

(unsigned but by Francis Palgrave) in the July 1823 London *Quarterly Review*. It is this source that directly relates to *Moby-Dick*.

Here are quotations from "Superstition and Knowledge" followed by Melville's notes.

*Quarterly Review* 444: Palgrave quotes from a Scottish town's expenses in 1633 of £3.6s.8d. for "ten loads of coals to burn them" (i.e., to burn William Coke and Alison Dick).

Melville: Ten loads of coal to burn him.—

*Quarterly Review* 446 (On the "last execution of a Scottish witch," a grandmother executed at Dornock in 1722): "After being brought out for execution, the weather proving very severe, the poor old woman sat composedly before the pile, warming herself by the fire prepared to consume her."

Melville: Brought to the stake—warmed himself by the fire.

*Quarterly Review* 447: "Upwards of six hundred women were executed in the bishopric of Bamberg alone. The accusations bear the stamp of raving madness. Priests were convicted of baptising in the following form: Ego non baptizo te in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti—sed in nomine Diaboli."

Melville: Ego non baptizo te in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti—sed in nomine Diaboli.—

*Quarterly Review* 449: "Madness is almost undefinable. Right reason and insanity are merely the extreme terms of a series of mental action, which need not be very long."

Melville: Madness is undefinable—It & right reasons extremes of one.

*Quarterly Review* 452–453: "The doctrine delivered at Simancas, however, was not Goetic Magic, or that which is vulgarly termed the Black Art, but the high and pure Theurgy which repels all converse with the evil demon. Theurgical magic, the magic which seeks its converse with the Power, the Intelligence, and the Angel, might have been first diffused in Spain by the sectaries of the Gnostic doctrines, who appear to have found numerous adherents in that country during many centuries.

Melville—Not the (black art) Goetic but Theurgic magic—seeks converse with the Intelligence, Power, the Angel [The words in parentheses are Melville's insertion above the line.]

## HERMAN MELVILLE

### Hawthorne and His Mosses: By a Virginian Spending July in Vermont†

Melville's revisions in the manuscript show he added this fictional pseudonymous Virginian, here and in all five later passages, after he had written most of the essay expressing his own fervent feelings, which he thus distanced himself from, advised by Evert Duyckinck, editor of the New York *Literary*

† *The Literary World* (August 17 and 24, 1850). The "Mosses" is Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1846 collection of short stories, *Mosses from an Old Manse*.

*World*, who had a hand in other revisions and who published it anonymously. Still other things told in the essay are not true, including the assertion that it was written before the author met Hawthorne, that the book was given to him by a "Cousin Cherry" (his Aunt Mary Ann Melville, widow of his Uncle Thomas, gave it to him on July 18, knowing he might meet Hawthorne on his vacation at Pittsfield), and that it was "verdantly bound" and had green Salem moss pressed to the flyleaf.

This is a slightly regularized reading text, transcribed by Harrison Hayford and Hershel Parker. The punctuation is that of the manuscript in the Duyckinck Collection of the New York Public Library. It is mainly in Elizabeth Melville's hand, copied from her husband's hastily scrawled draft. Several of the footnotes explain the difficulties Elizabeth Melville had in copying the original manuscript and just how Duyckinck censored what Melville had written. Melville had no chance to correct proofs and found "ugly errors" in the printed essay, but listed only one. The footnotes about the errors in the text and emendations are designed to complement the discussions elsewhere of emendations in the text of *Moby-Dick*.

The most detailed narrative account of the composition of this essay and the aftermath, drawing on the papers of Melville's sister Augusta (acquired by the New York Public Library in 1983), is in the first volume of Hershel Parker's *Herman Melville: A Biography* (1996), Ch. 36, "Hawthorne and His Mosses: 8 August–September 1850."

A papered chamber in a fine old farm-house—a mile from any other dwelling, and dipped to the eaves in foliage—surrounded by mountains, old woods, and Indian ponds,—this, surely, is the place to write of Hawthorne. Some charm is in this northern air, for love and duty seem both impelling to the task. A man of a deep and noble nature has seized me in this seclusion. His wild, witch voice rings through me; or, in softer cadences, I seem to hear it in the songs of the hill-side birds, that sing in the larch trees at my window.

Would that all excellent books were foundlings, without father or mother, that so it might be, we could glorify them, without including their ostensible authors. Nor would any true man take exception to this;—least of all, he who writes,—"When the Artist rises high enough to achieve the Beautiful, the symbol by which he makes it perceptible to mortal senses becomes of little value in his eyes, while his spirit possesses itself in the enjoyment of the reality."

But more than this. I know not what would be the right name to put on the title-page of an excellent book, but this I feel, that the names of all fine authors are fictitious ones, far more so than that of Junius,<sup>1</sup>—simply standing, as they do for the mystical, ever-eluding Spirit of all Beauty, which ubiquitously possesses men of genius. Purely imaginative as this fancy may appear, it nevertheless seems to receive some warranty from the fact, that on a personal interview no great author has ever come up to the idea of his reader. But that dust of which our bodies are composed, how can it fitly express the nobler intelligences among us? With reverence be it spoken, that not even in the case of one deemed more than man, not even in our Saviour, did his visible frame betoken anything of the

1. Pseudonym of an unidentified British author of famous political satires (1769–72), now thought to have been Sir Philip Francis.

augustness of the nature within. Else, how could those Jewish eyewitnesses fail to see heaven in his glance.

It is curious, how a man may travel along a country road, and yet miss the grandest, or sweetest of prospects, by reason of an intervening hedge, so like all other hedges, as in no way to hint of the wide landscape beyond. So has it been with me concerning the enchanting landscape in the soul of this Hawthorne, this most excellent Man of Mosses. His "Old Manse" has been written now four years, but I never read it till a day or two since. I had seen it in the book-stores—heard of it often—even had it recommended to me by a tasteful friend, as a rare, quiet book, perhaps too deserving of popularity to be popular. But there are so many books called "excellent," and so much unpopular merit, that amid the thick stir of other things, the hint of my tasteful friend was disregarded; and for four years the Mosses on the Old Manse never refreshed me with their perennial green. It may be, however, that all this while, the book, like wine,<sup>2</sup> was only improving in flavor and body. At any rate, it so chanced that this long procrastination eventuated in a happy result. At breakfast the other day, a mountain girl, a cousin of mine, who for the last two weeks has every morning helped me to strawberries and raspberries,—which, like the roses and pearls in the fairy-tale, seemed to fall into the saucer from those strawberry-beds in the cheeks,—this delightful creature, this charming Cherry says to me—"I see you spend your mornings in the hay-mow; and yesterday I found there 'Dwight's Travels in New England'." Now I have something far better than that,—something more congenial to our summer on these hills. Take these raspberries, and then I will give you some moss."—"Moss!" said I,—"*Yes*, and you must take it to the barn with you, and good-bye to 'Dwight'."

With that she left me, and soon returned with a volume, verdantly bound, and garnished with a curious frontispiece in green,—nothing less, than a fragment of real moss cunningly pressed to a fly-leaf.—"*Why this*," said I, spilling my raspberries, "this is the 'Mosses from an Old Manse'." "*Yes*," said cousin Cherry, "yes, it is that flowery Hawthorne."—"Hawthorne and Mosses," said I, "no more: it is morning: it is July in the country: and I am off for the barn."

Stretched on that new mown clover, the hill-side breeze blowing over me through the wide barn door, and soothed by the hum of the bees in the meadows around, how magically stole over me this Mossy Man! And how amply, how bountifully, did he redeem that delicious promise to his guests in the Old Manse, of whom it is written<sup>4</sup>—"Others could give them pleasure, or amusement, or instruction—these could be picked up anywhere—but it was for me to give them rest. Rest, in a life of trouble!

2. Misprinted in LW as "likewise."

3. *Travels in New-England and New-York*, 4 vols. (1821–22), by Timothy Dwight (1752–1817).

4. During the composition of *Mardi* (see Log, 276), Mrs. Melville in a letter to her stepmother apologized for perhaps having left out punctuation marks, explaining that as Herman's copyist she was in the habit of leaving all the punctuation for him to supply. This passage (4.2–4.8 in the manuscript) is clear proof that in 1850 she was still omitting punctuation. In Melville's hand, in different ink, are the following additions and changes: he added the comma after "clover"; he altered "with the hill side breeze blowing over me from the wide barn door" to "the hill-side breeze blowing over me thro' the wide barn door," (Melville's comma); he added a comma after "around"; he mended the "M's" in "mossy man" to capitals; he added an exclamation point after "Man" and commas after "amply" and "bountifully"; and he changed "old manse" to "Old Manse." Presumably the extraordinary absence of necessary periods and quotation marks in the first American edition of *Mardi* is due to Melville's failure to add the punctuation, and certain unusual absences of commas in *Moby-Dick* may be due to the same cause.

What better could be done for weary and world-worn spirits? what better could be done for anybody, who came within our magic circle, than to throw the spell of a magic spirit over him?"—So all that day, half-buried in the new clover, I watched this Hawthorne's "Assyrian dawn, and Paphian sunset and moonrise, from the summit of our Eastern Hill."

The soft ravishments of the man spun me round about in a web of dreams, and when the book was closed, when the spell was over, this wizard "dismissed me with but misty reminiscences, as if I had been dreaming of him."

What a mild<sup>6</sup> moonlight of contemplative humor bathes that Old Manse!—the rich and rare distilment of a spicy and slowly-oozing heart. No rollicking rudeness, no gross fun fed on fat dinners, and bred in the lees of wine,—but a humor so spiritually gentle, so high, so deep, and yet so richly relishable, that it were hardly inappropriate in an angel. It is the very religion of mirth; for nothing so human but it may be advanced to that. The orchard of the Old Manse seems the visible type of the fine mind that has described it. Those twisted, and contorted old trees, "that stretch out their crooked branches, and take such hold of the fine mind we remember them as humorists and odd-fellows." And then, as surrounded by these grotesque forms, and hushed in the noon-day repose of this Hawthorne's spell, how aptly might the still fall of his ruddy thoughts into your soul be symbolized by "the thump of a great apple, in the stillest perfect ripeness"! For no less ripe than ruddy are the apples of the thoughts

and fancies, in this sweet Man of Mosses. "Buds and Bird-Voices"—What a delicious thing is that!—"Will the world ever be so decayed, that Spring may not renew its greenness?"—And the "Fire-Worship." Was ever the hearth so glorified into an altar before? The mere title of that piece is better than any common work in fifty folio volumes. How exquisite is this:—"Nor did it lessen the charm of his soft, familiar courtesy and helpfulness, that the mighty spirit, were opportunity offered him, would run riot through the peaceful house, wrap its inmates in his terrible embrace, and leave nothing of them save their whitened bones. This possibility of mad destruction only made his domestic kindness the more beautiful, and touching. It was so sweet of him, being endowed with such power, to dwell, day after day, and one long, lonesome night after

5. The quotations here and in the next two paragraphs are from the introductory essay, "The Old Manse," about the Hawthornes' happy early married years in Concord, Massachusetts (1842–46). The second quotation is from the description of the "little nook of a study" where Emerson, while living there, wrote "Nature" (1836) and, as he wrote in that book, "used to watch the Assyrian dawn and the Paphian sunset and moonrise, from the summit of our eastern hill."

Melville may not have recognized that Hawthorne was paraphrasing Emerson's words.  
6. Misprinted in LW as "wild," as misread by Mrs. Melville. Parker in the 1970s in Los Angeles realized from the context that "wild" was wrong, and Hayford later verified the surmise by recourse to the manuscript in the Duyckinck Collection at the New York Public Library (NYPL). In the early 1990s Parker at the NYPL saw that for decades we had been misled about Hawthorne's response to meeting Melville at the picnic on Monument Mountain on August 5, 1850, because the available texts of Evert Duyckinck's record had Hawthorne looking "mildly" about. In fact, Duyckinck wrote "wildly": "The rain did not do its worst and we scattered over the cliffs, Herman Melville to seat himself, the boldest of all, astride a projecting bow sprit of rock while little Dr Holmes peeped about the cliffs and protested it affected him like ipecac. Hawthorne looked wildly about for the great Carbuncle" (an allusion to one of his own early stories). Excited by meeting the man he thought he knew intimately from reading and reviewing *Typee* in 1846, Hawthorne had been hammering it up in a humorous theatricality that those who knew him found uncharacteristic and that Melville found charming. Here one letter of one word makes a big difference.

another, on the dusky hearth, only now and then betraying his wild nature, by thrusting his red tongue out of the chimney-top! True, he had done much mischief in the world, and was pretty certain to do more, but his warm heart atoned for all. He was kindly to the race of man."

