

"A New World": Philosophical Idealism in America, 1700 to 1950"
Lecture III

1. *Joseph Emerson and Esther Edwards*

I could not obtain from the young Lady the least Encouragement to come again I hope the disappointment will be sanctified to me, and that the Lord will by his Providence order it so that this shall be my companion for Life.

2. *The heavy hand on the shoulder of Henry James, Sr., as described by Colm Tóibín in The Master, his novel of the life of Henry James*

There was a battle going on, Aunt Kate used the same words each time, between his own sweetness and the heavy Puritan hand which his father, old William James of Albany, had placed on his shoulder. Everywhere he went, she said, Henry James Senior saw love and the beauty of God's plan, but the old Puritan teaching would not let him believe his eyes. Daily, within him, the battle went on.

3. *The Puritans looking over Emerson's shoulder (from Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Old Manse")*

There was, in the rear of the house, the most delightful little nook of a study that ever offered its snug seclusion to a scholar. It was here that Emerson wrote "Nature;" for he was then an inhabitant of the Manse, and used to watch the Assyrian dawn and the Paphian sunset and moonrise, from the summit of our eastern hill. When I first saw the room, its walls were blackened with the smoke of unnumbered years, and made still blacker by the grim prints of puritan ministers that hung around. These worthies looked strangely like bad angels, or, at least, like men who had wrestled so continually and so sternly with the devil, that somewhat of his sooty fierceness had been imparted to their own visages. They had all vanished now; a cheerful coat of paint, and golden tinted paper hangings, lighted up the small apartment; while the shadow of a willow-tree, that swept against the overhanging eaves, tempered the cheery western sunshine. In place of the grim prints, there was the sweet and lovely head of one of Raphael's Madonnas, and two pleasant little pictures of the Lake of Como. The only other decorations were a purple vase of flowers, always fresh, and a bronze one containing graceful ferns.

4. *Emerson on the diary of his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, from a journal entry for 1866*

Read M.M.E.'s mss yesterday—many pages. They keep for me the old attraction They make the best example I have known of the power of the religion of the Puritans in full energy, until fifty years ago in New England. The central theme of these endless diaries, is, her relation to the Divine Being; the absolute submission of her will, with the sole proviso, that she may know it is the direct agency of God, (& not of cold laws of contingency &c) which bereaves and humiliates her. But the religion of the diary . . . is the culture, the poetry, the mythology, in which they personally believed themselves dignified, inspired, judged, & dealt with, in the present & in the future. And certainly gives to life an earnestness, & to nature a sentiment, which lacking, our later generation appears frivolous.

From a lecture Emerson gave in 1839-40

Who can read the pious diaries of the Englishmen in the time of the Commonwealth and later without a sigh that we write no diaries today? . . . How richly this old stream of antique faith descended into New England, the remembrance of the elder

portion of my audience I am sure will bear witness. . . . It raised every trivial incident to a celestial and religious dignity.

On the diary of his great-grandfather, Joseph Emerson: All his haps are providences. If he keeps school, marries, begets children, if his house burns, if he buys a negro, & Dinah misbehaves . . . he preaches next Sunday on the new circumstances and the willing flock are contented with his consecration of one man's adventures for the benefit of them all.

His cow & horse & pig did duty next Sunday.

5. Resolutions

Jonathan Edwards: Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

Henry David Thoreau: I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life.

William James: Live energetically; and whatever you have to do, do it with your might.

6. For some, the Puritans become unreadable

From Emerson, again in 1839-40

In the departure of this faith a vast body of religious writing which came down to this generation as an inestimable treasure—the whole body I mean of English and early American sermons and practical divinity, have been suddenly found to be unreadable.

From Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., Pages from an Old Volume of Life: A Collection of Essays, 1857-1881

Edwards's system seems, in the light of to-day, to the last degree barbaric, mechanical, materialistic, pessimistic. . . . It is impossible that people of ordinary sensibilities should have listened to his torturing discourses without becoming at last sick of hearing of infinite horrors and endless agonies. . . . If he had lived a hundred years later, and breathed the air of freedom, he could not have written with such old-world barbarism as we find in his volcanic sermons. . . . We cannot have self-government and humane laws without its reacting on our view of Divine administration.

7. William Ellery Channing, the greatest figure in the early history of American Unitarianism (Emerson called him "our bishop") and a founder of Harvard Divinity School (whose Unitarian faculty was scandalized by Emerson's address of 1838), on Richard Price's *Dissertations on Matter and Spirit*. Price, he told Elizabeth Peabody, "saved me from Locke's philosophy."

He gave me the Platonic doctrine of ideas, and like him I always write the words Right, Love, Idea, etc. with a capital letter. His book, probably, moulded my philosophy into the form it has always retained, and opened my mind into the *transcendental depth*. And I have always found in the accounts I have read of the German philosophy in Madame de Stael, and in these later times, that it was cognate to my own.

8. Channing on Calvinism and pantheism

Calvinism will complain of being spoken of as an approach to Pantheism. It will say that it recognizes distinct minds from the Divine. But what avails this, if it robs these minds of self-determining force, of original activity; if it makes them passive recipients

of the Universal Force; if it sees in human action only the necessary issues of a foreign impulse. The doctrine that God is the only Substance, which is Pantheism, differs little from the doctrine that God is the only active power of the universe. For what is substance without power? It is a striking fact that the philosophy which teaches that matter is an inert substance, and that God is the force which pervades it, has led me to question whether any such thing as matter exists: whether the powers of attraction and repulsion which are regarded as the indwelling Deity, be not its whole essence. Take away force, and substance is a shadow, and might as well vanish from the universe. Without a free power in man, he is nothing. The divine agent within him is every thing. Man acts only in show. He is a phenomenal existence, under which the One Infinite Power is manifested: and is this much better than Pantheism?

One of the greatest of all errors is the attempt to exalt God, by making him the sole cause, the sole agent in the universe, by denying to the creature freedom of the will and moral power, by making man a mere recipient and transmitter of foreign impulse.

Emerson in the journals, voicing a similar concern: It is by magnifying God, that men becomes pantheists; it is by piously personifying him, that they become idolaters.

9. Emerson as philosopher

A logical mode of thinking & speaking I do not possess, & may not reasonably hope to attain. . . . My reasoning faculty is proportionably weak, nor can I ever hope to write a Butler's Analogy or an Essay of Hume. . . . My comprehension of a question in technical metaphysics [is] very slow (*from journal entries for 1824 and 1833*).

Bronson Alcott on Emerson's essays: You may begin at the last paragraph and read backwards.

Emerson to Thomas Carlyle: Expect nothing more of my powers of construction: no shipbuilding, nor clipper, smack, nor skiff even, only boards and logs tied together.

Emerson's advice to Charles Woodbury: [Do not] concern yourself about consistency. The moment you putty and plaster your expressions to make them hang together, you have begun a weakening process. Take it for granted that the truths will harmonize; and as for the falsities and mistakes, they will speedily die of themselves. If you must be contradictory, let it be clean and sharp, as the two blades of scissors meet. . . . A little guessing does [a reader] no harm, so I would assist him with no connections.

Emerson to Elizabeth Peabody: You express overkind opinions of my little book [*Nature*] but say it wants connexion. I thought it resembled the multiplication table.

I cannot,—nor can any man—speak precisely of things so sublime. . . . It is beyond explanation. When all is said and done, and rapt saint is found the only logician. Not exhortation, not argument becomes our lips, but paens of joy and praise. ("The Method of Nature," 1841)

The thought of genius is spontaneous; but the power of picture or expression, in the most enriched and flowing nature, implies a mixture of will, a certain control over the spontaneous states, without which no production is possible. It is a conversion of all nature into the rhetoric of thought, under the eye of judgment, with a strenuous exercise of choice. ("Intellect," 1841)

10. Emerson on Oxford in 1856 (*in English Traits*)

A stanza in the song of nature the Oxonian has no ear for, and . . . does not value the salient and curative influence of intellectual action, studious of truth, without a by-end.

