

MICKIEWICZ
AND
EMERSON

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IT IS PERHAPS NOT STRANGE THAT THERE should have been no attempt up to now to investigate in detail Mickiewicz's interest in Emerson. Polish interest in Emerson has not been great; in fact, not even all his essays have yet been translated into Polish.¹ American scholars, on the other hand, have been kept from a thorough investigation because they would need to read Polish to get at all of the relevant texts. One preliminary study in English has covered part of the ground.² The Mickiewicz-Emerson relationship has also been of peripheral interest to other studies.

Though this relationship has been little studied, the investigations have actually produced more problems than they have solved. The major problem raised by previous investigations has two aspects. The first aspect is the time at which Mickiewicz first came to know of Emerson's writings; the second aspect has to do with whether Mickiewicz was the first person to make Emerson known to the French, and thus to all of Europe. The time range, on the basis of critical statements and Mickiewicz's own words, extends from 1838 to January, 1843. Several scholars accept the year 1838 as the time when Mickiewicz was already acquainted with Emerson's writings. The first one to do so was Mickiewicz's son, Władysław, in *La Trilogie du Collège de France: Mickiewicz, Michelet, Quinet*. He printed two letters, both of which, he claimed, were written in 1838.

Mon cher Edgar, veuillez bien retrouver le manuscrit de mes leçons et le volume d'Emerson. J'enverrai demain les chercher.
Votre dévoué,

A. MICKIEWICZ

¹In Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Szkice*, przełożył i skomentował Andrzej Tretiak, przedmowę napisał Artur Górski (Warszawa: Instytut Literacki, 1933), pp. 86-87, we learn that *Essays, First Series* is available in Polish translation, but that four of the *Essays, Second Series* are not yet translated into Polish.

²Ludwik Krzyżanowski, "Mickiewicz and Emerson," in *Adam Mickiewicz: Poet of Poland*, ed. Manfred Kridl (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), pp. 264-73.

According to Władysław Mickiewicz, Quinet responded (in part) as follows:

Mon cher ami (permettez-moi de vous donner ce nom.)
Il m'a été impossible d'aller prendre congé de vous, ce que j'ai
regretté. J'ai laissé, en partant, le livre que vous m'avez prêté chez une
personne de mes amies qui s'est chargée de vous le faire remettre. . . .³

This exchange of letters was accepted as properly dated by Maurice Chazin in his investigation of the relationship between Quinet and Emerson. "As early as 1838 Quinet had been introduced to Emerson. Mickiewicz communicated to Quinet his enthusiasm for the American philosopher by lending him Emerson's first volume (*Nature*, 1836). This was on the occasion of the Polish patriot's first meeting with Quinet and was the beginning of a long and fruitful friendship."⁴ By accepting these letters as written in 1838, both Władysław Mickiewicz and Chazin raised a number of problems without, apparently, being aware of them.

Chazin himself states (p. 148) that Quinet did not indicate any interest in Emerson until May 15, 1844, when he listed him during a lecture at the Collège de France as one of the greatest modern historiographers. How can one explain a lapse of six years on Quinet's part and a lapse of five years on Adam Mickiewicz's part before either man mentioned Emerson publicly? The answer, it would seem, is that neither knew Emerson in 1838. The evidence for this conviction, so far as Mickiewicz is concerned, is threefold.

Apart from two or three addresses and poems, *Nature* was Emerson's first published work. It appeared anonymously on September 9 or 10, 1836, in a small edition and sold slowly; in fact, it is estimated that it took twelve years to sell 500 copies. Before a second American edition appeared in 1849, there were two English editions, in 1845 and 1848.⁵ If Mickiewicz

³(Paris: Musée Adam Mickiewicz, 1924), pp. 56-57. I have not been able to trace this letter in Quinet's correspondence. The editor of the most recent edition of Mickiewicz's correspondence, using the argument of internal evidence assigns the date July 4, 1844, to the Pole's letter. See Adam Mickiewicz, *Dziela, wydanie narodowe*. Teksty wydania opracowano staraniem Komitetu Redakcyjnego pod przewodnictwem Leona Płoszewskiego (Kraków: Czytelnik, 1948-), XV, 568. The various editions of Mickiewicz's lectures at the Collège de France are most thoroughly collated in this, still unfinished, edition of his works. Consequently, it will be used in the earlier part of this paper and cited hereafter as *Dziela*.

⁴"Quinet, an Early Discoverer of Emerson," *PMLA*, XLVIII (1933), 147. That Mickiewicz introduced Quinet to Emerson's works was established earlier by Z. L. Zaleski, "Edgar Quinet et Auguste Cieszkowski," in *Mélanges offerts à Fernand Baldensperger* (Paris: Champion), II, 361-62.

⁵See *Nature* (1836) by Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Kenneth Walter Cameron (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1940), p. iv, and George Willis Cooke, *A Bibliography of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1908), pp. 97-98.

knew this work he must have been acquainted with the 1836 edition. Yet there is no record that he was. This is hardly unexpected. Emerson was completely unknown at this time, or at least known primarily as a preacher and lecturer. While the small volume *Nature* did, in time, become fairly well known in America and in England, its reception on the Continent was delayed for some time. In the second place, there is no evidence in the writings of Mickiewicz between 1838 and the lecture of January 31, 1843, at the Collège de France that he knew of Emerson. Nor is Emerson mentioned in his correspondence of this period. From 1836 to 1839, Mickiewicz was in poor financial circumstances and was occupied with literary hack work and various unsuccessful schemes for making money. It was not till late 1839 that his situation improved when he was nominated professor of Latin literature at the Academy of Lausanne. And, as might be expected, there is no mention of Emerson in the lectures he delivered there on the literature of the Augustan period. Finally, we have his own words during the lecture mentioned above: "A certain American philosopher, whose work has just been reissued in London . . . which I have scarcely had time to glance at. . . . This American thinker, Emerson" (XI, 82). These words make it possible to identify the work referred to as the *Essays* which were published in London in 1841, with a preface by Thomas Carlyle.⁶ And, as will be shown later, Mickiewicz's references to Emerson do not include material from *Nature*. It seems clear, therefore, that he first became acquainted with Emerson's writings late in 1842 or in January, 1843, and not before.

The question of whether Mickiewicz was the first person to introduce Emerson to France has also been variously answered. Margaret Fuller, who met Mickiewicz in Paris in 1847, wrote to Emerson about the meeting and among other things said: "Mickiewicz, the Polish poet, first introduced the *Essays* to acquaintances in Paris."⁷ The author of the standard Emerson biography, Ralph L. Rusk, accepts this view but not unreservedly, saying that Mickiewicz was "presumably the first to make Emerson known in France."⁸ Polish scholars usually assume that Mickiewicz has first claim to introducing Emerson in France without arguing the matter.⁹

On the other hand, in the first article entirely devoted to Emerson which appeared in France, we find information of another sort. This article,

⁶Since it was so early in 1843, it was hardly likely that Mickiewicz could have seen the first pirated edition of the *Essays* which appeared during this year. See *ibid.*, p. 77.

⁷*Memoirs* (Boston, 1852), II, 207. Quoted by Leopold Wellisz, *The Friendship of Margaret Fuller D'Ossoli and Adam Mickiewicz* (New York: Polish Book Importing Co., 1947), p. 9.

⁸*The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York: Scribners, 1949), p. 350.

