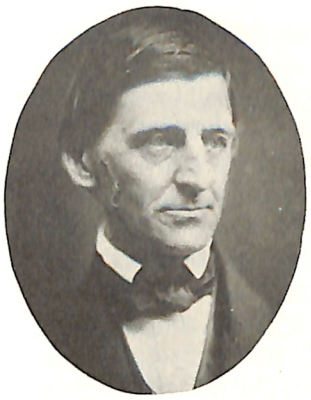

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EMERSON SOCIETY PAPERS

Thoreau as Napoleon; or A Note on Emerson's Big, Little, and Good Endians

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In 1849, when Emerson was preparing *Representative Men* for the press, he listed in his journal TU the six figures he had chosen to represent the composite great man; beside each he wrote the name of a friend and contemporary (including himself):

Bigendians	*Littleendians*
Plato	Alcott
Swedenborg	Very
Shakspere	Newcomb
Montaigne	Channing
Goethe	RWE
Napoleon	Thoreau[1]

The meaning of this pairing is not completely clear. W. H. Gilman, who edited this volume of the *Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks,* wondered "whether Emerson intended to set up parallels" between the two lists and concluded that there exist "demonstrable relationships between all pairs except Napoleon and Thoreau" (*JMN* 11:173). More recently, in two papers that explore Emerson's ideas about history, biography, and material culture, Ron Bosco has drawn chuckles from the audience with his reference to the Napoleon-Thoreau connection, indicating that they too wondered at this pairing.[2]

The source for Emerson's terminology is not very helpful here. "Big-Endians" derives from Swift's well-known lampooning of religious controversy in *Gulliver's Travels.* He exposes the absurdity of fighting over religious matters by reducing the conflict to a question about which end of the egg one should break before eating it. The Lilliputian Emperor's edict that all must "break the smaller End of their Eggs" is resisted by the people who prefer the "primitive" way of breaking eggs, at the larger end. These reactionaries and resisters of tyranny are called "Big-Endians."[3] In 1814 Sir Walter Scott interpreted the allegory to refer to Papists or Jacobites (the "Big-Endians" who flee to the nearby island of Blefuscu, or France) and Protestants (the "Small-Endians," responsible for the beheading of Charles I and the removal of Roman Catholic James II from the throne).[4]

Swift did not use the corresponding term "little-endians," but Nathaniel Ames of Dedham, Massachusetts, did when he borrowed the terminology to describe the controversy that split Dedham's First Parish in 1818 and resulted in the 1820 Massachusetts Supreme Court's decision that ended the old New England Congregational system and marked the triumph of the liberals.[5] In Ames's brief diary comments, the "Big-Endians" are the "parish" or congregation, the majority of the Dedham religious society, basically anti-Federalist in politics, who in 1818 chose a young, liberal, recent Harvard product as their minister in defiance of the established, Federalist, and more orthodox members of the "Church"—the smaller body of professed "saints" who had heretofore controlled such matters as the election of ministers— Ames's "Little Endians." Swiftian language adds to Ames's exposure of the silliness of the controversy, seen in competing meeting houses, competing ministerial salaries, and needless expenses generated by pettifogging lawyers.[6] Thus Ames reverses, to some extent, Swift's terms: his "Big-Endians" are progressive rather than reactionary, while his "Little Endians" cling to an earlier belief; and it is the "Little Endians" who flee (to a new meeting house). However, his "Big-Endians" still represent the "people" in danger of being tyrannized by a powerful elite.

Because Emerson's use of the terms seems neither satirical nor political, his revision of this list in an unpublished late journal, titled "Auto," may be more helpful than etymology here. Many years later, Emerson returned to the 1849 Journal TU, noting on its flyleaf, "Examined March 1877" (*JMN* 11:88). Probably at this time he made the following entry:

Friends. I find in TU 259 this comic paralogism.

