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The Business of Reflection

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INTRODUCTION



(i) Hawthorne in His Notebooks

Writers keep journals for different purposes, and for different purposes at various times in their careers. Emerson spoke of his journal as a “‘Savings Bank’ where he could deposit his daily ‘fractions’ and hope to see them grow into ‘integers,’”¹ as they often did as he moved from journal to lecture to published essay. Emerson writes about books and ideas, he comments on people, and he trains his eye on what he perceives to be signs of the times; only intermittently, after his youthful self-preoccupation, does he take stock of himself beyond questions of vocation. Thoreau writes of his daily walks and his quarrels with society, but he is also absorbed with his spiritual development and his prickly personal relationship with the world; his journal is a calendar of nature’s microseasons and of his own.

Hawthorne’s notebooks (so his wife Sophia titled them in her editions after his death) resemble neither of these, nor do they fully resemble one another. Commenting on Hawthorne’s “Lost Notebook” of 1835–41, Hyatt Waggoner characterizes its author as “very clearly not a ‘thinker,’ not concerned with the current of thought in his day or with conceptual, philosophic, or theological problems of any sort”; his interest is “in the ‘real world’ outside himself, in the workings of the human psyche under stress, the ‘deeper psychology,’ and in curious facts, especially if they suggested what he once called ‘the moral picturesque.’”² The earlier American notebooks are divided between descriptive accounts of daily reality (travels

included) and brief notations for stories and sketches, the realist and the allegorist existing side by side in ways that almost defy literary and psychological understanding. The surprising thing, given Hawthorne's fictional themes of sin and guilt, is his apparent *normality* in the descriptive sections of the notebooks; he is open, inquisitive, ready to take people as he finds them, sociable, and even mildly flirtatious (when away from Salem), with few hints of the obscure guilts of the early tales or of their quasi-theological contextualization of human frailty. The Henry James who objected that "Hawthorne was not a realist" was quick to add that "he had a high sense of reality—his Note-Books superabundantly testify to it."³ They do. Their writer seems secular, tolerant, oriented to the present and immediate, and, though solitary before his marriage, rarely introspective. Hawthorne's travel notebooks, especially, show him moving easily in the world, consorting with all classes of people and observing them with a shrewdness that belies contemporary critic E. P. Whipple's otherwise keen remark that Hawthorne's "eye is more certain in detecting remote spiritual laws and their relations, than in the sure grasp of individual character."⁴

The Manse notebook, begun in July 1842 shortly after his marriage to Sophia Peabody and the couple's removal to Emerson's Concord, is Hawthorne's idyll. Reborn himself (so he feels), Hawthorne imbibes much of the morning atmosphere of transcendentalism, if little of its philosophical and social radicalism. It is the happiest period of his adult life, clouded only by the urgencies of making money, and the journal is genial, quietly humorous, and appreciative of life's bounty in what seemed, illusorily he knew, a perpetual New England summer. With the birth of daughter Una in 1844 and son Julian in 1846, the reality principle entered from another side. The notebooks show Hawthorne an attentive and loving father, though uneasy about Una's mercurial temper; yet having wished for family life and joined fictively in its cultural consecration, Hawthorne seems also to have found himself prematurely burdened by it. Fatherhood "ought not to come too early in a man's life—not till he has fully enjoyed his youth," he told George Hillard shortly after the birth of Una (CE XVI: 22–23). The gentle joyousness that shines through the first year of the Manse notebook represents a high-water mark of Hawthorne's emotional life; it would not be forgotten. Within the stout, sober, formally dressed personage of later photographs lay the embers, never fully extinguished, of the adventuring newlywed who felt his life of the senses curtailed too soon after it began.

The English and the French and Italian notebooks are the work of a riper and more capacious man—not yet a man of the world so much as a man *coming into* the world and fronting a complexity of culture and history at once exhilarating and overwhelming. Though rarely "about" Hawthorne,

the later notebooks disclose him everywhere as he observes, judges, and reflects with the conservatism of a mind struggling to retain its core values and suppositions in a world immensely larger and more attractive and repellent than he has known.

England seemed comfortably familiar to Hawthorne, as it would have to almost any literary American; the English countryside especially delighted him. Nothing could have prepared him, however, for the appalling squalor and degradation of the Liverpool slums with their suggestion not only of material conditions beyond imaginable remedy (Melville had similarly despaired about lower-class Liverpool in *Redburn*) but also of a quasi-hereditary brutishness of body and soul that seemed an inherent casualty of the British class system. Even among the upper middle classes, a certain coarseness struck Hawthorne as the defining quality of national life. Always uneasy about humanity's "animal nature," Hawthorne felt himself more "surrounded by materialisms, and hemmed in with the grossness of this earthly life, than anywhere else" in his experience (CE XXII: 433). The bluff, commonsensical beef-and-ale Englishman, John Bull, won his grudging affection and, within limits, his respect. Jane Bull was another matter. Except perhaps for his comments on Margaret Fuller in Rome, Hawthorne's characterization of English women ("They are gross, gross, gross. Who would not shrink from such a mother! Who would not abhor such a wife!" [CE XXI: 133]) is the harshest pronouncement in his notebooks. Hawthorne was always fastidious about feminine appearance—he fretted about the on-again, off-again beauty of young Una—but women were also the locus of spirituality for him, and the sight of a nation of beefy dowagers was more than an affront to his aesthetic sense; it was a mockery of his deep, if sometimes tenuous, belief in the reality of the soul.

Hawthorne's descriptions of England are chiefly of city and country, tourist sites, and occasional social calls or formal occasions; they are rarely cultural or philosophical, nor do they bear fruit in published writing, the essayistic *Our Old Home* (1863) excepted. Although Hawthorne enjoyed England and even sporadically imagined settling there, it cannot be said to have deeply stimulated his imagination or his emotions. Even his literary pilgrimages to Shakespeare's birthplace and grave, to Samuel Johnson's Lichfield and Uttoxeter, and to Sir Walter Scott's Abbotsford failed to move him profoundly, leaving him, as he said of Abbotsford, "angry and dissatisfied with myself for not feeling something which I did not and could not feel" (CE XXII: 26), and half regretting he had come. It is as if the literary enthusiasms of youthful days were best left alone, in the hermetic world of memory. Art galleries also depressed him. "Doubtless, this is my fault—my own deficiency"—he wrote of his indifference to Turner, "but I

cannot help it; not, at least, without sophisticating myself by the effort" (CE XXII: 347).

The Continent virtually forced Hawthorne to sophisticate himself, and much to his surprise he found himself enjoying it, though in the matter of French cookery he was not certain whether he ought to enjoy it. In the sublimity of their architecture and art, France and, even more, Italy were a revelation; so, too, were the filth and "nastiness" that frequently displayed themselves beside it. James's portrait of a "youthful-elderly mind, contending so late in the day with new opportunities for learning old things, and, on the whole, profiting by them so freely and gracefully"⁷⁵ is only half of the truth, at most. If Hawthorne anticipates Lambert Strether in James's *The Ambassadors*, progressively yielding to the charm of Europe, he also resembles Strether's provincial friend Waymarsh, gnashing his teeth at European slackness, dirt, and corruption. Indeed, the running tension between "Strether" and "Waymarsh"—the reawakened sensualist and aesthete in Hawthorne and the unbending moralist and Victorian paterfamilias—might be said to define much of the European notebooks. Rome, in particular, came to symbolize for Hawthorne not only the double aspect of Europe, grand and appalling, but also, in some sense, the bewildering extremities of human experience. Hawthorne hated and loved Rome, alternately or at once. The slower life of Florence and Siena was more beckoning yet fraught with the dangers exemplified by the life of expatriate sculptor Hiram Powers, who had lost touch with one country without rooting himself in another. Hawthorne wanted to stay in Italy forever and he could not wait to get home. Leaving the galleries of the Uffizi one day, he wondered, "What shall we do in America!" (CE XIV: 428).

