.'s 29 - 31.

This is the season of the shrike and I should like to write a poem to him; for although he is a butcher he is a fine note of force, form, and color.

THOMPSON'S PARAGRAPHS.

The paragraphs of this essay are much shorter than those of Muir or Lowell. Eight of them, paragraphs 1,3,4,17,18, 26, and 30 have fewer than four sentences, and several others have only four sentences. This helps to give an effect of sketchiness and a slight lack of dignity to the essay, in

spite of the fact that each paragraph has a topic sentence, except the narrative passage including paragraphs 20 to 22; and that each is a unit. In paragraphs 19 and 20 the topic sentences are at the end instead of the beginning; while in paragraphs 2 and 5 the topic sentence is the third; in paragraph 7, the second. Two entire paragraphs, 3 and 16, are mere transitions. Instead of the connectives used by the other two writers mentioned, Thompson begins all the paragraphs in the "Buffon Interlude" with a repetition of the name "Buffon", and in the latter half of the essay with the repetition of "shrike". Paragraph 19 is connected with paragraph 18 by the repetition of "pleasant trouble" used in the first sentence of paragraph 18. This lack of variety in paragraph length and connection is one element of weakness in style.

#### THOMPSON'S SENTENCES.

The sentence structure is common-place throughout; for though the sentences vary in length and are generally supplied with specific connectives, the similarity of form is so great as to become monotonous. The compound sentence with "but" for a connective is very common. But, however, indeed, then, and the personal pronouns, are the most common connectives at the beginnings of the sentences. There is only one balanced sentence in the essay: "One is literature, the

other is science." To be sure, a nature essay does not need balanced sentences, but it needs enough variety of sentence structure to prevent the reader from becoming wearied by the monotony.

#### THOMPSON'S WORDS.

In this essay there is a mixture of happy phrases with a nearly equal number of inexact, commonplace or even vulgar ones.

Of the pleasing expressions the following are the most noticeable:

Par. 1 ---"the least diplomatic bird"

---"wearing his dress uniform"

"An Ishmaelite of the strictest breed"

Par. 2 --"the finest marrow of his ornithological essay"

---"smelling of moldy loam and damp, flower-haunted stream-banks."

"Out of his mildewed pages fall spores of literary life"

---"on the tipmost spray" - a change from topmost

Par. 6 "They shook hands across the chasm of self-admiration"

Par. 11 ---"laying the groundsills of that beautiful structure of bird literature"

Par. 12 --"all the halcyon literature"

Par. 18 --"a great deal of pleasant trouble"

---"fascinating little free lance in the world of wings"

Of the expressions that offend the ear, the mind or the taste,  
are the following:

Par. 1 --"all avian comers" - an ugly word

Par. 2 --"there comes the rub"

--"from Pindar along the singing line to Tennyson"

----"to tell the whole avian truth"

Par. 6 ---" scratch my back and I'll scratch yours  
method"

Par. 7 "Daubenton quit before the bird-volumes were begun"

---"distribution of species, etc."

Par. 14 ---"poets--had wreaked themselves in rhythmic praises".

Par. 16 "His sedentary quiet serves him two ways."

--"the darkling stare of his eye."

--"a typically predatory orb."

Par. 17 ---"whole nature is a puddle of blood-stained cruelty"

Par. 18 "playing open and shut with himself"

Par. 29 --"here again is the bone - yard of the scientists"

--"in the ecstasy of his diabolical fun"

Par. 31 ---"nerornithos" - coined from Nero.

## THOREAU'S ESSAYS.

Thoreau's nature essays are as different as possible from those of the other three writers we have studied. While Muir is the quietly rapturous worshiper of nature in her most distant retreats; Lowell, the cultured scholar and man of the world who loves nature as a fine soul loves all beauty; Thompson, the picturesque attitudinizer among his Southern song birds, and flowers heavy with sweet odors: Thoreau is the recluse, who sets out from town to build him a hut by Walden pond, where he may "loaf and invite his soul!" The Brook Farm idea is always with us in some form; only with Thoreau it was not to see how little a community could live on, but how infinitesimal an amount a single human being could exist upon. He seemed satisfied with his experiment, and with complacence he records the minutest details of his daily routine. The interest of the reader is due largely to the freshness of enthusiasm with which Thoreau records the most commonplace observations, as if he were the first who had ever examined such wonders of the world. And indeed he was the first to observe some curious phenomena; I believe he is the only one, for instance, who has seen "red snow" in New England.

