Last evening I took a walk, and dark masses of clouds moved across the sky like the heralds of an approaching storm. ¹

I reflected that the south wind would still blow and bring up its gloomy clouds for ages and ages after I am gone. ²

I have scarcely done anything, not finished a single picture. Indeed my mind has been occupied with so many cares and anxieties.³

May my fears be foolish.⁴

I have found no natural scenery which has affected me so powerfully as that which I have seen in the wilderness of America.⁵

Here, I felt the sublimity of untamed wilderness and the majesty of the eternal mountains. ⁶

Painting is capable of imparting knowledge. Painting is capable of awakening the soul to the refining influences of beauty and sublimity.⁷

Without Art Man would scarce be human.⁸

I long for the time when I can paint whatever my imagination would dictate without fear of running into pecuniary difficulties.⁹

I have determined to commence a series of pictures for which I have no commission.¹⁰

There are many wanderings in the stream of life and in this idea I have proceeded.¹¹

All nature here is new to art.¹²

Year by year, the groves that adorn the banks of the Catskill—wasted away. ¹³

In this age, may we at times turn to the pure enjoyment of rural nature. ¹⁴

We are still in Eden. ¹⁵
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2 Thomas Cole, “Thoughts and Occurrences,” Journal Entry May 31, 1835, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Thomas Cole Papers 1821-1863, SC10635, Journals, Box 4a Folder 1.
3 Thomas Cole, “Thoughts and Occurrences,” Journal Entry April 17, 1835, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Thomas Cole Papers 1821-1863, SC10635, Journals, Box 4a Folder 1.
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5 Thomas Cole to Robert Gilmor, January 29, 1832, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Thomas Cole Papers 1821-1863, SC10635, Correspondence between Thomas Cole and Robert Gilmor 1826-1837, Box 3 Folder 8.
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8 Thomas Cole, Lecture on Art, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Thomas Cole Papers 1821-1863, SC10635, Essays, Box 5, Folder 2.
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10 Thomas Cole, “Thoughts and Occurrences,” Journal Entry January 1, 1846, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Thomas Cole Papers 1821-1863, SC10635, Journals, Box 4a Folder 1.
12 Thomas Cole, “Thoughts and Occurrences,” Journal Entry July 6, 1835, New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Thomas Cole Papers 1821-1863, SC10635, Journals, Box 4a Folder 1.