But he has still other apples, not quite so ruddy, though full as ripe:—apples, that have been left to wither on the tree, after the pleasant autumn gathering is past. The sketch of "The Old Apple Dealer" is conceived in the subtlest spirit of sadness; he whose "subdued and nerveless boyhood prefigured his abortive prime, which, likewise, contained within itself the prophecy and image of his lean and torpid age." Such touches as are in this piece can not proceed from any common heart.<sup>7</sup> They argue such a depth of tenderness, such a boundless sympathy with all forms of being, such an omnipresent love, that we must needs say, that this Hawthorne is here almost alone in his generation,—at least, in the artistic manifestation of these things. Still more. Such touches as these,—and many, very many similar ones, all through his chapters—furnish clues, whereby we enter a little way into the intricate, profound heart where they originated. And we see, that suffering, some time or other and in some shape or other,—this only can enable any man to depict it in others. All over him, Hawthorne's melancholy rests like an Indian Summer, which, though bathing a whole country in one softness, still reveals the distinctive hue of every towering hill, and each far-winding vale.

But it is the least part of genius that attracts admiration. Where Hawthorne is known, he seems to be deemed a pleasant writer, with a pleasant style,—a sequestered, harmless man, from whom any deep and weighty thing would hardly be anticipated:—a man who means no meanings. But there is no man, in whom humor and love, like mountain peaks, soar to such a rapt height, as to receive the irradiations of the upper skies;—there is no man in whom humor and love are developed in that high form called genius; no such man can exist without also possessing, as the indispensable complement of these, a great, deep intellect, which drops down into the universe like a plummet.<sup>8</sup> Or, love and humor are only the eyes, through which such an intellect views this world. The great beauty in such a mind is but the product of its strength. What, to all readers, can be more charming than the piece entitled "Monsieur du Miroir"; and to a reader at all capable of fully fathoming it, what, at the same time, can possess more mystical depth of meaning?—Yes, there he sits, and looks at me,—this "shape of mystery," this "identical Monsieur

7. The first part of this sentence occurs on 6.22 of the manuscript. In the left margin is a small penciled "X"—erased, but still visible. An examination of the whole manuscript reveals that such marginal X's were Mrs. Melville's way of reminding herself that she was uncertain about what she had copied and that she would have to ask her husband for the correct reading. After she had checked with him, she would erase the X—but lightly enough so that most are still readily visible. Here she first copied "Such tones as are in this piece," and later inserted the correct word, "touches," above "tones." Often enough in the manuscript inserted words are simply revisions of Melville's, but frequently, as here, the reading Mrs. Melville first copied can never have been what Melville wrote.

8. At 7.21 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville copied "into the universe like a planet"; she later marked out "planet" and inserted the correct "plummet" above it. Here no X is visible in the margin, perhaps an indication that she had not questioned her reading. It is not clear why the correction is in her hand instead of Melville's; perhaps she simply caught the error herself later, and corrected it, as she did at other points; perhaps she was reading her copy aloud to him to spare his eyes and making the changes herself; perhaps he was proofreading with her nearby to enter any corrections.

du Miroir."—"Methinks I should tremble now, were his wizard power of gliding through all impediments in search of me, to place him suddenly before my eyes."

How profound, nay appalling, is the moral evolved by the "Earth's Holocaust"; where—beginning with the hollow follies and affectations of the world,—all vanities and empty theories and forms, are, one after another, and by an admirably graduated, growing comprehensiveness, thrown into the allegorical fire, till, at length, nothing is left but the engendering heart of man; which remaining still unconsumed, the conflagration is naught.

Of a piece with this, is the "Intelligence Office," a wondrous symbol more charged with ponderous import. There are other sketches, still "The Christmas Banquet," and "The Bosom Serpent" would be fine subjects for a curious and elaborate analysis, touching the conjectural part of the mind that produced them. For spite of all the Indian-summer sunlight on the hither side of Hawthorne's soul,<sup>1</sup> the other side—like the dark half of the physical sphere—is shrouded in a blackness, ten times black. But this darkness but gives more effect to the evermoving dawn, that forever advances through it, and circumnavigates his world.<sup>2</sup> Whether Hawthorne has simply availed himself of this mystical blackness as a means to the wondrous effects he makes it to produce in his lights and shades; or whether there really lurks in him, perhaps unknown to himself, a touch of Puritanic gloom,—this, I cannot altogether tell. Certain it is, however, that this great power of blackness in him derives its force from its appeals to that Calvinistic sense of Innate Depravity and Original Sin, from whose visitations, in some shape or other, no deeply thinking mind is always and wholly free. For, in certain moods, no man can weigh this world, without throwing in something, somehow like Original Sin, to strike the uneven balance. At all events, perhaps no writer has ever wielded this terrific thought with greater terror than this same harmless Hawthorne. Still more; this black conceit pervades him, through and through. You may be witched by his sunlight,—transported by the bright gildings in the skies he builds over you;—but there is the blackness of darkness beyond; and even his bright gildings but fringe, and play upon the edges of thunder-clouds.—In one word, the world is mistaken in this Nathaniel Hawthorne. He himself must often have smiled at its absurd misconception of him. He is immeasurably deeper than the plummet of the mere

9. In the manuscript 8.14 reads "of secret workings in this world. There are" (in Mrs. Melville's hand); in Melville's hand "the" is inserted before "secret," and "this world" is altered to "the souls." Mrs. Melville evidently did not suspect she had miscopied, for no X is visible in the margin.

1. In this sentence at 8.20 in the manuscript is a clear instance of Mrs. Melville's misreading Melville's "on" as "in." She copied the passage as "sunlight in the hither side of Hawthorne's soul," and Melville mended the "in" to "on," which must have been the original reading.

2. At 8.25 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville left two blanks: "that forever through it, and . . ." Later, presumably after consulting her husband, she added "advances" in the first space and "circumnavigates" in the second. It is almost always easy to detect which words have been added later by the unusual spacing and the anomalous slanting of the added word. In *Moby-Dick* there are instances of Melville's adding words in the English edition that seem likely to have been in his manuscript, though they do not appear in the first American edition. It may be that sometimes any blanks left by the copyist (Melville's sister Augusta for most of *Moby-Dick*) simply never got detected and filled in, despite any symbol like Mrs. Melville's X.

critic. For it is not the brain<sup>3</sup> that can test such a man; it is only the heart. You cannot come to know greatness by inspecting it; there is no glimpse to be caught of it, except by intuition; you need not ring it, you but touch it, and you find it is gold.<sup>4</sup>

Now it is that blackness in Hawthorne, of which I have spoken, that so fixes and fascinates me. It may be, nevertheless, that it is too largely developed in him. Perhaps he does not give us a ray of his light for every shade of his dark. But however this may be, this blackness it is that furnishes the infinite obscure of his background,—that background, against which Shakespeare plays his grandest conceits, the things that have made for Shakespeare his loftiest, but most circumscribed renown, as the profoundest of thinkers. For by philosophers Shakespeare is not adored as the great man of tragedy and comedy.—“Off with his head! so much for Buckingham!”<sup>5</sup> this sort of rant, interlined by another hand, brings down the house,—those mistaken souls, who dream of Shakespeare as a mere man of Richard-the-Third humps, and Macbeth daggers. But it is those deep far-away things in him; those occasional flashings-forth of the intuitive Truth in him; those short, quick probings at the very axis of reality;—these are the things that make Shakespeare, Shakespeare. Through the mouths of the dark characters<sup>6</sup> of Hamlet, Timon, Lear, and Iago, he craftily says, or sometimes insinuates the things, which we feel to be so terrifically true; that it were all but madness for any good man, in his own proper character, to utter, or even hint of them. Tormented into desperation, Lear the frantic King tears off the mask, and speaks the sane madness of vital truth.<sup>7</sup> But, as I before said, it is the least part of the genius that attracts admiration. And so, much of the blind, unbridled admiration that has been heaped upon Shakespeare, has been lavished upon the least part of him. And few of his endless commentators and critics seem to have remembered, or even perceived, that the immediate products of a great mind are not so great, as that undeveloped, (and sometimes undevelopable) yet dimly-discernible<sup>8</sup> greatness, to which these immediate products are but the infallible indices. In Shakespeare's tomb lies infinitely more than Shakespeare ever wrote. And if I magnify Shakespeare, it is not so much for what he did do, as for what

3. At 9.23 in the manuscript a word clearly baffled Mrs. Melville. She put an X in the margin, and left a blank, in which she later inserted the word “brain.”

4. At 9.27 in the manuscript is a clear instance of Mrs. Melville's omitting words that Melville restored as he proofread her copy. She copied “you ring it you but touch it and you find”; he later inserted “need not” before “ring” and added a comma after both the first and the second “it.”

5. At 10.12–13 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville copied “Buckingham” [these close quotes are in the manuscript] this sort of rant introduced by some other hand bring down the house those.” Melville crowded in an exclamation point between “Buckingham” and the following double quotes, added a comma after “rant,” inserted “interlined” in place of “introduced,” marked out “some” and altered “other” to “another,” added a comma after “hand,” added (or traced over) the S in “brings,” and added a comma-dash after “house,” but no separating punctuation before “this!”

6. At 10.21 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville copied “Though the issues of the dark characters”; in Melville's hand “issues” is marked out and replaced with “mouths” (with no doubtful “X” in the margin).

7. In October Sophia Hawthorne wrote to her sister Elizabeth Peabody: “He [Melville] told me that the Review was too carelessly written—that he dashed it off in great haste & did not see the proof sheets, & that there was one provoking mistake in it. Instead of ‘the same madness of truth’ it should be ‘the same madness of truth.’”

8. At 11.7 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville copied “divinely” then at once realized her error, marked out “divinely” and on the same line added “dimly-discerned” (which Melville later altered to “dimly-discernable”—a misspelling corrected in LW).

he did not do, or refrained from doing. For in this world of lies, Truth is forced to fly like a sacred<sup>9</sup> white doe in the woodlands; and only by cunning glimpses will she reveal herself, as in Shakespeare and other masters of the great Art of Telling the Truth,—even though it be covertly and by snatches.<sup>2</sup>

But if this view of the all-popular Shakespeare be seldom taken by his readers, and if very few who extol him, have ever read him deeply, or perhaps, only have seen him on the tricky stage, (which alone made, and is still making him his mere mob renown)—if few men have time, or patience, or palate, for the spiritual truth as it is in that great genius;—it is, then, no matter of surprise that in a contemporaneous age, Nathaniel Hawthorne is a man, as yet, almost utterly mistaken among men. Here and there, in some quiet arm-chair in the noisy town, or some deep nook among the noiseless mountains, he may be appreciated for something of what he is. But unlike Shakespeare, who was forced to the contrary course by circumstances, Hawthorne (either from simple disinclination, or else from inaptitude) refrains from all the popularizing noise and show of broad farce, and blood-in repose, and which sends few thoughts into circulation, except they be arterIALIZED at his large warm lungs, and expanded in his honest heart.

Nor need you fix upon that blackness in him, if it suit you not. Nor, indeed, will all readers discern it, for it is, mostly, insinuated to those who may best understand it, and account for it; it is not obtruded upon every one alike.

Some may start to read of Shakespeare and Hawthorne on the same page. They may say, that if an illustration were needed, a lesser light might have sufficed to elucidate this Hawthorne, this small man of yesterday. I am not; willingly, one of those who, as touching Shakespeare at least, exemplify the maxim of Rochefoucauld,<sup>3</sup> that “we exalt the reputation of some, in order to depress that of others”;—who, to teach all noble-souled aspirants that there is no hope for them, pronounce Shakespeare absolutely unapproachable. But Shakespeare has been approached. There are minds that have gone as far as Shakespeare into the universe. And hardly a mortal man, who, at some time or other, has not felt as great thoughts in him as any you will find in Hamlet. We must not inferentially malign mankind for the sake of any one man, whoever he may be. This is too cheap a purchase of contentment for conscious mediocrity to make. Besides, this absolute and unconditional adoration of Shakespeare has grown to be a part of our Anglo Saxon superstitions. The Thirty-Nine Articles are now

9. Mrs. Melville wrote “scared.” In *Herman Melville: A Biography* (I. 756) Parker introduced the emendation of “sacred white doe” instead of “scared white doe” on the analogy of John Dryden's “milk-white Hind” in “The Hind and the Panther” (1687) and William Wordsworth's “White Doe of Rylstone” (1807). In the third paragraph of Ch. 42 of *Moby-Dick*, “The Whiteness of the Whale,” see the passage on the “sacred White Dog” of the Iroquois. At 11.12 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville copied “Truth is found” and recorded her doubt with an X in the margin. Later she marked out “found” and inserted “forced.”

