

**RALPH WALDO  
EMERSON; HOW  
TO KNOW HIM**

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Ralph Waldo Emerson; how to know him by Samuel McChord Crothers

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**SAMUEL MCCHORD CROTHERS**

**RALPH WALDO  
EMERSON; HOW  
TO KNOW HIM**



THE AMERICAN  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL



*R. W. Emerson*

# Ralph Waldo Emerson

## HOW TO KNOW HIM

*By*

Samuel McChord Crothers

*Author of*

THE GENTLE READER, THE PARDONER'S WALLET  
OLIVER WENDEL HOLMES AND HIS FELLOW BOARDERS  
ETC., ETC.

*WITH PORTRAIT*

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## INTRODUCTORY

The mind of Emerson was a searchlight revealing not itself but the various objects on which it successively turned. An intense and narrow beam of light would shoot through the darkness and reveal some object. Then it would pick up another object which would have its brief moment of visibility. The landscape was never revealed in any one view.

The only way to know Emerson is to join him in his intellectual exercises. In spite of his personal aloofness I know of no one with whom we can more readily come to a feeling of intellectual intimacy. He had no pretensions and no reserves. In clear sentences he told us what from time to time he thought. He made no attempt to connect these thoughts into a coherent system. For any one else to attempt to do this would be to misrepresent him.

In the short chapters which follow I have



## INTRODUCTORY

treated Emerson as a contemporary rather than as a writer of the last generation. His thought is as pertinent to the twentieth century as to the nineteenth. Indeed I think that in many respects we may be nearer to him than were those who first listened to him. The prejudices which he encountered have largely died away. The problems over which he was meditating remain.

I wish to make grateful acknowledgment to Houghton Mifflin Company for special permission to make extracts from their authorized and copyright editions of Emerson's works. Also to Doctor Edward Emerson for the use of his edition of his father's journals. S. M. M.

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