11. *Nature: the 1836 motto*

"Nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing of the soul; nature being a thing which doth only do, but not know."

PLOTINUS

Its source in Cudworth: How doth wisdom differ from that which is called nature? Verily in this manner, that wisdom is the first thing, but nature the last and lowest; for nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing of the soul, which hath the lowest impress of reason shining upon it; as when a thick piece of wax is thoroughly impressed upon by a seal, that impress, which is clean and distinct in the superior superficies of it, will in the lower side be weak and obscure; and such is the stamp and signature of nature, compared with that of wisdom and understanding, nature being a thing which doth only do, but not know.

12. *The introduction*

Our age is restrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs? Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us by the powers they supply, to actions proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? The sun shines to-day also. There is more wool and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.

On continuous creation, in letter to his aunt (1826): It is one of the *feelings* of modern philosophy, that it is wrong to regard ourselves so much in a *historical* light as we do, putting Time between God & us; and that it were fitter to account every moment of the existence of the Universe as a new Creation, and *all* as a revelation proceeding each moment from the Divinity to the mind of the observer.

13. *Nature in the philosophical sense and "in the common sense"*

Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that is separate from us, all which Philosophy distinguished as the NOT ME, that is, both nature and art, all other men and my own body, must be ranked under this name, NATURE (*from the Introduction*).

14. *A third sense of nature*

When we speak of nature . . . , we [sometimes] have a distinct but most poetical sense in mind. We mean the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. It is this which distinguishes the stick of timber of the wood-cutter, from the tree of the poet. The charming landscape which I saw this morning, is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the

poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds give no title (*chapter 1*).

The eye as a poetical organ: Such is the constitution of all things, or such the plastic power of the human eye, that the primary forms, as the sky, the mountain, the tree the animal, give us a delight *in and for themselves*, a pleasure arising from outline, color, motion, and grouping. This seems partly owing to the eye itself. The eye is the best of artists. By the mutual action of its structure and of the laws of light, perspective is produced, which integrates every mass of objects, of what character soever, into a well colored and shaded globe, so that where the particular objects are mean and unaffecting, the landscape which they compose, is round and symmetrical (*chapter 3*).

To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood (*chapter 1*).



The "transparent eyeball," caricature by Christopher Cranch

Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods too, a man casts off his years, as the snake its slough, and at what period soever of life, is always a child. In the woods, is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life,—no disgrace, no calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground,—my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space,—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances,—master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature. (*chapter 1*)

15. *The lower argument* (chapters 2 through 5)

Whoever considers the final cause of the world, will discern a multitude of uses that enter as parts into that result. They all admit of being thrown into one of the following classes; Commodity; Beauty; Language; and Discipline (*from chapter 2*).

Under the general name of Commodity, I rank all those advantages which our senses owe to nature (*from chapter 2*).

A nobler want of man is served by nature, namely, the love of Beauty (*from chapter 3*).

Language is a third use which Nature subserves to man. Nature is the vehicle of thought, and in a simple, double, and threefold degree. 1. Words are signs of natural facts. 2. Particular nature facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts. 3. Nature is the symbol of the spirit (*from chapter 4*).

Nature is a discipline (*from chapter 5*).

16. Spirit

This universal soul, [man] calls Reason: it is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its; we are its property and men. And the blue sky in which the private earth is buried, the sky with its eternal calm, and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which, intellectually considered, we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself. (*chapter 4*).