Big endians	*Good Endians*
Plato	A. Bronson Alcott
Swedenborg	Jones Very
Shakespeare	C. K. Newcomb
Montaigne	W. E. Channing
Goethe	Thomas Carlyle
	H. D. Thoreau
Napoleon	J. Elliot Cabot
	S. G. Ward[7]

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Thoreau as Napoleon

(Continued from page 1)

Some significant changes crept into the supposed transcription: the 1849 "Little" Endians became "Good" in 1877, possibly reflecting an increased appreciation of society. Even more interestingly, Carlyle and Thoreau have usurped Emerson's own place of "the Writer," and Cabot and Ward have moved into the slot vacated by Thoreau. Emerson's belated appreciation of Thoreau's literary abilities helps explain the first shift. The second change in the list may explain why Emerson assigned Thoreau the Napoleon slot in the first place.

The link between Napoleon, Thoreau, Cabot, and Ward becomes more clear if we consider the Napoleonic qualities in the abstract or as universals, as Emerson did, rather than in their particular manifestation in a great military mind. The essay "Napoleon; or the Man of the World" in *Representative Men* (1850) indicates that though he recognized the historical Napoleon as neither hero nor saint, because he lacked "generous sentiments" and was "thoroughly unscrupulous," Emerson admired other qualities in this man. To Emerson, Napoleon was the "incarnate Democrat," representing the modern party of "business men."[8] He both embodied the middle-class tendency to "material success" and used his power and wealth to advantage; he enjoyed all of the attributes of modern life:

> good society, good books, fast travelling, dress, dinners, servants without number, personal weight, the execution of his ideas, the standing in the attitude of a benefactor to all persons about him, the refined enjoyments of pictures, statues, music, palaces, and conventional honours. (130)

To his wealth were added the powers of "insight and generalization" (132) and a "capacity for speculation on general topics" (143). He was a man of "common sense" (133), of energy and prudence. In particular, he was the "agent or attorney of the Middle Class" (144) and an "actor, who took Occasion by the beard, and showed us how much may be accomplished" (141). He represented the "man of the world."

Thoreau's apparent failure to act, to be the man of action prophesied in "The American Scholar," had disappointed Emerson— until he worked on Thoreau's unpublished manuscripts after his death. This resulted in his elevating Thoreau to the position of "the Writer." In December 1863, Emerson sent a volume of Thoreau's manuscript journal to Cabot for his advice, admitting the "mounting estimation" he felt upon discovering these treasures.[9] But he had sounded a different note in the eulogy read at Thoreau's funeral eighteen months earlier. Calling his friend a "speaker and actor of the truth," Emerson claimed that "with his energy and practical ability he seemed born for great enterprise and for command." In the passage that continues to divide Thoreauvians from Emersonians, Emerson summed up what he regarded as Thoreau's failure to be the American Napoleon, his "regret [for] the loss of his rare powers of action" and lack of ambition. "Wanting this, instead of engineering for all America, he was the Captain of a huckleberry-party."[10]

Emerson was looking for an engineer, a forceful, practical man of the world who could get things done, and in 1877, when he revised his list, he saw this quality embodied in two younger men who were always linked in his thinking. Samuel Gray Ward (1817-1907) and James Elliot Cabot (1821-1903) were both born into established, affluent Boston mercantile families. Ward's father was a banker and the American agent for the English investment firm of Baring Brothers; Cabot's father was junior partner in the foreign mercantile and shipping firm of his father-in-law T. H. Perkins, "the Merchant Prince of Boston."[11] Both families occupied elegant Boston homes and vacationed at Nahant; both men graduated from Boston Latin School and Harvard College (Ward in 1836, Cabot in 1840) and enjoyed post-collegiate *Wanderjahren* in Europe, where they developed their knowledge of art (especially Ward) and new German thought (especially Cabot).

Following their returns from Europe, both took extended trips into the new American West, purportedly in the interest of family business (Ward in 1838 and Cabot in 1846); both were amateur artists and writers who published in the *Dial* and the *Massachusetts Quarterly Review,* wrote about art and architecture, published their translations of German authors, and late in their lives composed reflective autobiographical statements addressed to their families. Each became an exemplary patron of the arts: Ward serving as a founding father for New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art beginning in 1879, continuing as its treasurer and trustee for ten years, and Cabot serving in a similar capacity for the Boston Museum of Fine Arts beginning in 1870, continuing as secretary for its board of trustees for many years after the Museum opened in 1876.

