

Notwithstanding Emerson's unquestioned greatness of intellect in his own department, one cannot but be impressed by the fact, equally unquestionable, that the transcendental school of thought like the enterprise at Brook farm have quite retired from their supremacy; overborne by the perennial consciousness of our thinking world of that authority of the scriptures which it is the beautiful office of orthodoxy inflexibly to maintain.

The character of Emerson's productions may be vividly suggested by a glance at ~~himself~~ ~~Lord Macaulay's~~ ~~essay on History, in~~ ~~contrast,~~ ~~with the~~ ~~essay by Emerson on the same subject.~~ by a comparison of his essays with those of Lord Macaulay. In their published works, each has an essay on the topic: History. Macaulay's is a ^{practical} discussion of the method of writing or composing a book on that subject; exemplifying by a comparison of the history of Herodotus with that of Thucydides, or of Livy with Sallust. Macaulay is thinking of history as a ~~department~~ ^{province} of literature; and remarks that "it is sometimes fiction. It is sometimes theory." "History," he says, "has its foreground & its background; & it is principally in the management of its perspective that one artist differs from another. Some events must be represented on a large scale, others diminished. . . . In the philosophy of history, the moderns have very far surpassed the ancients. . . . The perfect historian is he in whose work the character & spirit of an age is exhibited in miniature; &c., &c."

The essay of Emerson, on the other hand, makes but little account of methods by which history should be or has been written; hardly mentions the noted historians, repeating a few of their names after the fashion of a catalogue. But from first to last the essay treats History as but a text to ~~preach a discourse on~~ afford an opportunity for the author's fa-

write doctrine of Transcendentalism. His first sentence is: "There is
one mind common to all individual men." And presently he adds:
"Of the works of this mind history is the record." That is to say,
Mr. Emerson muses on a certain ideal which that sum of
events called history suggest to his mind, idealizes the subject
itself + writes upon it at length, carrying our thoughts far far
beyond any such consideration of history as any one but
he would ever find in such a title. And not only the
wisdom, but the actual contradiction of his views to views com-
monly received, may be marked by a contrast of passages in his
essay + in Macaulay's. Macaulay says: "The effect of his-
torical reading is, analogous, in many respects, to that produced by
foreign travel. The student, like the tourist, is transported into a new
state of society. He sees new fashions. He hears ~~new~~ new modes
of expression. His mind is enlarged by contemplating the wide
diversities of laws, of morals, + of manners. ~~But Emerson says:~~
+ return with minds as contracted as ~~But men may travel far,~~
if they had never stirred from their own market-town. In the
same manner men may know the dates of many battles + the
genealogies of many royal houses, + yet be no wiser..... He who
would understand the vast + complex system of ~~society, the practical~~
society....., the practical operation of governments + laws, must...
... see ordinary men as they appear in their ordinary business + their
ordinary pleasures; +c., +c. But Emerson says: "All that Chate-
leau says of treading, yonder ship of a boy that reads in the corner
feels to be true of himself.... The student is to read history actively
+ not passively; to esteem his own life the text, + books the com-
mentary. Thus compelled, the Muse of history will utter oracles, as
never to those who do not respect themselves. There no expectation that any man
will read history aright, who thinks that what was done in a remote
age by men whose names have resounded far, has any deeper sense
than what he is doing today!"