17. Idealism (chapter 6)

A noble doubt perpetually suggests itself, whether [our discipline] be not the Final Cause of the Universe; and whether nature outwardly exists. It is a sufficient account of that Appearance we call the World, that God will teach a human mind, and so makes it the receiver of a certain number of congruent sensations, which we call sun and moon, man and woman, house and trade. In my utter impotence to test the authenticity of the report of my senses, to know whether the impressions they make on me correspond with outlying objects, what different does it make, whether Orion is up there in heaven, or some god paints the image in the firmament of the soul? . . . whether, without relations of time and space, the same appearances are inscribed in the constant faith of man? Whether nature enjoy a substantial existence without, or is only in the apocalypse of the mind, it is alike useful and alike venerable to me. Be what it may, it is ideal to me, so long as I cannot try the accuracy of my senses.

One of many indications that it is Berkeley's idealism Emerson has in mind: The frivolous make themselves merry with the Ideal theory, as if its consequences were burlesque; as if it affected the stability of nature. It surely does not.

Emerson acknowledges the Scottish reply to Berkeley: To the senses and the unrenewed understanding, belongs a sort of instinctive belief in the absolute existence of nature.

But he counters with a causal claim of his own: It is the uniform effect of culture on the human mind, not to shake our faith in the stability of particular phenomena, . . . but to lead us to regard nature as a phenomenon, not a substance; to attribute necessary existence to spirit; to esteem nature as an accident and an effect.

Let us proceed to indicate the effects of culture. [1.] Our first institution in the Ideal philosophy is a hint from nature herself.

Certain mechanical changes, a small alteration in our local position apprizes us of a dualism. We are strangely affected by seeing the shore from a moving ship, from a balloon, or through the tints of an unusual sky. The least change in our point of view, gives the whole world a pictorial air. A man who seldom rides, needs only to get into a *coach* and traverse his own town, to turn the street into a puppet-show. The men, the women . . . are unrealized at once, . . . and seen as apparent, not as substantial beings. . . . Man is hereby apprized that, whilst the world is a spectacle, something in himself is stable.

[2.] This transfiguration which all material objects undergo through the passion of the poet,—this power which he exerts to dwarf the great, to magnify the small,—might be illustrated by a thousand examples from [Shakespeare's] Plays. . . . The perception of real affinities between events, (that is to say, of *ideal* affinities, for those only are real,) enables the poet thus to make free with the most imposing forms and phenomena of the world, and to assert the predominance of the soul.

[3.] The solid seeming block of matter has been pervaded and dissolved by a thought; . . . this feeble human being has penetrated the vast masses of nature with an informing soul, and recognised itself in their harmony, that is, seized their law. . . . Thus even in physics, the material is degraded before the spiritual. . . . The sublime remark of Euler on his law of arches, "This will be found contrary to all experience, yet is true;" had already transferred nature into the mind, and left matter like an outcast corpse.

Schelling: The highest consummation of natural science would be the complete spiritualizing of all natural laws into laws of intuition and thought. The phenomena (the matter) must wholly disappear, and only the laws (the form) remain. Hence it is, that the more lawfulness emerges in nature itself, the more the husk disappears, the phenomena themselves become more mental, and at length vanish entirely. . . . Nature's highest goal, to become wholly an object to herself, is achieved only through the last and highest order of reflection, which is none other than man; or, more generally, it is what we call reason, . . . by which it becomes apparent that nature is identical from the first with what we recognize in ourselves.

[4.] Intellectual science has been observed to beget invariably a doubt of the existence of matter. . . . Whilst we behold unveiled the nature of Justice and Truth, we learn the difference between the absolute and the conditional or relative. We apprehend the absolute. As it were, for the first time, *we exist*. We become immortal, for we learn that time and space are relations of matter; that, with a perception of truth, or a virtuous will, they have no affinity.

[5.] Finally, religion and ethics . . . have an analogous effect with all lower culture, in degrading nature and suggesting its dependence on spirit. . . . The first and last lesson of religion is, "The things that are seen, are temporal; the things that are unseen, are eternal." It puts an affront upon nature. It does that for the unschooled, which philosophy does for Berkeley

It appears that motion, poetry, physical and intellectual science, and religion, all tend to affect our convictions of the reality of the external world.

