

**SHELBURNE
ESSAYS. FIRST
SERIES, PP. 1-250**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649703845

Shelburne Essays. First Series, pp. 1-250 by Paul Elmer More

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

PAUL ELMER MORE

**SHELBURNE
ESSAYS. FIRST
SERIES, PP. 1-250**

SHELBURNE ESSAYS

FIRST SERIES

Shelburne Essays

FIRST SERIES

By Paul Elmer More

"Before we have an American literature,
we must have an American criticism."

— J. R. LOWELL



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
Houghton Mifflin Company
The Riverside Press Cambridge

~~Account of the~~ *Transcripts*
English - Current 7-12-71
W.A.H.
6-2-71
295-863
11 vol

ADVERTISEMENT

All but one of these essays were written for magazines or for the daily press, and thanks are due to the publishers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Independent*, the *International Quarterly*, the *Sewanee Review*, and the *New York Evening Post*, for permission to reprint.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
A HERMIT'S NOTES ON THOREAU'	I
THE SOLITUDE OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE	22
THE ORIGINS OF HAWTHORNE AND POE	51
THE INFLUENCE OF EMERSON	71
THE SPIRIT OF CARLYLE	85
THE SCIENCE OF ENGLISH VERSE	103
ARTHUR SYMONS: THE TWO ILLUSIONS	122
THE EPIC OF IRELAND	147
TWO POETS OF THE IRISH MOVEMENT	177
TOlstoy; OR, THE ANCIENT FEUD BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND ART	193
THE RELIGIOUS GROUND OF HUMANITARIANISM . .	225

SHELBURNE ESSAYS

A HERMIT'S NOTES ON THOREAU

NEAR the secluded village of Shelburne that lies along the peaceful valley of the Androscoggin, I took upon myself to live two years as a hermit after a mild Epicurean fashion of my own. Three maiden aunts wagged their heads ominously; my nearest friend inquired cautiously whether there was any taint of insanity in the family; an old grey-haired lady, a veritable saint who had not been soured by her many deeds of charity, admonished me on the utter selfishness and godlessness of such a proceeding. But I clung heroically to my resolution. Summer tourists in that pleasant valley may still see the little red house among the pines,—empty now, I believe; and I dare say gaudy coaches still draw up at the door, as they used to do, when the gaudier bonnets and hats exchanged wondering remarks on the cabalistic inscription over the lintel, or spoke condescendingly to the great dog lying on the steps. As for the hermit within, having found it impossible to

educe any meaning from the tangled habits of mankind while he himself was whirled about in the imbroglia, he had determined to try the efficacy of undisturbed meditation at a distance. So deficient had been his education that he was actually better acquainted with the aspirations and emotions of the old dwellers on the Ganges than with those of the modern toilers by the Hudson or the Potomac. He had been deafened by the "indistinguishable roar" of the streets, and could make no sense of the noisy jargon of the market place. But—shall it be confessed?—although he discovered many things during his contemplative sojourn in the wilderness, and learned that the attempt to criticise and not to create literature was to be his labour in this world, nevertheless he returned to civilisation as ignorant, alas, of its meaning as when he left it.

However, it is not my intention to justify the saintly old lady's charge of egotism by telling the story of my exodus to the desert; that, perhaps, may come later and at a more suitable time. I wish now only to record the memories of one perfect day in June, when woods and mountains were as yet a new delight.

The fresh odours of morning were still swaying in the air when I set out on this particular day; and my steps turned instinctively to the great pine forest, called the Cathedral Woods, that filled the valley and climbed the hill slopes behind my house. There, many long roads that are laid

down in no map wind hither and thither among the trees, whose leafless trunks tower into the sky and then meet in evergreen arches overhead. There,

The tumult of the times disconsolate

never enters, and no noise of the world is heard save now and then, in winter, the ringing strokes of the woodchopper at his cruel task. How many times I have walked those quiet cathedral aisles, while my great dog paced faithfully on before! Underfoot the dry, purple-hued moss was stretched like a royal carpet; and at intervals a glimpse of the deep sky, caught through an aperture in the groined roof, reminded me of the other world, and carried my thoughts still farther from the desolating memories of this life. Nothing but pure odours were there, sweeter than cloistral incense; and murmurous voices of the pines, more harmonious than the chanting of trained choristers; and in the heart of the wanderer nothing but tranquillity and passionless peace.

Often now the recollection of those scenes comes floating back upon his senses when, in the wakeful seasons of a summer night, he hears the wind at work among the trees; even in barren city streets some sound or spectacle can act upon him as a spell, banishing for a moment the hideous contention of commerce, and placing him beneath the restful shadows of the pines. May his understanding cease its function, and his heart forget to feel, when the memory of those days has utterly