1. Melville himself added a comma after “herself” (line 11.15) and altered the impossible reading “other writers” to “other masters” (there is no X at this point to indicate Mrs. Melville was uncertain about what she copied).

2. In 11.16 Melville altered “art” to “Art” and inserted a comma-dash after “Truth.” In the following line he inserted a comma after “covertly,” even though it had to be crowded in.

3. Francois de la Rochefoucauld (1613–1680), French author noted for the dim view of human nature in his *Moral Reflections & Maxims*.

Forty.<sup>4</sup> Intolerance has come to exist in this matter. You must believe in Shakespeare's unapproachability, or quit the country. But what sort of a belief is this for an American, a man who is bound to carry republican progressiveness into Literature, as well as into Life? Believe me, my friends, that men not very much inferior to Shakespeare, are this day being born on the banks of the Ohio.<sup>5</sup> And the day will come, when you shall say who reads a book by an Englishman that is a modern?<sup>6</sup> The great mistake seems to be, that even with those Americans who look forward to the coming of a great literary genius among us, they somehow fancy he will come in the costume of Queen Elizabeth's day,—be a writer of dramas founded upon old English history, or the tales of Boccaccio. Whereas, great geniuses are parts of the times; they themselves are the times; and possess a correspondent coloring. It is of a piece with the Jews, who while their Shiloh was meekly walking in their streets, were still praying for his magnificent coming; looking for him in a chariot, who was already among them on an ass. Nor must we forget, that, in his own life-time, Shakespeare was not Shakespeare, but only Master William Shakespeare of the shrewd, thriving business firm of Condell, Shakespeare & Co., proprietors of the Globe Theatre in London; and by a courtly author, of the name of Greene,<sup>7</sup> was hooted at, as an "upstart crow" beautified "with other birds' feathers." For, mark it well, imitation is often the first charge brought against real originality. Why this is so, there is not space to set forth here. You must have plenty of sea-room to tell the Truth in; especially, when it seems to have an aspect of newness, as America did in 1492, though it was then just as old, and perhaps older than Asia, only those sagacious philosophers, the common sailors, had never seen it before; swearing it was all water and moonshine there. Now, I do not say that Nathaniel of Salem is a greater than William of Avon, or as great. But the difference between the two men is by no means

4. The Church of England's Articles of Faith issued in 1551 and 1553, acceptance of which is obligatory for its clergy. The phrase came to refer to any such basic list of beliefs.
5. Duyckinck toned this down to "that men not very much inferior to Shakespeare are being born on the banks of the Ohio." See Parker (I. 757) for an analysis of the way Melville was characteristically twisting the words of his unnamed source, here Maurice Morgann, famous in late-18th-century London for his "Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff," in which he celebrates the majesty of Shakespeare's language by saying that Shakespeare's words would resound in the Appalachian mountains and on "the banks of the Ohio," long after Shakespeare's critics and editors and Voltaire and the very French language had been forgotten. Melville knew as he wrote that a man capable of writing a mighty book in the tradition of Shakespeare, had been born in the United States three decades earlier a stone's throw from a great bay and two rivers, the East and the Hudson.
6. A reversal of the contemptuous putdown of American works by the Scottish critic Sydney Smith (1771-1845) in the *Edinburgh Review* (January 1820): "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? Or goes to an American play? Or looks at an American picture or statue?" In the next decades American critics and writers contested this dismissal of their literature. Here, by praising Hawthorne, Melville prepares for recognition of the greatness of his whaling book then in progress.
7. Melville's manuscript has "Chettle" here. It was not the publisher Henry Chettle but the playwright Robert Greene who, in *A Groatsworth of Wit* (1592) thus maligned the young Shakespeare. However, Melville's writing "Chettle" is not a simple error (see Parker I.705, 739, 758). In Thomas Powell's *Living Authors of America* (1850) Melville had read in the chapter on Henry Wadsworth Longfellow a theory of literary influence: "Imitation has been charged on all poets, and we know that the indignation of Robert Green[e] was so soured by the appropriations of Shakespeare, that he denounced him 'as a jay strutting about in our feathers, and fancying himself as the only Shaksene of the country.' This charge is always more or less true of a young author, and it is in the very nature of things." Every poet, Powell had concluded, "commences with more or less of some predominant mind, the most assimilated to his own." Melville also knew John Payne Collier's edition of Shakespeare that contained a "Life," in which Paine enunciated the theory that Chettle was the author of *A Groatsworth of Wit*, a theory that Melville may have accepted and combined with Powell's ideas about originality and imitation. Like Powell, Melville is careless with the epithet in *Groatsworth*: "an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers."

immeasurable. Not a very great deal more, and Nathaniel were verily William. This, too, I mean, that if Shakespeare has not been equaled, give the world time, and he is sure to be surpassed, in one hemisphere or the other. Nor will it at all do to say, that the world is getting grey and grizzled now, and has lost that fresh charm which she wore of old, and by virtue of which the great poets of past times made themselves what we esteem them to be. Not so. The world is as young today, as when it was created; and this Vermont morning dew is as wet to my feet, as Eden's dew to Adam's. Nor has Nature been all over ransacked by our progenitors, so that no new charms and mysteries remain for this latter generation to find. Far from it. The trillions<sup>8</sup> part has not yet been said; and all that has been said, but multiplies the avenues of material that seems to incapacitate modern authors.

Let America then prize and cherish her writers; yea, let her glorify them. They are not so many in number, as to exhaust her good-will. And while she has good kith and kin of her own, to take to her bosom, let her not lavish her embraces upon the household of an alien. For believe it or not England, after all, is, in many things, an alien to us. China has more bowels<sup>9</sup> of real love for us than she. But even were there no Hawthorne no Emerson no Whittier, no Irving, no Bryant, no Dana no Cooper no Willis (not the author of the "Dashes", but the author of the "Belfry Pigeon")—were there none of these, and others of like calibre among us, nevertheless, let America first praise mediocrity even, in her own children, before she praises (for everywhere, merit demands acknowledgment from every one) the best excellence in the children of any other land. Let her own authors, I say, have the priority of appreciation. I was much pleased with a hot-headed Carolina cousin of mine, who once said,—“If there were no other American to stand by, in Literature,—why, then, I would stand by Pop Emmons and his *Fredoniad*,<sup>12</sup> and till a better epic came along, swear it was not very far behind the *Iliad*!” Take away the words, and in spirit he was sound.

Not that American genius needs patronage in order to expand. For that explosive sort of stuff will expand though screwed up in a vice, and burst it, though it were triple steel. It is for the nation's sake, and not for her authors' sake, that I would have America be heedful of the increasing greatness among her writers. For how great the shame, if other nations should be

8. At 15x.28 in the manuscript is one of Mrs. Melville's more striking misreadings. A very faint X in the margin signals her doubt about "brilliant part"—and she has marked out "brilliant" and inserted the correct "trillionth."
9. Melville corrected "bowels" from his wife's misreading, "bonds."
10. Here the manuscript wording is restored over LW. Melville's first wording (in his wife's hand) was "no Hawthornes Emersons Whittiers Danas Coopers"; he revised and expanded that to "no Hawthorne no Emerson no Whittier, no Irving, no Bryant, no Dana no Cooper no Willis (not Hawthorne no Emerson no Whittier, no Irving, no Bryant, no Dana no Cooper no Willis (not the author of the 'Dashes', but the author of the 'Belfrey Pigeon')—were there none of these, and others of like calibre among us, nevertheless, let America first praise mediocrity even, . . ."
11. Duyckinck lined out the names and reworded in more general terms for LW, so that the passage has been long known in this form: "China has more bowels of real love for us than she. But there were there no strong literary individualities among us, as there are some dozen at least; nevertheless, let America first praise mediocrity even, in her own children. . . ."
12. "Pop" Emmons is a result of Melville's confusion. As a child he was taken for walks on the Boston Common where a local orator, William Emmons, kept a concessionaire's stand at which he sold what the Portland, Maine, *Daily Advertiser* on November 14, 1851, recalled as "a delectable beverage known in those days as 'egg pop,'" hence the soubriquet "Pop Emmons." In the stand Emmons also kept for sale copies of his patriotic oration, which he would willingly repeat. When Melville later saw the four-volume nationalistic epic poem about naval battles in the war of 1812, *The Fredoniad*, he assumed it was by the man he remembered, but the poem was actually by Pop Emmons's brother Richard Emmons.

before her, in crowning her heroes of the pen. But this is almost the case now. American authors have received more just and discriminating praise (however loftily and ridiculously given, in certain cases) even from some Englishmen, than from their own countrymen. There are hardly five critics in America; and several of them are asleep. As for patronage, it is the American author who now patronizes his country, and not his country him. And if at times some among them appeal to the people for more recognition, it is not always with selfish motives, but patriotic ones.

It is true, that but few of them as yet have evinced that decided<sup>3</sup> originality which merits great praise. But that graceful writer, who perhaps of all Americans has received the most plaudits from his own country for his productions,—that very popular and amiable writer, however good, and self-reliant in many things, perhaps owes his chief reputation to the self-acknowledged imitation of a foreign model, and to the studied avoidance of all topics but smooth ones. But it is better to fail in originality, than to succeed in imitation. He who has never failed somewhere, that man can not be great. Failure is the true test of greatness. And if it be said, that continual success is a proof that a man wisely knows his powers,—it is only to be added, that, in that case, he knows them to be small. Let us believe it, then, once for all, that there is no hope for us in these smooth pleasing writers that know their powers. Without malice, but to speak the plain fact, they but furnish an appendix to Goldsmith, and other English authors. And we want no American Goldsmiths; nay, we want no American Miltons. It were the vilest thing you could say of a true American author, that he were an American Tompkins.<sup>4</sup> Call him an American, and have done; for you can not say a nobler thing of him. But it is not meant that all American writers should studiously cleave to nationality in their writings;<sup>5</sup> only this, no American writer should write like an Englishman, or a Frenchman; let him write like a man, for then he will be sure to write like an American. Let us away with this leaven of literary flunkyism towards England. If either must play the flunky in this thing, let England do it, not us. While we are rapidly preparing for that political supremacy among the nations, which prophetically awaits us at the close of the present century; in a literary point of view, we are deplorably unprepared for it; and we seem studious to remain so. Hitherto, reasons might have existed why this should be; but no good reason exists now. And all that is requisite to amendment in this matter, is simply this: that, while freely acknowledging all excellence, everywhere, we should refrain from unduly lauding foreign writers, and, at the same time, duly recognize the meritorious writers that are our own;—those writers, who breathe that unshackled, democratic spirit of Christianity in all things, which now takes the practical lead in this world, though at the same time

3. An X in the margin at 16.10 indicates Mrs. Melville's uncertainty. She left a space after "as yet have," and later filled it in with "evinced." It appears that "decided" was also added later, but it may not have been.

4. Melville substituted "Tompkins" for what he first wrote, "Milton." Melville means "any Tom, Dick, or Harry," an "American Anybody," judging from William Makepeace Thackeray's contemporary usage in an unpleasant comment about Charlotte Brontë, before her marriage, that she needed "some Tomkins or another to love her and be in love with."

5. At 17.7 in the manuscript Mrs. Melville copied "studiously cleave to nationality in their"—leaving a space about as long as that taken up by the word "writers" in the line above. There is an erased X in the margin, but the space is not filled in. Presumably the erased X means that she had thought that there might be another word in the manuscript; she may have left a much longer space and filled in "nationality," though that word does not appear to be added at a later time.

led by ourselves—us Americans. Let us boldly contemn all imitation, though it comes to us graceful and fragrant as the morning; and foster all originality, though, at first, it be crabbed and ugly as our own pine knots. And if any of our authors fail, or seem to fail, then, in the words of my enthusiastic Carolina cousin, let us clap him on the shoulder, and back him against all Europe for his second round. The truth is, that in our point of view, this matter of a national literature has come to such a pass with us, that in some sense we must turn bullies, else the day is lost, or superiority so far beyond us, that we can hardly say it will ever be ours.