⁹*Dziela*, XI, 508.

written by a friend of Mickiewicz's, the Comtesse d'Agoult, who used the pen name Daniel Stern, appeared in the *Revue Indépendante* for July 25, 1845. In this article we read the following: "It [Emerson's name] was mentioned for the first time by M. Philarète Chasles in an article on American literary tendencies and more recently during some remarkable lectures given by a distinguished foreign poet who quoted him on different occasions *à propos* of certain enigmatic opinions on the language of animals and the transmigration of souls."¹⁰ The poet referred to is, of course, Mickiewicz.

A somewhat different chronology is presented by Hans Keller in his dissertation *Emerson in Frankreich: Wirkungen und Parallelen*. He agrees with the Comtesse that Philarète Chasles was the first to mention Emerson in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for August 15, 1844. According to Keller, the second person to speak of Emerson was Quinet during his lectures at the Collège de France in 1845. And the article by the Comtesse d'Agoult, Keller says, was the next reference made in France to Emerson.¹¹ Keller mentions Mickiewicz only once, in a footnote (pp. 81-82), to explain that he did not follow up the reference in Marie d'Agoult's article because of a friendly agreement with another scholar who was preparing a dissertation on Emerson's literary reputation in France. Had he looked into the published lectures he would have noticed his error immediately.¹² He would also have noticed that Marie d'Agoult was herself in error.¹³ For simple chronology indicates that Mickiewicz's lecture of January 31, 1843, preceded the article by Chasles in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

What has escaped general notice up to now is the fact that Mickiewicz's first references to Emerson also appeared in printed form several times before the appearance of the article by Chasles. Mickiewicz's lectures were reproduced in lithographic form from stenographic copies shortly after they were delivered. As it happened, the lectures of the third course (1842-1843), which are pertinent to our problem, appeared regularly.¹⁴ It was from this lithographed copy that George Sand extracted material relating to Mickiewicz's interpretation of Zygmunt Krasinski's *Un-divine Comedy* and

¹⁰This article was translated by Besse D. Howard, "The First French Estimate of Emerson," *New England Quarterly*, X (1937), 446-63. The quotation is from pp. 448-49.

¹¹(Giessen, 1932), pp. 74-8.

¹²The lectures of the first two years, 1840-42, were published in a German version in 1843, *Vorlesungen über slawische Literatur und Zustände* (Leipzig und Paris); those of the last two years were published in a French version in 1845 bearing the titles *L'Église officielle et le Messianisme* and *L'Église et le Messie*.

¹³She was not a regular listener. In a letter of February 12, 1844, Mickiewicz writes to her to inform her that the lectures would be temporarily discontinued and says: "Vous me faites l'honneur de venir quelquefois assister à mon cours . . ." *Dziela*, XV, 535.

¹⁴The details can be found in *ibid.*, VIII, 345-47 and XI, 483-85.

containing the first mention of Emerson for publication in the *Revue Indépendants*. This material appeared under the title "La Comédie Infernale, examinée par M. Mickiewicz dans ses leçons du Collège [sic] de France," [VIII (May 10, 1843), 37-71]. Finally, to conclude this list of firsts, one should mention one more fact. It is generally known to Polish scholars that Mickiewicz translated (rather freely) Emerson's essay "History" and the lecture "Man the Reformer", the latter published in 1849 in the *Tribune des Peuples*, of which he was the editor and guiding spirit.¹⁵ What has not been given sufficient emphasis, however, is that this was the first of Emerson's works made available to the French reading public, for the translation of the *Essays* by Emile Montégut, which has generally been regarded as the first French translation of Emerson's writings, did not appear until two years later.¹⁶ The record seems clear. Mickiewicz was the first person to speak publicly of Emerson in France; these words were the first words printed about Emerson in France; and Mickiewicz was the first translator of Emerson in France.

We do not know how it happened that Mickiewicz came to know of Emerson. It may well be that some of his friends residing in England served as intermediaries. The first significant criticism of Emerson in England was written by Richard Monckton Milnes in 1840.¹⁷ Milnes later became a member of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, but it has not yet been possible to establish whether he was in contact with Polish emigrés between 1840 and 1843. And it may well have been that the 1841 edition of the *Essays* with the Carlyle preface attracted the attention of such persons as Stanislaw Worcell or Christian Lach Szyrma who were in intermittent contact with Mickiewicz. Until some specific information becomes available, however, this question can only be conjectural.

We are on surer ground when we turn to another question, namely what it was that Mickiewicz found congenial and stimulating in Emerson. To develop this question we shall first discuss the lectures given at the Collège de France. There are in the lectures from the period beginning January 31, 1843, to May 21, 1844, sixteen references to Emerson. Some are quotations, some are more or less accurate summaries of Emersonian ideas, and some are simply references to Emerson as a thinker the cornerstone of whose philosophy is intuition.¹⁸ What attracted Mickiewicz immediately was Emerson's emphasis on intuition as primary and superior to

¹⁵This fact was noted by Krzyzanowski, *op. cit.*, p. 273, n. 11.

¹⁶Cooke, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

¹⁷"American Philosophy—Emerson's Works," *Westminster Review*, XXXIII (1840), 345-72.

¹⁸Krzyzanowski, *op. cit.*, discusses references to and quotations from Emerson found in six of the lectures. With two exceptions the translations here are my own.

intelligence. The manner in which he introduces him is characteristic. He does not use Emerson as an aid to prove a new point. Instead he finds in him an ally on long established positions. And when, as will happen twice, he does not agree with Emerson completely, it will be — strangely enough — because he will find the American too much isolated in a transcendental ivory tower.

Almost throughout his whole life Mickiewicz was firmly convinced of the importance of intuition or feeling as a cognitive faculty. In his earlier creative years, he coupled feeling with faith. One of the earliest expressions of feeling and faith as cognitive faculties is in the poem "Romanticism" which was included in his first published volume *Ballads and Romances* (1822). The last two stanzas are explicit statements of this belief.

*I answer modestly: "The maid can feel,
The common people to their faith are true:
Feeling and faith to me far more reveal
Than eyes and spectacles, though learned, do.*

*"You delve among dead truths, to men unknown,
The world you see in dust and specks of light;
But Truth you know not, miracles disown—
Look in your heart, that still may see aright!"¹⁹*

In his later years, particularly in the last three years of his lectures at the Collège de France, Mickiewicz tended to telescope feeling and faith into a single faculty. He who had feeling had faith, and he who had faith — or love for God — had feeling. This feeling-faith which was obviously inspirational or intuitional in nature had been rapturously expressed in the third part of *Forefathers' Eve*, written in 1832.

*My song is worthy God and nature; great
It is, it also doth create;
Such song is power and deathless energy,
Such song is immortality.
Yes, I have made this immortality I feel
.*

*And I have more,
A power that men cannot bestow:
Feeling, that oftentimes must choke
Within itself, and yet sometimes doth pour
Forth words as the volcano smoke.²⁰*

¹⁹*Poems by Adam Mickiewicz*, tr. by various hands and ed. by George Rapall Noyes (New York: Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, 1944), p. 69.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 272-74.