The two men even managed to meet Emerson in similar ways that also highlight their major differences. Emerson first got to know Ward through his sketches of European art works (especially Raphaels), which Margaret Fuller brought to his house in August 1838, soon after Ward's return from Europe (*JMN* 7:46). Although Emerson immediately invited Ward to Concord (*L* 7:313), the two did not meet until a year later (July 1839) in Boston, when Emerson chanced upon Margaret Fuller, Sam Ward, and others while visiting an art gallery (*JMN* 7:221). Cabot had come to know Emerson through his reading of the *Dial* and first *Essays* while he was in Germany; after his return in the summer of 1843, he sent Emerson an article on Kant (published in the *Dial,* April 1844)— but in his self-effacing way, Cabot did not identify himself as the author. In the fall of 1844 he sent Emerson another unsigned article (on Spinoza), but this time provided the name of a friend to whom it could be returned. By December Emerson had discovered the identity of the writer, whom he described to Ward as "Elliot Cabot, . . . son of Saml. Cabot. Do you know him? He seems to be a master in the abstruse science of psychology" (*L* 7:623). At the end of May 1845, Emerson wrote Ward, "I have lately made Elliot Cabot's acquaintance, who is a rare scholar, though a better metaphysician than poet" (*L* 3:286). The "refined enjoyment" of art and metaphysics prepared Emerson for meeting these two young men and remained signs of each man's particular genius.

Ward and Cabot were Emerson's top candidates when he was thinking about forming a club—an association of "men of this world" (*L* 8:218) in 1849, following his return from Europe. Writing to Ward about prospective members for the Town and Country Club, Emerson called Cabot "always bright, erect, military, courteous and knowing, a man to make a club" (*L* 8:218). Another letter to Ward on the same subject ended, "But I wish to see you and Cabot" (*L* 8:225). To Elizabeth Hoar, Emerson tried to explain the attraction such young men had for him in terms of his continuing search for "the Sangreal"—"without which . . . life is nought." He mentions Plato, Gorgias, Phaedrus, and Dante, and continues, "Sam Ward and Elliot Cabot have some occult relation in my cloudy mind to the same old [*pelagos*—the open sea], as symbol semblance or reflection, and so I revere them" (*L* 4:155-156).

In short, both men combined superior intelligence and sensitivity and an aristocratic background with executive skill. (Emerson tended to label Ward an aristocrat and Cabot a gentleman.) They seemed to Emerson to balance the practical with the ideal, materialism with abstractionism. Ward was the better businessman and more social than Cabot: following his marriage to the wealthy and beautiful Anna Barker in 1840, he worked for three years (the period of Emerson's greatest influence on him) in a Boston brokerage house before moving to the Berkshires (Baldwin suggests he wished to "establish himself as a sort of Emersonian American Scholar, Man on the Farm," 305). Lured back to Boston and business upon his father's retirement in 1849, Ward succeeded him as the Barings' American agent, remaining in this position, at which he was superbly skilled, for twenty years, despite his reluctance to follow the family business, "trade." According to Edward Emerson, one of Ward's last duties for Baring Brothers was "effecting the purchase of Alaska from Russia for the United States"—a transaction involving seven and a half million dollars (115).

Cabot, who took a law degree at Harvard in 1845 and did not marry until 1857, worked for twenty years at numerous "avocations," as he called them: law, natural history (with Louis Agassiz), editing (*The Massachusetts Quarterly Review*), and architecture (practiced with his brother Edward for twelve years). Much of the architecture business involved the numerous Cabot family homes; the major project during Elliot's tenure was the design and construction of the Boston Theatre, completed in 1854. At this time he met his future wife, Elizabeth Dwight, who described him as "stiff and shy."[12] In 1865, at age forty-four, he retired from active business, conducting from his Brookline and Beverly Farms homes the life of gentleman-scholar and active public servant. In 1875 he helped the aging Emerson complete *Letters and Social Aims* and continued to compile materials for Emerson thereafter. Emerson's new will in 1876 named Cabot literary executor, and in 1877 he accepted the post of official biographer.