For readers acquainted with Hawthorne only through his fiction, the style and manner of the journals (notes for stories excepted) will seem most like the limpid prose of "The Custom House" and "The Old Manse." As his son Julian remarked, "the impression produced by his notebooks is oddly different from that of the romances—a difference comparable in kind and degree to that between the voice in ordinary speech and in singing."⁷⁶ "Ordinary speech," yes, but not without considerable art and deliberation. Centenary editor Thomas Woodson observes that Hawthorne's "notebooks and letters both show frequent signs of copying from earlier versions. . . . By all accounts not a ready conversationalist, Hawthorne often mistrusted spontaneity in writing as well" (CE XV: 7). Notebook entries were revised, expanded, embellished, and subtilized through qualifiers and added nuance (CE VIII: 682). The fine-grained fluency of their prose was a wrought, not casual, achievement, despite the fact that the notebooks were probably never intended for public view. Critics of Thoreau have sometimes argued that his greatest literary production was his journal. Hawthorne's notebooks

will never displace *The Scarlet Letter* or a handful of his best tales, but the comparison is futile because the notebooks are writings of a different kind with interests and excellences of their own. If “Ethan Brand” testifies to what James called “the deeper psychology,”⁷ the Berkshire journal that was its outward source shows Hawthorne with a realist’s eye for telling surfaces of character and with a prose as elegant as, if less formal than, that of the stylized tale.

Like Hawthorne’s autobiographical prefaces, the notebooks encourage readers to feel that they “know” Hawthorne. Certainly they know him better, and on more sides, but there are reticences even in the notebooks. “People who write about themselves and their feelings, as Byron did, may be said to serve up their own hearts, spiced, and with brain-sauce out of their own heads, as a repast for the public” (CE VIII: 253), Hawthorne remarked in July 1844, a comment whose elaboration in “The Old Manse”—“nor am I, nor have ever been, one of those supremely hospitable people, who serve up their own hearts delicately fried, with brain-sauce, as a tidbit for their beloved public” (CE X: 33)—applies in principle to the notebooks as well. Still, if seldom revelatory of “the inmost ME” (CE I: 4)—according to his wife, Hawthorne “hid from himself even more cunningly than he hid himself from others”⁸—the notebooks can be surprisingly irreverent and nihilistic. Things that could not be said, or said only glancingly, in the public writing are broached in the private. Most instructive are those slight amendments by which a subversive idea in the notebooks is transformed into a conventional one in the fiction. Even after her prudent omissions and alterations, Sophia Hawthorne felt obliged to preface her edition of *Passages from the English Note-Books* (1870) with the disclaimer that “throughout his journals it will be seen that Hawthorne is *entertaining*, and not *asserting*, opinions and ideas. He questions, doubts, and reflects with his pen, and, as it were, instructs himself”—his “*conclusions*,” so far as he came to any, lying in his published work (CE XII: 739). There is truth to Sophia’s words beyond her genteel guardianship of her husband’s posthumous reputation. Hawthorne was a man of moods, self-doubting at times, susceptible to weather, prone to irritability as he aged, uneasy about sensual enjoyment even as he was drawn to it, and yet capable of what Melville called “short, quick probings at the very axis of reality”⁹ that punctured, temporarily at least, his most urgent moral and spiritual beliefs. Nothing that Hawthorne writes in the notebooks can be lifted from context and taken as final, but neither can anything, however discordant with postures in the fiction, be lightly dismissed.

Aside from their inherent literary and biographical interest, the notebooks have implications for criticism. Some of these are local and particular: the dating of an idea for a story or romance; the origin of a descriptive

passage that appears in the fiction. But the notebooks also raise important questions about the kind of writer Hawthorne was. For example, against Michael J. Colacurcio's contention that Hawthorne was a "moral historian" whose finest early tales aim "to recover the affective quality of human lives lived under conditions or assumptions different from those which prevailed in his own later and moral liberal age,"¹⁰ it might be observed that the extant notebooks of the 1830s contain only infrequent and usually slight entries on the New England past. Hawthorne's ideas for tales and sketches are recorded atemporally in abstract moral terms (e.g., "The story of a man, cold and hard-hearted, and acknowledging no brotherhood with mankind" [CE VIII: 13]), not, as Colacurcio says of the fiction, in the context of crises "referable back to some actuality" and "stand[ing] for the limits of perception or experience at a certain critical moment in the historical past."¹¹ On the larger matter of Hawthorne's literary mode, the notebooks call into question the claim, advanced publicly by Hawthorne himself and often taken as a truism, that allegory was his natural literary bent. After describing an 1837 tavern scene in which a rustic simpleton comes looking for his prostitute-wife and is met with laughter and scorn, Hawthorne reflects, "On the whole there was a moral picturesqueness in the contrasts of this scene—a man moved as deeply as his nature would admit, in the midst of hardened, gibing spectators, heartless towards him. It is worth thinking over and studying out" (CE VIII: 59). If Hawthorne would never write such a tale in such a literary manner, it was not for want of ability; the scene is brilliantly rendered, with a humanity wholly devoid of sentimentality: Hawthorne as Chekhov. The notebooks are filled with vignettes of this sort, nearly all of them fictively unused.

Taken together, the notebooks are not simply a context for Hawthorne's fiction; they are a supplement to it that enriches and deepens one's apprehension of the artist and the man, much as the publication of Virginia Woolf's five-volume diary did with the author of *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*. Woolf had seemed to many brittle, ethereal, and out of touch with the "real world." So may Hawthorne, whether in his dark, sin-obsessed writings or in his sunnier, sentimental ones—so much so that a recent collection of bicentennial essays pointedly titled itself *Hawthorne and the Real*.¹² The notebooks show a more robust and many-sided humanity, not always admirable—Hawthorne can be fastidious, impatient, moody, severe—but precisely for that reason closer to the complete personality than the deftly managed literary persona Hawthorne tendered the public in its stead. In the sketch "Monsieur du Miroir," Hawthorne confesses that "there is nobody, in the whole circle of my acquaintance, whom I have more attentively studied, yet of whom I have less real knowledge, beneath the

surface which it pleases him to present" (CE X: 159). Like Monsieur du Miroir, Hawthorne does not reveal himself in acts of self-reflection, but we may catch aspects of him as he turns his mind outward and reflects upon the world. To perceive, for Hawthorne, was characteristically to weigh, to interpret, to evaluate, and to seek to understand. "Reflection" was his "business" (CE X: 171). To read Hawthorne in his notebooks is to reflect with him and on him. It is to meet him afresh, often with surprise, nearly always with pleasure, and with a sense that the published writings may never look quite the same again.

(ii) The American Notebooks

Hawthorne's American notebooks, totaling about two hundred thousand words, begin in 1835 and end in 1853 with Hawthorne's departure for England as newly appointed consul at Liverpool. In need of money after Hawthorne's death in 1864, and with the encouragement and advice of his publisher, James T. Fields, Sophia Hawthorne edited a selection of the notebooks for the *Atlantic Monthly* in twelve installments (1866), and two years later she published *Passages from the American Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne*. Sophia edited freely, omitting and reordering passages, erasing, inking over, and sometimes scissoring out lines in the manuscripts, and changing words for reasons of elegance or, more often, of propriety. "Her central aim," editor Claude M. Simpson comments, "was to be a worthy surrogate to her husband" (CE VIII: 686). Practically, this meant not only excluding what she believed Hawthorne would not have wanted the public to read—often rightly: "her cautious changing of private attitudes to public ones is consistent . . . with [Hawthorne's] use of the notebook in *The Marble Faun*" (CE XIV: 925)—but also retouching him according to how she wished him to appear to family, public, and posterity. Allusions to smoking and drinking were toned down or excluded, as were sexual passages of nearly every kind. Significantly, as Simpson notes, "her hand is equally conspicuous in the notebooks from which she did not print" (CE VIII: 690), as if she were expurgating Hawthorne to preserve an ideal image for herself and her children as well as to memorialize him for the world. Five of the seven American notebooks from which Sophia worked survived and were restored as far as was technically possible by Randall Stewart in 1931. Volume VIII of the Centenary Edition (1972) builds upon and extends Stewart's scholarship, but in the absence of the two lost notebooks it was forced to rely on Sophia's renderings with their alterations, rearrangements, and uncertain chronology.