In his lectures Mickiewicz used the words "enthusiasm(*zapal*) and especially "soul" (*duch*) to designate this means of cognition. Several times he attempted to convey the meaning these words had for him to his listeners. In the lecture of February 11, 1842, he said: "*Duch* therefore signifies neither soul as understood by some philosophers nor *esprit* in the colloquial meaning of the term, but spiritual being, the inner being animating the body, *spiritus* in the Biblical sense." (X, 155) When he commenced his discussion of the poetry of the Polish poet Stefan Garczynski, in his lecture of June 17, 1842, he developed this concept thus:

Garczynski says that lofty thought is evidence of an exalted heart; that the lofty thought born of the heart creates courageous acts; that prophets, joining premonition and knowledge, give evidence of truth; and that, in turn, time confirms the prophets. Everything thus has its beginning in the heart. . . . Heart here means nothing else than the abode of the soul, the abode, the covering of the inner being. Slavic poets are always speaking of the heart, but they avoid speaking of the brain, which is generally regarded as the abode of the intelligence—in order to show that soul and intelligence are not one and the same for them. (X, 371-72)

Having long and strongly believed in the prophetic significance of intuition, it is not at all surprising that Mickiewicz should have called upon Emerson as another witness of this truth. Even the manner in which he first speaks of the American partakes of intuition, for the passage in which he introduces him is a hastily improvised amalgam rather than a detailed exposition of Emerson's views. In fact, Mickiewicz attributes to Emerson ideas which he did not set forth in the first series of *Essays*.

This American thinker, Emerson, whom I shall often quote to you later on, because you will see in his works several chapters which seem made to order to explain the Polish poets and philosophers, this thinker believes also that the embryo, the center of all action is the soul. This soul acts either through thought or feeling; it creates a philosophy, a poetry. But in its lesser activities it appears first as prudence; it scarcely raises itself above the level of the brute; later it becomes philosophy; slowly it raises itself toward poetry, which Emerson places above philosophy; and finally it becomes wisdom. Thus on the ladder of humanity prudent men occupy the lower rungs; then come the intellectuals; then the poets; and finally the true sages. Emerson believed that, as in nature, the fluids and forces we call imponderable, such as magnetism, light, and electricity, are only material forces rarefied and released; thus the intelligence of man is nothing but a material force of this type, raised to a third or fourth power. The soul of man can take hold of the earth, steam, electricity, intelligence, to employ them for its purposes; but it must raise itself toward what he calls the Over-Soul, that is, toward God.²¹

The lines on the soul as the center of action and the classification of men come from two essays: "Self-Reliance" and "Prudence". They are a combination of the following passages from these essays.

²¹Krzyżanowski's translation.

The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of thought and action. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. (p. 64)

There are all degrees of proficiency in knowledge of the world. It is sufficient to our present purpose to indicate three. One class live to the utility of the symbol; esteeming health and wealth a final good. Another class live above this mark to the beauty of the symbol, as the poet and artist and the naturalist and man of science. A third class live above the beauty of the symbol to the beauty of the thing signified; they are the wise men. The first class have a common sense; the second, taste; and the third, spiritual perception. (pp. 222-23)²²

It seems clear that what Mickiewicz has done is to attribute to Emerson his own dislike for schools of philosophy. Emerson, too, was opposed to philosophical schools, but this attitude is not present in the passages Mickiewicz utilized. Though he was not unaffected by philosophical thought — even that of the eighteenth century — Mickiewicz scorned systematized philosophy. The only philosophers he referred to with approval (for he considered Emerson primarily a philosopher) during his lectures, especially in the last two years, were the newly discovered American and the Pole, August Cieszkowski. It is also clear that Mickiewicz attributed to Emerson views on the nature and value of the poet which he was not to express until much later. The first half of this passage in which Mickiewicz purports to present Emerson's views turns out to be, then, in large measure another expression of his own ideas.

In the lines dealing with forces in nature and the intelligence, Mickiewicz departs even farther from Emerson's thought. His source is the opening passage in the essay "Intellect": "Every substance is negatively electric to that which stands above it in the chemical tables, positively to that which stands below it. Water dissolves wood and iron and salt; air dissolves water; electric fire dissolves air, but the intellect dissolves fire, gravity, laws, method, and the subtlest unnamed relations of nature in its resistless menstruum" (p. 325). There is nothing in this passage, however,

²²The text of *Essays, First Series* used here is that in *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1903-04), Vol. II, cited hereafter as *Works*.

or in the rest of the essay which would justify calling man's intelligence a material force. Nor is there, in this essay, a distinction between intellect and soul. When Mickiewicz interprets Emerson as saying that "the soul of man can take hold of the earth, steam, electricity, intelligence to employ them for its purposes", he is grasping an Emersonian thought, true enough, but he is also recalling a statement of his own. In the lecture of April 8, 1842, he had compared the divine in the soul, its motor force, with steam and declared that it was this force which produced all of man's works. (X, 225)

Finally, the last clause in the introduction to Emerson is obviously nothing more than a general reference to the essay "Over-Soul".²³ Indeed, all that Mickiewicz said when he first presented Emerson to his audience shows that he had done little more than to glance at some pages of the *Essays*. He found in them ammunition of the kind he had already been using and hastened to make use of an unexpected ally.

The next reference to Emerson occurred during the lecture of February 21, 1843, in the course of a continuing analysis of the *Un-divine Comedy*. Among the points made in the analysis is that the drama has a strong Slavic, and particularly Polish, character. Mickiewicz disputed Krasinski's interpretation of the Polish peasant, claiming that he had deprived the peasant of two of his basic characteristics, namely his need to be ruled with loving gentleness and his peacefulness. He agreed with Krasinski, however, that there is a relation between the supernatural world and men who have, or regard themselves as having, a mission to accomplish in the natural world. (XI, 102-05)

The picture that Mickiewicz had earlier painted of the Polish peasant was generally an idyllic one, and there is no question that he was interested in seeing his lot improved. Yet, as Wiktor Weintraub has pointed out, "his position is far from that of a radical political reformer: he is for the people . . . because the people are closer to God, preserve the old customs, and have true faith, while the upper classes are contaminated by cosmopolitanism and rationalism".²⁴ Weintraub quotes Mickiewicz on this point.

One paints in vivid colors the poverty of the peasant living in a shabby hut who is exposed to the strokes of the whip. How is it then, that before the fall of Poland we find no complaint in folk songs? Why did this peasant not complain before against oppression, hunger and the whip? It is only because men begin to feel physical suffering only when they lack moral force.²⁵

²³Płoszewski in *Dziela*, XI, 508, indicates the three essays which served Mickiewicz as sources for this introduction without attempting to identify specific passages.

²⁴"Adam Mickiewicz, the Mystic-Politician," *Harvard Slavic Studies*, Vol. I (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 158.

²⁵*Loc cit.* The Polish passage is in *Dziela*, X, 141-42.

Such was Mickiewicz's view of the peasant (*lud*) on February 1, 1842. Little more than a year later, in the lecture in which he refers to Emerson for the second time, his view of the peasant has been slightly modified. The early emphasis on the Slavic folk as mild, gentle and agricultural shifts to an even greater emphasis on the folk as a moral force affecting the history of the Slavic countries and is the basis for disagreement with Krasinski.