Both Ward and Cabot early impressed Emerson as men of potential action. They combined social position, refined enjoyment, speculative powers, and executive ability in much the same way that Napoleon did—with something that Napoleon lacked. As Baldwin puts it, "Emerson's interest in Ward depended on Ward's combining the two polarities of dream or hope, and worldly effectiveness" (315). True gentlemen, both were engaged in the business of living. Throughout his career,

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For future issues of *Emerson Society Papers* we solicit information about editions, publications, and research in progress on Emerson and his circle; queries and requests for information in aid of research in these fields; and significant news (promotions, transfers, retirements, deaths, etc.) of Emersonian scholars. We will also consider notes and short articles (about 4′ to 5 double-spaced typewritten pages, or less) on subjects of interest to our membership. MLA stylesheet is preferred. Send manuscripts to the editor, Douglas Emory Wilson, 1404 Christine Ave., Anniston, AL 36201.

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Emerson frequently returned to the Napoleonic ideal; it was one version of the new American hero, the man who would combine the old world's appreciation for culture with the new world's reverence for character—and an Emersonian update of what Howe called "Unitarian Whiggery" (206). "Aristocracy," the last essay that Cabot compiled for Emerson, defined gentlemen or aristocrats as "model men,—true instead of spurious pictures of excellence, and, if possible, living standards" (*W* 10:31). In Ward and Cabot, Emerson had found that ideal.

What was Emerson trying to say by lining up his friends against his "great men"? In his late journal, Emerson labeled his list a "comic paralogism." Perhaps he recognized the false opposition set up by the labels "Big" and "little." In Swift's text, after he has attempted to explain the political situation to Gulliver, the Lilliputian official Reldresal cites Lilliputian scripture, *"That all true Believers shall break their Eggs at the convenient End"* and remarks, "which is the convenient End, seems, in my humble Opinion, to be left to every Man's Conscience" (49-50). The obvious difference between the two ends of an egg need not result in conflict or domination. Both ends are equally part of the whole, and preferences may be left to the individual. In his borrowed terminology, Emerson found a way to bring together the local and the historical as shared expressions of the ideal.

Notes

[1]*The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson,* ed. William H. Gilman *et al.,* 16 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1960-1982), 11:173. Subsequent citations of Emerson's published journals will be indicated by the abbreviation *JMN.*

[2]Ronald A. Bosco, "Emerson's *Littleendians*: A Hedge against the Anarchy of Material Culture," MLA, New York, 27 December 1989; "The Anarchy of Material Culture: An Unspoken Side of Emerson's Nationalism," ALA, San Diego, 28 May 1992.

[3]*Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Herbert Davis, *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift,* 14 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 11:49.

[4]Quoted from Sir Walter Scott, *The Works of Jonathan Swift* (Edinburgh, 1814), by Martin Kallich, *The Other End of the Egg: Religious Satire in Swift's Gulliver's Travels* (Bridgeport, Conn.: New York Univ. Press, 1970), 26; Martin Price, ed., *Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift* (Indianapolis: Bobbs- Merrill, 1963), 37-38n.

[5]See Daniel Walker Howe, *The Unitarian Conscience* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970; rpt. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1988), 218-21.

[6]Charles Warren, *Jacobin or Junto, or Early American Politics as Viewed in the Diary of Dr. Nathaniel Ames, 1758-1822* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1931; rpt. New York and London: Benjamin Blom, 1968), 303-11.

[7]bMS Am 1280.195 (MH); quoted by permission of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association and the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

[8]"Napoleon; or the Man of the World," *Representative Men, The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson,* vol. 4, ed. Wallace E. Williams and Douglas Emory Wilson (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1987), 129.