Thoreau was naturally very unobservant; and it was not until comparatively late in life that he began to open his

eyes to common things which had always been familiar to those around him. But the enthusiasm with which he wrote about his observations aroused new interest in these things, until his readers began to realize that the wonders of the world are always at our very feet, and that we can learn and enjoy as much in our back door yard as in a trip around the world, if we make use of our senses and our imaginations.

Like all nature essays, the essay "Sounds" is very simply constructed. It begins with a general statement about the value of observation, continues with statements concerning the time spent in observation one summer, and then records the fancies and reflections that came with the different sounds heard. No attempt is made to record the sounds in the order of climax: sounds of trains come first, and receive most space; then church bells, cows, birds, frogs, in the most informal manner. There is no formal conclusion, the last paragraph merely remarking the absence of the domestic sound of cock crowing. At the very close there is a general remark emphasizing the fact that the writer was in the midst of untamed nature. He seems to ruminate in calm content, chewing the cud of fancy and reflection, and recording plain and homely ideas which give the reader a feeling of repose. The subjectivity of this essay is much more marked than that of the other nature essays, though there is almost no attempt to remind the reader of the world of books. The literary



allusions of Thompson and Lowell are lacking here, though the phraseology has a biblical turn now and then, as: "chairs enough to seat all the weary and heavy laden"; "the mountains do indeed skip like rams and the little hills like lambs"; "cattle train bearing the cattle of a thousand hills". The language is largely figurative, though the figures are not striking; the engine is personified throughout, an iron steed with lungs and liver. A frog is "aldermanic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps". When "the train of clouds go to heaven as the cars go to Boston" we are not edified. But the "dark and tearful side of music" of the screech owl is interesting for its novelty; and the sound of the hooting owl, "expressive of a mind which has reached the gelatinous mildewy stage in the mortification of all healthy and courageous thought" arrests the attention. "They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have.", is one of the most imaginative touches in the essay.

Humor is a very infrequent element in this essay, the only touch being in paragraph 12, where the indestructibility of dried fish is laughed at. But Thoreau could never be classed with the humorists.

THOREAU: Sound.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par.'s 1 - 4.

A. Observation the best means of education, Par. 1.

B. First summer at Walden largely spent observing,  
Par.'s 2 - 4

II. Body, Par.'s 5 - 21.

A. Sounds of trains very interesting: Par.'s 5 - 14

1. Railroad links with the great world, Par.'s 5-7

2. Regularity, courage, enterprise, of commerce  
exemplified in trains symbolize a heroic  
race. Par.'s 8 - 13.

3. More alone than ever after trains have gone  
by, Par.14.

B. Church bells charm on Sunday, Par. 15

C. Lowing of cows at evening, Par. 16

D. Whippoorwill's song, Par. 17

E. Screech and hoot owls interesting. Par.'s 18 - 20

F. Frogs kept up a chorus all night. Par. 21

III. Conclusion, Par. 22

Domestic sound of cock never heard; all was untamed  
nature...

### THOREAU'S PARAGRAPHS.

The paragraphs are, on the whole, longer than those of the other nature essays; only two, paragraphs 14 and 16, having fewer than four sentences, while paragraph 12 is over two pages in length. There is no evidence, however, that Thoreau took special thought for the length of his paragraphs. Unity is carefully maintained, and the paragraphs connected by such words as "these", "now" and the repetition of words used in preceding paragraphs. The internal structure is very informal, though not formless. There is usually a general statement at the beginning, followed by enumeration of details; then some reflection or fancy, neither of which is notable for picturesqueness, unexpectedness, or loftiness. The paragraphs on the railway trains have some passages written in Hawthorne's style of direct address.