18. *Idealism as "a useful introductory hypothesis" (chapter 7)*

Three problems are put by nature to the mind; What is matter? Whence is it? and Whereto? The first of these questions only, the ideal theory answers. Idealism saith: matter is a phenomenon, not a substance. Idealism acquaints us with the total

disparity between the evidence of our own being, and the evidence of the world's being. The one is perfect; the other, incapable of any assurance; the mind is a part of the nature of things; the world is a divine dream, from which we may presently awake to the glories and certainties of day. Idealism is a hypothesis to account for nature by other principles than those of carpentry and chemistry. Yet, if it only deny the existence of matter, it does not satisfy the demands of the spirit. It leaves God out of me. . . . Then the heart resists it, because it balks the affections in denying substantive being to men and women. . . . This theory makes nature foreign to me, and does not account for that consanguinity which we acknowledge to it.

But when, following the invisible steps of thought, we come to inquire, Whence is matter? and Whereto? many truths arise to us out of the recesses of consciousness. We learn that the highest is present to the soul of man, that the dread universal essence, which is not wisdom, or love, or beauty, or power, but all in one, and each entirely, is that for which all things exist, and that by which they are; that spirit creates; that behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present; one and not compound, it does not act upon us from without, that is, in space and time, but spiritually, or through ourselves: therefore, that spirit, that is, the Supreme Being, does not build up nature around us, but puts it forth through us, as the life of the tree puts forth new branches and leaves through the pores of the old.

The world proceeds from the same spirit as the body of man. It is a remoter and inferior incarnation of God, a projection of God in the unconscious. . . . It is . . . , to us, the present expositor of the divine mind.

17. *The fall*

[Nature] is a fixed point whereby we may measure our departure. As we degenerate, the contrast between us and our house is more evident. We are as much strangers in nature, as we are aliens from God. We do not understand the notes of birds. The fox and the deer run away from us; the bear and the tiger rend us. We do not know the uses of more than a few plants, as corn and the apple, the potato and the vine. Is not the landscape, every glimpse of which hath a grandeur, a face of him? Yet this may show us what discord is between man and nature, for you cannot freely admire a noble landscape, if laborers are digging in the field hard by. The poet finds something ridiculous in his delight, until he is out of the sight of men. (*chapter 7*)

A man is a god in ruins. (*chapter 8*)

It is very unhappy, but too late to be helped, the discovery we have made, that we exist. That discovery is called the Fall of Man. ("Experience," 1844)

18. *Prospects (chapter 8)*

At present, man applies to nature but half his force. He works on the world with his understanding alone. . . . [Yet] there are not wanting gleams of a better light,—occasional examples of the action of man upon nature with his entire force,—with reason as well as understanding. (p. 46)

The problem of restoring the world original and eternal beauty, is solved by the redemption of the soul. . . . The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is, because man is disunited with himself. (p. 47)

We shall come to look at the world with new eyes. It shall answer the endless inquiry of the intellect,—What is truth? and of the affections,—What is good? by yielding itself passive to the educated Will. Then shall come to pass what my poet said; "Nature is not fixed but fluid. Spirit alters, mounts, makes it. . . . Know then, that the world exists for you. . . . All that Adam had, all that Caesar could, you have and can do. . . . [L]ine for line and point for point, your dominion is as great as theirs, though without fine names. Build, therefore, your own world. As fast as you conform your life to the pure idea in your mind, that will unfold its great proportions. A correspondent revolution in things will attend the influx of the spirit. So fast will disagreeable appearances, swine, spiders, snakes, pests, madhouses, prisons, enemies, vanish; they are temporary and shall no more be seen. The sordid and filth of nature, the sun shall dry up, and the wind exhale. As when the summer comes from the south; the snow-banks melt, and the face of the earth becomes green before it, so shall the advancing spirit create its ornaments along its path, and carry with it the beauty it visits, and the song which enchants it; it shall draw around its way, until evil is no more seen. The kingdom of man over nature, which cometh not with observation,—a dominion such as now is beyond his dream of God,—he shall enter without more wonder than the blind man feels who is gradually restored to perfect sight."