And now, my countrymen, as an excellent author, of your own flesh and blood,—an unimitating, and, perhaps, in his way, an inimitable man—whom better can I commend to you, in the first place, an inimitable man—thorne. He is one of the new, and far better generation, than Nathaniel Hawthorne are in his soul; and if you travel away inland into his deep and noble nature, you will hear the far roar of his Niagara. Give not over to future generations the glad duty of acknowledging him for what he is. Take that joy to yourself, in your own generation; and so shall he feel those grateful impulses in him, that may possibly prompt him to the full flower of some still greater achievement in your eyes. And by confessing him, you thereby confess others; you embrace the whole brotherhood. For genius, all over the world, stands hand in hand, and one shock of recognition runs the whole circle round. In treating of Hawthorne, or rather of Hawthorne in his writings (for I never saw the man; and in the chances of a quiet plantation life, remote thus far omitted all mention of his "Twice Told Tales," and "Scarlet Letter." Both are excellent; but full of such manifold, strange and diffusive beauties, that time would all but fail me, to point the half of them out. But there are things in those two books, which, had they been written in England a century ago, Nathaniel Hawthorne had utterly displaced many of the bright names we now revere on authority. But I am content to leave Hawthorne to himself; and to the infallible finding of posterity; and however great may be the praise I have bestowed upon him, I feel, that in so doing, I have more served and honored myself, than him. For, at bottom, great excellence is praise enough to itself; but the feeling of a sincere and appreciative love and admiration towards it, this is relieved by utterance; and warm, honest praise ever leaves a pleasant flavor in the mouth; and it is an honorable thing to confess to what is honorable in others.

But I cannot leave my subject yet. No man can read a fine author, and relish him to his very bones, while he reads, without subsequently fancying to himself some ideal image of the man and his mind. And if you rightly look for it, you will almost always find that the author himself has somewhere furnished you with his own picture. For poets (whether in prose or verse), being painters of Nature, are like their brethren of the pencil, the true portrait-painters, who, in the multitude of likenesses to be sketched, do not invariably omit their own; and in all high instances, they paint them without any vanity, though, at times, with a lurking something, that would take several pages to properly define.

I submit it, then, to those best acquainted with the man personally, whether the following is not Nathaniel Hawthorne;—and to himself, whether something involved in it does not express the temper of his mind,—that lasting temper of all true, candid men—a seeker, not a finder yet:—

"A man now entered, in neglected attire, with the aspect of a thinker, but somewhat too rough-hewn and brawny for a scholar. His face was full of sturdy vigor, with some finer and keener attribute beneath; though harsh at first, it was tempered with the glow of a large, warm heart, which had force enough to heat his powerful intellect through and through. He advanced to the Intelligencer, and looked at him with a glance of such stern sincerity, that perhaps few secrets were beyond its scope.

"I seek for Truth," said he."

Twenty-four hours have elapsed since writing the foregoing. I have just returned from the hay mow, charged more and more with love and admiration of Hawthorne. For I have just been gleaning through the "Mosses," picking up many things here and there that had previously escaped me. And I found that but to glean after this man, is better than to be in at the harvest of others. To be frank (though, perhaps, rather foolish), notwithstanding what I wrote yesterday of these Mosses, I had not then culled them all; but had, nevertheless, been sufficiently sensible of the subtle essence, in them, as to write as I did. To what infinite height of loving wonder and admiration I may yet be borne, when by repeatedly banquetting on these Mosses, I shall have thoroughly incorporated their whole stuff into my being,—that, I can not tell. But already I feel that this Hawthorne has dropped germinous seeds into my soul. He expands and deepens down, the more I contemplate him; and further, and further, shoots his strong New-England roots into the hot soil of my Southern soul.

By careful reference to the "Table of Contents," I now find, that I have gone through all the sketches; but that when I yesterday wrote, I had not at all read two particular pieces, to which I now desire to call special attention,—*"A Select Party,"* and *"Young Goodman Brown."* Here, be it said to all those whom this poor fugitive scrawl of mine may tempt to the perusal of the "Mosses," that they must on no account suffer themselves to be trifled with, disappointed, or deceived by the triviality of many of the titles to these Sketches. For in more than one instance, the title utterly belies the piece. It is as if rustic demijohns containing the very best and costliest of Falernian and Tokay, were labeled "Cider," "Perry," and "Elderberry Wine." The truth seems to be, that like many other geniuses, this Man of Mosses takes great delight in hoodwinking the world,—at least, with respect to himself. Personally, I doubt not, that he rather prefers to be generally esteemed but a so-so sort of author; being willing to reserve the thorough and acute appreciation of what he is, to that party most qualified to judge—that is, to himself. Besides, at the bottom of their natures, men like Hawthorne, in many things, deem the plaudits of the public such strong presumptive evidence of mediocrity in the object of them, that it would in some degree render them doubtful of their own powers, did they hear much and vociferous braying concerning them in the public pastures. True, I have been braying myself (if you please to be witty enough, to have it so) but then I claim to be the first that has so brayed in this particular matter; and therefore, while pleading guilty to the charge, still claim all the merit due to originality.

But with whatever motive, playful or profound, Nathaniel Hawthorne has chosen to entitle his pieces in the manner he has, it is certain, that

some of them are directly calculated to deceive—egregiously deceive—the superficial skimmer of pages. To be downright and candid once more, let me cheerfully say, that two of these titles did dolefully dupe no less an eagle-eyed reader than myself; and that, too, after I had been impressed with a sense of the great depth and breadth of this American man. "Who in the name of thunder" (as the country-people say in this neighborhood), "who in the name of thunder," would anticipate any marvel in a piece entitled "Young Goodman Brown"? You would of course suppose that it was a simple little tale, intended as a supplement to "Goody Two Shoes." Whereas, it is deep as Dante; nor can you finish it, without addressing the author in his own words—"It is yours to penetrate, in every bosom, the deep mystery of sin." And with Young Goodman, too, in allegorical pursuit of his Puritan wife, you cry out in your anguish,—

"Faith!" shouted Goodman Brown, in a voice of agony and desperation; and the echoes of the forest mocked him, crying—"Faith! Faith!" as if bewildered wretches were seeking her all through the wilderness.

Now this same piece, entitled "Young Goodman Brown," is one of the two that I had not all read yesterday; and I allude to it now, because it is, in itself, such a strong positive illustration of that blackness in Hawthorne, which I had assumed from the mere occasional shadows of it, as revealed in several of the other sketches. But had I previously perused "Young Goodman Brown," I should have been at no pains to draw the conclusion, which I came to, at a time, when I was ignorant that the book contained one such direct and unqualified manifestation of it.

The other piece of the two referred to, is entitled "A Select Party," which, in my first simplicity upon originally taking hold of the book, I fancied must treat of some pumpkin-pie party in Old Salem, or some Chowder Party on Cape Cod. Whereas, by all the gods of Peedee! it is the sweetest and sublimest thing that has been written since Spenser wrote. Nay, there is nothing in Spenser that surpasses it, perhaps, nothing that equals it. And the test is this: read any canto in "The Faery Queen," and then read "A Select Party," and decide which pleases you the most,—that is, if you are qualified to judge. Do not be frightened at this; for when Spenser was alive, he was thought of very much as Hawthorne is now,—was generally accounted just such a "gentle" harmless man. It may be, that to common eyes, the sublimity of Hawthorne seems lost in his sweetness,—as perhaps in this same "Select Party" of his; for whom, he has builded so august a dome of sunset clouds, and served them on richer plate, than Belshazzar's when he banquetted his lords in Babylon.

But my chief business now, is to point out a particular page in this piece, having reference to an honored guest, who under the name of "The Master Genius" but in the guise of a young man of poor attire, with no insignia of rank or acknowledged eminence, is introduced to the Man of Fancy, who is the giver of the feast. Now the page having reference to this "Master Genius," so happily expresses much of what I yesterday wrote, touching the coming of the literary Shiloh of America, that I cannot but be charmed by the coincidence; especially, when it shows such a parity of ideas, at least, in this one point, between a man like Hawthorne and a man like me.



of any literary career he had would have been unimaginably different, and there would not have been the *Moby-Dick* we know. After brooding during an exceptionally long voyage back to New York, Melville settled down to write in February and March and April and May of 1850 when what he had planned to be doing was seeing Rome and everything on the way there and beyond. Even as he absorbed himself in his new manuscript, his London failure was mocked. The New York *Albion* on February 23, 1850, printed a letter from a London importer of foreign books about the end of protected copyright for Americans: "the author of *Typee*, &c., who recently made a voyage to this country on purpose to sell the 'right' of his unpublished *White Jacket*, wearily hawked the book from Piccadilly to Whitechapel, calling upon every publisher in his way, and could find no one rash enough to buy his 'protected right.'" In fact, Melville had wearily hawked the book, and Bentley had bought the book but had not given Melville the advance he needed. Melville's grand renunciation figured into his determination, in September 1850, to buy a house in the Berkshires. If he could not have his Grand Tour, he must write amid natural grandeur, not the streets of New York City. He was not being reasonable in his desire to be in the Berkshires, near his new friend Hawthorne. He was a galley-slave who had not yet come to terms with his renunciation of a Grand Tour and had not yet understood that the lack of international copyright would inevitably doom his career. The letters printed here were written in the aftermath of his failure to see Rome and his failure to face financial realities, as explained in "Damned by Dollars" (on pp. 617-31). He wrote *Moby-Dick* in a sustained period of blind faith in his future as an American writer.

To Richard H. Dana Jr.

NEW YORK May 1, 1850

I thank you very heartily for your friendly letter; and am more pleased than I can well tell, to think that any thing I have written about the sea has at all responded to your own impressions of it. Were I inclined to undue vanity, this one fact would be far more to me than acres & square miles of the superficial shallow praise of the publishing critics. And I am specially delighted at the thought, that those strange, congenial feelings, with which after my first voyage, I for the first time read "Two Years Before the Mast", and while so engaged was, as it were, tied & welded to you by a sort of Siamese link of affectionate sympathy—that these feelings should be reciprocated by you, in your turn, and be called out by any *White Jackets* or *Redburns* of mine—this is indeed delightful to me. In fact, My Dear Dana, did I not write these books of mine almost entirely for "lucre"—by the job, as a woodsawyer saws wood—I almost think, I should hereafter—in the case of a sea book—get my M.S.S. neatly & legibly copied by a scrivener—send you that one copy—& deem such a procedure the best publication. \* \* \*

About the "whaling voyage"—I am half way in the work, & am very glad that your suggestion so jumps with mine.<sup>1</sup> It will be a strange sort of a book, tho', I fear; blubber is blubber you know; tho' you may get oil out of

1. Melville's first known reference to *Moby-Dick*, important for his estimate of his progress. He had been working on it for almost three months, and the year before he had written two long books in a four-month stretch. It is important also for his definition of the aesthetic challenge he was confronting (to present the reality of whaling and yet wring poetry from the unpromising material). Melville's sense of what he owed Dana should be taken seriously. In 2016, while

TO RICHARD BENTLEY

it, the poetry runs as hard as sap from a frozen maple tree;—& to cook the thing up, one must needs throw in a little fancy, which from the nature of the thing, must be ungainly as the gambols of the whales themselves. Yet I mean to give the truth of the thing, spite of this. \* \* \*

To Richard Bentley

NEW YORK June 27, 1850

In the latter part of the coming autumn I shall have ready a new work,<sup>2</sup> and I write you now to propose its publication in England.

The book is a romance of adventure, founded upon certain wild legends in the Southern Sperm Whale Fisheries, and illustrated by the author's own personal experience, of two years & more, as a harpooneer.

Should you be inclined to undertake the book, I think that it will be worth to you £200.<sup>3</sup> Could you be positively put in possession of the copy-right, it might be worth to you a larger sum—considering its great novelty; for I do not know that the subject treated of has ever been worked up by a romancer; or, indeed, by any writer, in any adequate manner. But as things are, I say £200, because that sum was given for "White-Jacket"; and it does not appear, as yet, that you have been interfered with in your publication of that book; & therefore there seems reason to conclude, that, at £200, "White Jacket" must have been, in some degree, profitable to you.