In 1976 one of the lost notebooks—forty-three leaves in small handwriting, covering the period 1835–41—was discovered in a family heirloom by Barbara S. Mouffe, who transcribed the manuscript, had it authenticated, and took it to Hawthorne scholar Hyatt H. Waggoner; the notebook was published by Pennsylvania State University Press in 1978, with an introduction by Waggoner. Of the seventy-one passages of varying length not contained in the Centenary Edition, the most dramatic is a very brief one. “In this dismal chamber FAME was won” (CE VIII: 20), the Centenary text has Hawthorne writing of his Salem room in 1836. “In this dismal *and squalid* chamber, fame was won,” the Lost Notebook reads¹³—“squalid,” according to Waggoner, retaining its historical connotation of “impure, morally polluted, morally shameful,”¹⁴ and reinforcing the notion of sexual transgression (if only fantasized) sounded elsewhere in Hawthorne’s early work. In another passage from the Lost Notebook, mostly excised by Sophia, Hawthorne admires working-class girls as they parade about on an island resort near Boston, “their petticoats being few and thin, and short withal, showing a good deal of leg in a stocking, and the entire shape of both legs, with the mist of a flimsy gown floating about it.”¹⁵ Hawthorne’s sexual voyeurism is of a piece with the physical and psychological voyeurism in his writing from “Sights from a Steeple” onward, yet on the whole, judging from the notebooks, Waggoner has reason to claim that the younger Hawthorne “had a normal interest” in sex and “could write about it without either prurience or euphemism.”¹⁶ To put it more precisely, sexual guilt belongs to Hawthorne’s tales and sketches; his journal entries are healthily appreciative of women and sexuality, save when they touch on the matter of unchastity in a respectable woman. Listening to an acquaintance tell the story of a girl’s tearful confession to him of a single premarital lapse, Hawthorne enters into the feelings of the girl and her would-be suitor. The artist in him senses that “much might be made of such a scene”; the moralist is appalled that his acquaintance can speak “as if one deviation from chastity might not be an altogether insuperable objection to making a girl his wife!!” (CE VIII: 146).

The above anecdote is from Hawthorne’s travel notebook of the summer of 1838, when he spent nearly two months exploring the Berkshires in western Massachusetts and filling what amounts to more than seventy pages of printed text. The Berkshire journal is one of the notebooks’ masterpieces, not simply or primarily for the passages of local color that would nourish “Ethan Brand.” If anything, the notebook’s account of “Remarkable characters” (CE VIII: 90) is more engaging, because more keenly observant, realistic, subtle, and humane, than that of the story, whose defining interest is in the timeless, placeless notion of the Unpardonable Sin. As he travels

through the towns, villages, and wild, romantic scenery of a half-civilized America, Hawthorne encounters a colorful array of stage passengers, peddlers, doctors, lawyers, itinerant preachers, and tavern haunters—Chaucerian figures rendered with a Chaucerian gusto far removed from the characterization, style, and sensibility usually associated with “Hawthorne.” The travel journal of the preceding summer describes an extended visit to his friend Horatio Bridge in Maine and includes, among other sketches, a portrait of a “sturdy blacksmith” who seemed to Hawthorne “more like a man—more indescribably human” than anyone he had ever met (CE VIII: 95), and a fascinating cameo of his college classmate, then-Congressman Jonathan Cilley, a lesser Aaron Burr, crafty-sincere, who would soon be killed in a duel. So far as Hawthorne’s fiction is concerned, the style and picaresque content of the travel journals represent a road not taken, yet they belong as much to Hawthorne the man, and to Hawthorne the writer, as “The May-Pole of Merry Mount” or “The Minister’s Black Veil.”¹⁷

Appropos of the division in Hawthorne between realist and allegorist, it should be noted that “two-thirds of all dated entries” in the American notebooks “were written during the four months between July and October” (CE VIII: 681). “Early in his career,” biographer James R. Mellow observes, Hawthorne “discovered that the summer was an unfavorable time for writing,”¹⁸ and conversely that the New England winter was an unfavorable time for living and enjoying. Except during his first rush of creativity in the years around 1830 and again as he worked on *The Scarlet Letter*, writing came hard for Hawthorne, who several times expressed the thought that he would never write again and who seems to have greeted spring as an occasion to put aside his work. “In the spring and summer time,” he wrote in “Buds and Bird-Voices” (1843), “all somber thoughts should follow the winter northward, with the somber and thoughtful crows” (CE X: 148–49). So they did, so far as the bulk of the American notebooks are concerned. Hawthorne journalized in the summer as he traveled or simply lazed; he wrote for publication in the fall and winter, though he might conceive a tale or sketch in other months. This bifurcation of life was more than a compositional habit with Hawthorne; it was the symptom and symbol of a division of sensibility not uncommon among New Englanders. As Henry Adams would put it, “Winter was always the effort to live; summer was tropical license”: “two hostile lives” that bred in New Englanders a chronically self-divided moral nature.¹⁹

A more familiar Hawthorne appears in the notebook jottings of idea and theme that sometimes germinated and flowered in published works. Because the extant notebooks begin with 1835, there are no entries for tales such as “Young Goodman Brown,” “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” and

“Roger Malvin’s Burial,” but many of the notes do anticipate works to be written, not necessarily in the immediate future: “A snake, taken into a man’s stomach and nourished there from fifteen years to thirty-five, tormenting him most horribly. A type of envy or some other evil passion” ([CE VIII: 22] “Egotism; or The Bosom-Serpent”); “To make one’s own reflection in a mirror the subject of a story” ([CE VIII: 15] “Monsieur du Miroir”); “The race of mankind to be swept away, leaving all their cities and works. Then another human pair to be placed in the world, with native intelligence like Adam and Eve, but knowing nothing of their predecessors or of their own nature and destiny” ([CE VIII: 21] “The New Adam and Eve”); and so on. Simpson assigns such idea-centered fictions to the genre Northrop Frye calls the “anatomy” (CE VIII: 679),²⁰ a form of intellectual prose that would become an important vehicle for Hawthorne in the Manse period as he turned away from historical settings, but whose abstraction, the notebooks indicate, was characteristic of his imagination even in the mid-1830s when he was writing dramatic tales.

Among the most intriguing of the hints for stories are those pertaining to *The Scarlet Letter* (e.g., “The life of a woman, who, by the old colony law, was condemned always to wear the letter A, sewed on her garment, in token of her having committed adultery”; “To symbolize moral or spiritual disease by disease of the body;—thus, when a person committed any sin, it might cause a sore to appear on the body”; “To trace out the influence of a frightful and disgraceful crime, in debasing and destroying a character naturally high and noble”; “A story of the effects of revenge, in diabolizing him who indulges in it”; “Pearl—the English of Margaret—a pretty name for a girl in a story” (CE VIII: 254, 222, 227, 278, 242). By what process these isolated themes came together and were alchemized into *The Scarlet Letter* we can never know. The notebooks rarely touch upon the creative process, and only with the Berkshire journal and “Ethan Brand” are we able to observe, if not the process itself, then at least its beginnings and achieved result.

