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<th>Preface, holograph manuscript, corrected and signed</th>
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<td>[ca. 1891]</td>
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Walt Whitman's Last — Complete My Fancy

"Good-bye, my Fancy" — Concluding Address to
Leaves of Grass.

H. Heine's first principles of criticizing a book was:
What motive is the author trying to carry out, or express or
accomplish? and the second, Has he achieved it?

The theory of "Leaves of Grass" as an utterance in
composition of verses, as are authentically informed, has been from first
to last, to thoroughly possess the mind, memory, cognizance
of the author himself with everything beforehand, a full array of
concrete actualities, observations, humanity, past poems,
ballets, facts, technique war and peace, politics north and south,
est and west, nothing too large or too small, the sciences as
far as possible — and above all the present —

After and out of which the subject of the poem, long or short,
has been invariably turned over to his emotionality, even per
sonality, to be shaped thence; and emerges with all its
merits and demerits on its head. Every page of Walt Whitman's
my poetic or attempt at poetic utterance
poems, therefore smack of the living physical identity, date,
environment, individuality, probably beyond anything known and
in style often offensive to the conventions.

This now last cluster, "Good-bye, my Fancy" follows suit, and
yet with a difference. The clef is here charged to its lowest,
and the little book is a lot of tremulous about old age, death,
and faith. The voice just lingers but almost vanished.
It is garrulous, irascible (like old Lear) and has various
breaks and even tricks to avoid monotony. It will have to be
ciphered out long and is in some respects the most curious part
of its author's curious works.