of the main social and political problems; but when it does, we shall, I believe, clearly recognise Walt Whitman as the fountain and origin of it all.

I am well aware that I am thus placing on the highest of all possible pinnacles a man whom I detest and despise; but I deliberately do so. *Ł* Balaam come to judgment!

Whitman is America. He is the real thing, the spirit of the new continent made word. Not the voice of imported culture, or of any other thing inessential. He is raw, untutored, tameless, crude, the America of the War. I have lived on the prairie myself, and I recognise the note.

The claims of Emerson, Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier and the rest are more easily dealt with. Emerson's ruggedness saves him from the barber's-assistant fate of the others. In some ways Emerson is quite the greatest of the Americans. His outlook is wide, and his thought profound; but his speech (as far as the poetry is concerned) is very imperfect, and (as far as the prose is concerned) too perfect, while the quantity of his best work is quite negligible if we think of Carlyle, or Nietzsche. Nor do the Essays rank with Bacon or Montaigne.

Longfellow is merely the polite professor; he has little learning, even for an undergraduate, and he has never penetrated a single μ into the varnish of any 'drawing-room idea. Smooth, shallow optimism, a faith even more frock-coated and silk-hatted than Tennyson's, a style absolutely wooden.

Said Poe, having printed a long passage of "Evangeline" as prose: "There is good, respectable prose, and no one will ever again run the danger of mistaking it for poetry."

There are one or two lyrics, good second-class: for example:

> "The day is done, and the darkness
> Falls from the wings of night
> As a feather is wafted downward
> From an eagle in its flight."

That is fairly fine poetry. It is simple; the image is clear and coherent, as well as beautiful; and the infinite purpose of the Universe is suggested by the introduction of the eagle. But there is not much else of this calibre;