Hawthorne did not keep an ongoing journal during his residence at the Utopian community Brook Farm in 1841, but he did describe the progress of a glorious New England autumn near the farm, the frail seamstress who would become the outward model for Priscilla in *The Blithedale Romance*, and the horrific late-night search for a young woman who had drowned herself in a river, the source for Coverdale’s and Hollingsworth’s midnight search for Zenobia. The real Utopia in Hawthorne’s life was his first year at the Old Manse, chronicled at length in the notebook he kept jointly with Sophia (her contribution was published by Patricia Dunlavy Valenti in the 1996 volume of *Studies in the American Renaissance*). Valenti sees “an antiphonal quality” in the couple’s entries; “one spouse calls, the other

answers.”²¹ Passages in Hawthorne’s notebook sometimes do assume added point when set against Sophia’s, and in judging Hawthorne’s attitudes of the time (toward “ideality,” for example) it is important to keep Sophia in mind not simply as a reader but as a muse, a tacit censor (there were things Hawthorne would not write for her eyes), and a resident priestess of sunshine and spiritualized domesticity.

The defining circumstance of the Manse notebook is the happy convergence of honeymoon, season, historical moment (the reformist 1840s), and geographical site (Concord), which makes the notebook, more than *The Blithedale Romance*, Hawthorne’s most sympathetic contribution to the literature of renewal characteristic of the American Renaissance. Hawthorne meets Emerson, Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Ellery Channing; he buys Thoreau’s boat and learns to manage it with tolerable skill; he hoes beans, fishes for dinner in the Concord River, and reads the transcendentalist journal, *The Dial*, if only after dinner as a soporific. When Emerson comes by with the local minister, Barzillai Frost (the “spectral” preacher of the Divinity School Address), Hawthorne reacts much as Emerson did: “We certainly do need a new revelation—a new system—for there seems to be no life in the old one” (CE VIII: 352). A notebook entry recording a long afternoon in Concord’s Sleepy Hollow is Hawthorne’s *Walden*: he listens to the sounds of the day, broken by the “long shriek, harsh, above all other harshness,” of a locomotive (CE VIII: 248); he observes the small particulars of nature; he watches a colony of ants and briefly intrudes into their world as a willful god; he feels the infinitude of things to observe, reflect upon, and express. On another occasion he visits Walden itself and, along with the crystalline purity of the water, notes the shanties of the Irish railroad-builders around it, which somehow do not seem to profane “the repose and sanctity” of the woods (CE VIII: 396). Through everything, he feels the attraction of “a true relation with nature” and wishes he “could run wild” in it (CE VIII: 358). The Manse notebook covers fifteen months. Its outward matter would be distilled for Hawthorne’s 1846 preface “The Old Manse”; the tenor of being it memorializes would remain for him a touchstone of life at its most felicitous.

Obliged to leave the Old Manse in 1845, Hawthorne returned to Salem, where political influence secured him the post of Surveyor of Customs in the local custom house. Hawthorne would use the sinecure poorly, writing little during his three-year tenure. Notebook entries are also sparse, but they resume, intensely, during the summer of 1849 as the family gathers around the deathbed of Hawthorne’s mother and Hawthorne appears simultaneously, at midlife, as besieged father and grieving son. Within weeks of his mother’s death he would begin *The Scarlet Letter*, and the following May

(1850) the family would leave Salem for a cottage in Lenox, Massachusetts, where daughter Rose would be born, where Hawthorne would write *The House of the Seven Gables*, and where in August 1850 he would begin a friendship with Herman Melville, himself about to settle in neighboring Pittsfield.

Unlike Melville's extraordinary letters to Hawthorne, Hawthorne's to Melville have not survived, and Hawthorne, though liking Melville uncommonly well and admiring his work (he had favorably reviewed *Typee* in 1846 for the *Salem Advertiser*), is reticent about him in journal passages. The most engaging section of the later American notebooks is the seriocomic "Twenty Days with Julian & Little Bunny, By Papa," written when Hawthorne was left to fend with his son and their housekeeper in the Lenox cottage, Sophia having gone to visit her sister, Mary Mann, with Una and the infant Rose. Hawthorne is an astute observer of the character of both his older children: Julian is humorous, easy-going, sturdy; Una, clearly the more brilliant, is disturbing and complex, "her life, at present, . . . a tempestuous day, with blinks of sunshine gushing between the rifts of cloud" (CE VIII: 411). In Sophia's absence, Hawthorne and Melville solidified their friendship, exchanging visits and talking freely about "time and eternity, things of this world and of the next, and books, and publishers, and all possible and impossible matters," a conversation scarcely imaginable with any other acquaintance of Hawthorne's, before or after. Hawthorne left the Berkshires in November 1851, and his relationship with Melville, or Melville's with him, grew more wary and distant. After Lenox, except for the record of an 1852 visit to the Isles of Shoals off New Hampshire, the notebooks trail off. James T. Fields had helped make Hawthorne a "personage," and finding himself, belatedly, with an audience, Hawthorne turned his energies to supplying it with published prose.

(iii) The English Notebooks

When Hawthorne sailed with his family on July 6, 1853, for England, he was arguably a different person from the one indirectly chronicled in the American notebooks. Entering his fiftieth year and widely recognized at home and abroad as the foremost writer of fiction in America, he was on the cusp of becoming more financially secure than at any other time in his life. The English notebooks reflect this new amplitude: at nearly four hundred thousand words (covering five and a half years of residence in Great Britain) they represent the most lengthy and sustained journalizing of his career as well as their author's expanding sense of a world, social and historical, previously encountered in books alone.

Making these widened horizons possible was an appointment to the U.S. Consul at Liverpool by Hawthorne's college friend and incoming president Franklin Pierce. A reward for the laudatory campaign biography written in 1852, the job proved vexing to Hawthorne, who at one point diligently produced a 107-page document in reply to a list of queries about maritime practices by the U.S. Secretary of State William L. Marcy. Plagued by importunate Americans seeking passage home or introductions to British aristocracy, asked to adjudicate conflicts that arose within the notoriously cruel American merchant marines, and besieged by dinner invitations in his dual capacity as consul and literary lion, Hawthorne soon conceded the need to postpone plans to write the romance he hoped to base on his English experiences. "The pleasantest incident of the day," he candidly confessed, occurred with the appearance of "the account books, containing the receipts and expenditures of the preceding day," accompanied by "a little rouleau of the Queen's coin, wrapt in a piece of paper" (CE XXI: 3).

The consulship's "net emoluments" (CE XVII: 204), as he described the generous commissions to his friend Horatio Bridge, nevertheless afforded the opportunity for the Hawthorne family to travel extensively.²² The notebooks chronicle in meticulous and voluminous detail numerous sojourns to Scotland, Wales, and various points of interest throughout England, trips consisting largely of obligatory visits to cathedrals, museums, and literary shrines, including those of Shakespeare, Johnson, Scott, Burns, Wordsworth, Southey, and others. Comparing the England he saw to the England he had long imagined, Hawthorne was frequently disappointed. Shakespeare's gravestone was "the commonest looking slab of all, just such a flagstone as a sidewalk of the street might be paved with" (CE XXI: 201); about Johnson's hometown, he was, "to say the truth, . . . heartily tired of it" (CE XXI: 228–29). While the intricacies of Gothic architecture elicited some of his most appreciative descriptions, he was almost invariably bored and unmoved by the nation's art treasures. In a valiant effort to please Sophia and, at the same time, to prepare for an art-filled tour of Italy, he visited the vast Manchester Art Exhibit on a daily basis, to little avail.