In case of an arrangement, I shall, of course, put you in early & certain possession of the proof sheets, as in previous cases.

Being desirous of early arranging this matter in London,—so as to lose no time, when the book has passed thro' the Harpers' press here—I beg, M<sup>r</sup> Bentley, that you at once write me as to your views concerning it.

Circumstances make it indispensable, that if the book suits you at the sum above-named, that on the day of sale, you give your note for that sum—at four months say—to whomever I depute to ratify the arrangement with you. \* \* \*

preparing this new NCE, Parker discovered a very late but plausible newspaper account. The respected journalist E. J. Edwards in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on February 8, 1912, reported that before his death in 1877 Charles F. Briggs (once Melville's editor at Putnam's) had told him of a conversation he had had with Melville when they both were at the New York Custom-House. As Edwards remembered it, Melville had told Briggs that when he told his story to sailors after being picked up at Nukaheva by the *Lucy Ann* one of the men asked if he had read Dana's book and, when answered in the affirmative, declared that his adventures with the *Typees* were more exciting than Dana's. Edwards puts these words into Melville's mouth: "That gave me the inspiration to write the story of my adventures; and as I wrote along I found that I was doing it very well. I had no idea, however, when the book was first published that it would attain the popularity it did. I might have written a story, even if I had not been inspired to do that by Dana's book. But the fact remains that my book *Typee* was originally suggested by Dana's book. I wish I could hope that it would become as great a classic as Dana's book has become."

2. Although Melville expected to "have ready" by the autumn of 1850 the "romance of adventure" proposed in this letter, proofs of the American edition were not sent to Bentley until the next autumn—on September 10, 1851. Bentley published it with Melville's original title, *The Whale*, in October of 1851. The book made use of Melville's whaling experiences of "two years & more" (about twenty-six months) aboard three different whaleships—the *Acushnet*, the *Lucy Ann*, and the *Charles and Henry*—only on the last of which, for six months, was he possibly rated as a harpooneer (boatsteerer).

3. About \$1,000 in 1850 money—enough to support a small family for half a year or more. It helps to envision what a few thousand dollars would buy. In 1850 Melville's uncle Thomas's heirs sold the grand house and 250 acres south of Pittsfield (where the Melvilles spent the summer) to J. Rowland Morewood for \$6,500, the same price that Melville (or his father-in-law) paid for the contiguous Arrowhead, a rundown farmhouse with 160 acres.

To Evert A. Duyckinck

ARROWHEAD December 13, 1850

I have a sort of sea-feeling here in the country, now that the ground is all covered with snow. I look out of my window in the morning when I rise as I would out of a port-hole of a ship in the Atlantic. My room seems a ship's cabin; & at nights when I wake up & hear the wind shrieking, I almost fancy there is too much sail on the house, & I had better go on the roof & rig in the chimney.

Do you want to know how I pass my time?—I rise at eight—thereabouts—& go to my barn—say good-morning to the horse, & give him his breakfast. (It goes to my heart to give him a cold one, but it can't be helped) Then, pay a visit to my cow—cut up a pumpkin or two for her, & stand by to see her eat it—for it's a pleasant sight to see a cow move her jaws—she does it so mildly & with such a sanctity.—My own breakfast over, I go to my work-room & light my fire—then spread my M.S.S on the table—take one business squint at it, & fall to with a will. At 2½ P.M. I hear a preconcerted knock at my door, which (by request) continues till I rise & go to the door, which serves to wean me effectively from my writing, however interested I may be. My friends the horse & cow now demand their dinner—& I go & give it them. My own dinner over, I rig my sleigh & with my mother or sisters start off for the village—& if it be a Literary World day,<sup>4</sup> great is the satisfaction thereof.—My evenings I spend in a sort of mesmeric state in my room—not being able to read—only now & then skimming over some large-printed book.—Can you send me about fifty fast-writing youths, with an easy style & not averse to polishing their labors? If you can, I wish you would, because since I have been here I have planned about that number of future works & cant find enough time to think about them separately.—But I dont know but a book in a man's brain is better off than a book bound in calf—at any rate it is safer from criticism. And taking a book off the brain, is akin to the ticklish & dangerous business of taking an old painting off a panel—you have to scrape off the whole brain in order to get at it with due safety—& even then, the painting may not be worth the trouble.—

To Evert A. Duyckinck

ARROWHEAD February 12, 1851

"A dash of salt spray"<sup>5</sup>—where am I to get salt spray here in inland Pittsfield? I shall have to import it from foreign parts. All I now have to do with salt, is when I salt my horse & cow—not salt them down—I dont mean that (tho' indeed I have before now dined on "salt-horse") but when I give them their weekly salt, by way of seasoning all their week's meals in one prospective lump.

4. I.e., a day when the weekly *Literary World*, edited by Duyckinck and his brother George, would arrive from New York, usually on a Friday (if it was sent a day earlier than the date of the issue) or Saturday.

5. Duyckinck had asked Melville to contribute a nautical piece to *Holden's Dollar Magazine*, a monthly that he was now editing in addition to the weekly *Literary World*.

To Evert A. Duyckinck

How shall a man go about refusing a man?<sup>6</sup>—Best be round-about, or plumb on the mark?—I can not write the thing you want. I am in the humor to lend a hand to a friend, if I can;—but I am not in the humor to write the kind of thing you need—and I am not in the humor to holden's Magazine. If I were to go on to give you all my reasons—you would pronounce me a bore, so I will not do that. You must be content to believe that I have reasons, or else I would not refuse so small a thing.—As for the Daguerreotype (I spell the word right from your sheet)—As I can not send you, because I have none. And if I had, I would not send it for such a purpose, even to you.—Pshaw! you cry—& so cry I.—"This is intensified vanity, not true modesty or anything of that sort!"—Again, I say so too. But if it be so, how can I help it. The fact is, almost everybody is having his "mug" engraved nowadays; so that this test of distinction is getting to be reversed; and therefore, to see one's "mug" in a magazine is presumptive evidence that he's a nobody. So being as vain a man as ever lived; & believing that my illustrious name is famous throughout the world—I respectfully decline being *oblivionated* by a Daguerre-type (what a level of an unspellable word!)

We are all queer customers, Mr Duyckinck, you, I, & every body else in the world. So if I here seem queer to you, be sure, I am not alone in my queerness, tho' it present itself at a different port, perhaps, from other people, since every one has his own distinct peculiarity. But I trust you take me aright. If you dont' I shall be sorry—that's all.

After a long procrastination, I drove down to see M<sup>r</sup> Hawthorne a couple of weeks ago. I found him, of course, buried in snow; & the delightful scenery about him, all wrapped up & tucked away under a napkin, as it were. He was to have made me a day's visit, & I had promised myself much pleasure in getting him up in my snug room here, & discussing the Universe with a bottle of brandy & cigars. But he has not been able to come, owing to sickness in his family.—or else, he's up to the lips in the *Universe* again.

By the way, I have recently read his "Twice Told Tales"<sup>7</sup> (I had not read but a few of them before) I think they far exceed the "Mosses"—they are, I fancy, an earlier vintage from his vine. Some of those sketches are wonderfully subtle. Their deeper meanings are worthy of a Brahmin. Still there is something lacking—a good deal lacking—to the plump sphericity of the man. What is that?—He does'nt patronise the butcher—he needs roast-beef, done rare.—Nevertheless, for one, I regard Hawthorne (in his books) as evincing a quality of genius; immensely loftier, & more profound, too, than any other American has shown hitherto in the printed

6. Duyckinck expected to include an engraving of Melville in an upcoming issue of *Holden's* as that month's literary personality. Melville's refusal seemed inexplicable to the editor, who enlisted Melville's formidable mother to try to make her son listen to reason. The upshot of Melville's refusal is that we have no reliable image of him until 1860, only a too-vague image in a painting made soon after the publication of *Typee*. Ch. 33 of *Moby-Dick* contains the best explanation of Melville's seemingly perverse and ultimately suicidal attitude: he was one of "God's true princes of the Empire," kept from "the world's hustings." A biographer can only wish fervently that Melville had listened to his mother on this and other occasions, as on February 10, 1854, when she eloquently urged him to become a lecturer.

7. Melville had borrowed *Twice-Told Tales* (1837) from Duyckinck in his busy (two-book) summer of 1849, and on January 22, 1851, received two inscribed copies from Hawthorne himself (first series, 1845, and vol. 2, second series, 1842). See Seals, *Melville's Reading* (1988), nos. 258–60.

form. Irving is a grasshopper to him—putting the souls of the two men together, I mean<sup>8</sup>—But I must close. \* \* \*

I am just on the point of starting a foot for the village, and have glanced over the previous letter, before sealing.—I thought there seemed an unkindness in it—and that had I, under the circumstances, rec'd such a letter from you, in reply to such a letter as yours to me—I would deem it not well of you.—Still, I can't help it—and I may yet be of some better service to you than merely jotting a paragraph for Holden's. \* \* \*

To Nathaniel Hawthorne

ARROWHEAD [April 16?], 1851

"The House of the Seven Gables: A Romance. By Nathaniel Hawthorne. One vol. 16mo, pp. 344." The contents of this book do not belie its rich, clustering, romantic title. With great enjoyment we spent almost an hour in each separate gable. This book is like a fine old chamber, abundantly, but still judiciously, furnished with precisely that sort of furniture best fitted to furnish it. There are rich hangings, wherein are braided scenes from tragedies! There is old china with rare devices, set out on the carved buffet; there are long and indolent lounges to throw yourself upon; there is an admirable sideboard, plentifully stored with good viands; there is a smell as of old wine in the pantry; and finally, in one corner, there is a dark little black-letter volume in golden clasps, entitled "Hawthorne: A Problem." It has delighted us; it has piqued a reperusal; it has robbed us of a day, and made us a present of a whole year of thoughtfulness; it has bred great exhilaration and exultation with the remembrance that the architect of the Gables resides only six miles off, and not three thousand miles away, in England, say. We think the book, for pleasantness of running interest, surpasses the other works of the author. The curtains are more drawn; the sun comes in more; genialities peep out more. Were we to particularize what

8. See the "Mosses" essay (p. 544 herein) for Melville's defying the dominant opinion that Irving was America's greatest writer. Long before this time Duyckinck may have learned of the distress the essay had caused Irving and his biographer-nephew Pierre Irving. For the story see Parker's *The Powell Papers: A Confidence Man Amok Among the Anglo-American Literati* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2011), especially pp. 213–14. What enraged Pierre Irving for more than a decade was Melville's calling Irving a self-confessed imitator of Oliver Goldsmith, using Irving's tribute in his biography of Goldsmith against him. There is an earlier mystery. Irving was friendly with Gansevoort Melville in London early in 1846 and helped expedite the publication of *Typee*. Perhaps the American minister Louis McLane, who hated Gansevoort and was trying to remove him from his post as secretary of the legation, complained to Irving. Whatever happened, no one has yet found any comment Irving made about Herman Melville after early 1846.
9. On April 11, 1851, when Melville visited the Hawthornes at Lenox, Hawthorne gave him an inscribed copy of the newly published *The House of the Seven Gables*. In this letter Melville pretends to be reviewing it for an imaginary *Pittsfield Secret Review*. On May 7, Mrs. Hawthorne wrote her sister Elizabeth Peabody about the "review" and Melville's admiration for Hawthorne:

The fresh, sincere, glowing mind that utters it is in a state of "fluid consciousness," & to Mr Hawthorne speaks his innermost about GOD, the Devil & Life if so be he can get at the Truth—for he is a boy in opinion—having settled nothing yet—informs—ingens—and it would betray him to make public his confessions & efforts to grasp—because they would be considered perhaps impious, if one did not take in the whole scope of the case. Nothing pleases me better than to sit & hear this growing man dash his tumultuous waves of thought up against Mr Hawthorne's great, genial, comprehending silences—out of the profound of which a wonderful smile, or one powerful word sends back the foam & fury into a peaceful booming, calm—or perchance, not into a calm—but a murmuring expostulation—for there is never a "mush of concession" in him—Yet such a love & reverence & admiration for Mr Hawthorne as is really beautiful to witness.

To NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

has most struck us in the deeper passages, we would point out the scene where Clifford, for a moment, would fain throw himself forth from the win-dow to join the procession; or the scene where the Judge is left seated in his ancestral chair. Clifford is full of an awful truth throughout. He is conceived in the finest, truest spirit. He is no caricature. He is con-better than to devote an elaborate and careful paper to the full consid-eration and analysis of the purport and significance of what so strongly char-acterizes all of this author's writings. There is a certain tragic phase of humanity which, in our opinion, was never more powerfully embodied than by Hawthorne. We mean the tragicness of human thought in its own unbiassed, native, and profounder workings. We think that into no recorded mind has the intense feeling of the visible truth ever entered more deeply than into this man's. By visible truth, we mean the apprehension of the absolute condition of present things as they strike the eye of the man who fears them not, though they do their worst to him,—the man who, like Rus-sia or the British Empire, declares himself a sovereign nature (in himself) exists he insists upon treating with all Powers upon an equal basis. If any of those other Powers choose to withhold certain secrets, let them; that does not impair my sovereignty in myself; that does not make me tributary. And perhaps, after all, there is no secret. We incline to think that the Problem of the Universe is like the Freemason's mighty secret, so terrible to all children. It turns out, at last, to consist in a triangle, a mallet, and an apron,—nothing more! We incline to think that God cannot explain His own secrets, and that He would like a little information upon certain points Himself. We mortals astonish Him as much as He us. But it is this *Being* of the matter; there lies the knot with which we choke ourselves. As soon as you say *Me, a God, a Nature*, so soon you jump off from your stool and hang from the beam. Yes, that word is the hangman. Take God out of the dictionary, and you would have Him in the street.

There is the grand truth about Nathaniel Hawthorne. He says NO! in thunder; but the Devil himself cannot make him say yes. For all men who say yes, lie; and all men who say no,—why, they are in the happy condition of judicious, unincumbered travellers in Europe; they cross the frontiers into Eternity with nothing but a carpet-bag,—that is to say, the Ego. Whereas those yes-gentry, they travel with heaps of baggage, and, damn them! they will never get through the Custom House. What's the reason, Mr. Hawthorne, that in the last stages of metaphysics a fellow always falls to *swearing* so? I could rip an hour. You see, I began with a little criticism extracted for your benefit from the "Pittsfield Secret Review," and here I have landed in Africa.

Walk down one of these mornings and see me. No nonsense; come. Remember me to Mrs. Hawthorne and the children.

H. Melville.

P.S. The marriage of Phoebe with the daguerreotypist is a fine stroke, because of his turning out to be a *Maule*.<sup>1</sup> If you pass Hepzibah's cent-shop, buy me a Jim Crow (fresh) and send it to me by Ned Higgins.

1. In his reference to characters in *The House of the Seven Gables* Melville puns on the name of one of them (Maule) and the hammer-like tool (maul).

## To Nathaniel Hawthorne

ARROWHEAD Early May 1851<sup>2</sup>

I should have been rumbling down to you in my pine-board chariot a long time ago, were it not that for some weeks past I have been more busy than you can well imagine,—out of doors,—building and patching and tinkering away in all directions. Besides, I had my crops to get in,—corn and potatoes (I hope to show you some famous ones by and by),—and many other things to attend to, all accumulating upon this one particular season. I work myself; and at night my bodily sensations are akin to those I have so often felt before, when a hired man, doing my day's work from sun to sun. But I mean to continue visiting you until you tell me that my visits are both supererogatory and superfluous. With no son of man do I stand upon any etiquette or ceremony, except the Christian ones of charity and honesty. I am told, my fellow-man, that there is an aristocracy of the brain. Some men have boldly advocated and asserted it. Schiller seems to have done so, though I don't know much about him.<sup>3</sup> At any rate, it is true that there have been those who, while earnest in behalf of political equality, still accept the intellectual estates. And I can well perceive, I think, how a man of superior mind can, by its intense cultivation, bring himself, as it were, into a certain spontaneous aristocracy of feeling,—exceedingly nice and fastidious,—similar to that which, in an English Howard,<sup>4</sup> conveys a torpedo-fish thrill at the slightest contact with a social plebeian. So, when you see or hear of my ruthless democracy on all sides; you may possibly feel a touch of a shrink, or something of that sort. It is but nature to be shy of a mortal who boldly declares that a thief in jail is as honorable a personage as Gen. George Washington. This is ludicrous. But Truth is the silliest thing under the sun. Try to get a living by the Truth—and go to the Soup Societies. Heavens! Let any clergyman try to preach the Truth from its very stronghold, the pulpit, and they would ride him out of his church on his own pulpit bannister. It can hardly be doubted that all Reformers are bottomed upon the truth, more or less; and to the world at large are not reformers almost universally laughing-stocks? Why so? Truth is ridiculous to men. Thus easily in my room here do I, conceited and garrulous, reverse the test of my Lord Shaftesbury.<sup>5</sup>

It seems an inconsistency to assert unconditional democracy in all things, and yet confess a dislike to all mankind—in the mass. But not so.—But it's an endless sermon,—no more of it. I began by saying that the

2. Redated from June 17, 1851, by Parker (*Herman Melville: A Biography*, 1.84[=44]). The complicated evidence turns on a previously unknown letter Melville's copyist-sister Augusta Melville wrote her brother Allan on May 16, 1850, a letter deposited at Arrowhead by Anna Morewood a few years before her death in the 1990s. She was the widow of Henry Gansevoort Morewood (much older than she) and the daughter-in-law of Allan's daughter Maria (Millie), born in February 1849.
3. Melville seems to have had in mind the quality pointed out in Wolfgang Menzel's criticism of Friedrich Schiller as quoted by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in *The Poets and Poetry of Europe* (1845, 308):

We turn now to the second secret of the beauty belonging to Schiller's ideal characters. This is their nobleness,—their honorableness. His heroes and heroines never discredit the pride and dignity which announce a loftier nature; and all their outward acts bear the stamp of magnanimity and inborn nobleness. Its perfect opposite is the vulgar character, and that conventional spirit which serves for a bridle and leading-strings to the vulgar nature.

4. Among English families, the Howards had long held first place, its head being the duke of Norfolk. See *Moby-Dick*, Ch. 89.
5. Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713) maintained that one test of truth was its power to survive ridicule. As he put it in "An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour"

reason I have not been to Lenox is this,—in the evening I feel completely done up, as the phrase is, and incapable of the long jolting to get to your house and back. In a week or so, I go to New York, to bury myself in a third-story room, and work and slave on my "Whale" while it is driving through and thither by circumstances. The calm, the coolness, the silent grass-growing mood in which a man ought always to compose,—that, I fear, can seldom be mine. Dollars damn me; and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar. My dear Sir, a presentiment is engrated to pieces by the constant attrition of the wood, that is, the nutmeg-grater. What I feel most moved to write, that is banned,—it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the other way I cannot. So the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches. I'm rather sore, perhaps, in this letter; but see my hand!—four blisters on this palm, made by hoes and hammers within the last few days. It is a rainy morning; so I am indoors, and all work suspended. I feel cheerfully disposed, and therefore I write a little bluey. Would the Gin were here! If ever, my dear Hawthorne, in the eternal times that are to come, you and I shall sit down in Paradise, in some little shady corner by ourselves; and if we shall by any means be able to smuggle a basket of champagne there (I won't believe in a Temperance Heaven), and if we shall then cross our celestial legs in the celestial grass that is forever tropical, and strike our glasses and our heads together, till both musically ring in concert,—then, O my dear fellow-mortal, how shall we pleasantly discourse of all the things manifold which now so distress us,—when all the earth shall be but a reminiscence, yea, its final dissolution an antiquity. Then shall songs be composed as when wars are over; humorous, comic songs,—“Oh, when I lived in that queer little hole called the world,” or “Oh, when I toiled and sweated below,” or “Oh, when I knocked and was knocked in the fight!”—yes, let us look forward to such things. Let us swear that, though now we sweat, yet it is because of the dry heat which is indispensable to the nourishment of the vine which is to bear the grapes that are to give us the champagne hereafter.

But I was talking about the "Whale." As the fishermen say, "he's in his flurry" when I left him some three weeks ago. I'm going to take him by his jaw, however, before long, and finish him up in some fashion or other. What's the use of elaborating what, in its very essence, is so short-lived as a modern book? Though I wrote the Gospels in this century, I should die in the gutter.—I talk all about myself, and this is selfishness and egotism. Granted. But how help it? I am writing to you; I know little about you, but something about myself. So I write about myself,—at least, to you. Don't trouble yourself, though, about writing; and don't trouble yourself about visiting; and when you do visit, don't trouble yourself about talking. I will do all the writing and visiting and talking myself.—By the way, in the last "Dollar Magazine" I read "The Unpardonable Sin."<sup>6</sup> He was a sad fellow, that

(1709), truth "can stand in any light," even the challenging light of ridicule. Shaftesbury cited the fact that Socrates's character and doctrines seemed only the more "solid and just" after they had "stood the Proof" of Aristophanes's ridicule. But whereas Shaftesbury is saying that you can know a thing is true if it survives ridicule, Melville is saying that you can know a thing is true because it is considered ridiculous. Melville is reversing Shaftesbury's test. Julian Hawthorne printed "revere" (misreading Melville's hand).

6. Hawthorne's story had been reprinted in *Holden's Dollar Magazine* for May 1851.

Ethan Brand. I have no doubt you are by this time responsible for many a shake and tremor of the tribe of "general readers." It is a frightful poetical creed that the cultivation of the brain eats out the heart. But it's my prose opinion that in most cases, in those men who have fine brains and work them well, the heart extends down to hams. And though you smoke and work with the fire of tribulation, yet, like veritable hams, the head only gives them richer and the better flavor. I stand for the heart. To the dogs with the head! I had rather be a fool with a heart, than Jupiter Olympus with his head. The reason the mass of men fear God, and at bottom dislike Him, is because they rather distrust His heart, and fancy Him all brain like a watch. (You perceive I employ a capital initial in the pronoun referring to the Diety; don't you think there is a slight dash of flunkeyism in that usage?) Another thing. I was in New York for four-and-twenty hours the other day, and saw a portrait of N. H. And I have seen and heard many flattering (in a publisher's point of view) allusions to the "Seven Gables." And I have seen "Tales," and "A New Volume" announced, by N. H.<sup>7</sup> So upon the whole, I say to myself, this N. H. is in the ascendant. My dear Sir, they begin to patronize. All Fame is patronage. Let me be infamous: there is no patronage in that. What "reputation" H. M. has is horrible. Think of it! To go down to posterity is bad enough, any way; but to go down as a "man who lived among the cannibals"! When I speak of posterity, in reference to myself, I only mean the babies who will probably be born in the moment immediately ensuing upon my giving up the ghost. I shall go down to some of them, in all likelihood. "Typee" will be given to them, perhaps, with their gingerbread. I have come to regard this matter of Fame as the most transparent of all vanities. I read Solomon more and more, and every time see deeper and deeper and unspeakable meanings in him. I did not think of Fame, a year ago, as I do now. My development has been all within a few years past. I am like one of those seeds taken out of the Egyptian Pyramids; which, after being three thousand years a seed and nothing but a seed, being planted in English soil, it developed itself, grew to greenness, and then fell to mould.<sup>8</sup> So I. Until I was twenty-five, I had no development at all. From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. Three weeks have scarcely passed, at any time between then and now, that I have not unfolded within myself. But I feel that I am now come to the inmost leaf of the bulb, and that shortly the flower must fall to the mould. It seems to me now that Solomon was the truest man who ever spoke,<sup>9</sup> and yet that he a little *managed* the truth with a view to popular conservatism; or else there have been many corruptions and interpolations of the text—In reading some of Goethe's sayings, so worshipped by his votaries, I came across this, "*Live in the all.*" That is to say, your separate identity is but a wretched one,—good; but get out of yourself, spread and expand

7. Melville may have seen any one of a number of Hawthorne portraits, possibly the 1850 one by Cephas Thompson (see *Correspondence* [1993], pp. 188–89). Announcements of Hawthorne's forthcoming books appeared in the *Literary World* and elsewhere during and after May 1851.

8. At about this time, the English novelist G. P. R. James carried on an experiment at Stockbridge, south of Pittsfield, of planting some Egyptian wheat seed taken from the inside of a mummy case. His son Charles Leigh James described the planting, saw it come up, and observed that "it did not seed 'worth a continental.'" See S. M. Ellis, *The Solitary Horseman, or the Life and Adventures of G. P. R. James*, as cited in *American Notes and Queries* 7 (December 1947): 41.