### THOREAU'S SENTENCES.

The sentences vary in length enough to be pleasing, though the longer sentence predominates. This is in harmony with the leisurely style of the essay, conducing to smoothness. Smoothness is also effected by the generous use of sentence connectives and by the transposition of sentence elements for coherence. Balance, antithesis and periodic structure are not necessary in such an essay, and so are not noticeable. There

is one sentence, however, the first in paragraph 8, which is noticeable for its cumulative structure, though it seems to be the result of carelessness rather than planning.

#### THORREAU'S WORDS.

There is very little individuality in the choice of words in this essay; a fishhawk dimples the surface of the pond, the train of cars hugs the earth and later reposes in iron slumber. Even such expressions are very scarce. Perhaps the most noticeable word in the essay is the first one, "But". The only other peculiarity is a fondness for such words as "lo", "athwart", "ere", "wrought"? "methinks", and such homely expressions as "stay put and stick".

MRS. MEYNELL

Symmetry and Incident.

Mrs. Meynell's short essay on the chief characteristic of Japanese art is an illuminating and delightful popular exposition which not only imparts information upon a subject little understood by the ordinary reader, but which imparts it in an orderly, easy, yet literary manner. In fact, the order, once examined, is felt to be necessary: Japanese art is alien, even though it has affected all Western arts; for it is neither symmetrical nor permanent, and so transgresses the abiding principles of western arts. The essay has a well defined introduction and conclusion, the latter very brief. Short quotations from Emerson, Coventry Patmore, and Aristotle, each of which fits in so naturally as to be scarcely noticed, comprise the only literary allusions. Yet the tone of the whole, which never drops below the level set at the beginning, is distinctly literary; the effect being produced largely by artistic sentence structure and imaginative comparisons.

When the author says that "the perpetual slight novelty which was Aristotle's ideal of the language poetic----is like the frequent pulse of the pinion, that keeps verse upon the wing"; and again, "But whatever may be the phases of the arts, there is the abiding principle of symmetry in the body of man, that goes erect, like an upright soul. ----For the

centres of life and movement within the body are placed with Oriental inequality. Man is Greek without and Japanese within", the reader feels that the entire essay has been permanently crystallized. The last sentence alone sums up imaginatively the difference between Japanese and Western art: "Man is Greek without and Japanese within."

MRS. MEYNELL: Symmetry and Incident.

Structure.

I. Introduction. Par.'s 1,2.

A. Japanese art has affected western art. Par.'s 1,2.

II. Body. Par.'s 3 - 9.

A. It is not symmetrical; substituting position for symmetry, Par.'s 3,4.

B. It is bent, not on the permanent, but on the transitory, Par.'s 5,6.

C. It belies the human form, Par.'s 7 - 9.

1. Since it is intent upon perpetual slight deformity.

2. While symmetry is the principle of the exterior of the body.

III. Conclusion. Par. 10.

Summary.

### MRS. MEYNELL'S PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE.

Of the ten paragraphs, only one, the eighth, has fewer than four sentences; there is considerable variety in the length of the paragraphs, the sixth being nearly two pages in length. The last paragraph of the essay is noticeably shorter than the first. The theme is stated in the first sentence of the essay, and the topic sentence of each paragraph near the beginning of the paragraph. In paragraph 3 the topic sentence is the fourth; in paragraphs 4 and 5, the first; in paragraph 6, the second; in paragraphs 7 and 9, the third. Where the topic sentence is not the first one of the paragraph, the sentences preceding it are transitional; and paragraph 8 is entirely transitional. In addition, each paragraph is connected to the preceding one by specific words. One-half of such connectives are pronouns; next come adverbs; and then repetitions of words used at the close of the preceding paragraph.

### MRS. MEYNELL'S SENTENCES.

The sentences vary enough in length to prevent monotony, but short sentences predominate. Sentence connectives are noticeably frequent, especially conjunctions and the repetition of words. One of the longest sentences in the essay is cumulative in effect: "The smile, the figure, the drapery not yet settled from the arranging touch of a hand, and showing its mark, the restless and unstationary foot, and the unity

of impulse that has passed everywhere like a single breeze, all these have a life that greatly transcends the life of Japanese art, yet has the nimble touch of Japanese incident."