Hawthorne was more pleased by the ordered hedgerows, the undulating landscape, and the time-stained cemeteries of the English countryside. The flash of unexpected detail—bags of salt "swinging and vibrating in the air" (CE XXI: 4) over the Liverpool docks; Tennyson studying paintings "through a pair of spectacles which he held in his hand, and then standing a minute before those that interested him, with his hands folded behind his back" (CE XXII: 352)—appears on practically every page of the notebooks, revealing a novelistic observer delighting in the height of his powers. The same is true with the descriptions of people he encountered. In *Our Old*

Home, he described the duty of the consul to “consist in building up for himself a recognized position in the society where he resides so that his local influence might be felt in behalf of his own country” (CE V: 37). To this end he attended numerous boat christenings and civic banquets: wine-flushed events in which he often was called to deliver speeches that seldom find their way into the journals. In their place are carefully wrought—and often acerbic—portraits of the English upper classes, glimpses of aristocratic society that combine insight with prejudice, revelatory detail with provincial attitude, as in his anti-Semitic reaction to London’s lord mayor or his more general repulsion to fleshly English women. Hawthorne is more tolerant of those less constrained by social convention and protocol. His assessment of Melville—who visited Hawthorne in November 1856, on his way to the Holy Land following the disappointments of *Pierre* and *The Confidence Man*—remains the most penetrating and perspicacious we have. Acting as a tour guide for two days, Hawthorne directs his guest to sit down “in a hollow among the sand hills (sheltering ourselves from the high, cool wind)” in order to smoke cigars and discuss “Providence and futurity, and everything that lies beyond human ken” (CE XXII: 163). His encounter with the Shakespearean conspiracy theorist, Delia Bacon—surely one of the strangest episodes in his biography—is similarly buoyed by a mixture of cool analysis and empathy. An Ahabian figure consumed by the notion that Shakespeare’s plays were written by a secret cabal of intellectuals, Bacon acquired a surprisingly devoted advocate in Hawthorne, who saw her book through publication even as he discerned in her precarious reason “a system growing up in a person’s mind without the volition—contrary to the volition—and substituting itself in place of everything that originally grew there” (CE XXII: 92).

Equally sympathetic are his descriptions of working people, such as the servant at Scott’s estate who unwittingly sat Hawthorne in the great novelist’s chair so that “you may catch some inspiration!” (CE XXII: 24) as well as the poor of Liverpool and London with whom he was everywhere besieged. Thomas Woodson notes that by the time Hawthorne had arrived in England, he must “have become aware that his lack of realism was out of tune with current fiction” (CE XVII: 6–7). Indeed, writing to his editor James T. Fields in 1860 just before leaving England for Concord, he unfavorably compared his recently completed *Marble Faun* to the novels of Trollope, which, he continued, “precisely suit my taste; [they are] solid and substantial, written on the strength of beef and through the inspiration of ale, and just as real as if some giant had hewn a great lump out of the earth and put it under a glass case” (CE XVIII: 229). To a large extent, the English notebooks may be seen as Hawthorne’s experiment in realism,

confirming the prediction by Mary Russell Mitford, an English admirer and writer, who noted that “A consulship in a bustling town will give him the cheerful reality, the healthy air of every-day life, which is his only want” (CE XXI: 713). Hawthorne’s long walks through Liverpool and London constantly yield descriptions of the poor, “filthy in clothes and person, ragged, pale, often afflicted with humors; women, nursing their babies at dirty bosoms; men haggard, drunken, care-worn, hopeless, but with a kind of patience” (CE XXI: 18). Observing an impoverished mother with her infant, Hawthorne adopts the perspective of Dickens, whom he wished to meet, though never did, during his time in England: “I heard [her] laughing and priding herself on the pretty ways of her dirty infant—just as a Christian mother might in a nursery or drawing room.” He then adds: “I must study this street-life more, and think of it more deeply” (CE XXI: 25).

Yet unlike his experience in Rome—where he set and wrote his fourth and final romance, *The Marble Faun*—Hawthorne found it impossible to incorporate into fiction the English experiences he so meticulously recorded in his journals. Beginning as early as 1853, he imagined himself writing a romance on the theme of an American claimant returning to the mother country to receive his legacy. The idea gained additional heft and impetus after his visit to Smithell’s Hall, where he first learned of the legend of a bloody footprint in the flagstone of the hallway. But his plans were soon thwarted, in part by the duties of the consulship, in part by the intensity and frequency of his travels, in part by his difficulty in etherealizing the real he so persistently encountered in the literature and life of England. In *The Scarlet Letter* he had described the romance as an imagined space designed to mediate the fraught exchange between the real and ideal, between existing actuality and the ideas or concepts for which they might stand.²³ England seemed to eclipse that imagined space; “It is human life,” he wrote, in an uneasy blend of appreciation and claustrophobia, “it is this material world; it is a grim and heavy reality. I have never had the same sense of being surrounded by materialism, and hemmed in with the grossness of this earthly life, anywhere else” (CE XXII: 433). Not until January 1855 would he mention his fiction again, this time to assert that it will be “all the better for ripening slowly” (CE XVII: 304). The multiple drafts and false starts of the romance, collected in the Centenary Edition as *The American Claimant*, contain notations of creative blockage and despair that are among the most heartrending in American letters: “Still there is something wanting to make an action for the story,” he interjects after working on his ever-growing manuscript. “There is still a want of something, which I can by no means get at, nor describe what it is. . . . Oh, Heavens! I have not the least

notion how to get on. I never was in such a sad predicament before" (CE XII: 286).

Creatively balked, Hawthorne increasingly devoted himself to journalizing, his letters home testifying to pride in their orotund completeness. "I think my Journals (which are getting to be voluminous) would already enable me to give you a book" (CE XVII: 370), he wrote his publisher, William D. Ticknor, half a year after confessing his slowness in drafting a romance. Nine months later, he again wrote, "I keep a journal of all my travels and adventures, and I could easily make up a couple of nice volumes for you; but, unluckily, they would be too good and true to bear publication. It would bring a terrible hornet's nest about my ear" (CE XVII: 493). Presumably referring to his unflattering depictions of the English aristocracy, Hawthorne could not know at the time that the publication of *Our Old Home* would in fact bring about a hornet's nest, but for reasons unimaginable in the mid-1850s. Many of the notebooks' most memorable set pieces—the encounters with Bacon and the debauched clergyman, the visit to Lichfield and Uttoxeter, the speechifying at civic banquets—would be extracted and reworked for *Our Old Home* when Hawthorne returned to Concord in 1860. But the America he found was as different and changed as himself: bitterly divided, nervous with impending war. From 1861 to 1863, Hawthorne would transform his English notebooks into a collection of essays published first in the *Atlantic* and then collected in his final book. When he decided to dedicate the book to Pierce—who had made his travels to England possible in the first place but who was now vilified by Republicans and abolitionists for his appeasement of the South—he created an uproar. Fields beseeched Hawthorne to reconsider, claiming the dedication would affect sales. The author was adamant: "I find that it would be a piece of poltroonery in me to withdraw either the dedication or the dedicatory letter" (CE XVIII: 586). When *Our Old Home* was published, many of Hawthorne's New England readers simply overlooked the dedicatory note (or cut it out) before plunging into the pellucid prose for which its author was famous.