In the same way he [Krasinski] did not appreciate the character of the folk, of Slavic peasants in general. Fortunately all authors without exception, from Jordanes and Procopius all the way to Herder, agree in one respect; all of them value the moral attributes of the Slavic peasant. He is distinguished above all by that warmth of soul, that feeling of love which shines through so clearly in his customs and habits, in his delight in poetry and song, and also in his hospitality. Therefore this folk never can be moved and pushed to action in the name of some bloodthirsty theory. (XI, 102)

This view of the folk as a moral force is intimately connected with his belief in the impact of the supernatural world on the every day world, a belief he had long held. He had developed it many times in the lectures. On January 4, 1841, he had concluded his lecture with these words: "Faith in direct relationships between the supernatural world and the earthly constituted the moral and political strength of the Polish system: whenever it was wanted to draw the force of resistance or the force of action from the nation, it was necessary to call upon this faith" (X, 55). In the following year (May 6, 1842), he spoke on this topic again, combining it, as he frequently did, with his conception of Poland's historical mission and finding, at the same time, an analogy between the destinies of nations and the secret — or at least unknown — workings of nature.

How explain this phenomenon [the source of a nation's strength]? Contemporary philosophy, which regards people only as parts attached to the state machine, cannot say anything about this serious problem. But the new science of nature has already observed the secret connection between the portions of an organism and the whole representing its idea. . . .

Can one not deduce from this that people, the beings endowed with the highest and strongest supply of life, are related to each other more deeply and strongly still. . . . This invisible bond unites nationalities.

Nationality, in the highest meaning of the word, means the mission of a nation, means a group of people appointed by God to perform a certain work, people who work each for the others and are connected by that deep emotional bond which we have shown in the plant kingdom and whose existence we affirmed from examples taken from the history of the Polish nation. (X, 280-81)

It is against this background that we can best understand Mickiewicz's use of Emerson. Having painted the picture he wanted his hearers to see, he made it almost tangible by the device of contrast, a device he used frequently with dramatic effectiveness. Against his own interpretation of a patriotic, morally centered society with a divine mission, he set Emerson's

criticism of American society. This society, Mickiewicz himself said, was "reputed to be the most practical and most materialistic society on earth". Substantiating this judgment, he quoted from the beginning of Emerson's lecture "Man the Reformer" which appeared in the *Dial* and which, he said, came into his hands "accidentally". The quotation begins with Emerson's lamentation on the sad state of American life which seems to have lost all its spiritual ideals and traditions. It concludes: "Grant all this, as we must, yet I suppose none of my auditors, — no honest and intelligent soul will deny that we ought to seek to establish ourselves in such disciplines and courses as will deserve that guidance and clearer communication with the spiritual nature".²⁶ Mickiewicz continued the contrast by saying that Emerson accused the American people of lacking the "two necessary virtues, Hope and Charity", an accusation, he continued, that could not be made against the Polish nation.

The point of this contrast was that no old formulas, no mechanistic philosophies would move the Polish nation, so unlike the Americans in their religious traditions and conservative, patriotic traditions. It is worth noticing, though, that Mickiewicz either was not accurate in his translation or intentionally changed the two virtues given by Emerson, which were faith and hope. These were transformed by him into hope and charity. It is not possible to say for certain why this change occurred since faith in all its meanings was a concept more important to him than was charity.

Mickiewicz's next use of "Man the Reformer" occurred on March 14, 1843. He reverted to his conception of the Slavs as an agricultural people and to their coming historical role, and once again used Emerson's words to set up a contrast between materialistic Americans and the landloving Slavs. He quoted Emerson extensively, though not altogether faithfully, to prove that the American advocated a sort of return to nature. "I confess," he had Emerson say, "that I would not regret the rarity, and even destruction of articles of luxury or of worldly fashion, if there were a return to the agricultural life, in the conviction that we could then better fulfill our *human obligations*, while tempering our consciences and refining our taste". It is characteristic of Mickiewicz that he translated freely, but it is even more characteristic that he wished to maintain his own point. Otherwise he would have added the rest of Emerson's argument.

Who could regret to see a high conscience and a purer taste exercising a sensible effect on young men in their choice of occupation, and thinning the ranks of competition in the labors of commerce, of law, and of state? It is easy to see that the inconvenience would last but a short time. This would be great action, which always opens the eyes of men. When many persons shall have done this, when the majority shall admit the necessity of reform

²⁶The *Dial*, I (1840-41), 527-28.

in all these institutions, their abuses will be redressed, and the way will be open again to the advantages which arise from the division of labor, and a man may select the fittest employment for his peculiar talent again without compromise. (pp. 527-28)

Instead he asserted anew that the Slavs could not and would not accept modern materialistic philosophy and technological advancements. Their historical role, he said, depended upon continuing faithfulness to the principles of a peaceful, agricultural life. (XI, 265)

The next reference to Emerson in the lectures occurred May 16, of the same year. Once again we find that he used Emerson — this time only in passing — in order to emphasize his point by contrast. His topic was the concept of property in its West European interpretation as compared with the view of the Slavic peoples.

One should not assume that all these [contemporary French] ideas express only the anger of the poor classes, the proletarians, or that in all these projects there is only blind jealousy regarding property or finally that all these schools want to delude public opinion and shield their political passions with these theories; the evil lies much deeper. In America, where the land calls out for industry, where a man can settle everywhere and regard forest and plains as his own property, from this still unoccupied land there arise similar voices expressing the same ideas. An American philosopher, basing himself on man's moral needs, counsels his countrymen to give up property.

The most important thing is to find sanction for these new tendencies in a living tradition. Now, there exists on earth only one people which still preserves it, an old people which, having resisted for so many centuries the deduced [*wyrozumowanym*] ideas of the European movement, remained faithful to the ancient tradition; I speak of the Slavic people [*lud*]. (XI, 279-80)

It is quite clear that he still has "Man the Reformer" in mind, but it is also evident that he has stretched Emerson's argument beyond its intent in order to strengthen his own.

Later in this lecture he returned to the relationship between man and nature and once more made an ally of Emerson, saying: "There is a generally growing presentiment that there is a closer bond than has been assumed between man and what we call nature. The American philosopher, Emerson, whom I quote frequently with pleasure, also asks himself the question: what is an animal? what is a tree?" (XI, 291). The fact of the matter is that nowhere in the *Essays* does Emerson ask these questions. What Mickiewicz did was to interpret several passages which were related to his thinking at the time and utilize them for his own ends. Most likely he had in mind the following passage from the essay "Compensation": "These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish



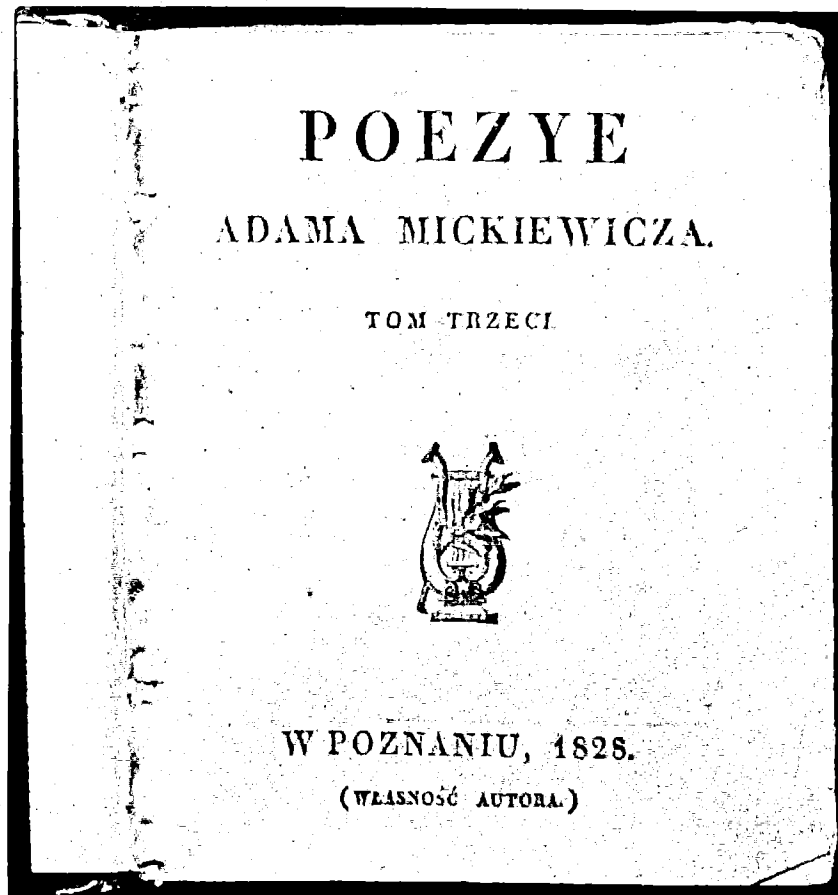
A view of the Polish Room established through the efforts of the Polish Arts Club of Buffalo at the Lockwood Memorial Library of the University of Buffalo. August 3rd, 1955.



Bronze portrait of Adam Mickiewicz by Stanislaw Roman Lewandowski, 19th century Polish sculptor. The portrait is on display in the Polish Room.



Mickiewicz profile. This study was executed by Joseph C. Mazur especially for the Mickiewicz Year Convention of the American Council of Polish Cultural Clubs.



A first edition of KONRAD WALLENROD by Adam Mickiewicz. One of the many treasures of Polish culture on exhibit at the University of Buffalo.

as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man" (p. 101). He might also well have remembered two pertinent passages from "History", one of the essays he prized most. The first one emphasizes the unity of the universe which gifted men are able to perceive; the second one is preceded by a discussion of Greek fables, which Mickiewicz also mentioned in this lecture.

Genius detects through the fly, through the caterpillar, through the egg, the constant individual; through countless individuals the fixed species; through many species the genus; through all genera the steadfast type; through all the kingdoms of organized life the eternal unity. Nature is a mutable cloud which is always and never the same. (p. 13)

The transmigration of souls is no fable. I would it were; but men and women are only half human. Every animal of the barn-yard, the field and the forest, of the earth and of the waters that are under the earth, has contrived to get a footing and to leave the print of its features and form in some one or other of these upright, heaven-facing speakers. (p. 32)

One month later, on June 13, Emerson is mentioned again during a discussion of the problem of the criterion of certainty and compared with Pierre Leroux. For the first time Mickiewicz expressed disagreement with Emerson, though his high esteem remained undiminished. The basis for the disagreement was Mickiewicz's strong belief in the value of nationality which, as we have seen, meant for him "the mission of a nation". Nowhere in the *Essays* could he find a similar conviction. Consequently he reproached Emerson for what he regarded as an omission of basic significance.²⁷

Emerson, the American philosopher, in his religious opinions, is very much like Leroux. He also believes in the existence of a universal soul which absorbs individual souls. More profound than Leroux, he seeks above all to instill in us the importance of maintaining ourselves in a state of being in which it is possible to communicate with the universal soul; he seeks to detach us from prejudices, from generally accepted opinions, and even from all affections; he advises us to concentrate our attention on ourselves, to have a lively faith in God, and to lend an attentive ear to His inspirations. At the same time he isolates us too much, not taking into account epoch, nation or earth. Emerson's man dangles one knows not where. Leroux, on the other hand, leaves us at least the support of nationality. (XI, 170)

Mickiewicz did not refer to Emerson again in his lectures until December 26, 1843. From this time to May 21, 1844 — when he is mentioned for the last time — Emerson will be spoken of usually in conjunction with the Polish philosopher, August Cieszkowski. Some of these references need little comment, but others need to be paused on for they indicate that Mickiewicz continued to use Emerson for his own ends and even to attribute to him

²⁷Evidently Mickiewicz had not read or been impressed by the essay "Art". He would have found in it an argument relating art, though not nationality, to space and time. See *Works*, pp. 352-54.

words which Emerson did not utter. The first of these references was intended to make his hearers accept more readily what he would have to say about a work entitled *Biesiada* (*The Banquet*), whose author he did not name.²⁸ Apparently he felt that if a foreigner could be mustered in support of this work, it would prove more acceptable to his hearers. Preparing the ground, he stated: "We will not cite any other philosophers except the Pole, Cieszkowski, and the American, Emerson, who will help us to understand what the thinking of the public will find unfamiliar in the work referred to" (XI, 316). Somewhat later in the lecture he brought the two names together again. "The work which I wish to take as the subject of my considerations comes from that lofty domain which philosophers, in their language, term intuition, the domain which the Polish philosopher, Cieszkowski, indicated as the only source of all future truth. The American philosopher, Emerson, came to this same conclusion" (XI, 318).

In his next lecture, on January 9, 1844, Mickiewicz again referred to Emerson twice. The first of these references clearly indicates the importance he attached to Emerson and it is regrettable that he never carried out the promise it contained. "I have spoken of intuition; later I shall examine Cieszkowski's philosophy of intuition which I shall compare with Emerson's philosophy" (XI, 325). The other reference to Emerson in this lecture is of another kind. It is, in a sense, testimony to the fact that Mickiewicz responded more easily to the spirit of Emerson's writing than to his words. Finding himself in agreement with the Emersonian philosophy, Mickiewicz attributed to the American words he did not write, but which he could well have written. There is no violence done here to the thought or to the style. Summarizing briefly his past lectures, Mickiewicz stated: "In past years I have shown how philosophy, poetry and politics went hand in hand among these [Slavic] peoples; how all these works of humanity aimed first at producing strong men, to lift them toward what Emerson himself terms the most exalted moment — when man places before God the evidence of his own independence — toward the moment of inspiration" (XI, 332).

Nowhere in the *Essays* does Emerson define such a moment, but more than once he speaks of the powers of man's soul and the rewards it may gain if it is willing to heed its own intuitions. There are two passages in the *Essays* which could have served Mickiewicz as springboards for the expression he attributes to him. One is from "Self-Reliance".

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any

²⁸Its author was Andrzej Towianski. It is beyond the scope of this paper to deal with the vexing problem of Mickiewicz's relationship to this man and his ideas.

known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name; — the way, the thought, the good shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is something low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion beholds its identity and external causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself knowing that all things go well. (pp. 68-69)

It is equally likely that Mickiewicz remembered another passage, from the "Over-Soul"; more probably the above passage fused in his mind with the one below to provide him with material for his own interpretation.

The growths of genius are of a certain *total* character, that does not advance the elect individual first over John, then Adam, then Richard, and give to each the pain of discovered inferiority, — but by every throes of growth the man expands there where he works, passing, at each pulsation, classes, populations of men. With each divine impulse the mind rends the thin rinds of the visible and finite, and comes out into eternity, and inspires and expires its air. (pp. 274-75)

These examples indicate Mickiewicz's continuing use of Emerson as an ally, if not to strengthen his own position then at least to prove that it was not a solitary one.