The use of balanced sentences is not excessive, yet is one of the prominent means of securing coherence in this essay. For the most part such sentences are short: as,

Par. 1 "It is of accidental value, and not of integral

Par. 2. necessity." "In this we have, if not the Japanese suppression of minor emphasis, certainly the Japanese exaggeration of major emphasis."

Par. 5. "Japan lives much of its daily life by means of paper, painted; so does Europe by means of paper, printed"

Par. 6. "The art of such people is not liberal art, not the art of peace, and not the art of humanity."

Par. 7. "But it is not easy to recognize, it is certainly not difficult to guess at."

Three examples of longer balanced sentences, too long to give entire:

Par. 2. "The smile---touch of Japanese incident"

Par. 9. "All the more---is this rhythm the law."

Par. 10. Most of the paragraph.

In several places modified balance is delicately used to prevent monotony, as in paragraph 3: "What symmetry is to form, that is repetition in the art of ornament"; and in



paragraph 5, "The French etcher would never have written his signs so freely had not the Japanese so freely drawn his own."

Two sentences of prose rhythm add charm to the essay; these are in paragraph 2: "Whether still or in motion the aspen and the free leafed poplar have the alertness and expectancy of flight in all their flocks of leaves," and in paragraph 6: "The distances, the greatness, the winds and the waves of the world, coloured plains, and the flight of a sky, are all certainly alien to the perceptions of a people intent upon little deformities."

#### MRS. MEYNELL'S WORDS.

The essay depends less upon striking or picturesque words than upon careful sentence structure for its effect. Yet there are several choice phrases such as:

- Par. 1. "the tact of the unique."
- Par. 2. "the music of phase and of fragment"
- Par. 3. "freakish avoidance of the goal"
- Par. 5. "to intrude upon posterity"
- Par. 6. "evasive attitude towards landscape"  
"exquisite freakishness of variety"

Only four technical terms are used and these are made clear: leit-motif, modulus, asymmetry, and interruption.

The foreign word "mousmé" is the only one; and "perdurable" and "collocation" the only uncommon English words. The only other word which calls attention to itself is "niggling labor".

## ARNOLD'S ESSAYS.

Matthew Arnold is generally accepted as the foremost of English literary critics. Having formed his own taste upon the Greek classics, he tried all writings by their standards, and formed his own style upon their models of simplicity, clearness, and dignity. The intellectual quality predominates in all his writings, though the emotional quality is not lacking. The emotion, however, is not impassioned, but serious and earnest. Humor is not prominent, though in some essays sarcasm and keen irony cut like a knife; so that Arnold has come to be regarded as looking down upon his fellow men in a supercilious manner. But he tries to "see life steadily and see it whole" and so his judgment is peculiarly unbiassed, and he has given us such sound and clear criteria for judging works of art that we are much less likely to run to extremes in our judgments after reading him.

ARNOLD: Wordsworth.

### Structure.

#### I. Introduction, Par.'s 1 - 9

Wordsworth is unpopular at home and abroad.

#### II. Body, Par.'s 10 - 38

A. Yet he is, except Shakespeare and Milton, the greatest English poet, and except Goethe the greatest European poet since Molière. Par. 11

B. Most readers fail to perceive this because:

1. Longest poems are not the best. Par. 13
  2. Good poems mingled with poor ones. Par. 14
  3. Poems are poorly classified. Par. 15
- C. Well classified selections would prove him to have more great poems than any other late writer. Par.'s 16 - 19.
- D. His superiority is in his profound application of ideas to life and in his style. Par.'s 20 - 38
- III. Conclusion, Par.'s 39 - 41
- Summary.

#### ARNOLD'S PARAGRAPHS.

The paragraphs are carefully constructed; and vary in length, from paragraph 34, which is a page in length, to paragraphs 17, 20, 22, 29, 36, which have fewer than four sentences each. Yet on the whole the paragraphs show no great diversity of length, nor any complication of structure; unusual clearness, remarkable coherence, and great emphasis being the prominent characteristics. Each paragraph has a clearly stated topic sentence, usually at the beginning, unless a sentence or two at the beginning is needed for transition. In paragraphs 14, 15, 16, 17, and in one or two other places, the topic sentence comes last. These paragraphs give the reasons why Wordsworth's poetry is not appreciated, and

