

a beginning, a middle, and an end. But what was to be done with the fragments which remained — without beginning, and without end — links of a hidden or a broken chain? Whether to preserve them or destroy them became a question, and one I could not answer for myself. In allowing a portion of ~~them~~ to go forth to the world in their original form, as ~~unconnected~~ fragments, I have been guided by the wishes of others, who deemed it not wholly uninteresting or profitless to trace the path, sometimes devious enough, of an "inquiring spirit," even by the little pebbles dropped as vestiges by the way side.

A book so supremely egotistical and subjective can do good only in one way. It may, like conversation with a friend, open up sources of sympathy and reflection; excite to argument, agreement, or disagreement; and, like every spontaneous utterance of thought out of an earnest mind, suggest far higher and better thoughts than any to be found here, to higher and more productive minds. If I had not the humble hope of such a possible result, instead of sending these memoranda to the printer, I should have thrown them into the fire; for I lack that creative faculty which can work up the teachings of heart-sorrow and world-experience into attractive forms of fiction or of art; and having no intention of leaving any such memorials to be published after my death, they must have gone into the fire as the only alternative left.

The passages from books are not, strictly speaking, *selected*; they are not given here on any principle of choice, but simply because that by some process of assimilation they became a part of the individual mind. They "found me," — to borrow Coleridge's expression, — "found me in some depth of my being;" I did not "find them."