The same kind of free approach is evident in Mickiewicz's next reference to him during the lecture of January 23, 1844. Mickiewicz then attacked what seemed to him a bureaucratic and formalistic attitude of the Catholic Church toward inner certainty. One of his examples was the reported treatment of Alphonse Ratisbonne, an Alsatian Jew who desired to become a Catholic after having had a vision of the Virgin Mary. His desire, according to Mickiewicz, was thwarted by formal demands placed on him to learn the Catechism and various tenets of the Catholic faith. Despite Ratisbonne's protestations that he had gained instantaneous knowledge, Mickiewicz said: "The priests could not understand this at all. For none of them had probably experienced that moment which enraptures a person and absorbs him completely". Then, in order to emphasize his statement by contrast, he continued: "A Protestant, the American philosopher Emerson, wrote a sketch clarifying what such a moment is, and according to him, *he to whom God has spoken at least once knows all*". (XI, 353)

Again we find that he has Emerson say words he did not use in the *Essays*, but words much like those he did use. And again "The Over-Soul" and "Self-Reliance" are the likely sources. In the former, for example, we find these passages.

The soul is the receiver and revealer of truth. We know truth when we see it, let skeptic and scoffer say what they choose. Foolish people ask you, when you have spoken what they do not wish to hear, 'How do you know it is truth, and not an error of your own?' We know truth when we see it, from opinion, as we know when we are awake that we are awake. . . . We are wiser than we know. If we will not interfere with our thought, but will act entirely, or see how the thing stands in God, we know the particular thing, and every thing, and every man. For the Maker of all things and all persons stands behind us, and casts his dread omniscience through us over things. (pp. 279-80)

. . . the heart which abandons itself to the Supreme Mind finds itself related to all its works, and will travel a royal road to particular knowledges and powers. In ascending to this primary and aboriginal sentiment, we have come from our remote station on the circumference instantaneously to the centre of the world, where, as in the closet of God, we see causes, and anticipate the universe, which is but a slow effect. (p. 276)

In "Self-Reliance" this passage also echoes Mickiewicz's attribution: "The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure, that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole" (pp. 65-66). The usual pattern is visible here. Mickiewicz finds that Emerson is a thinker on whom he can call to buttress his own argument. Secure in the belief that the spirit of their thinking is the same, he does not feel it necessary to quote in exact detail. Emerson is doubly useful to him also because he serves as an unexpected and effective contrast.

The next reference to Emerson, however, was rather casual and repetitive. Continuing his attack against the Church (an attack he was later to deplore), he declared, in the lecture of February 27, 1844, that all the significant terms of the epoch had been formed outside the Church, whereas formerly they had come from writers on religion or from preachers. Among the significant new terms is "intuition" of which he said that it was "logically demonstrated by Cieszkowski and explained in a popular fashion by Emerson" (XI, 373).

As if to make up for such casual treatment of a favored friend, the next time Mickiewicz referred to Emerson he quoted him extensively. At the same time, he expressed his second, and last, reservation concerning the American's thought. The reservation is gratuitous, in the context of the lecture, but it is expressed in terms of what Emerson did not say, rather than in terms of what he did say. The question that Mickiewicz addressed himself to at first (during the lecture of March 19, 1844) was the relationship between man and other forms of organic life and our knowledge of this relationship. A sub-question was the problem of suffering and whether

it conferred immortality on man and animal alike. Calling upon authority, Mickiewicz said: "There are scholars, and I could even cite their names, who concern themselves actively with this question. It is one of the open questions of the present day. As evidence I shall quote some words of the American philosopher, Emerson, a philosopher who best mirrors the needs of our epoch, who, it is true, did not succeed in resolving any question, but who stated all questions with marvelous precision and clarity" (XI, 415). Here again we feel Mickiewicz's regret that he could not agree with Emerson on all points, and even a trace of criticism. It is clear that he wished the American had provided some opinion or theory or set of principles which would be helpful in fashioning the future of mankind and not of individual men only. And it is clear that he wished he might have used Emerson in his argument for the specific destinies of nations. Despite this reservation, Mickiewicz then quoted (freely) the penultimate paragraph of the essay "History". And somewhat later in this lecture he quoted — one should perhaps say paraphrased — the last paragraph of the essay. This is how he presented Emerson's words: "The time has come," Emerson says, "to widen and deepen the basis of our information; but in order to widen and transform it we must transform ourselves internally. It is necessary to begin a new life, to fashion a new consciousness for oneself, taking into the self a new portion of that universal soul which revives everything and returns it to life" (XI, 419). Here, in turn, are Emerson's words.

Broader and deeper we must write our annals,—from an ethical reformation, from an influx of the ever new, ever sanative conscience,—if we would trulier express our central and wide-related nature, instead of this old chronology of selfishness and pride to which we have too long lent our eyes. Already that day exists for us, shines in on us unawares, but the path of science and of letters is not the way into nature. The idiot, the Indian, the child and the unschooled farmer's boy stand nearer to the light by which nature is to be read, than the dissector or the antiquary. (pp. 40-41)

Mickiewicz's version of what Emerson wrote is faithful to the thrust, but it must be admitted that the hand wielding the weapon is a Polish hand.

The next reference to Emerson is also fairly extensive, and somewhat more exact in its form. It occurred during the lecture of April 30, 1844, when his topic was "Eternal Man". Once again he pointed to parallels between Polish literature and his American ally. "This latest cry from Polish literature finds an echo on the other side of the globe, in America. There Emerson preaches the same holy war against bookmen and their systems, against the world that is artificial, spoiled, and rotten. We have nothing more to learn there about our future; even the past is no longer there" (XI, 441). Immediately afterwards comes another extensive quotation from "History". The first sentence of the passage is not actually a quotation; it is a summing up of the first half of Emerson's essay. The rest

of the passages is, despite its omissions, a fairly faithful equivalent of the paragraph preceding those already mentioned.

It is not outside ourselves, says Emerson, that we should seek our history; we must learn to read it within ourselves.

History should cease to be an old book; we must absolutely get away from old books. History should walk incarnate in every honorable and wise man. Do not list for me catalogs of volumes you have read; let me feel what period you come from, how many periods you have lived through. Give me living evidence of the epoch to which you belong; I shall designate your place in accord with it. I should find in a man all of the past: in his childhood the golden age, the tree of good and evil, the Argonautic expedition, the calling of Abraham; and in his youth the coming of Christ, the Middle Ages, the discovery of America, etc., etc. (*Loc. cit.*)

Setting the Emersonian text beside this one, we can see that Mickiewicz has at least tried to be exact.