the explanations are summed up in topic sentences at the ends of the paragraphs. In paragraphs 18,20,26, the topic stated at the beginning is repeated in a different form at the end. The theme of the essay is given in paragraph 10, and repeated at the beginning of the summary in paragraph 39. In addition, the paragraphs are carefully bound together by such words as however, now, then, this, it, and the repetition in the beginning of new paragraphs of words occurring at the ends of preceding paragraphs. In only one place does the essay digress from its main thread, and this digression is seen at once to add to the force of main thought; this is in paragraphs 5 to 9, where the author defines and discusses the meaning of "glory". Paragraph 10 is an illustration of Arnold's use of repetition for the purpose of emphasis. He first states his topic and then repeats it in detail, part by part; finally summing up in another repetition. No other writer makes such use of this device.

#### ARNOLD'S SENTENCES.

Arnold's sentences are more remarkable for balance and antithesis than those of any other writer. Since the subjects he treated are not difficult to understand, the only reason for such structure is to gain emphasis. But there is so much repetition of words that it seems often as if emphasis is lost rather than gained. One annoyed critic has called it "damnable iteration." Sometimes, however, Arnold repeats a phrase in the same words, because it is a telling phrase which he

wants to send home. In this essay he repeats three times in two pages a phrase which he had previously used in his essay on "Homer": "noble and profound application of ideas to life". We cannot be too thankful for some of his strictly balanced sentences, since we remember the thought he wants to impress, much more easily in such a sentence than in one more carelessly written. For instance: "A poetry of revolt against moral ideas is a poetry of revolt against life; a poetry of indifference towards moral ideas is a poetry of indifference towards life". Sometimes he uses a modified balance, which we may find ourselves instinctively trying to turn into strict balance, so surely have we come to expect the construction. For example: "We shall recognize him in his place, as we recognize Shakespeare and Milton; and not only we ourselves shall recognize him, but he will be recognized by Europe also". Another kind of repetition is for emotional effect: "Wordsworth brings us words; therefore, according to his own strong and characteristic line, he brings us words

'Of joy in widest commonalty spread.' "

#### ARNOLD'S WORDS.

Like the paragraphs and sentences, the words are remarkable for simplicity. Arnold seems to want to impress the thought with as little obstruction as possible, therefore no picturesque or unusual words call attention to themselves,

but the medium which conveys the thought is as nearly transparent as possible. Only--and it is a big "only"--the repetition of words is at times carried to such excess that the reader is in danger of forgetting that he is reading the greatest of all English literary critics. It will be sufficient to call attention to the third quotation above, where "recognize" is used four times in one sentence.

It should be noted that the tone of dignity and high seriousness which is due to the subject of this essay is maintained throughout. Arnold is never guilty of a lack of taste, any more than the Greeks on whom he modeled himself. The element of humor is absent in this essay, though as an apostle of culture Arnold is somewhat noted for his cutting sarcasm. Here, however, we have only simplicity with seriousness and dignity.

## NEWMAN'S ESSAYS.

While Arnold's writings are characterized by their intellectual quality, Newman's are a combination of the intellectual and the emotional. With just as great a desire to make himself clear as Arnold had, Newman explains sometimes too elaborately. He makes much use of balanced sentences, but does not repeat words so frequently as Arnold, who was a student and imitator of his style. Both writers always outlined their work with care; but the outline is more plainly seen in Arnold than in Newman, who combined to an unusual degree a definite purpose with a hap-hazard manner. Indeed it is said that no other writer shows at once such breadth of knowledge and such ease of style. This ease, however, did not result, as students usually think, from rapidity of production; but like Addison's essays, from much care and re-writing. Newman read aloud every day a chapter of Cicero, in order to train his ear to sentence rhythm. This study, and his desire to be one with his fellow men instead of standing aloof like Arnold, give to his writings an ease and a human quality largely wanting in the great critic's work. So admirably are the qualities of clearness, force, and elegance blended in all his work that many call him the greatest master of English prose.

In the essay on "Literature" Newman begins by clearing

away false ideas regarding the subject, then defines the term literature, and shows its relation to the arts of painting and sculpture, reaches a climax in the statement that it is the highest expression of what is most permanently and widely human, and draws the conclusion that for this reason it is worthy of the closest study.

