

20 The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister, is the suggestion of an **occult** relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them. The waving of the boughs in the storm, is new to me and old. It takes me by surprise, and yet is not unknown. Its effect is like that of a higher thought or a better emotion coming over me, when I deemed I was thinking justly or doing right.

Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight, does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both. It is necessary to use these pleasures with great temperance. For, nature is not always tricked³ in holiday attire, but the same scene which yesterday breathed perfume and glittered as for the frolic of the
30 nymphs, is overspread with melancholy today. Nature always wears the colors of the spirit. To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then, there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population. 🌀 F

occult (ə-kŭlt') *adj.* secret or hidden from view

F TRANSCENDENTALISM
Reread lines 30–34. What is Emerson saying about our perception of the natural world?

3. **tricked:** dressed.

ANALYZE VISUALS

Emerson says that “nature always wears the colors of the spirit.” What **mood** does this painting convey? Describe the elements of the painting that establish this mood.

Ben Lomond (1829–1830), Thomas Doughty. Oil on canvas. © Christie's Images/SuperStock.