Thus in all ways does the soul concentrate and reproduce its treasures for each pupil. He too shall pass through the whole cycle of experience. He shall collect into a focus the rays of nature. History no longer shall be a dull book. It shall walk incarnate in every just and wise man. You shall not tell me by languages and titles a catalogue of the volumes you have read. You shall make me feel what periods you have lived. A man shall be the Temple of Fame. He shall walk, as the poets have described that goddess, in a robe painted all over with wonderful events and experiences;—his own form and features by their exalted intelligence shall be that variegated vest. I shall find in him the Foreworld; in his childhood the Age of Gold, the Apples of Knowledge, the Argonautic Expedition, the calling of Abraham, the building of the Temple, the Advent of Christ, Dark Ages, the Revival of Letters, the Reformation, the discovery of new lands, the opening of new sciences and new regions in man. He shall be the priest of Pan, and bring with him into humble cottages the blessing of the morning stars, and all the recorded benefits of heaven and earth. (pp. 38-39)

More interesting perhaps than this attempt at exactness are the words which follow the quoted passage. It is as though Mickiewicz were still quoting Emerson. The thought and the style are Emerson's, but it is Mickiewicz speaking his own belief. Two minds are here in earnest consonance. "If you," Mickiewicz said, "have not yet known your Crusade and your French Revolution, hurry, for otherwise you will not be able to proceed with today's generation. To build your temple and to perform your own Crusade is something more than reading a description of a temple and the history of the Crusades" (XI, 442). Still later in this lecture Mickiewicz made use of Emerson's views on history. It is a use which follows naturally from the quotations above. "The doctors of the Church have said that each Christian should, during his lifetime, pass through all periods of the history of the Church, should concentrate this history in himself. Emerson, who agrees on this point with the Christian doctors, bids us to concentrate in ourselves the political history of our nations, to complete

it and to begin a new chapter" (XI, 445). By putting the argument this way he was stretching it beyond Emerson's intent. Mickiewicz here attempted to have the individual act for, or in the name of, the nation. Emerson's argument was always that the individual should act in his own name and for himself.

Mickiewicz's last reference to Emerson in the lectures occurred May 21, one week before his final lecture at the Collège de France. Once again he coupled the name of his favorite Polish philosopher, Cieszkowski, with Emerson's. And once again he praised them and criticized them as he had before for what he considered their lack of concern with the demands of the times and with the importance of nationality. It should be noted, however, that the criticism is expressed in a style which is wholly Emersonian.

Still, some philosophers (Cieszkowski, Emerson) had an inkling of what was needed for the acceptance of truth. They admit the necessity of inner labor; but they do not know that not all people or all nations are equally prepared for this labor. Every plot of ground possesses treasures, underground springs which make its cultivation possible, but these springs are not everywhere the same distance from the surface, the depth differs. There are deserts in Arabia and heights in the Alps where the finest artesian art would avail nothing; they must be left to the workings of the elements and the centuries. (XI, 458-59)

From the evidence presented it becomes clear that Mickiewicz welcomed Emerson not as an authority (no American would have been accepted as an authority in France then), but as an ally from a distance whose arguments could be used to aid his pleading of his own cause. He used the American's pungent words directly and indirectly and used them effectively as a foil for what he found distasteful to himself in European thought. He used him also to underline his own conviction of the coming role of the Slavic nations in general and of his distant Poland in particular. And it was in connection with this last point that he found himself in disagreement with Emerson. Mickiewicz was convinced of the supreme importance of nations in the historical process. Emerson, in his more or less splendid isolation, was unaware of such a problem.

Mickiewicz's interest in Emerson was by no means limited to its role in the lectures at the Collège de France. From his son's biography we learn that he translated lengthy extracts from the *Essays* and distributed them among his friends.²⁹ Some of these extracts have come down to us in the so-called "Statements of Mickiewicz to Aleksander Chodźko".³⁰ It is not certain whether these extracts, as we know them, are Mickiewicz's own translations or whether they are re-translations into Polish by Chodźko.

²⁹Władysław Mickiewicz, *Żywot Adama Mickiewicza* (Poznań, 1892), IV, 240.

³⁰Leon Płoszewski, "Przekłady z Emersona w t. zw. 'Zdaniach Mickiewicza do A. Chodźki,'" *Pamiętnik Literacki*, XX (1923), 216-18.

With one exception, they are faithful translations, though one is made up of isolated phrases and disconnected parts of an essay. Five of these "Statements" are from "Self-Reliance"; one is from "Spiritual Laws". In order to show further what in Emerson continued to interest Mickiewicz, they are given here *in toto*. The first is an accurately translated passage which occurs early in "Self-Reliance".

According to Emerson there is a moment in every man's education when he becomes convinced that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know it until he has tried. (p. 40)

The next passage comes from a paragraph only a few pages later in the essay and is an equally faithful translation. "It is easy to live in the world after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude" (pp. 53-54). In the third passage we find Mickiewicz combining and paraphrasing Emerson's words. He wrote: "You must be yourself, believe in yourself, trust yourself. Do not be a leaning willow, for you must detach yourself from everything and become your own power". The injunction "trust thyself" is, of course, repeated throughout "Self-Reliance" with many changes. But Mickiewicz's second sentence has a specific source. Emerson wrote: "Let a Stoic open the resources of man, and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear" (p. 76).

The fourth "Statement" is a curious one. It is fairly accurate as a translation, but made up of a number of sentences and parts of sentences gathered from various pages of the essay. Out of these portions Mickiewicz made a coherent whole. "Depend on the strong faith that what is deep is holy. Sit at home in your own heaven, but your isolation must not be mechanical but spiritual, that is, must be elevation".³¹ The next "Statement", on the other hand, is a faithful translation of two sentences which can be given in Emerson's own words. "If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly, but humbly and truly" (p. 73). The last of these "Statements" comes from "Spiritual Laws" and is also fairly accurately translated. "According to Emerson, real action is in moments of silence. The epochs of our life are not in the visible facts of our choice of a calling, our marriage,

³¹Emerson's words are to be found in *Works*, pp. 73; 71 ["let us sit at home with the cause . . ."]; 72.

our office, etc. but in a silent thought, as we walk musing, in a thought which, analyzing our entire manner of life, says to itself: 'Thus have you done, but it were better thus.' And from then on all our years, like menials, wait for this and, according to its capabilities, educate the will" (p. 161).

The emphasis in all of these "Statements" is clearly on a self-reliant individualism, but it should not be taken to mean that Mickiewicz had lost interest in Emerson as an exponent of the certainty of intuition. There are two other sources which afford evidence of his continuing appreciation of Emerson's views on this matter. The first of these sources are conversations with Mickiewicz which were recorded by close friends and acquaintances. In them we can find strong echoes of Emersonian ideas expressed in Emersonian style. Aleksander Chodźko, for example, reports Mickiewicz as saying the following, sometime in 1843: "Learn to listen and understand the whispers of instinct; the spirit speaks to you more often than it seems".³² This injunction recalls two passages from Emerson. The first is from "Self-Reliance": "A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages" (p. 39). Even more likely as a source is the passage from "Friendship": "Let us be silent, — so we may hear the whisper of the gods. Let us not interfere" (p. 211). Chodźko also reports this statement by Mickiewicz (June 24, 1844): "Intuition can be called penetration [*wnikaniem*] in Polish. The highest degree of intuition, or the greatest exertion of the eyes and ears of the spirit is a dream, when you become an incorporeal part of an incorporeal image. I felt this today when I was suddenly awakened. Listen to and observe what happens in yourself, and no human wisdom can give you more than you will find there" (XVI, 219). Here we find him agreeing again with Emerson on the need for individualism and the certainty of intuition. The dream motif can also be found in Emerson's *Essays*, though it is not an important one. It appears, for example, in "The Over-Soul". "If we consider what happens in conversations, in reveries, in remorse, in times of passion, in surprises, in the instructions of dreams, wherein often we see ourselves in masquerade, — the droll disguises only magnifying and enhancing a real element, and forcing it on our distinct notice, — we shall catch many hints that will broaden and lighten into knowledge of the secret of nature" (p. 270). Visions of one kind or another are to be found in Mickiewicz's earlier works, however, and no special importance should be attached to this near-parallel.

