

Charles King Newcomb Biography

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Biography

Charles King Newcomb (1820-1894), Transcendental author whose "The Two Dolons" in the July 1842 *Dial* (3:112-123) is often used to ridicule the "Transcendental" aspects of the journal, was born at Providence, Rhode Island. Through his mother, a blue-stocking with literary pretensions, he met many contemporary authors, including Margaret Fuller, with whom he formed an unreturned romantic attachment. From 1841 to 1845 Newcomb lived at the Brook Farm community. Ralph Waldo Emerson, who thought highly of him, urged Newcomb to write for the *Dial* and helped edit his "The Two Dolons," which is partly a disguised hymn to Emerson's son, Waldo, who had died in January 1842. But Newcomb never published another piece, returning to Providence in 1845, and, after five years in Philadelphia, sailed for Europe in 1871, where he stayed until his death. Emerson, who drew him as Benedict in the "Worship" chapter of *Conduct of Life*, concluded that while Newcomb had shown "rich possibilities," his "result is zero."