Passages from the English Note-books was published in 1870 by Fields, Osgood & Co. following the appearance of one installment in the *Atlantic* about Hawthorne's visit to Wordsworth's house. As with the American notebooks, Sophia excised passages with scissors and pen, especially those referring to tobacco, alcohol, and sexual or bodily functions. This time, however, she worked in consultation with Francis Bennoch, the London merchant and patron of the arts who had introduced Hawthorne to London society and made available his summer home, Blackheath, to the family. The book was well received in the United States; Bronson Alcott (who had

been among those who excised the dedication to *Our Old Home*) admirably noted about Hawthorne's portrait of England, "Few of his contemporaries have observed with finer eyes than did our American Romancer. His facts are better facts than most historians, since he dealt with life and living things as only poets can."²⁴

Not surprisingly, England had a somewhat different perspective. Hawthorne's consistent Americanism and especially his shuddering remarks about English women led the *Athenaeum* to find Hawthorne's "most kindly spirit . . . somewhat soured by that miserable feeling of jealousy towards England which seems so common" in America.²⁵ Horace Bright—Hawthorne's other close English friend—believed Sophia had been misguided by Bennoch into including Hawthorne's impolitic descriptions. To have censored those descriptions may have improved the reception of the notebooks in England, but it would have also been to remove the pungent earthiness Hawthorne saw and recorded even at the expense of his ability to write a romance. It would be to excise what for Hawthorne was, however briefly, the romance of the real. Writing from Dickens's London in December, he would, in a tone unlike that to be found anywhere else in his writings, rhapsodize over "the dingy brick edifices heaving themselves up, and shutting out all but a strip of sullen cloud that serves London for a sky;—in short, a general impression of grime and sordidness, and, at this season, always a fog scattered along the vista of streets, sometimes so densely as almost to spiritualize the materialism and make the scene resemble the other world of worldly people, gross even to ghostliness" (CE XXII: 433).

(iv) The French and Italian Notebooks

Culturally and intellectually as well as descriptively, the French and Italian notebooks (somewhat less than two hundred thousand words) are the richest that Hawthorne kept. They are also, in sheer mass, among the most fictively productive. "Nine-tenths of the chapters [in *The Marble Faun*] include material directly from the notebooks" (CE XIV: 920); even this only barely suggests the influence of Italy on Hawthorne's imagination. Not since his residence in Concord had Hawthorne been so challenged by notions of life radically different from his own. Concord was exhilarating for him because his private feeling of renewal coincided with the spirit of time and place; for all its differences, Concord was also provincial and familiar, and the Old Manse, as the Hawthornes made themselves comfortable in it, became a haven of stability that allowed Hawthorne to test the winds of change without feeling himself blown about by them. As Brenda Wineapple remarked,

“Hawthorne was a fastidious man who depended on regulation—regular living, regular loving, rituals of predictable routine—as if to contain or curb his own sense of the underside of things, that stuff of terror and despair and dissolution (or so he thought).”²⁶ Italy disoriented and overwhelmed Hawthorne, awakening both the aesthete’s sense of beauty and pleasure and the aesthete’s nervous irritability, and troubling the moralist and the historian with incursions of chaos that could not be contained within Protestant New World ideas of virtue and historical design. The English title of *The Marble Faun—Transformation*—applies to its author as well.

It cannot be said that Hawthorne responded to the Continent with fresh enthusiasm, as Sophia did. Even apart from the logistics of steering a family of five (plus governess) through the complications of foreign travel and residence, Hawthorne seems to have approached France and Italy much as he approached museums, with a combination of trepidation, awe, and weary resignation to spousal and cultural duty. Yet as with museums, he found himself coming increasingly to enjoy Europe and to appreciate the refinements of taste and sensibility that were gradually “making their way into [his] mind,” “very sturdy Goth” though he continued to be (CE XIV: 166). If “Hawthorne felt out of his element in Europe” (CE XIV: 910), as Thomas Woodson remarks, he was nonetheless broadened, deepened, and unsettled enough by it to feel that America was no longer his element, either. “I wish I were more patriotic,” he wrote Ticknor in April 1858, “but to confess the truth, I had rather be a sojourner in any other country than return to my own. The United States are fit for many excellent purposes, but they are certainly not fit to live in” (CE XVIII: 140).

The notebooks open with Hawthorne’s arrival in Paris on January 6, 1858; they conclude with his leaving Havre for England eighteen months later. The vast majority of entries occur between January 1858, when Hawthorne arrived in Rome, and October 1858, when fourteen-year-old Una contracted malaria. Her illness continued intermittently through the spring of 1859; at times she seemed near death. In a pocket diary (printed in the Centenary Edition of *The French and Italian Notebooks*), Hawthorne recorded the vicissitudes of her condition, which took a severe toll on both parents and effectively suspended the expeditions to galleries, churches, and historical sites, as well as the social calls, that formed the staple of Hawthorne’s journalizing. Bowdoin classmate and former president Franklin Pierce, visiting Rome at the time, proved a godsend to Hawthorne during this trying period, and Hawthorne’s grateful tribute to him (“Well; I have found in him, here in Rome, the whole of my early friend, and even better than I used to know him” [CE XIV: 519]) is one of the most deeply felt celebrations of friendship in his notebooks. His farewell tribute to Rome

the following month is more ambivalent: "I seem to know it better than my birth place, and to have known it longer; and though I have been very miserable here, and languid with the effects of the atmosphere, and disgusted with a thousand things in daily life, still I cannot say I hate it—perhaps might fairly own a love for it. But (life being too short for such questionable and troublesome enjoyments) I desire never to set eyes on it again" (CE XIV: 524).

Sophia Hawthorne's *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books* was excerpted in the magazine *Good Words* from January through November 1871 and published that same November by James R. Osgood and Company, Sophia having quarreled with James T. Fields over royalties. Julian Hawthorne later printed additional passages in *Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife* (1884), which included a devastatingly censorious one on Margaret Fuller,²⁷ and in *Hawthorne and His Circle* (1903). Woodson observes that although Sophia by this time "had become an experienced copyist and editor," no longer inking or scissoring out offending passages, she had no qualms about refining Hawthorne's diction or muting graphic, indecorous, or heterodox words and ideas to suit propriety; the result was a "less colorful and realistic account than her husband wrote" (CE XIV: 924–25). In 1941, then-doctoral student Norman Holmes Pearson transcribed the manuscripts, with extended commentary. The Centenary Edition of 1980 drew upon Pearson's work but performed its own transcription, with commentary, under the direction of Thomas Woodson.

Hawthorne's visit to France was brief—a scant two weeks—but it strikes the note of his response to the Continent generally. The life of the senses made its initial appeal to Hawthorne by way of French cookery, which he enjoyed warily at first before concluding that it might be a good thing for a man "to afford himself a little discipline in this line" (CE XIV: 26). A few days in Paris were enough to make the Hawthornes fledgling gourmets, who could dismiss an indifferent meal with the aplomb of connoisseurs. The "splendor of Paris," its "unwearying magnificence and beauty," took Hawthorne "altogether by surprise" (CE XIV: 13, 14), as did the architectural grandeur of the Louvre, whose halls impressed him more than its paintings. Yet as would happen recurrently in France and Italy, Hawthorne's receptive power wore thin, novelty yielded to familiarity, the life of the city felt alien and unhomelike to him, its uncleanness was offensive, and after a week he confessed that he was "quite tired of Paris, and never longed for a home so much" (CE XIV: 34).

Italy was Paris writ large, its heights higher (Hawthorne was dazzled by the beauty and opulence of the Italian churches), its depths deeper (he was appalled by the filth and decay of its urban life). Rome in January was

bone-chillingly cold, and Hawthorne never fully overcame, or wanted to overcome, the “first freshness of [his] discomfort” in the city (CE XIV: 54). As it was for Anglo-American tourists generally, Rome for Hawthorne was a layered city: ancient Rome, Catholic High Renaissance Rome, and contemporary Rome, an island under papal rule (supported by French troops) in a still-disunited Italy.