Never mind the ridicule, never mind the defeat: up again, old heart!—it seems to say, there is victory yet for all justice; and the true romance which the world exists to realize, will be the transformation of genius into practical power. ("Experience," 1844)

From the journals: I am Defeated all the time, yet to Victory I am born.

19. *The 1849 motto*

A subtle chain of countless rings / The next unto the farthest brings; / The eye reads omens where it goes, / And speaks all languages the rose; / And, striving to be man, the worm /Mounts through all the spires of form.

20. *Tendencies in Emerson's spiritualism*

Inescapable immanence

From the journals: I get no further than my old doctrine that the Whole is in each man (1837). In all my lectures I have taught one doctrine, namely the infinitude of the private man (1840).

We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE. ("The Over-Soul," 1841)

[Of "the Efficient Nature, *natura naturans*"]. It publishes itself in creatures. ("The Over-Soul")

All the universe over, there is but one thing, this old Two-Face, creator-creature, mind-matter. . . . ("Nominalist and Realist," 1844)

Philosophy is the account which the human mind gives to itself of the constitution of the world. Two cardinal facts lie forever at the base: the one, and the two. . . . Oneness and otherness. It is impossible to speak, or to think, without embracing both. ("Plato; or, the Philosopher," 1850)

The central fact is the superhuman intelligence pouring into us from its unknown fountain, to be received with religious awe, and defended from any mixture of our will (*from an introduction to Plutarch, 1870*).

Other world! there is no other world. God is one and omnipresent: here or nowhere is the whole fact. All the universe over, there is but one thing,—one Creator, one mind, one right ("Essential Principles," 1862, but based on a journal entry from 1842)

Other journal entries on the same theme: Heaven is the name we give to the True State, the World of Reason not of the Understanding, of the Real, not the Apparent. It exists always It is, as Coleridge said, another world but not to come.

Within and Above are synonyms.

I affirm the divinity of man; but, . . . I know well how much is my debt to bread, & coffee, & flannel, & heated room.

Impersonality

Three entries from the journals: I say that I cannot find when I explore my own consciousness any truth in saying that God is a Person, but the reverse. I feel that there is some profanation in saying He is personal. To represent him as an individual is to shut him out of my consciousness.

I deny Personality to God because it is too little not too much. Life, personal life is faint & cold to the energy of God.

I see profound need of distinguishing the First Cause as superpersonal.

Spirit as law. Inwardness as the perception of law. Law identified with its perception.

The law and the perception of the law are at last one. ("Lecture on the Times," 1841)

The nature of these revelations is the same: they are perceptions of the absolute law. ("The Over-Soul," 1841)

The nameless Thought, the nameless Power, the superpersonal Heart,—he shall repose alone on that. . . . The Laws are his consolers, the good Laws themselves are alive, they know if he have kept them, they animate him with the leading of great duty, and an endless horizon. . . . Law is the basis of the human mind. In us, it is inspiration; out there in Nature, we see its fatal strength. We call it the moral sentiment. ("Worship," 1860)

Let us build to the Beautiful Necessity, which makes men brave in believing that he cannot shun a danger that is appointed, nor incur one that is not; to the Necessity which rudely or softly educates him to the perception that there are no contingencies; the Law rules throughout existence, a Law which is not intelligent but intelligence,—not personal nor impersonal,—it disdains words and passes understanding; it dissolves persons; it vivifies nature; yet solicits the pure in heart to draw on all its omnipotence. ("Fate," 1860)

We are . . . immortal with the immortality of this law.