[9]*The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson,* vols. 1-6, ed. Ralph L. Rusk, vols. 7-8, ed. Eleanor M. Tilton (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1939, 1990, 1991), 5:344. Subsequent citations of Emerson's letters will be indicated by the abbreviation *L.*

[10]*The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson,* 12 vols., ed. Edward W. Emerson (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1903): 10:480. Subsequent citations from this edition will be indicated by the abbreviation *W.*

[11]Carl Seaburg and Stanley Patterson, *Merchant Prince of Boston: Colonel T. H. Perkins, 1764-1854* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1971). Information on Ward can be found in Edward W. Emerson, *The Early Years of the Saturday Club, 1855-1870* (Boston, 1918), 109-116, and David Baldwin, "The Emerson-Ward Friendship: Ideals and Realities," *Studies in the American Renaissance 1984,* ed. Joel Myerson (Charlottesville, Va.: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1984), 299-324. Baldwin's article derives from his unpublished 1961 dissertation on Ward. Information on Cabot can be found in my "The 'Autobiographical Sketch' of James Elliot Cabot," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 30 (1982): 117-52; "Arranging the Sibylline Leaves: James Elliot Cabot's Work as Emerson's Literary Executor," *Studies in the American Renaissance 1983*: 335-89; and "Philosophical Biographer: James Elliot Cabot and *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson,*" *Studies in the American Renaissance 1987*: 365-91, which derive from my unpublished 1980 dissertation on Cabot.

[12]Elizabeth Dwight to Ellen Twistleton, 23 July 1854 (MCR).

"The World's Eye, The World's Heart": Emerson and the Continuity of Children's Knowing

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As a "scholar" looking at my experiences in the classroom, I have found, as Emerson did, that "the feelings of the child" may be "richer than all foreign parts" (1971, 67) and so I am writing this to share my appreciation for the pedagogical wisdom which I have found in Emerson's writing. In "The American Scholar" (1971, 62), Emerson says that the scholar is "the world's eye. He is the world's heart." These words have enticed me into reflections on what is called in the language of "educational research" the tradition of hermeneutic phenomenology. In the language of the children in the classroom, my reflections have been a search into how the "heart" tells me.

A child in a kindergarten classroom told me one day that "My heart tells me I feel like I know it. It's there somewhere in my head." This child also told me another day that "My heart is cracking!" At another time, a child emphatically told me that "We can hear you with our hearts too!" A child without language, a "severely autistic" child who was "not supposed to be able to initiate or engage in communication" kissed me one day as I acted on a decision to pick him up from his rest rather than make him walk to the bathroom. Each time, I stopped in the "busyness" of my actions, halted, captivated in surprise and wonderment.

It is among children that I have been "caught by surprise" and "thrown" into puzzlement. In the ordinary acts of organizing for a day, of walking down a hall, of simply standing watching and listening, I have found myself halted, breathless, captured in a moment without sense of time passing. In this "timeless moment" I grope for words to express what I have seen and heard. Nothing more than "What is this?" emerges as I begin to breathe again. A sensation of awe, wonder and surprise remains. A confusion of breathless tension and whirling thoughts signals these encounters with the unfamiliar, the wonder-full.

Thoughts, unarticulated and questioning, rise half formed and entangled with sensations. Awareness of such a labyrinth of entanglement entices a questioning beyond "What is this?" What is this experience of the eye, this experience of the heart? What is the nature of this transformation of sensations into a rising together of thoughtful, encircling reflections?

The children are suggesting that the pattern of their "knowing" is rooted in the "heart" with their "feelings." Meyer-Drawe (1986) suggests that in childhood "the world itself is polymorphous and not yet governed by units which act like boundaries of limits" (52). For children these "polymorphous," shifting boundaries are their daily life, while we struggle with understandings that have gone to our heads with building blocks of words. Are we divided into eyes, mind, heart, and hands, or as Emerson says, "a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man" (53)? Emerson said that a divided view of man is a "fable" which "metamorphosed [him] into a thing," but that man is really part of a "continuity [in which] there is never a beginning, there is never an end . . . but always a circular power returning to itself" (53-54).