Ancient Rome confounded Hawthorne’s sense of time and history. In America, the House of the Seven Gables was old; in Rome, St. Peter’s and the Palazzo Barbarini were comparatively new alongside the ruins of classical Rome, which, unlike English ruins, the dry climate preserved as agelessly and unendearingly white. Culturally, although Hawthorne could see traces of familiar humanity in the busts of the Roman emperors in the Capitol Museum, he felt himself and all Christendom “morally unlike, and disconnected with [the Romans], and not belonging to the same train of thought” (CE XIV: 167). Nor could he accustom himself to the juxtaposition of epochs and to the intermingling of the sublime and the paltry (or worse) that assaulted him everywhere in Rome: washerwomen hanging out clothes in the Forum; monuments used as public privies; the temple of Minerva occupied by a bakeshop; the Coliseum patrolled by French soldiers, with a Christian shrine at its center and youths gaily running footraces around it. To one who prided himself on his deep historical sense, Rome seemed to proclaim that he knew nothing about history at all. Rome encapsulated 2,500 years of Western moral, intellectual, and spiritual life, and Hawthorne the provincial American felt tasked, at age fifty-four, with comprehending its meaning. Of all Roman monuments, the Pantheon pleased him most, partly because it managed to bridge pagan, Renaissance, and modern—a Roman temple converted into a Christian church and surrounded by the lively confusion of a neighborhood market—but chiefly because its open dome symbolized to him a connection to heaven and the eternal that bypassed the conundrums of historical being.

The museums of Rome and Florence also challenged Hawthorne. Sculpture had limited appeal for him, but he did admire and revisit the four classical statues revered by contemporary taste—the *Apollo Belvedere*, the *Venus de Medici*, the *Dying Gladiator* (as it was then known), and the *Laocöon*—though his response to them varied according to his mood and degree of receptive empathy—that “free and generous surrender of myself, which . . . is essential to the proper estimate of anything excellent” (CE XIV: 110–11). One other statue also caught his attention: the Faun of Praxiteles, which suggested to him a “story, with all sorts of fun and pathos in it, [that] might be contrived on the idea of their species having become intermingled with the human race” (CE XIV: 178). He came to know expa-

triate American sculptors such as William Wetmore Story (whose Cleopatra would become Kenyon's in *The Marble Faun*), Hiram Powers, Harriet Hosmer, and young Salemite Louisa Lander, who befriended the family and undertook to model a bust of Hawthorne. But he objected strongly to the sculptors' use of nudity in their works, aesthetically because it seemed an absurd anachronism with modern subjects (Washington nude or in a toga?), morally because it offended and embarrassed him, especially when viewed in mixed company. The life of art and the senses halted abruptly for Hawthorne whenever it verged on the sexual, even in cold marble.

Painting was the art that fascinated and exasperated Hawthorne and to which he devoted numerous passages in the notebooks. Sophia was an indefatigable museumgoer, dragging Hawthorne with her. In England paintings had bored him, but in Italy he conscientiously undertook to make himself conversant with and, if possible, appreciative of Renaissance art. Despite what he called the "external weariness and sense of thousand-fold sameness to be overcome"—"the terrible lack of variety in [the painters'] subjects" (CE XIV: 111)—he did come to make distinctions. He lacked enthusiasm for Fra Angelico, the ethereal painter so beloved by Sophia; he disliked the accomplished but soulless Andrea del Sarto; he was transfixed by Guido Reni, supposed painter of a supposed portrait of Beatrice Cenci and of Michael triumphing over Lucifer (both paintings would figure prominently in *The Marble Faun*); and he loathingly admired, or admiringly loathed, Titian, painter of a "naked and lustful" Venus and of a Magdalene with "golden hair clustering round her naked body," which he could hardly avert his eyes and mind from: "This Magdalene [*sic*] is very coarse and sensual, with only an impudent assumption of penitence and religious sentiment, scarcely so deep as the eyelids; but it is a splendid picture, nevertheless, with those naked, lifelike arms, and the hands that press the rich locks about her, and so carefully let those two voluptuous breasts be seen. She a penitent! She would shake off all pretence to it, as easily as she would shake aside that clustering hair and offer her nude front to the next comer. Titian must have been a very good-for-nothing old man" (CE XIV: 334).

The question that Hawthorne is silently revolving through many of his entries on art is the relationship between the spiritual and the physical. The Hawthorne of the early notebooks seldom concerns himself with matters of religion, certainly not with salvation through Christ. The later Hawthorne does, apropos of painting at least. This may have been an effect of osmosis—what gallery haunter can avoid thinking about Christ?—but it may also have been an aging man's longing, if not for deliverance from sin, then at least for reassurance of eternal life. The need to find spirit confirmed in and through art sheds light on Hawthorne's perplexity and horror at those

Italian masters who could depict a Virgin Mary but “were just as ready, or more so, to paint a lewd and naked woman, and call her Venus” (CE XIV: 111). Raphael, considered “the greatest painter of all time, indisputably,”²⁸ epitomized the problem. *The Transfiguration* was a masterpiece, but Raphael was also taken to be the artist of *La Fornarina* (a reputed portrait of his mistress, a baker’s daughter), “a brunette, with a deep, bright glow in her face, naked below the navel and well pleased to be so for the sake of your admiration—ready for any extent of nudity, for love or money,—the brazen trollope that she is” (CE XIV: 93). As with Titian, Hawthorne vents indignation even as his prose lingers graphically on the details of the woman’s body. Hawthorne never outgrew the voyeurism of his youth; he simply outgrew its comparatively good-natured innocence and came to clothe it in Victorian prudery even in the privacy of his notebook.

Whenever the gallery collection enabled it, Hawthorne was always pleased to pass from the Italian masters to the Dutch and Flemish—“men of flesh and blood, with warm fists, and human hearts,” who “address[ed] themselves” to “human sympathies” rather than to the “formed intellectual taste” of a church-endowed genre (CE XIV: 112). This is nothing new: Hawthorne had always admired the Dutch realists, who seemed to him analogous to realists in fiction, his own form (the romance) being closer to Italianate rarefaction. The ideal was to combine the two: to spiritualize matter or, as Christ did and his Italian depictees tried to do, to materialize spirit. Viewing *The Transfiguration*, Hawthorne wished that Raphael had painted it in the style of Gerard Duow while “at the same time preserving [the] breadth and grandeur of [his] design” (CE XIV: 317). Hawthorne wants spirituality in art and he wants, simultaneously, the “petty miracles” of “a Dutch fly settling on a peach, or a humble-bee burying himself in a flower” (CE XIV: 317, 318).

The work of art that came nearest to achieving such a union was the *Venus de Medici*, which seemed to Hawthorne at once real and ideal—a type of essential womanhood, and modest enough to be slightly alarmed that someone might be looking at her nude. “Type” as Hawthorne imagines it here, however, does not imply the transcendent so much as the transpersonal: an *archetype*. The Venus is the work of a naturalistic imagination, and any “spirituality” to be found in it must be superadded by a Pygmalion-like spectator. As he pored over the artworks in Italian galleries, such superadding struck Hawthorne as nearly always the requirement for a spiritual art. However much the artist idealized his subject, he could not reach heaven except by losing touch with earth (like Fra Angelico), and if he were faithful to earth—to the human condition, as we know it in time—he could not sweep aside the clouds of suffering and evil that obscured heaven. Recalling a portrait of the despairing Christ on the cross by Giovanni Sodoma,

Hawthorne feels that it achieves the most an honest art is able to achieve: “Sodoma almost seems to have reconciled the impossibilities of combining an Omnipresent Divinity with a suffering and outraged humanity” (CE XIV: 492). (When he adapted the passage for *The Marble Faun*, Hawthorne recast Sodoma’s noble failure as a miraculous success.) Even the journal’s “almost” is qualified by Hawthorne’s consciousness of idealizing: “But this is one of those cases in which the spectator’s imagination completes what the artist merely hints at” (ibid.).