9. See *Moby-Dick* (Ch. 96): "The truest of all men was the Man of Sorrows, and the truest of all books is Solomon's, and Ecclesiastes is the fine hammered steel of woe. 'All is vanity.' ALL. This wilful world hath not got hold of unchristian Solomon's wisdom yet."

yourself, and bring to yourself the tinglings of life that are felt in the flowers and the woods, that are felt in the planets Saturn and Venus, and the Fixed Stars. What nonsense! Here is a fellow with a raging toothache. "My dear boy," Goethe says to him, "you are sorely afflicted with that tooth; but you must *live in the all*, and then you will be happy!" As with all great genius, there is an immense deal of flummery in Goethe, and in proportion to my own contact with him, a monstrous deal of it in me!

P.S. "Amen!" saith Hawthorne. H. Melville

N.B. This "all" feeling, though, there is some truth in. You must often have felt it, lying on the grass on a warm summer's day. Your legs seem to send out shoots into the earth. Your hair feels like leaves upon your head. This is the *all* feeling. But what plays the mischief with the truth is that men will insist upon the universal application of a temporary feeling or opinion. P.S. You must not fail to admire my discretion in paying the postage on this letter.

### To Nathaniel Hawthorne:

NARROWHEAD June 29, 1851

The clear air and open window invite me to write to you. For some time past I have been so busy with a thousand things that I have almost forgotten when I wrote you last, and whether I received an answer. This most persuasive season has now for weeks recalled me from certain crotchety and over-doleful chimearas, the like of which men like you and me and some others, forming a chain of God's posts round the world, must be content to encounter now and then, and fight them the best way we can. But come they will,—for, in the boundless, trackless, but still glorious wild wilderness through which these outposts run, the Indians do sorely abound, as well as the insignificant but still stinging mosquitoes. Since you have been here, I have been building some shanties of houses (connected with the old one) and likewise some shanties of chapters and essays. I have been plowing and sowing and raising and painting and printing and

1. Melville's exact source remains to be discovered. The idea is general in Goethe; the particular thought is doubtless a translation of a phrase in stanza four of "Generalbeichte":

Willst du Absolution  
Deinen Treuen geben,  
Wollen wir nach deinem Wink  
Unablässlich streben,  
Uns von Halben zu entwohnen  
Und in Ganzen, Guten, Schönen  
Resolut zu leben.

Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881), Scottish philosopher important in introducing German writers to Americans, translates it "To live . . . in the Whole" (*Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, 3 [1839]: 205), and John S. Dwight renders it "living" "In the Whole" (George Ripley, ed., *Specimens of Foreign Standard Literature*, Vol. 3, *Select Minor Poems from the German of Goethe and Schiller*, 1839, p. 48). One of Ripley's notes on Goethe may have helped give currency to the idea Melville was lampooning: "Total occupation of himself, heart and soul, in the subject nearest him,—living in it, and identifying himself with it for the time,—left no room for sick yearnings, made each little sphere a world, each moment an eternity. This is evidently what he meant by 'Living in the Whole,' by finding 'All in One, and One in All'" (p. 365).

praying,—and now begin to come out upon a less bustling time, and to enjoy the calm prospect of things from a fair piazza at the north of the old farm house here.

Not entirely yet, though, am I without something to be urgent with. The "Whale" is only half through the press; for, wearied with the long delay of the printers, and disgusted with the heat and dust of the babylonish brick-kiln of New York, I came back to the country to feel the grass—and end the book reclining on it, if I may.—I am sure you will pardon this speaking all about myself,—for if I say so much on that head, be sure all the rest of the world are thinking about themselves ten times as much. Let us speak, though we show all our faults and weaknesses,—for it is a sign of strength to be weak, to know it, and out with it,—not in set way and ostentatiously, though, but incidentally and without premeditation.—But I am falling into my old foible—preaching. I am busy, but shall not be very long. Come and spend a day here, if you can and want to; if not, stay in Lenox, and God give you long life. When I am quite free of my present engagements, I am going to treat myself to a ride and a visit to you. Have ready a bottle of brandy, because I always feel like drinking that heroic drink when we talk ontological heroics together. This is rather a crazy letter in some respects, I apprehend. If so, ascribe it to the intoxicating effects of the latter end of June operating upon a very susceptible and peradventure feeble temperament.

Shall I send you a fin of the *Whale* by way of a specimen mouthful? The tail is not yet cooked—though the hell-fire in which the whole book is broiled might not unreasonably have cooked it all ere this. This is the book's motto (the secret one),—Ego non baptiso te in nomine—but make out the rest yourself.<sup>2</sup>

To Richard Bentley

ARROWHEAD July 20, 1851

I promptly received your note of the 3<sup>d</sup> Inst: in reply to mine concerning the publication of my new book. I accept your offer for the work;<sup>3</sup> but not without strong hope that before long, we shall be able to treat upon a firmer basis than now, & heretofore; & that with the more assurance you will be disposed to make overtures for American books. And here let me say to you,—since you are peculiarly interested in the matter—that in all reasonable probability no International Copyright will ever be obtained—in our time, at least—if you Englishmen wait at all for the first step to be taken in this country. Who have any motive in this country to bestir themselves in this thing?

2. Melville's diabolical baptismal formula at the end of this letter appears in fuller form in *Moby-Dick*, Ch. 113, when Captain Ahab uses the blood of the pagan harpooners to baptize the harpoon with which he plans to kill the white whale. For Melville's source, first discovered by Geoffrey Sanborn, see "*Moby-Dick* and Melville's Notes in His Shakespeare" on p. 543 herein. See Parker, *Herman Melville: A Biography* (1.847) for the likelihood that Melville saw some of his religious reviewers as witch-hunters and identified himself with those persecuted and killed as witches. In *Moby-Dick* (Ch. 54), one of the Spanish dons hopes that "Dame Isabella's Inquisition," the cruel legacy of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain, has waned in Lima. Continuing to brood about religious persecution, in 1856 Melville thought of dedicating his American satire *The Confidence-Man* to victims of *auto-da-fé* (act of faith; in practice, burning alive at the stake).

3. Bentley had made a generous offer, £150.

Only the authors.—Who are the authors?—A handful. And what influence have they to bring to bear upon any question whose settlement must necessarily assume a political form?—They can bring scarcely any influence whatever. This country & nearly all its affairs are governed by sturdy backwoodsmen—noble fellows enough, but not at all literary, & who care not a fig for any authors except those who write those most saleable of all books nowadays—ie—the newspapers, & magazines. And tho' the number of cultivated, catholic men, who may be supposed to feel an interest in a national literature, is large & every day growing larger, yet they are nothing in comparison with the overwhelming majority who care nothing about it. This country is at present engaged in furnishing material for future authors; not in encouraging its living ones. Nevertheless, if this matter by any means comes to be made nationally conspicuous; and if you in England come out magnanimously, & protect a foreign author; then there is that sort of stuff in the people here, which will be sure to make them all eagerness in reciprocating. For, be assured, that my countrymen will never be outdone in generosity.—Therefore, if you desire an International Copyright—hoist your flag on your side of the water, & the signal will be answered; but look for no flag on this side till then.

I am now passing thro' the press, the closing sheets of my new work; so that I shall be able to forward it to you in the course of two or three weeks—perhaps a little longer. I shall forward it to you thro' the Office of the Legation. And upon your receipt of it, I suppose you will immediately proceed to printing; as, of course, publication will not take place here, till you have made yourself safe.—You say you will give me your notes at three & six months; I infer that this means from the time of receiving the book. \* \* \*

To Nathaniel Hawthorne

ARROWHEAD July 22, 1851

This is not a letter, or even a note—but only a passing word said to you over your garden gate. I thank you for your easy-flowing long letter (received yesterday) which flowed through me, and refreshed all my meadows, as the Housatonic—opposite me—does in reality. I am now busy with various things—not incessantly though; but enough to require my frequent tinkering; and this is the height of the haying season, and my nag is dragging me home his winter's dinners all the time. And so, one way and another, I am not yet a disengaged man; but shall be, very soon. Meantime, the earliest good chance I get, I shall roll down to you.

My dear fellow-being, we—that is, you and I—must hit upon some little bit of vagabondism, before Autumn comes. Graylock<sup>4</sup>—we must go and vagabondize there. But ere we start we must dig a deep hole and bury all the Blue Devils,<sup>5</sup> there to abide till the Last Day. \* \* \*

4. The highest mountain in Massachusetts, visible to the north on a clear day from Melville's study window at Arrowhead, his farmhouse south of Pittsfield.

5. The blues or hypos such as Ishmael feels at the start of "Loomings."

To Sarah Huyler Morewood<sup>6</sup>

ARROWHEAD September 12 [or 19?], 1851

\* \* \* The "Hour & the Man" is exceedingly acceptable to me. "Zanoni" is a very fine book in very fine print—but I shall endeavor to surmount that difficulty. At present, however, the Fates have plunged me into certain silly thoughts and wayward speculations<sup>7</sup> which will prevent me, for a time, from falling into the reveries of these books—for a fine book is a sort of reverie to us—is it not?—So I shall regard them as my Paradise in store, & Mrs Morewood the goddess from whom it comes.

Concerning my own forthcoming book—it is off my hands, but must cross the sea before publication here. Dont you buy it—dont you read it, when it does come out, because it is by no means the sort of book for you. It is not a peice of fine feminine Spitalfields silk<sup>8</sup>—but is of the horrible texture of a fabric that should be woven of ships' cables & hausers. A Polar wind blows through it, & birds of prey hover over it. Warn all gentle fastidious people from so much as peeping into the book—on risk of a lumbago & sciatics.

To Evert A. Duyckinck

ARROWHEAD November 7, 1851

Your letter received last night had a sort of stunning effect on me.<sup>9</sup> For some days past being engaged in the woods with axe, wedge, & beetle,<sup>1</sup> the Whale had almost completely slipped me for the time (& I was the merrier for it) when Crash! comes Moby Dick himself (as you justly say) & reminds me of what I have been about for part of the last year or two. It is really & truly a surprising coincidence—to say the least. I make no doubt it is Moby Dick himself, for there is no account of his capture after the sad fate of the Pequod about fourteen years ago.—Ye Gods! What a Commentator is this Ann Alexander whale. What he has to say is short & pithy & very much to the point. I wonder if my evil art has raised this monster.

The Behrings Straits Disaster, too, & the cording along the New Foundland coast of those scores & scores of fishermen, and the inland gales on the Lakes. Verily the pot boileth inside & out. And woe unto us, we but live in the days that have been. Yet even then they found time to be jolly.

6. Sarah Morewood and her husband, Rowland Morewood, lived at Broadhall, the adjacent property to the west where Melville's paternal uncle and his large family had lived. An inveterate hostess, she was febrile, the Melvilles knew, in her embarrassing infatuations with a brother-in-law of former President Tyler, then, for years (as Parker explains in both volumes of *Herman Melville: A Biography*), with George Duyckinck, the decorous, prim brother of Evert Duyckinck.

7. The "silly thoughts and wayward speculations" concerned his next book, *Pierre*. Mrs. Morewood's gifts were Harriet Martineau's *The Hour and the Man* (1841) and Edward George Bulwer-Lytton's *Zanoni* (1842).

8. French Protestant refugees from France in the 16th century began weaving silk in Spitalfield, near Brick Lane in London, and by the 1700s gorgeous silks were woven there.

9. Duyckinck had sent Melville a clipping about the sinking of the *Ann Alexander* by a whale off Chile, a sensation especially in the largest whaling states of New York and Massachusetts. The news arrived in the United States in a copy of the *Panama Herald* of October 16, 1851 (see Parker, *Melville*, 1.877-78 and *Correspondence* 208).

1. A heavy hammering tool, like a maul.

Why didn't you send me that inestimable item of "Herman de Wardt" before?<sup>2</sup> Oh had I but had that pie to cut into! But that & many other fine things doubtless are omitted. All one can do is to pick up what chips he can buy round him. They have no Vatican<sup>3</sup> (as you have) in Pittsfield here. \* \* \*

To Nathaniel Hawthorne

ARROWHEAD November 17, 1851

Your letter<sup>4</sup> was handed me last night on the road going to Mr. Morewood's, and I read it there. Had I been at home, I would have sat down at once and answered it. In me divine magnanimities are spontaneous and instantaneous—catch them while you can. The world goes round, and the other side comes up. So now I can't write what I felt. But I felt pantheistic then—your heart beat in my ribs and mine in yours, and both in God's. A sense of unspeakable security is in me this moment, on account of your having understood the book. I have written a wicked book, and feel spotless as the lamb. Ineffable socialities are in me. I would sit down and dine with you and all the gods in old Rome's Pantheon. It is a strange feeling—no hopefulness is in it, no despair. Content—that is it; and irrefoundest sense of being, not of an incidental feeling.