Emerson's wisdom is shared by other scholars in education, though he is seldom mentioned. Hodgkin (1985) talks about connecting what we have separated with discrete boundaries. He says that the Chinese ideogram for "knowledge" is in part formed by the sign for "heart," and suggests that perhaps

> we, in the West, need to recover something of that element of warmth in our understanding of the meaning of knowledge and of its representations. . . . When "heart" and feeling are involved it is probable that other parts of the brain and other parts of our bodies will also be activated. (121)

The exasperated child who told me that it was possible to hear with your heart would not have thought that Nietzsche was as hopeless as I was. Nietzsche (1987) said "There is more reason in your body than in your best wisdom. And who knows for what purpose your body requires precisely your best wisdom" (63). Levin (1988) says about this,

> Furthermore, when we read Nietzsche with an intelligence tutored by a later phenomenology, we may find . . . that he comes within a breath of recognizing something like a corporeal intentionality . . . of the body which is anterior to acts of judgement and makes them possible: Before judgement occurs, [he writes] there is a cognitive activity that does not enter consciousness, but which operates through the living body. (35)

Merleau-Ponty (1968) tells us also, as Emerson does, that "man is related to all nature" (69). He says that "the body's messages to the self are our experience of inhabiting the world by our body, of inhabiting the truth by our whole selves" (28). Our "vision and body are tangled up in one another" (152). He also tells us that with an acceptance of this tangled condition, "a third dimension seems to open up, wherein their discordance is effaced" (29). Merleau-Ponty's translator describes the opening of vision to this third dimension as the following of a system of levels (the body and the mind) which are not what we see, but "that with which, according to which we see" (intro, li).

To share reflections on these experiences one must have a community. For me, Emerson's writings form part of my community. In education, we need to know that thoughts of "post-modern" philosophers and "modern" educators are not band wagons and fads, but are part of a long and shared tradition. Sharing our understandings of traditions across countries and disciplines helps us to shift boundaries and clear spaces for exploration.

(Continued on page 8)

PROSPECTS.

Status Report on Emerson Editions

Volume 4 of *The Complete Sermons of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Wesley T. Mott, Editor; Albert J. von Frank, Chief Editor) has been published by the University of Missouri Press. This final volume in the series includes "Records of the Second Church in Boston Relating to the Ministry of RWE," from the archives of the First and Second Church in Boston deposited at the Massachusetts Historical Society. *(See also page 8.)*

American Literature Association Conference

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Society will present two panels at the fourth annual conference of the American Literature Association in Baltimore, Maryland, on 28-30 May 1993. Both sessions, on a date to be announced, will be on the theme of "Emerson and Pedagogy":

SESSION 1: Chair, Glen M. Johnson (Catholic Univ. of America)

"Notes Toward Teaching Emerson," Robert E. Burkholder (Penn State)

"The Student Thinking," Susan L. Roberson (Auburn Univ.)

"Teaching Emerson: The New Criticism Revisited," Richard Lee Francis (Western Washington Univ.)

"From 'Christian Sentiment' to 'Self-Reliance': Approaching Emerson through the Sermons," Wesley T. Mott (Worcester Polytechnic Inst.)

SESSION 2: Chair, Sterling F. Delano (Villanova Univ.)

"Emerson and the Conversation on Race," Len G. Gougeon (Univ. of Scranton)

"Feminist Conversations: Emerson and the Task of Reading," Christina Zwarg (Haverford Coll.)

"'Your name has been seen so often, your book must be worth buying': Emerson on His Canon," Ronald A. Bosco (Univ. at Albany, SUNY)

The ALA conference will be held at the Stouffer Harborplace Hotel. Preregistration conference fees will be $35 (with a special rate of $10 for independent scholars, retired individuals, and students). The hotel is offering a conference rate of $70 a night (single) or $80 a night (double). To register or obtain housing information, write to Professor Alfred Bendixen, English Dept., California State University, Los Angeles, CA 90032-8110.

Concord Session 1993: "Emerson's Women"

The Emerson Society will present its third annual summer panel—"Emerson's Women"—in Concord, Mass., on Saturday, 10 July.

The panel, moderated by Ronald A. Bosco (Univ. at Albany, SUNY), will include Armida J. Gilbert (Kent State Univ.), Ralph H. Orth (Univ. of Vermont), and Sarah A. Wider (Colgate Univ.). Topics will range from the women in and around Emerson's household, to women in his audience, to contemporary female writers and critics.