On a different level, the problem of the spiritual and the material was replicated for Hawthorne in the institution of the Catholic Church. His first introduction to Italian Catholicism came through the churches in Genoa, which “dazzled” him with their magnificence and caused him to feel “what a splendid religion it was that reared” them (CE XIV: 48, 49). With its artwork, gilding, and polished marble, St. Peter’s impressed him even more, accustomed as he was to the dim vastness of English cathedrals. The Catholic priesthood tapped common Anglo-American prejudices in Hawthorne, as did stories or superstitions about Vatican politics, past and present. Apart from the aesthetic, his attraction to Catholicism centered on its intimacy and spiritual tact. He appreciated the cool, dark side chapels that allowed solitary worshippers a haven for quiet communion, so different from the harsh communal daylight of Protestant worship; and he “wonder[ed] at the exuberance with which [the Catholic Church] responds to the demands of human infirmity” (CE XIV: 91), especially in the sacrament—or was it the psychotherapy?—of confession. Observing a man leaving a confessional, Hawthorne reflected that if “he had been a protestant, I think he would have shut all that up within his heart, and let it burn there till it seared him” (CE XIV: 60). One thinks immediately of Dimmesdale and of whether the moral and psychological themes, not to mention the plot, of *The Scarlet Letter* would have been possible in a Catholic community. A “son of the Puritans,” as he would soon call Hilda in *The Marble Faun* a “daughter,” Hawthorne had no sympathy with Catholic doctrine, but he marveled at the Church’s usefulness for “human occasions” (CE XIV: 59) and at the richness of its sacramental and ornamental life, which made Protestantism seem by contrast a stark, impoverished creed of negation.

Though chronically shy and averse to social gatherings, Hawthorne may have socialized more in Italy than anywhere else, save perhaps in Concord at the Old Manse. Thanks to Sophia, at any rate, he worked at being more companionable. Expatriate American artists, and occasionally English men and women such as the Brownings and sculptor John Gibson, make extended cameo appearances in the notebooks; like most other Anglo-Americans, Hawthorne never entered Italian society or seems to have wanted to. His portraits of sculptors William Wetmore Story (later

a friend—and biographical subject—of Henry James) and Hiram Powers are shrewd and judicious, if sometimes deflating; Hawthorne the gossip is always lively reading. Two other sketches are notable, both for their own sake and because they form an instructive moral diptych. The first is of Louisa Lander, the piquant young sculptress who molded a bust of Hawthorne and whose freedom and independence—living alone far from home, she “go[es] fearlessly about these mysterious streets, by night as well as by day, with no household ties, no rule or law but that within her; yet acting with quietness and simplicity, and keeping, after all, within a homely line of right” (CE XIV: 78)—served as a model for the outward situation of Hilda. There the resemblance ends. Lander became a close friend of the Hawthorne family until whispers had it that she had posed in the nude, and perhaps more, at which point Hawthorne assumed the role of guardian of family values and cut her coldly.²⁹ The other portrait is of a dead woman, Margaret Fuller, and also turns upon sexual rumor. Agitated by sculptor Joseph Mozier’s account of Fuller’s Roman liaison with Giovanni Ossoli, an intellectual inferior whom she may have married only after their child was born (if at all, according to some), Hawthorne launches into what James R. Mellow aptly calls “the sharpest and most critical judgment he ever made on the human clay”:³⁰

It was such an awful joke, that she should have resolved—in all sincerity, no doubt—to make herself the greatest, wisest, best woman of the age; and, to that end, she set to work on her strong, heavy, unpliant, and, in many respects, defective and evil nature, and adorned it with a mosaic of admirable qualities, such as she chose to possess; putting in here a splendid talent, and there a moral excellence, and polishing each separate piece, and the whole together, till it seemed to shine afar and dazzle all who saw it. She took credit to herself for having been her own Redeemer, if not her own Creator; and, indeed, she was far more a work of art than any of Mr. Mozier’s statues. But she was not working on inanimate substance, like marble or clay; there was something within her that she could not possibly come at, to re-create and refine it; and, by and by, this rude old potency bestirred itself, and undid all her labor in the twinkling of an eye. On the whole, I do not know but I like her the better for it;—the better, because she proved herself a very woman, after all, and fell as the weakest of her sisters might. (CE XIV: 156–57)

Sexual jealousy and a triumphant antifeminism may account for much of Hawthorne’s vehemence toward Fuller, yet, tone apart, the passage is in keeping with Hawthorne’s severity toward sexual transgression throughout

his published and private writings. Louisa Lander and Margaret Fuller occupy a place beside the once-seduced girl of the Berkshire journal whom no respectable man could think of marrying, and of course with Hawthorne's Fuller-tinged dark heroines—Hester Prynne, Zenobia of *The Blithedale Romance*, and Miriam of *The Marble Faun*—whom Hawthorne admires and may even love but feels obliged to exorcise and punish.

Hawthorne's first three romances draw intermittently upon notebook materials; *The Marble Faun* is saturated with them and unimaginable without them. Critics have sometimes objected that Hawthorne's long descriptions of places, works of art, and events such as the Roman carnival or the unearthing of a Venus in the countryside give the romance a guidebook aspect that impedes its development of plot and theme. The book is slower reading than Hawthorne's other romances. The remarkable thing is how aptly Hawthorne uses notebook materials for symbolic purposes, even with a minimum of fictive transformation; it is as if life arranged itself symbolically for Hawthorne on first perception or in the initial act of notebook composition. The faun may be *too* apt—one tires of Hawthorne's overinsistence—but the portrait of Beatrice Cenci that so fascinated him is made to pertain to both Miriam and Hilda, as is the Guidi Reni painting of Michael subduing Lucifer, which the women regard in opposite but characteristic ways. The most dominant symbol in *The Marble Faun* is Rome itself, and beyond its containing theme of the growth of the soul—a near-constant in Hawthorne's work from the beginning—the romance gives expression to the *uncontainable* phenomenon of a city that had come to represent to Hawthorne nothing less than “the world.”

The Marble Faun ends with Kenyon, Hawthorne's sometime alter ego, turning from the bewilderments of Rome and asking the righteous Hilda to guide him home. Physically, “home” is America; metaphysically, it is the structures of belief of a New England village. In Italy Hawthorne had been wooed to a life of beauty and the senses, to the contemplation of a history immeasurably longer, deeper, and more ambiguous than his Salem family's, and to a vertiginous pleasure in edging away from established belief toward chasms of uncertainty. After a residence in England in 1859–60, Hawthorne, too, returned home. Whether he ever returned “home” is another matter.

(v) Editorial Principles

The editors have attempted in the following selections to present a full and rounded self-portrait of Hawthorne—both of his process of thinking and,

so far as the entries gesture outward, of his historical context. To preserve a sense of life and thought unfolding (ragged as all human unfolding is), we have rearranged the Centenary texts by chronology alone rather than by chronology within separate notebooks. We have sought to be as sparing of ellipses as possible, especially with selections from the American notebooks; with the English and French and Italian notebooks, the length and the discursiveness of entries make editing unavoidable.

The text of the selections reproduces that in the four volumes of notebooks in the Centenary Edition. Ellipsis marks have been used to indicate omitted material within or at the beginning or end of a sentence or paragraph but not to indicate omissions at the end of a dated entry, between discrete sections of an entry, or between its inscribed date and the selected material. The irregularities of format in recording dates are Hawthorne's, as are the occasionally erratic spellings. In accordance with the practice of the Centenary Edition, square brackets have been used to mark undeciphered inked-out passages, and pointed brackets excisions from manuscript. Empty brackets of either sort indicate that one or two words are affected; ellipsis dots within brackets signify three or more words. Letters or words inside square brackets are conjectural. Italicized text refers to material that appears in Hawthorne's *Lost Notebook* but not in the Centenary Edition. Explanatory notes are marked by numerals, numbered consecutively for the American, the English, and the French and Italian notebooks; the notes themselves appear in the Notes section at the end of the book.