NEWMAN: Literature.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Sections 1,2, Par.'s 1 - 6

There are three false ideas to be cleared away:

- A. Since Holy Writ is the greatest of all literature, literature is measured by its subject matter.
- B. Since Holy Writ is simple, literature must be simple.
- C. Holy Writ is readily translatable; therefore the test of literature is its ability to be translated.

II. Body, Sections 3 - 8, Par.'s 7 - 30

- A. Literature is primarily personal expression, Par.'s 7 - 11
- B. Not to be tested by degrees of elaborateness Par.'s 12 - 23
  - 1. Since this test wrongly deems elaborateness extraneous, Par. 12
  - 2. The style must be as elaborate as the author, Par.'s 15 - 18
  - 3. It is worked up like painting or sculpture, Par. 20



C. Not to be tested by adaptability to translation:

since Sections 7,8 Par.'s 24 - 30

1. It puts literature on same basis as science
2. It is belied by the analogy of the other arts.
3. Each language, like each art, has its own peculiar capacities and limitations.
4. Scripture is not easily translated, and is elaborate.

III. Summary and Conclusion, Sections 9,10, Par.'s 31 - 34

Literature deserves the closest study.

#### NEWMAN'S PARAGRAPHS.

In addition to the paragraph divisions this essay is made still clearer by being divided into sections, of which there are ten. In the third section Newman states that he is ready to begin with the body of the work; and in section nine he says "I shall --sum up--and come to a conclusion". The paragraphs average about a page in length, though nine paragraphs, in all, have fewer than four sentences: two are introductory, three are concluding, two are paragraphs of example, and paragraph 21 is transition within a section. The structure of each paragraph is very close; one thought leading to another in what seems, upon examination, to be an inevitable manner. For instance paragraph 24:

1. ---a step further.
2. ---have exposed a notion.

3. ---have not brought out the second point, translation
4. ---the truth is the reverse of this point, as is easily seen.
5. ---since it implies the likeness of all languages to each other.
6. ---that is true for science, though not altogether so
7. ---much less true for literature, which is personal
8. ---as well say Beethoven not great because not to be played on hurdy-gurdy.
9. ---Shakespeare great because to be translated into German-- not great because not to be translated into French.
10. --multiplication table great because translated into anything.
11. --on the contrary most novel ideas cannot be translated.
12. --Hardly any act of the intellect can be expressed in the language of savages: should their language be made the measure of the genius of Plato?

A glance at the skeleton shows how the connection is made with the preceding paragraph; the topic stated; objection made; illustrations given, each one more convincing than the preceding one, until absolute conviction of the truth of Newman's argument remains with the reader.

Paragraph 14 is an example of Newman's emotional writing, as are also the last three paragraphs of the essay. The reader is carried along by the earnestness of the thought and

the beauty of the expression, although there is not a figure of speech in any of the paragraphs named.

#### NEWMAN'S SENTENCES.

Newman, as well as Arnold and Macaulay, is noted for his use of parallel construction, balance, and antithesis. But Newman's sentences have greater variety of structure than Arnold's, and a greater proportion of longer sentences, so that the balanced sentences are not so noticeable. Exclamations and rhetorical questions add warmth to the sober essay; and the balanced sentence members of the last three paragraphs constitute one of the most striking climaxes in Newman's writing. Paragraph 32 has five sentences; the first containing six balanced members, which gradually increase in length; the second, only two; the third, a shorter sentence, not balanced; the fourth, modified balance in two clauses; and the fifth, two clauses with the first balanced, and the last a long clause like the closing chord in a piece of music. The short paragraph following it has a balanced sentence of three members, followed by a longer compound sentence, which closes the section in a quiet that is a good preparation for the last section. This consists of one paragraph, and the paragraph of one sentence half a page in length; this sentence is cumulative, containing five "if" clauses, the first four of which gradually increase in length, the fifth, a summary and shorter. The rest of the sentence contains two

clauses of antithesis and closes with the idea of "personal" influence, which was the original idea of the essay.

