

**THE HAWTHORNE  
CLASSICS.  
AMERICAN ESSAYS**

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The Hawthorne Classics. American Essays by Edward Everett Hale

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**EDWARD EVERETT HALE**

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THE HAWTHORNE CLASSICS

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# AMERICAN ESSAYS

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## PREFATORY NOTE

THIS volume follows a plan slightly different from that of its companion, "English Essays," for a reason noted in the Introduction. It gives something from our very best essayists, however. It will seem that Emerson cannot be wholly understood by a young reader. But it is well for any one to read something of Emerson, even if he do not understand it thoroughly. Lowell's essay is a good apology for offering Emerson to those who cannot grasp his whole thought. The notes are few. Emerson and Lowell would permit many, but we have here helps only in places that did not seem themselves to offer the clew to explanation.

E. E. H., JR.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE extracts from "Emerson the Lecturer" and "A Great Public Character," by James Russell Lowell, are used by special arrangement with and permission of Houghton, Mifflin and Company, the authorized publishers of Lowell's works.



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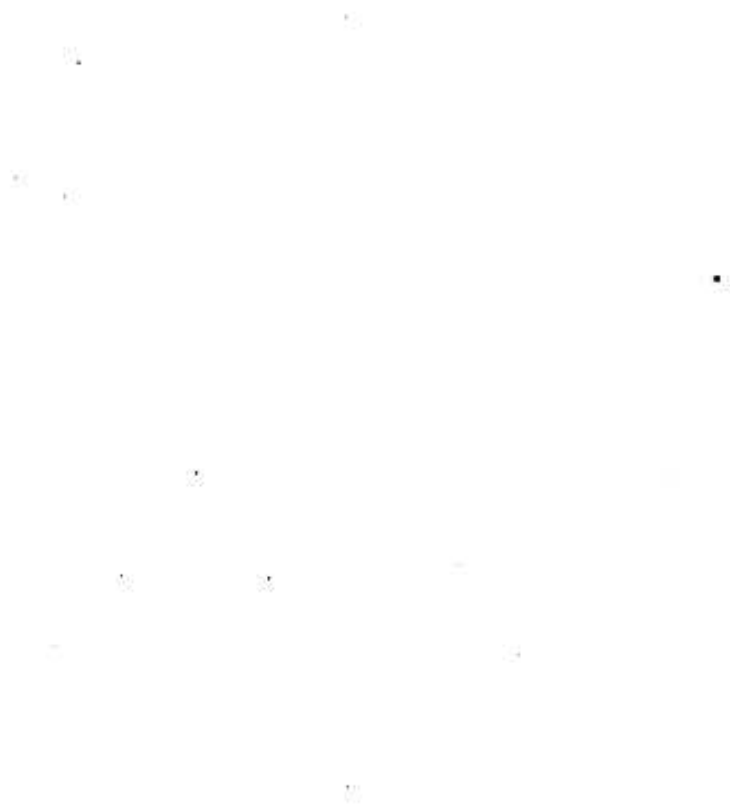


Figure 1. Relationship between the number of species and the number of individuals for 10 different species.

## INTRODUCTION

IN our volume on "English Essayists" we have described the essay in what may be said to be the stricter sense of the word, or, more correctly, the original sense, that of attempt or experiment. We there saw that the essay of Addison, Goldsmith, Lamb, Thackeray, was no formal treatment of some subject, but the easy following out of one's idea, whatever it were, without precision or particularity, but with the pleasant leisure that gives such a taste of the personality of the writer. The word "essay" is, of course, now correctly used for a wide variety of short-pieces of prose, from the matured and well-weighed aphorisms of Bacon to the brilliant and picturesque studies of Macaulay; indeed, for any treatment that does not aim at being finished and complete. But what we should call the true essay character is that of such writing as we have in the "Essays of Elia" and the "Spectator."

Of such essays the literature of our own country has comparatively little. It may be for many reasons. Perhaps Americans, as a nation, are too practical to take pleasure in what might be called