The past two Concord panels have been held at the Concord Museum on the Sunday following the annual meeting of the Thoreau Society. This year's panel moves to Saturday on the campus of Concord Academy because Fruitlands Museums plans a special sesquicentennial celebration of the Alcott Fruitlands experiment on Sunday, 11 July. For information on registration for the annual meeting of the Thoreau Society, write to Bradley P. Dean, Secretary, The Thoreau Society, Route 2, Box 36, Ayden, NC 28513.

Emerson House Hours for 1993

The Ralph Waldo Emerson House reopens on 15 April and will close on 31 October, reports Director Nancy S. Shackford. Hours are Thursday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sunday and Monday holidays from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Admission is $3.50 for adults, $2 for students ages 6-17; children under 6 are admitted free of charge. Special rates are available for groups of 10 or more. The Emerson House is located at 28 Cambridge Turnpike in Concord, Mass. For more information in season, call 508-369-2236.

Fruitlands' 150th

Fruitlands Museums in Harvard, Mass., opens the 1993 season on 15-16 May with a weekend of special activities honoring the 150th anniversary of the Con-Sociate family's residence at the Fruitlands farmhouse in 1843. These activities are presented in collaboration with Orchard House, Concord, Mass., home of the Alcotts from 1858 to 1877.

The Fruitlands sesquicentennial includes a daylong symposium, "The Cost of an Idea," on Sunday, 11 July. For details on these and other programs and exhibits, call 508-456-9028.

Walk for Walden Woods II

The Emerson Society joins the Thoreau Society and several environmental and civic organizations in endorsing the second annual "Walk for Walden Woods." This year's walk will be on Sunday, 23 May. Recording artist Don Henley, cofounder of the Walden Woods Project, will again lead walkers—including celebrities such as Peter Weller (of "RoboCop" fame)—through historic Concord, Mass.

Last year's walk drew 8,000 walkers and raised $175,000 to help purchase sites in historic Walden Woods that are threatened with commercial development. For details on this year's event, call the Walden Woods Project at 617-367-3787.

REVIEW

Emerson's Emergence: Self and Society in the Transformation of New England, 1800-1845. By MARY KUPIEC CAYTON. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989. xiii, 307 pp. $32.50 cloth; $14.95 paper.

Mary Kupiec Cayton's *Emerson's Emergence* proceeds from the questions, "How much do intellectuals have the power to act as transformative agents within society, and how much are they inevitably shaped by the circumstances of the age?" (x-xi). Convinced that the individual and the political, social, and religious voices of a particular period inform and shape each other, Cayton pulls together extensive cultural evidence of nineteenth-century Boston and Emerson's private and public texts to demonstrate the dialectic between Emerson and his time. Cayton finds an Emerson both increasingly dissatisfied with the hegemonic social organicism of the Republic and intent on reforming society through a natural organicism of morality. Her Emerson is not the isolato of previous studies, but one both of and apart from his time.

Cayton's examination of Emerson's dispute with his times centers on Emerson's early acceptance and subsequent rejection of the social organicism of a Federalist Boston, his resultant formulation of a natural organicism of morality, and his ambivalent retreat to a domestic organicism of family and friends. In all cases, Cayton correlates Emerson's philosophical responses with his evolving sense of vocation and calling as spokesman for moral reform. Cayton begins by placing Emerson in the Boston of his father's generation, a Boston concerned with maintaining the hegemonic order of merchants and the propertied elite. Unfortunately for the Federalists, the emerging industrialization and democratization called into question the authority upon which their control depended and spawned both political tension and a society concerned with maintaining the conventions of virtue even if the principles of virtue were being disrupted. It is here, in her careful delineation of the Boston that the young Emerson confronted as he found and formulated his own thought, that much of the strength of Cayton's study lies.

