

flow its banks again were I not here." This note of superiority did not escape the keen-witted neighbours of Thoreau. "Henry talks about Nature," said Madame Hoar, "just as if she'd been born and brought up in Concord."

Emerson was the highest type of this mingled frugality of the life of the body and generosity of the life of the mind ; of this harmonization of the highest and broadest interest with the simplest domesticity. He seemed to affect in dress and manner a slight rusticity as heightening the effect of his thought, as the slight hesitation of his speech in public address brought out the marvellous felicity of his diction. He would not have disclaimed the compliment of being called the "Yankee Plato;" so entirely content was he to be a resident of Concord as well as a citizen of the world.

Hawthorne has given us a characteristic report of the strange folk to be met in Concord in the days of the "newness": "It was necessary to go but a little way beyond my threshold before meeting with stranger moral shapes of men than might have been encountered elsewhere in a circuit of a thousand miles. These hobgoblins of flesh and blood were attracted thither by the wide-spreading influence of a great original thinker, who had his earthly abode at the opposite extremity of our village. His mind acted upon other minds of a certain constitution with wonderful magnetism, and drew many men upon long pilgrimages to speak with him face to face."

The foremost idealist of the New World, Emerson rendered incalculable service to the cause he had at heart by holding it clean and clear above the touch of fanaticism, impracticable experiment, and the bitterness of the egoistical reformer. In April, 1824, two years before he took refuge in Concord, "stretched beneath the pines," Emerson wrote

the poem which expresses the deepest instinct of his nature and the tranquillity and detachment he was to find in the quiet village :

Good-bye, proud world ! I'm going home :

I am going to my own hearthstone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—
A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned ;
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome ;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the love and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools and the learned clan ;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet ?

Emerson was in no sense a hermit ; an inveterate traveller of the mind, he was, for his time, an experienced traveller among his kind. His trips to Europe were memorable by reason of his quick and decisive insight, of which the "English Traits" is a permanent record ; and by reason of what he brought back in broader sympathies and clearer discernment of the great race qualities. He was for many years a familiar and honoured figure on the lyceum platform in distant sections of the country, and he came to have a wide knowledge of the United States of the middle decades of the nineteenth century. He had a keen appetite for good talk, and he was often seen in Cambridge and Boston in social gatherings, great and small. But his genius was essentially meditative ; he brooded over his subjects until they cleared themselves in his mind.

Tranquillity and peace were Concord's possessions by reason of its isolation and of the conformation of its landscape. It was a shire-town, and it had business relations with lumbermen and farmers who came to it for supplies. The life of the time was exceedingly deliberate in