Whence come you, Hawthorne? By what right do you drink from my flagon of life? And when I put it to my lips—lo, they are yours and not mine. I feel that the Godhead is broken up like the bread at the Supper, and that we are the pieces. Hence this infinite fraternity of feeling. Now, sympathizing with the paper, my angel turns over another page. You did not care a penny for the book. But, now and then as you read, you understood the pervading thought that impelled the book—and that you praised. Was it not

2. Duyckinck's second enclosure about "Herman [possibly Norman] de Wardt" is unidentified. Scholar Jay Leyda conjectured an allusion to Wynkyn de Worde's *The Boke of Keryngte* (Log 1.431) a 1508 book on carving that includes a brief instruction about whalemeat, which would fit with Melville's comment that he wanted to "cut into" it (de Worde's book was not reprinted until 1867, however). Whatever the inestimable item was, it clearly contained some more of the sort of "random allusions to whales" Melville had been accumulating for his "Extracts" at the start of *Moby-Dick*.

3. Library. Duyckinck's great book collection went largely to the New York Public Library, where it was dispersed. His manuscript material, kept more nearly intact, has proved inexhaustible. As late as 1990 Parker found an unknown Melville letter in a folder of undated letters from unidentified correspondents, and long-printed texts of some documents still contain mistranscriptions.

4. The biographical context of this letter is outlined in *Correspondence* (1993, 210-11), and more fully detailed in Ch. 1 of Parker's *Melville*, Vol. 2. From evidence in a letter and in a newspaper article, we now know that Melville and Hawthorne had met twice that month, first on November 4 at the house in Lenox of the lawyer Charles Sedgwick, then at the Little Red Inn in Lenox, around November 14, when Melville gave Hawthorne the copy of *Moby-Dick*, which he read at once, despite the confusion of packing up for a move to the eastern part of the state, and wrote Melville about. Melville later destroyed Hawthorne's letter and the presentation copy of *Moby-Dick* was lost before or during the Hawthornes' long stay in England and Italy beginning in 1853. Parker's first volume concludes with the scene in which the two men sit alone together through an early afternoon in the dining room at the Little Red Inn, where a writer in a newspaper said they were a source of great amusement to the Lenox gamblers, who thought the two reclusive celebrities had chosen this odd way of getting acquainted (it not being the custom for people living locally to dine at the hotel). Hawthorne knew the publication of *Moby-Dick* was imminent, but the dedication was an astounding surprise. The men had taken farewell of each other, the presentation copy of *Moby-Dick* before them, only two or three or four days before Melville received Hawthorne's praise-filled letter (see Parker 1.879-83).

so? You were archangel enough to despise the imperfect body, and embrace the soul. Once you hugged the ugly Socrates because you saw the flame in the mouth, and heard the rushing of the demon,—the familiar,—and recognized the sound; for you have heard it in your own solitudes.

My dear Hawthorne, the atmospheric skepticisms steal into me now, and make me doubtful of my sanity in writing you thus. But, believe me, I am not mad, most noble Festus!<sup>5</sup> But truth is ever incoherent, and when the big hearts strike together, the concussion is a little stunning. Farewell. Don't write a word about the book.<sup>6</sup> That would be robbing me of my miserly delight. I am heartily sorry I ever wrote anything about you—it was paltry. Lord, when shall we be done growing? As long as we have anything more to do, we have done nothing. So, now, let us add *Moby Dick* to our blessing, and step from that. Leviathan is not the biggest fish;—I have heard of Krakens.<sup>7</sup>

This is a long letter, but you are not at all bound to answer it. Possibly, if you do answer it, and direct it to Herman Melville, you will missend it—for the very fingers that now guide this pen are not precisely the same that just took it up and put it on this paper. Lord, when shall we be done changing? Ah! it's a long stage, and no inn in sight, and night coming, and the body cold. But with you for a passenger, I am content and can be happy. I shall leave the world, I fell, with more satisfaction for having come to know you. Knowing you persuades me more than the Bible of our immortality.

What a pity, that, for your plain, bluff letter, you should get such gibberish! Mention me to Mrs. Hawthorne and to the children, and so, good-by to you, with my blessing.

Herman.

5. Melville defends the "gibberish" (see the last paragraph) of his letter with his biblical reference to Festus: "And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness" (Acts 26.24–25).

6. Hawthorne had offered to review *Moby-Dick*—just as Melville had written on *Mosses from an Old Manse* in the *Literary World*. Following Melville's directive, Hawthorne did not—although he wrote to Duyckinck on December 1, 1851: "What a book Melville has written! It gives me an idea of much greater power than his preceding ones. It hardly seemed to me that the review of it, in the *Literary World* [November 15 and 22], did justice to its best points" (*Letters*, 1843–1853, edited by Thomas Woodson, L. Neal Smith, and Norman Holmes Pearson [Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1985], p. 508).

7. A reference to *Pierre*, which he was envisioning as more profound than *Moby-Dick*. How Melville could have thought so has proved difficult for critics to understand, primarily because what he had in mind and on his writing desk at this time was not the book that was published in 1852. As Melville completed it at the end of December 1851, *Pierre* was the tragic story of the psychological awakening of a youthful idealist who makes the grotesque mistake of trying to put Christian principles into practice. In New York City, bolstered by hostile reviews and weak sales of *Moby-Dick*, the Harpers offered Melville an insulting and ruinous contract—twenty cents on the dollar after they had recouped their costs rather than the old basis of fifty cents on the dollar. Only then did Melville write into the manuscript a transparently autobiographical and ultimately suicidal account of his career. See Parker's introduction in the reconstruction of the "Kraken Edition" of *Pierre* (HarperCollins, 1995, xi–xlvii), notable for the illustrations by Maurice Sendak. The dust-jacket copy contains this hopeful passage:

*Moby-Dick* and the reconstructed *Pierre* are at last revealed as complexly interlinked companion studies of the moods of thought—the *Typee* and *Omoo* of depth psychology. . . . Not offered as 'definitive' but as supplementary to the standard Northwestern-Newberry text, this edition of *Pierre* is a close approximation of what Melville in a letter to Hawthorne alluded to as his "kraken" book, grander than the book whose original title was *The Whale*, just as the legendary krakens were more awesome than sperm whales. [See p. 626 herein.]

I can't stop yet. If the world was entirely made up of Magians, I'll tell you what I should do. I should have a paper-mill established at one end of the house, and so have an endless riband of foolscap rolling in upon my desk; and upon that endless riband I should write a thousand—a million—billion thoughts, all under the form of a letter to you. The divine magnet is in you, and my magnet responds. Which is the biggest? A foolish question—they are One.

Don't think that by writing me a letter, you shall always be bored with an immediate reply to it—and so keep both of us delving over a writing-desk eternally. No such thing! I sha'n't always answer your letters, and you may do just as you please.

To Sophia Peabody Hawthorne

NEW YORK CITY January 8, 1852

I have hunted up the finest Bath I could find, gilt-edged and stamped, whereon to inscribe my humble acknowledgement of your highly flattering letter of the 29th Dec.<sup>8</sup> It really amazed me that you should find any satisfaction in that book. It is true that some men have said they were pleased with it, but you are the only woman—for as a general thing, women have small taste for the sea. But, then, since you, with your spiritualizing nature, see more things than other people, and by the same process, refine all you see, so that they are not the same things that other people see, but things which while you think you but humbly discover them, you do in fact create them for yourself—therefore, upon the whole, I do not so much marvel at your expressions concerning *Moby Dick*. At any rate, your allusion for example to the "Spirit Spout" first showed to me that there was a subtle significance in that thing—but I did not, in that case, mean it. I had some vague idea while writing it, that the whole book was susceptible of an allegoric construction, & also that parts of it were—but the speciality of many of the particular subordinate allegories, were first revealed to me, after

Melville bids Hawthorne farewell because the Hawthornes were all but gone: they took the train in Pittsfield on November 21 in a fierce snowstorm, never to return to the Berkshires. Melville's "endless riband" postscript echoes his May 1, 1850, letter to Dana, in which he imagined writing only for him and spoke of feeling "welded" to him by a "Siamese link of affectionate sympathy." His intellectual, psychological, and aesthetic growth in a year and a half is measured by the two ideal readers he envisioned.

8. Sophia Hawthorne's letter was delayed by being forwarded to Melville from Pittsfield to New York, where he had gone with the completed manuscript of *Pierre* in its short form, without the sections he soon added on the hero as an author. Characteristically, Melville kept his distress over the demeaning contract the Harpers had just offered for *Pierre* out of his reply, but he may already have begun making his interpolations into the manuscript, knowing if not admitting that his career as a book writer might be over. Mrs. Hawthorne's admiration for Melville was firmly grounded in the fact that at times he had spoken almost as glowingly about her husband as she always did. Two letters newly acquired by Stanford University demonstrate the profundity of Sophia Hawthorne's interest in Melville during 1852, months after she had read *Moby-Dick*, of both as a young admirer of her husband and as himself a man of incalculable qualities. For his part, Melville was rather too appreciative of Sophia as a literary-minded woman, unlike his own wife; Melville's sister Augusta quoted him on the Hawthornes in a letter to their sister Helen on January 24, 1851 (New York Public Library, Gansevoort-Lansing): "Herman says that they are the loveliest family he ever met with, or anyone can possibly imagine."

reading Mr Hawthorne's letter, which, without citing any particular examples, yet intimated the part-&-parcel allegoricalness of the whole.—But, My Dear Lady, I shall not again send you a bowl of salt water. The next chalice I shall commend, will be a rural bowl of milk.<sup>9</sup> \* \* \*

Now, Madam, had you not said anything about Moby Dick, & had Mr Hawthorne been equally silent, then had I said perhaps, something to both of you about another Wonder-(-full) Book.<sup>1</sup> But as it is, I must be silent. How is it, that while all of us human beings are so entirely disembarassed in censuring a person; that so soon as we would praise, then we begin to feel awkward? I never blush after denouncing a man: but I grow scarlet, after eulogizing him. And yet this is all wrong; and yet we can't help it; and so we see how true was that musical sentence of the poet when he sang—  
"We can't help ourselves"

For tho' we know what we ought to be; & what it would be very sweet & beautiful to be; yet we can't be it. That is most sad, too. Life is a long Dardenelles,<sup>2</sup> My Dear Madam, the shores whereof are bright with flowers, which we want to pluck, but the bank is too high; & so we float on & on, hoping to come to a landing-place at last—but swoop! we launch into the great sea! Yet the geographers say, even then we must not despair, because across the great sea, however desolate & vacant it may look, lie all Persia & the delicious lands roundabout Damascus.

So wishing you a pleasant voyage at last to that sweet & far cuntry—\* \* \*

## CRITICISM



9. Melville knew that Sophia Hawthorne knew that the chalice commended in *Macbeth* (1.7.11) was a "poison'd" one; the rural bowl of milk was *Pierre*, a book set perhaps almost entirely in the country, before this week of January, when he began enlarging it with the *Pierre*-as-author sections—but it was first completed as a book of ambiguous psychological depths, not a tale of innocent rustics at work and play, as Melville was ironically implying.

1. On November 7, 1851, while still in Lenox, Hawthorne had sent a copy of his new *A Wonder Book for Boys and Girls* to Malcolm, the Melvilles' first child, then not quite three years old. In a section called "Bald Summit: After the Story," written in July 1851, Hawthorne had paid a neighborly compliment (which incidentally records what he thought the title of Melville's new book was to be): "On the hither side of Pittsfield sits Herman Melville, shaping out the gigantic conception of his 'White Whale,' while the gigantic shape of Graylock looms upon him from his study-window." The father was meant to preserve the book for the son, but in the meantime he was to enjoy the compliment to himself. Hawthorne had written this surprise for Melville into his new book while Melville was preparing his own surprise by dedicating his own new book to Hawthorne.

2. Or Hellespont, a strait connecting the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean Sea.