Dismayed by what he took to be a degenerate social order, the young Emerson looked to the general and abstract laws of nature to steady the individual in a world of shifting fortunes. Cayton finds the young man's retreats to the countryside invigorating, not so much because of his appreciation of the landscape but because the fresh air of nature seemed to inspire the fresh thinking that would change his life. As Cayton puts it, "How Emerson arrived at a natural organicism that rejected the very customs, ceremonies, and ethos of social organicism that held Federalist society together is the story of his interior response to the perception of decline in consensus in Boston during the 1820s. It is also the story of a conversion experience" to faith in man's possibilities (57). In large part, it is also the story of his ministry at Second Church. From Cayton's perspective, Emerson's final split with the Unitarian Church, articulated in the Lord's Supper controversy, is a rejection of the conventions and hypocrisy of his time for a timeless and individual sincerity grounded in the moral laws of nature. Though I find Cayton's reading of the Lord's Supper sermon to be correct and enlivened by her discussion of the controversy between Unitarians and evangelical Calvinists, I find it also too contained by her historical approach. Surely, the sermon and his resignation from the Second Church pulpit also mark a personal as well as vocational crisis.

The last broad section of the book shows Emerson unanchored to the church and groping for a "new place in the public arena" where he could continue to preach moral reform. Cayton reads the *American Scholar* and the *Divinity School Address* in light of his search for a calling, suggesting that Emerson's disappointment with the rancorous response to the *Divinity School Address* sealed his retreat from Boston intellectualism. Cayton shows Emerson withdrawing ever more from the contentiousness of Boston to the village life and promised domestic stability offered by Concord and his marriage to Lydia Jackson. In one of her most interesting sections, Cayton suggests how the cult of domesticity defined and perhaps interfered with the relationship between Emerson and his second wife. Most likely Cayton's discussion will generate more investigation and debate relevant to Emerson's position on the "woman question." She ends her study by demonstrating the effect of little Waldo's death on Emerson's thought, apparently his last major philosophical transformation, signalling finally the end of his "emergence."

Although Cayton's organization of Emerson's philosophical life may suggest an analysis that could become too neat, she is careful to demonstrate the tensions and tenuousness inherent in the thinker's relation to his life and society. Nonetheless, her look at Emerson, particularly during the ministerial years, while rich with cultural evidence, sometimes forgets the personal Emerson. She barely mentions, for instance, the tragedy of Ellen Tucker's early death. I must say, however, that the last section of the book, which sets Emerson in the domestic life of Concord and his second marriage, handles very well the correlation between the personal and the philosophical. Aside from these quibbles, I find *Emerson's Emergence* to be a most informative book and a fine example of intellectual history and literary criticism.

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A Glimpse of Emerson in Old Age

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Emerson's loss of memory in his later years is well documented, particularly the aphasia that caused him to forget the names of things. The letter printed for the first time below shows that in his last years even copying had become impossible for the man who once mined his journals as his "savings bank." Written on 5 March 1880 by Ellen Emerson to Edwin Percy Whipple, who was preparing an article on Emerson's poetry, it is a sad testimony to Emerson's mental state two years before his death:[1]

> I don't think Father can copy "Bacchus", it is so long. Perhaps he will try, and possibly he will succeed, but I think he will dread the undertaking, and defer it, and forget it, or he will make mistakes, and begin again till he is discouraged. It has become very difficult for him to write. I will ask him occasionally whether he has done it, but I wish to prepare you to expect nothing. He is rather surprised to hear of your proposed paper, he says "I haven't much pride in the poems. I wish they were a great deal better."

Note

[1]The letter is in the Collection of Joel Myerson and printed by permission of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association. Whipple's article was "Emerson as a Poet," *North American Review* 135 (July 1882): 1-26.

The World's Eye

(Continued from page 5)

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Status Report on Emerson Editions

(Continued from page 6)

Volume 2 of *The Topical Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Ronald A. Bosco, Editor; Ralph H. Orth, Chief Editor) has been published by the University of Missouri Press.

The typescript of *English Traits,* Volume 5 of *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Robert E. Burkholder, Philip Nicoloff and Douglas Emory Wilson, Editors; Joseph Slater, General Editor) has been submitted to Harvard University Press.

Annual Meeting

The 1993 annual meeting of The Ralph Waldo Emerson Society, Inc. will be held during the American Literature Association conference in Baltimore, Maryland. (See "PROSPECTS.") The exact time and location will be announced at both sessions presented by The Emerson Society.