³²These conversations have not yet appeared in the "National" edition. Fortunately, they are available in the earlier, unfinished "Sejm" edition of Mickiewicz's works, *Dzieła Wszystkie* (Warszawa, 1933), XVI, 203. All references to follow (except the one in note 33) will be to this edition.

The final source for Mickiewicz's interest in Emerson are the addresses he gave before various meetings of the Towianski sect while he was an active proponent of the Towianski doctrines. Many of these addresses were recorded or summarized by one or another of the "Brothers" or "Guardians". In two of them there are direct references to Emerson. One is dated July 29, 1844. "The action of the soul has already been acknowledged by human reason. Emerson shows that from now on everything must be based on this action. And that is indeed the case. The action of the soul, spiritual feeling, which is its action, acts invisibly, like an exhalation, for example, which can contaminate a whole region though invisible to the eye" (XI, 319). This statement and the following one recall his first words about Emerson during the lectures. There is no way of knowing whether on this occasion Mickiewicz expounded further his interpretation of Emerson. The likelihood, however, is that he did not, for the use of outside authority was not a usual practice among the Towianskiites.

Each brother ought today to find in himself the power he needs. It is not worthy to demand of another that he take us up on his shoulders. The entire world lies on each of us today; it is not proper to increase this burden with oneself.

Let us make no mistake in imaging to ourselves the coming Messiah. We are this Messiah. This Messiah will do only that which we will do, etc.

According to Emerson's works: Prudence. Reason or Philosophy. Poetry. Wisdom. (XI, 350-51)

More significant than these bare references are indications in the ideas and in the style of the addresses that Emerson could penetrate even the rather foggy and unreal atmosphere of the Towianski Circle. On July 28, 1844, for example, Mickiewicz is recorded as having expressed himself thus: "No man of destiny ever appeared with a card and register in hand to tell him what, whence and when he was to work. Each brought a seed within himself and, developing it by inner labor, inquired of God's will and acted according to signs and inspirations from above" (XI, 317). It is more than likely that he had Towianski in mind as he spoke these words. But the thought is strongly reminiscent of a passage from "History" where the idea is more fully developed. "Rare, extravagant spirits come by us at intervals, who disclose to us new facts in nature. I see that men of God have from time to time walked among men and made their commission felt in the heart and soul of the commonest hearer. Hence, evidently, the tripod, the priest, the priestess inspired by the divine afflatus" (p. 27). In an address recorded on March 9, 1847, Mickiewicz expressed, almost as an aside, an idea which was one of Emerson's favored thoughts, namely that one man's thought can create a universal law. "Yes," Adam said further, "but a manifesto has weight only insofar as it is an expression of a work already accomplished. One man even, if he creates a work on earth out of the soul,

brings a law for the entire world. Others afterwards will together realize what he initiated" (XI, 444). In "History" Emerson had put the idea thus: "Every revolution was first a thought in one man's mind, and when the same thought occurs to another man, it is the key to that era. Every reform was once a private opinion, and when it shall be a private opinion again, it will solve the problem of the age" (pp. 4-5). It was taken up again in the essay "Intellect". "Whatever any mind doth or saith is after a law; and this native law remains over it after it has come to reflection or conscious thought" (pp. 327-28).

To round out this investigation of Mickiewicz's interest in Emerson it will suffice to present two quotations which indicate how much in agreement they were on the significance of self-reliance and intuition. There is no question, in these quotations, of an Emersonian influence on Mickiewicz. They are thoroughly characteristic of the Polish poet's attitudes. At the same time, they are in accord with the spirit and intent of Emerson's essays. The first is from an address to the "Guardians" of July 29, 1844: "The Brothers should take to heart this, that only that act is actually our act and only in that act will we succeed which comes out of ourselves" (XI, 318). Some three years later, on March 4, 1847, he had this to say to the "Brothers": "Each of us has within himself that gift which he should keep drawing out through action (*praca*). This is our inner God, with whom we should consult. This gift will most frequently be found and most easily disclose itself in what each of us in his own life suffered most" (XI, 432).

Such is the available record of Mickiewicz's interest in and use of Emerson. It indicates that the Polish poet introduced the American writer to Europe. It shows that he welcomed Emerson because he was in agreement with his views on intuition and self-reliant individualism. It demonstrates that the relationship was, at least from Mickiewicz's point of view, one of equality. When Mickiewicz could not agree with Emerson, he did not refuse him admiration for qualities already admitted. The record also indicates that Mickiewicz used Emerson's ideas and words as allies in his lectures and that he frequently used them effectively as foils for other positions. Finally, it is proof that the interest was not ephemeral, lasting as it did from 1843 to at least 1849.

Emerson, it must be said, seems to have been unaware of this interest. Indeed, he was little drawn to persons and things Polish. It is true that in his *Poems* (1847) there is in the "Ode Inscribed to W. H. Channing" an entire stanza devoted to Poland.

*The Cossack eats Poland,
Like stolen fruit;
Her last noble is ruined,*

*Her last poet mute;
Straight, into double band
The victors divide;
Half for freedom strike and stand;—
The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side.*³³

However, since the Polish cause was espoused at that time by liberals of all descriptions, this stanza does not indicate anything more than Emerson's own type of liberalism. He knew from Margaret Fuller's letter of March 15, 1847, that Mickiewicz had received a copy of his *Poems*, but his response was little more than lukewarm. "I was heartily glad you saw Mme. Sand [George Sand] and the Polander [Mickiewicz], and heard the musical gods [Chopin and Liszt]."³⁴ He was distinctly less enthusiastic during his second trip to Europe. After hearing Lamartine speak in the Chamber of the National Assembly, he made this entry in his *Journal*.

Lamartine made his speech on the question of Poland. . . . His speech is reckoned wise and moderate. To me it looks as if a wise Frenchman should say to his country, Leave Poland and China and Oregon to themselves. You have more than enough to do, at present, in constructing your own government and dealing with disorder, hunger, and faction in France. — But Lamartine praised the new republic because it had not a moment of Egoism, but had adopted Poland and Italy.³⁵

These few positions seem to exhaust the record of Emerson's interest in Poland. Mickiewicz would have been pained by this scanty enthusiasm, but he had recognized the basic difference between himself and Emerson in his lectures and even stated it directly. Emerson was, of course, deeply concerned with wrongs done to human beings. He was less interested in wrongs done to nations. Even in regard to the question of emancipating slaves in his own country he said: "I have quite other slaves to free than those negroes, to wit, imprisoned spirits, imprisoned thoughts"³⁶ Therein lies the difference between the two men who had so much in common. Emerson viewed humanity through the prism of the individual. Mickiewicz saw it through the prism of the nation.

³³*Works*, IX, 79. Mickiewicz had received a copy of Emerson's *Poems* from Margaret Fuller. There is only one indication that he read them. In a letter to her (August 3, 1847) he wrote: "Emerson dit bien: *give all for love . . .*", *Dziela*, XVI, 135. The reference is to the poem with this title, *Works*, IX, 90-92.

³⁴*The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ralph L. Rusk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), III, 400.

³⁵*The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909-14), VII, 469-70.

³⁶*Works*, IX, 428.