#### NEWMAN'S WORDS.

Newman's words are neither striking nor picturesque. He uses words of Latin origin freely, as is consistent with the dignity of his theme, but there is no effect of formality. He uses Latin quotations and Latin phrases when he wishes, but never with any such effect of overpowering learning as Lowell's essays have. He gains the interest rather by his sentence structure, his free use of examples, and his humor, than by the use of striking words. In this essay he satirizes Sterne's idea that literature is "fine writing" by referring to the Persian way of hiring professional writers to dress up a person's thought; then without a hint of what is coming he blossoms out into: "The man of thought comes to the man of words; and the man of words, duly instructed in the thought, dips the pen of desire into the ink of devotedness and proceeds to spread it over the page of desolation. Then the nightingale of affection is heard to warble to the rose of loveliness, while the breeze of anxiety plays around the brow of expectation". Then he goes on as if nothing had happened.

## PATER'S ESSAYS.

While the intellectual element is dominant in Arnold's essays; the intellectual and emotional nearly balanced in Newman's essays; in Pater's essays the aesthetic quality overlays every other. Probably no other writer ever worked with such painstaking fidelity to carry out his idea of literary art. He produced little, produced it at long intervals, and yet was always at work. His few essays were polished and polished again, until the least word was exactly as he wished it. The effect, upon some readers, is similar to that produced by Poe's poetry; their senses are entranced by the beauty, but their minds untouched by the thought. Yet Pater believed in the union of mind and soul in prose, and aimed to put his theory into practice in his own essays. In his "Essays on Style" he says: "I call the necessity of mind in style, that architectural conception of work, which foresees the end in the beginning and never loses sight of it, and in every part is conscious of all the rest, till the last sentence does but, with undiminished vigor, unfold and justify the first."

Yet his architectural design in the following essay is so intricate that no attempt has been made to follow its windings. Upon an arbitrary division of Leonardo's life into three chronological stages, he weaves an altogether different pattern like the intricacies of a monogram. In the first

paragraph he states that one element of Leonardo's genius is mystery. He touches that like a refrain until near the middle of the essay; where, in a one sentence paragraph, he states his theme: that two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius are curiosity and the desire of beauty.

PATTER: Leonardo da Vinci.

Structure.

I. Introduction, Par.'s 1,2.

Mystery is one element of Leonardo's genius, Par.'s 1,2

II. Body, Par.'s 3 -

A. First period of life at Florence: Par.'s 4 - 12

1. Studied with Verrochio, Par.'s 4 - 6
2. Influenced by teacher's love of ornament, Par. 7
3. In discontent turned to nature, Par.'s 8,9.
4. Extremes of beauty and terror found there reflected in pictures. Par.'s 10 - 12

B. Second period of life at Milan: Par.'s 13 - 27

1. City suited his curiosity and desire of beauty, Par.'s 13 - 16
2. His the first pictures to show curious landscapes
3. He was especially a painter of curious portraits
4. Though curiosity and desire of beauty sometimes conflicted, he always seized moments of inspiration, and therefore paintings all characterized by mysterious beauty.

- a. Best seen in drawings.
- b. Also reflected in work of pupils.
- c. Dominant note even in religious paintings.

C. Third period of life a wanderer: Par.'s 28 - 34

1. In Florence painted Monna Lisa, both a portrait and his ideal of beauty, mysterious and troubled, Par.'s 28 - 30
2. Traveled as engineer for Caesar Borgia.
3. Alarmed in Rome at suspicion of his sympathy with France, he went to France where king gave him a home near Amboise for the rest of his life.

III. Conclusion, Par.35

Interesting to speculate how such a lover of curiosity experienced the last curiosity of all.

PATER'S PARAGRAPHS.

