

# CONTENTS

Introduction	3
1. Probably Poe	20
Method—If Method There Is	21
Vast Individual Error	30
Things External to the Game	42
2. <i>Moby-Dick</i> and the Opposite of Providence	55
The Cause of the Hunt	57
The Indifferent Sword of Chance	66
At a Venture	75
3. <i>Doubting If Doubt Itself Be Doubting: After Moby-Dick</i>	83
Judge ye, then, ye Judicious	84
<i>Pierre</i> and Pragmatism	92
“Bartleby” and Buridan’s Ass	95
4. Douglass’s Long Run	104
Providence and Improvidence	106
Balancing Probabilities	115
Give Them a Chance!	125
Reconstructing Black Pragmatism	132
5. Roughly Thoreau	140
Axes and Knives	143
Errors and Averages	149
Fish and Games	155
An Unfinished Life of Science	159
Summing Up	171
6. Dickinson’s Precarious Steps, Surprising Leaps, and Bounds	180
Romantic Embarrassments	182
Chances for Heaven	190
Precarious Gaits	200
Having an Experience	206
Coda: Lost Causes and the Civil War	215
Notes	221
Index	263