It is impossible to believe that a writer who labored so carefully as Pater, did not plan his paragraphs with great care. He says, "All orderly and artistic work presupposes a careful outline beforehand, not only of the whole composition, but of each paragraph." Yet the structure of this essay, as outlined, gives very little idea of the intricate design of the whole; and the paragraph structure is correspondingly intricate. Instead of unfolding or elaborating a topic stated

at the beginning of a paragraph, he passes from one thought to another in a graceful curve; and when the end of a paragraph is reached he couples the next paragraph to it, until finally he has a spiral reaching gradually upward until the death of the artist cuts it off abruptly. A good example of this peculiarity is paragraph 23, which proceeds as follows: Leonardo made a beautiful drawing of his favorite pupil's head--this is the only recorded attachment of his life at Milan--pupil identified himself so entirely with master that Leonardo's St. Anne is ascribed to him--this illustrates Leonardo's method of choosing pupils who had some peculiar likenesses to himself--he used to live among them and carry on his fugitive works of various kinds--other artists have been as careless of the future, but he is the only one who was careless in the work of art of all but art itself--from his strange temperament he brought strange effects which were an end in themselves--a perfect end.

The next paragraph:

His pupils so identified with him that his genius preserved in their works--his religious paintings only a starting point for a train of sentiment--so that in spite of his continued occupation with religious subjects he is the most profane of painters.

One passage in this last paragraph may be taken as



characteristic of the writer: "the ostensible subject is used---as the starting point of a train of sentiment, as subtle and vague as a piece of music."

#### PATER'S SENTENCES.

If the paragraphs remind one of music the sentences do so much more. In no other writer do we get just the same effect; for Ruskin constantly appealed to the religious and ethical nature, De Quincy (according to his own statement, at least) to the intellectual. But Pater is frankly impressionistic, reveling in color for its own sake; the beauty of sensuous impression is beauty enough for him.

The essay is richly embroidered with such beautiful passages, the most famous of which is paragraph 30. This paragraph of eight sentences falls naturally into twenty-nine clauses of unequal length. When these are arranged like lines of poetry it is easier to discover some of the reasons for the extraordinary effect produced. In only two places are there successive clauses having the same number of accented syllables: 14,15,16, having five each; and 17,18, having three each. The clauses increase irregularly to the seventh, decrease to the nineteenth, increase again to the twenty-seventh, which is the longest; the next is shorter, and the last the shortest of all. This coming and going like a wave is of itself pleasing. Added to this is the change of move-

ment in clauses 3,7,10,15,28, the only ones in which the first syllable is stressed. Most of the clauses begin with one unstressed syllable; 2,4,6,14,16,21, with two unstressed syllables, and 9, 18, with four unstressed syllables. The change of movement corresponds each time to the change of thought, and a similar variation in the closing cadences adds to the pleasing effect. Very little is due to alliteration; but the frequent occurrence of the most pleasing consonant sounds, l,m,n,r, and f,v,p,b, in varying combinations, cannot be due to chance.

- (1) The presence that thus rose so strangely beside the  
waters 6
- (2) is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years  
men had come to desire. 8
- (3) Hers is the head upon which all "the ends of the world  
are come," 7
- (4) and the eyelids are a little weary. 3
- (5) It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, 5
- (6) the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts  
and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. 10
- (7) Set it for a moment beside one of those white greek  
goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, 10
- (8) and how they would be troubled by this beauty, 3
- (9) into which the soul with all its maladies has  
passed! 4

- (10) All the thoughts and experience of the world have  
    etched and moulded there 7
- (11) in that which they have of power to refine and make  
    expressive the outward form, 8
- (12) the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, 4
- (13) the revery of the middle age with its spiritual  
    ambition and imaginative loves, 7
- (14) the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. 5
- (15) She is older than the rocks among which she sits; 5
- (16) like the vampire, she has been dead many times, 5
- (17) and learned the secrets of the grave; 3
- (18) and has been a diver in deep seas, 3
- (19) and keeps their fallen day about her; 4
- (20) and trafficked for strange webs with with Eastern  
    merchants; 5
- (21) and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, 4
- (22) and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; 3
- (23) and all this has been to her but as the sound of  
    lyres and flutes, 6
- (24) and lives only in the delicacy with which it has  
    moulded the changing lineaments, 7
- (25) and tinged the eyelids and the hands. 3
- (26) The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together  
    ten thousand experiences is an old one; 9

(27) and modern thought has conceived the idea of humanity  
as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all  
modes of thought and life. 13

(28) Certainly, Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of  
the old fancy, 7

(29) the symbol of the modern idea. 3